

# THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS OF JOHN FOXE:

A NEW AND COMPLETE EDITION:

WITH A PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION,

BY THE

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Wherefore, to end now with these, and to go forward in our story, as the order and computation of years do give, we have now consequently to enter into the story of the good martyr of God, William Tyndale, being this present year falsely betrayed and put to death; which William Tyndale, as he was a special organ of the Lord appointed, and as God's mattock to shake the inward roots and foundation of the pope's proud prelacy, so the great prince of darkness, with his impious imps, having a special malice against him, left no way unsought how craftily to entrap him, and falsely to betray him, and maliciously to spill his life, as by the process of his story here following may appear.

**The Life and Story of the true Servant and Martyr of God,  
William Tyndale,<sup>1</sup>**

WHO, FOR HIS NOTABLE PAINS AND TRAVAIL, MAY WELL BE CALLED THE  
APOSTLE OF ENGLAND IN THIS OUR LATER AGE.<sup>2</sup>

William Tyndale, the faithful minister and constant martyr of Christ, was born about the borders of Wales, and brought up from a child in the university of Oxford, where he, by long continuance, grew up, and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues, and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted; insomuch that he, lying then in Magdalen hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen college, some parcel of divinity; instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures. His manners also and conversation being correspondent to the same, were such, that all they that knew him, reputed and esteemed him to be a man of most virtuous disposition, and of life unspotted.

Thus he, in the university of Oxford, increasing more and more in learning, and proceeding in degrees of the schools, spying his time, removed from thence to the university of Cambridge, where, after he had likewise made his abode a certain space, being now further ripened in the knowledge of God's word, leaving that university also, he resorted to one

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<sup>1</sup> See the Latin edition: Basle, 1599, p. 138.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Offer, in his recently published *Life of William Tyndale*, represents him as the baron, when, in truth, he was only a descendant of the baron. The editor subjoins an extract from an unpublished MS. of a descendant of Thomas, the brother of William Tyndale. "Hugh Tyndale, a descendant of Robert, Baron de Tyndale, of Longly Castle, in Northumberland, settled in Gloucestershire during the wars of York and Lancaster, where he passed for some time under the name of Hutchens, having been concerned in the quarrel between the contending families. He married Alicia, daughter and sole heiress of — Hunt, of Hunt Court, in Nibley, near Dursley, Esquire. His son John Tyndale was the father of William Tyndale of Magdalen hall, Oxford, who was born at Hunt Court about the year 1477, and is justly styled The worthy Apostle of the English Reformation."—ED.

Master Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, and was there schoolmaster to his children, and in good favour with his master. This gentleman, as he kept a good ordinary commonly at his table, there resorted to him many times sundry abbots, deans, archdeacons, with divers other doctors, and great beneficed men; who there, together with Master Tyndale sitting at the same table, did use many times to enter communication, and talk of learned men, as of Luther and of Erasmus; also of divers other controversies and questions upon the Scripture.

Then Master Tyndale, as he was learned and well practised in God's matters, so he spared not to show unto them simply and plainly his judgment in matters, as he thought; and when they at any time did vary from Tyndale in opinions and judgment, he would show them in the book, and lay plainly before them the open and manifest places of the Scriptures, to confute their errors, and confirm his sayings. And thus continued they for a certain season, reasoning and contending together divers and sundry times, till at length they waxed weary, and bare a secret grudge in their hearts against him.

Not long after this, it happened that certain of these great doctors had invited Master Welch and his wife to a banquet; where they had talk at will and pleasure, uttering their blindness and ignorance without any resistance or gainsaying. Then Master Welch and his wife, coming home, and calling for Master Tyndale, began to reason with him about those matters whereof the priests had talked before at their banquet. Master Tyndale, answering by the Scriptures, maintained the truth, and reprov'd their false opinions. Then said the lady Welch, a stout and a wise woman (as Tyndale reported), "Well," said she, "there was such a doctor who may dispend a hundred pounds, and another two hundred pounds, and another three hundred pounds: and what! were it reason, think you, that we should believe you before them?" Master Tyndale gave her no answer at that time, and also after that (because he saw it would not avail), he talked but little in those matters. At that time he was about the translation of a book called 'Enchiridion Militis Christiani'<sup>1</sup> which, being translated, he delivered to his master and lady; who, after they had read and well perused the same, the doctorly prelates were no more so often called to the house, neither had they the cheer and countenance when they came, as before they had: which thing they marking, and well perceiving, and supposing no less but it came by the means of Master Tyndale, refrained themselves, and at last utterly withdrew, and came no more there.

As this grew on, the priests of the country, clustering together, began to grudge and storm against Tyndale, railing against him in alehouses and

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<sup>1</sup> Enchiridion, a book of Erasmus.

other places; of whom Tyndale himself, in his prologue before the first book of Moses, thus testifieth in his own words, and reporteth that he suffered much in that country by a sort of unlearned priests, being full rude and ignorant (saith he) God knoweth: “who have seen no more Latin, than that only which they read in their portueses and missals (which yet many of them can scarcely read), except it be ‘Albertus, De Secretis Mulierum,’ in which yet, though they be never so sorrily learned, they pore day and night, and make notes therein, and all to teach the midwives, as they say; and also another called ‘Lindwood,’ a book of constitutions to gather tithes, mortuaries, offerings, customs, and other pillage, which they call not theirs, but God’s part, the duty of holy church, to discharge their consciences withal. For they are bound that they shall not diminish, but increase all things unto the uttermost of their powers, which pertain to holy church.” Thus these blind and rude priests, flocking together to the alehouse (for that was their preaching place), raged and railed against him, affirming that his sayings were heresy; adding moreover unto his sayings, of their own heads, more than ever he spake, and so accused him secretly to the chancellor, and others of the bishop’s officers.

It followed not long after this, that there was a sitting of the bishop’s chancellor appointed, and warning was given to the priests to appear, amongst whom Master Tyndale was also warned to be there. And whether he had any misdoubt by their threatenings, or knowledge given him that they would lay some things to his charge, it is uncertain; but certain this is (as he himself declared), that he doubted their privy accusations; so that he by the way, in going thitherwards, cried in his mind heartily to God, to give him strength fast to stand in the truth of his word.

Then when the time came for his appearance before the chancellor, he threatened him grievously, reviling and rating at him as though he had been a dog, and laid to his charge many things whereof no accuser yet could be brought forth (as commonly their manner is, not to bring forth the accuser), notwithstanding that the priests of the country the same time were there present. And thus Master Tyndale, after those examinations, escaping out of their hands, departed home, and returned to his master again.

There dwelt not far off a certain doctor, that had been an old chancellor before to a bishop, who had been of old familiar acquaintance with Master Tyndale, and also favoured him well; unto whom Master Tyndale went and opened his mind upon divers questions of the Scripture: for to him he durst be bold to disclose his heart. Unto whom the doctor said, “Do you not know that the pope is very Antichrist, whom the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say; for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life;” and said moreover, “I have been an officer of his; but I have given it up, and defy him and all his works.”

It was not long after, but Master Tyndale happened to be in the company of a certain divine, recounted for a learned man, and, in communing and disputing with him, he drave him to that issue, that the said great doctor burst out into these blasphemous words, and said, "We were better to be without God's laws than the pope's." Master Tyndale, hearing this, full of godly zeal, and not bearing that blasphemous saying, replied again, and said, "I defy the pope, and all his laws;" and further added, that if God spared him life, ere many years he would cause a boy that driveth the plough, to know more of the Scripture than he did. After this, the grudge of the priests increasing still more and more against Tyndale, they never ceased barking and rating at him, and laid many things sorely to his charge, saying that he was a heretic in sophistry, a heretic in logic, a heretic in divinity; and said moreover to him, that he bare himself bold of the gentlemen there in that country; but notwithstanding, shortly he should be otherwise talked withal. To whom Master Tyndale, answering again, thus said, that he was contented they should bring him into any country in all England, giving him ten pounds a year to live with, and binding him to no more but to teach children, and to preach.

To be short, Master Tyndale, being so molested and vexed in the country by the priests, was constrained to leave that country, and to seek another place; and so coming to Master Welch, he desired him, of his good will, that he might depart from him, saying on this wise to him: "Sir, I perceive that I shall not be suffered to tarry long here in this country, neither shall you be able, though you would, to keep me out of the hands of the spirituality; and also what displeasure might grow thereby to you by keeping me, God knoweth; for the which I should be right sorry." So that in fine, Master Tyndale, with the good will of his master, departed, and soon after came up to London, and there preached awhile, according as he had done in the country before, and especially about the town of Bristol, and also in the said town, in the common place called St. Austin's Green.

At length, bethinking himself of Cuthbert Tonstal, then bishop of London, and especially for the great commendation of Erasmus, who, in his annotations, so extolleth him for his learning, Tyndale thus cast with himself, that if he might attain unto his service, he were a happy man. And so coming to Sir Henry Guilford, the king's comptroller, and bringing with him an oration of Isocrates, which he had then translated out of Greek into English, he desired him to speak to the said bishop of London for him; which he also did; and willed him moreover to write an epistle to the bishop, and to go himself with him. This he did likewise, and delivered his epistle to a servant of his, named William Hebilthwait, a man of his old acquaintance. But God, who secretly disposeth the course of things, saw that was not the best for Tyndale's purpose, nor for the profit of his church, and

therefore gave him to find little favour in the bishop's sight; the answer of whom was this: That his house was full; he had more than he could well find: and advised him to seek in London abroad, where, he said, he could lack no service, &c. And so remained he in London the space almost of a year, beholding and marking with himself the course of the world, and especially the demeanour of the preachers, how they boasted themselves, and set up their authority and kingdom; beholding also the pomp of the prelates, with other things more, which greatly misliked him; insomuch that he understood, not only that there was no room in the bishop's house for him to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England. And therefore, finding no place for his purpose within the realm, and having, by God's providence, some aid and provision ministered unto him by Humphrey Mummuth, above recited (as you may see before), and certain other good men, he took his leave of the realm, and departed into Germany, where the good man, being inflamed with a tender care and zeal of his country, refused no travail nor diligence, how, by all means possible, to reduce his brethren and countrymen of England to the same taste and understanding of God's holy word and verity, which the Lord had endued him withal. Whereupon, considering in his mind, and partly also conferring with John Frith, Tyndale thought with himself no way more to conduce thereunto, than if the Scripture were turned into the vulgar speech, that the poor people might also read and see the simple plain word of God. For first, wisely casting in his mind, he perceived by experience, how that it was not possible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scriptures were so plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text; for else, whatsoever truth should be taught them, these enemies of the truth would quench it again, either with apparent reasons of sophistry, and traditions of their own making, founded without all ground of Scripture; or else juggling with the text, expounding it in such a sense as it were impossible to gather of the text, if the right process, order, and meaning thereof were seen.

Again, right well he perceived and considered this only, or most chiefly, to be the cause of all mischief in the church, that the Scriptures of God were hidden from the people's eyes; for so long the abominable doings and idolatries maintained by the pharisaical clergy could not be espied; and therefore all their labour was with might and main to keep it down, so that either it should not be read at all, or if it were, they would darken the right sense with the mist of their sophistry, and so entangle those who rebuked or despised their abominations, with arguments of philosophy, and with worldly similitudes, and apparent reasons of natural wisdom; and, with wresting the Scripture unto their own purpose, contrary unto the process, order, and meaning of the text, would so delude them in descanting upon it

with allegories, and amaze them, expounding it in many senses laid before the unlearned lay people, that though thou felt in thy heart, and wert sure that all were false that they said, yet couldst thou not solve their subtle riddles.

For these and such other considerations this good man was moved (and no doubt stirred up of God) to translate the Scripture into his mother tongue, for the public utility and profit of the simple vulgar people of his country; first setting in hand with the New Testament, which he first translated about A.D. 1527. After that, he took in hand to translate the Old Testament, finishing the five books of Moses, with sundry most learned and godly prologues prefixed before every one, most worthy to be read and read again by all good Christians, as the like also he did upon the New Testament. He wrote also divers other works under sundry titles, amongst which is that most worthy monument of his, entitled, “The Obedience of a Christian Man,” wherein, with singular dexterity, he instructeth all men in the office and duty of Christian obedience, with divers other treatises, as “The Wicked Mammon,” “The Practice of Prelates;” with expositions upon certain parts of the Scripture, and other books also, answering to Sir Thomas More and other adversaries of the truth, no less delectable, than also most fruitful to be read; which partly before being unknown unto many, partly also being almost abolished and worn out by time, the printer hereof, good reader, for conserving and restoring such singular treasures, hath collected and set forth in print the same in one general volume, all and whole together, as also the works of John Frith, Barnes, and others, as are to be seen, most special and profitable for thy reading.

These books of William Tyndale being compiled, published, and sent over into England, it cannot be spoken what a door of light they opened to the eyes of the whole English nation, which before were many years shut up in darkness.

At his first departing out of the realm he took his journey into the further parts of Germany, as into Saxony, where he had conference with Luther and other learned men in those quarters; where after he had continued a certain season, he came down from thence into the Netherlands, and had his most abiding in the town of Antwerp, there,<sup>1</sup> being not idle, but labouring in setting forth a plain declaration and understanding of the Scriptures, until the time of his apprehension; whereof more shall be said (God willing) hereafter.

Amongst his other books which he compiled, one work he made also for the declaration of the sacrament (as it was then called) of the altar; which he kept by him, considering how the people were not as yet fully

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<sup>1</sup> See Edition 1563, p. 516.—ED.

persuaded in other matters tending to superstitious ceremonies and gross idolatry. Wherefore he thought as yet time was not come to put forth that work, but rather that it should hinder the people from other instructions, supposing that it would seem to them odious to hear any such thing spoken or set forth at that time, sounding against their great goddess Diana, that is, against their mass, being had everywhere in great estimation, as was the goddess Diana amongst the Ephesians, whom they thought to come from heaven. Wherefore Master Tyndale, being a man both prudent in his doings, and no less zealous in the setting forth of God's holy truth after such sort as it might take most effect with the people, did forbear the putting forth of that work, not doubting but, by God's merciful grace, a time should come to have that abomination openly declared, as it is at this present day: the Lord Almighty be always praised therefore. Amen!

These godly books of Tyndale, and especially the New Testament of his translation, after that they began to come into men's hands, and to spread abroad, as they wrought great and singular profit to the godly, so the ungodly (envying and disdaining that the people should be any thing wiser than they, and again, fearing lest, by the shining beams of truth, their false hypocrisy and works of darkness should be discerned), began to stir with no small ado; like as at the birth of Christ, Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. But especially Satan, the prince of darkness, maligning the happy course and success of the gospel, set to his might also, how to impeach and hinder the blessed travails of that man; as by this, and also by sundry other ways may appear. For at what time Tyndale had translated the fifth book of Moses called Deuteronomy, minding to print the same at Hamburgh, he sailed thitherward; where by the way, upon the coast of Holland, he suffered shipwreck, by which he lost all his books, writings, and copies, and so was compelled to begin all again anew, to his hinderance, and doubling of his labours. Thus, having lost by that ship, both money, his copies, and his time, he came in another ship to Hamburgh, where, at his appointment, Master Coverdale tarried for him, and helped him in the translating of the whole five books of Moses, from Easter till December, in the house of a worshipful widow, Mistress Margaret Van Emmerson, A.D. 1529; a great sweating sickness being at the same time in the town. So, having dispatched his business at Hamburgh, he returned afterwards to Antwerp again.

Thus, as Satan is, and ever hath been, an enemy to all godly endeavours, and chiefly to the promoting and furtherance of God's word, as by this and many other experiments may be seen, so his ministers and members, following the like quality of their master, be not altogether idle for their parts; as also by the pope's chaplains and God's enemies, and by



their cruel handling of the said Master Tyndale at the same time, both here in England and in Flanders, may well appear.

When God's will was, that the New Testament in the common tongue should come abroad, Tyndale, the translator thereof, added to the latter end a certain epistle, wherein he desired them that were learned to amend, if ought were found amiss. Wherefore if there had been any such default deserving correction, it had been the part of courtesy and gentleness, for men of knowledge and judgment to have showed their learning therein, and to have redressed what was to be amended. But the spiritual fathers then of the clergy, being not willing to have that book to prosper, cried out upon it, bearing men in hand that there were a thousand heresies in it, and that it was not to be corrected, but utterly to be suppressed. Some said it was not possible to translate the Scriptures into English; some, that it was not lawful for the lay people to have it in their mother-tongue; some, that it would make them all heretics. And to the intent to induce the temporal rulers also unto their purpose, they made more matter, and said that it would make the people to rebel and rise against the king. All this Tyndale himself, in his own prologue before the first' book of Moses, declareth; and addeth further, showing what great pains were taken in examining that translation, and comparing it with their own imaginations and terms, that with less labour, he supposeth, they might have translated themselves a great part of the Bible: showing moreover, that they scanned and examined every tittle and point in the said translation, in such sort, and so narrowly, that there was not one therein, but if it lacked a prick over its head, they did note it, and numbered it unto the ignorant people for a heresy. So great were then the froward devices of the English clergy (who should have been the guides of light unto the people), to drive the people from the text and knowledge of the Scripture, which neither they would translate themselves, nor yet abide it to be translated of others; to the intent (as Tyndale saith) that the world being kept still in darkness, they might sit in the consciences of the people through vain superstition and false doctrine, to satisfy their lusts, their ambition, and insatiable covetousness, and to exalt their own honour above king and emperor, yea and above God himself.<sup>1</sup>

The bishops and prelates of the realm, thus (as ye have heard) incensed and inflamed in their minds, although having no cause, against the Old and New Testament of the Lord newly translated by Tyndale, and conspiring together with all their heads and counsels, how to repeal the same, never rested before they had brought the king at last to their consent; by reason whereof, a proclamation in all haste was devised and set forth under public authority, but no just reason showed, that the Testament of Tyndale's trans-

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<sup>1</sup> 'Hæc ille.'

lation, with other works besides, both of his, and of other writers, were inhibited and abandoned, as ye heard before:<sup>1</sup> which was about A.D. 1527. And yet not contented herewith, they proceeded further, how to entangle him in their nets, and to bereave him of his life; which how they brought to pass, now it remaineth to be declared.

In the registers of London it appeareth manifest, how that the bishops and sir Thomas More having any poor man under ‘coram,’ to be examined before them, namely, such as had been at Antwerp, most studiously would search and examine all things belonging to Tyndale, where and with whom he hosted, whereabouts stood the house, what was his stature, in what apparel he went, what resort he had, &c.: all which things when they had diligently learned (as may appear by the examination of Simon Smith and others), then began they to work their feats, as you shall hear by the relation of his own host.

William Tyndale, being in the town of Antwerp, had been lodged about one whole year in the house of Thomas Pointz an Englishman, who kept there a house of English merchants; about which time came thither one out of England, whose name was Henry Philips, his father being customer of Poole, a comely fellow, like as he had been a gentleman, having a servant with him: but wherefore he came, or for what purpose he was sent thither, no man could tell.

Master Tyndale divers times was desired forth to dinner and supper amongst merchants; by means whereof this Henry Philips became acquainted with him, so that within short space Master Tyndale had a great confidence in him, and brought him to his lodging, to the house of Thomas Pointz; and had him also once or twice with him to dinner and supper, and further entered such friendship with him, that through his procurement he lay in the same house of the said Pointz; to whom he showed moreover his books, and other secrets of his study, so little did Tyndale then mistrust this traitor.

But Pointz, having no great confidence in the fellow, asked Master Tyndale how he came acquainted with this Philips. Master Tyndale answered, that he was an honest man, handsomely learned, and very conformable. Then Pointz, perceiving that he bare such favour to him, said no more, thinking that he was brought acquainted with him by some friend of his. The said Philips, being in the town three or four days, upon a time desired Pointz to walk with him forth of the town to show him the commodities thereof, and in walking together without the town, had communication of divers things, and some of the king’s affairs; by which talk Pointz as yet

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<sup>1</sup> The popish prelates procured not only the condemnation of Tyndale’s books, but also burned both them and the Testament, calling it ‘Doctrinam peregrinam,’ strange doctrine.

suspected nothing, but after, by the sequel of the matter, he perceived more what he intended. In the mean time this he well perceived, that he bare no great favour either to the setting forth of any good thing, or to the proceedings of the king of England. But after, when the time was past, Pointz perceived this to be his mind, to feel if he could perceive by him, whether he might break with him in the matter, for lucre of money, to help him to his purpose, for he perceived before that he was monied, and would that Pointz should think no less: but by whom it was unknown. For he had desired Pointz before, to help him to divers things; and such things as he named, he required might be of the best, “for,” said he, “I have money enough but of this talk came nothing but that men should think he had some things to do; for nothing else followed of his talk. So it was to be suspected, that Philips was in doubt to move this matter for his purpose, to any of the rulers or officers of the town of Antwerp, for doubt it should come to the knowledge of some Englishmen, and by the means thereof Master Tyndale should have had warning.

So Philips went from Antwerp to the court of Brussels, which is from thence twenty-four English miles, the king having there no ambassador; for at that time the king of England and the emperor were at a controversy for the question betwixt the king and the lady Katharine, who was aunt to the emperor; and the discord grew so much, that it was doubted lest there should have been war between the emperor and the king; so that Philips, as a traitor both against God and the king, was there the better retained, as also other traitors more besides him; who, after he had betrayed Master Tyndale into their hands, showed himself likewise against the king’s own person, and there set forth things against the king. To make short, the said Philips did so much there, that he procured to bring from thence with him to Antwerp, that procuror-general, who is the emperor’s attorney, with certain other officers, as after followeth; which was not done with small charges and expenses, from whomsoever it came.

Within a while after, Pointz sitting at his door, Philips’s man came unto him, and asked whether Master Tyndale were there, and said, his master would come to him; and so departed: but whether his Master Philips were in the town or not, it was not known; but at that time Pointz heard no more, either of the master or of the man. Within three or four days after, Pointz went forth to the town of Barrois, being eighteen English miles from Antwerp, where he had business to do for the space of a month or six weeks; and in the time of his absence Henry Philips came again to Antwerp, to the house of Pointz, and coming in, spake with his wife, asking her for Master Tyndale, and whether he would dine there with him; saying, “What good meat shall we have?” She answered, “Such as the market will give.” Then went he forth again (as it is thought) to provide, and set the officers whom

he brought with him from Brussels, in the street, and about the door. Then about noon he came again, and went to Master Tyndale, and desired him to lend him forty shillings; "for," said he, "I lost my purse this morning, coming over at the passage between this and Mechlin." So Master Tyndale took him forty shillings, which was easy to be had of him, if he had it for in the wily subtleties of this world he was simple and inexpert.

Then said Philips, "Master Tyndale! you shall be my guest here this day." "No," said Master Tyndale, "I go forth this day to dinner, and you shall go with me, and be my guest, where you shall be welcome." So when it was dinner-time, Master Tyndale went forth with Philips, and at the going forth of Pointz's house, was a long narrow entry, so that two could not go in a front. Master Tyndale would have put Philips before him, but Philips would in no wise, but put Master Tyndale before, for that he pretended to show great humanity. So Master Tyndale, being a man of no great stature, went before, and Philips, a tall comely person, followed behind him; who had set officers on either side of the door upon two seats, who, being there, might see who came in the entry; and coming through the same entry, Philips pointed with his finger over Master Tyndale's head down to him, that the officers who sat at the door might see that it was he whom they should take, as the officers that took Master Tyndale afterwards told Pointz, and said to Pointz, when they had laid him in prison, that they pitied to see his simplicity when they took him. Then they took him, and brought him to the emperor's attorney, or procuror-general, where he dined. Then came the procuror-general to the house of Pointz, and sent away all that was there of Master Tyndale's, as well his books as other things; and from thence Tyndale was had to the castle of Filford, eighteen English miles from Antwerp, and there he remained until he was put to death.

Then incontinent, by the help of English merchants, were letters sent, in favour of Tyndale, to the court of Brussels. Also, not long after, letters were directed out of England to the council at Brussels, and sent to the merchant-adventurers, to Antwerp, commanding them to see that with speed they should be delivered. Then such of the chief of the merchants as were there at that time, being called together, required the said Pointz to take in hand the delivery of those letters, with letters also from them, in favour of Master Tyndale, to the lord of Barrois and others; which lord of Barrois (as it was told Pointz by the way) at that time was departed from Brussels, as the chief conductor of the eldest daughter of the king of Denmark, to be married to the palsgrave, whose mother was sister to the emperor, she being chief princess of Denmark. Pointz, after he heard of his departure, did ride after the next way, and overtook him at Achon, where he delivered to him his letters; which when he had received and read, he made no direct answer, but somewhat objecting, said, There were of their countrymen that were

burned in England not long before (as indeed there were Anabaptists burned in Smithfield); and so Pointz said to him, "Howbeit," said he, "whatsoever the crime was, if his lordship or any other nobleman had written, requiring to have had them, he thought they should not have been denied." "Well," said he, "I have no leisure to write, for the princess is ready to ride." Then said Pointz, "If it shall please your lordship, I will attend upon you unto the next baiting-place which was at Maestricht. "If you so do," said the lord, "I will advise myself by the way what to write." So Pointz followed him from Achon to Maestricht, which are fifteen English miles asunder; and there he received letters of him, one to the council there, another to the company of the merchant-adventurers, and another also to the lord Cromwell in England.

So Pointz rode from thence to Brussels, and then and there delivered to the council the letters out of England, with the lord of Barrois's letters also, and received soon after answer into England of the same by letters which he brought to Antwerp to the English merchants, who required him to go with them into England. And he, very desirous to have Master Tyndale out of prison, let not to take pains, with loss of time in his own business and occupying, and diligently followed with the said letters, which he there delivered to the council, and was commanded by them to tarry until he had other letters, with which he was not dispatched thence in a month after. At length, the letters being delivered him, he returned again, and delivered them to the emperor's council at Brussels, and there tarried for answer of the same.

When the said Pointz had tarried three or four days, it was told him by one that belonged to the Chancery, that Master Tyndale should have been delivered to him according to the tenor of the letters; but Philips, being there, followed the suit against Master Tyndale, and hearing that he should be delivered to Pointz, and doubting lest he should be put from his purpose, he knew no other remedy but to accuse Pointz, saying, that he was a dweller in the town of Antwerp, and there had been a succourer of Tyndale, and was one of the same opinion; and that all this was only his own labour and suit, to have Master Tyndale at liberty, and no man's else.

Thus, upon his information and accusation, Pointz was attached by the procuror-general, the emperor's attorney, and delivered to the keeping of two serjeants at arms; and the same evening was sent to him one of the chancery, with the procuror-general, who ministered unto him an oath, that he should truly make answer to all such things as should be inquired of him, thinking they would have had no other examinations of him but of his message. The next day likewise they came again, and had him in examination, and so five or six days one after; another, upon not so few as a hundred articles, as well of the king's affairs, as of the message concerning

Tyndale, of his aiders, and of his religion; out of which examinations, the procuror-general drew twenty-three or twenty-four articles, and declared the same against the said Pointz, the copy whereof he delivered to him to make answer thereunto, and permitted him to have an advocate and proctor, that is, a doctor and proctor in the law; and order was taken, that eight days after he should deliver unto them his answer, and from eight days to eight days, to proceed till the process were ended. Also that he should send no messenger to Antwerp where his house was, being twenty-four English miles from Brussels, where he was prisoner, nor to any other place, but by the post of the town of Brussels; nor to send any letters, nor any to be delivered to him, but written in Dutch; and the procuror-general, who was party against him, to read them, to peruse and examine them thoroughly (contrary to all right and equity), before they were sent or delivered: neither might any be suffered to speak or talk with Pointz in any other tongue or language, except only in the Dutch tongue; so that his keepers, who were Dutchmen, might understand what the contents of the letters or talk should be: saving that at one certain time the provincial of the White Friars came to dinner where Pointz was prisoner, and brought with him a young novice, being an Englishman, whom the provincial, after dinner' of his own accord, did bid to talk with the said Pointz; and so with him he was licensed to talk. The purpose and great policy therein was easy to be perceived. Between Pointz and the novice was much pretty talk, as of sir Thomas More, and of the bishop of Rochester, and of their putting to death; whose death he seemed greatly to lament, especially dying in such a quarrel, worthy (as he said) to be accounted for martyrs; with other noble doctrine, and deep learning in divinity, meet to feed swine withal: such blindness then in those days reigned amongst them.

The eighth day,<sup>1</sup> the commissioners that were appointed came to the house where Pointz was kept, to have had his answer in writing: he, making no great haste in proceeding, answereth them with a dilatory manner, saying, he was there a prisoner, and might not go abroad, so that, although he had appointed and named who were to be a council with him, they came not to him, nor could he go to them; nor could any come to give counsel in this matter, but such as were licensed and named by them. Then they gave him a day, to make answer against the next eighth day. And Pointz drew out his own mind, answering to the whole declaration generally; which, at the next coming, he delivered them: but that answer they would not take, saying, he must answer to every article particularly; and so they took order, that he should make it ready against the next coming. Thus he trifled them off, from Allhallow-tide until Christmas-even, with dilatory matters, from

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<sup>1</sup> The history, being more fully given in the first edition, is here substituted for a short passage in recent editions.—ED.

one eighth day to another eighth day. And upon Christmas even, in the morning, they came to him to have had an answer, which was not made, nor had any counsel come to him in all that time: howbeit, they would delay the time no longer, but said they, "Bring in your answer this day, or else ye shall be put from it;" so he perceived, that if it were not brought in that night, he should have been condemned without answer. So then, with much ado, he got the advocate to help him in ordering of his answer; but it was long ere he came, so that it was past eight o'clock of Christmas-even before his answers were delivered to the, procuror-general. And then afterwards, as the time served, at the days appointed, it went forth with replication duplic, with other answers each to other, in writing what they could, in answering to the emperor's ordinances. And at such times as the commissioners came to Pointz, that traitor Philips accompanied them to the door, in following the process against him, as he also did against Master Tyndale, as they who had Pointz in keeping showed him.

The process being ended, as the order is there, either party delivered up to the commissioners a bag, with his process in writing, and took an inventory of every parcel of writing that was within the bag. So it rested in their hands; but, upon sentence, Pointz required, in the time of process, that he might put in surety, and so to be at liberty. This they granted him at the first time, but, afterwards, they denied to take surety for his body. Then he sent a post from the town of Brussels to Antwerp to the English merchants, thinking they would not let him have stuck for lack of their help, in putting in sureties for him, considering the cause, with the circumstance, especially since they brought him into this trouble themselves; although it does not appear that they made him any promise for his charges and pains taken, as Pointz reported of them they really did.

But, to pass over this, and to make the matter short: if the aforesaid merchants, such as were of the town of Antwerp, had, at the time, been surety for him, then the matter had been altered from a criminal to a civil case; but when Pointz had delivered to them his answer, they demanded of him, for his charges, money, or sureties. The charges were much, to reckon for the two officers' meat, and drink, and wages, beside his own charges; so that it was about five shillings every day. For all the while he was prisoner, he was not in a common prison, but in the keeping of two officers in one of their houses. So they demanded sureties to be brought within eight days for the charges, but then they denied him to take surety for his body, to make answer at liberty. Pointz, considering that they altered in their purposes, as well in other things as in that; and perceiving, by other things (as also it was told in secret), that it would have cost him his life if he had tarried, yet Pointz granted them to put in sureties, requiring of them to have a messenger to send; not because he reckoned to have any, but to make a delay, oth-

erwise they would have sent him to a stronger prison. But Pointz delayed them, thinking, if he could, to make escape; yet he did make a good face, as though he reckoned to have been in no danger; which if he had not done, it was very unlikely he should have escaped with his life out of their hands. And at the eighth day the commissioners came again to Pointz, and there received both their bags with the process, one from the procuror-general, and one from Pointz, delivering either of them an inventory of such pieces of writing as were delivered in the bags, and demanded sureties of Pointz, according to the order they took when they were last with him. Pointz alleged that he had divers times required those who had him in keeping to get him a messenger, as he also had done, but made no great haste to have any; for he reckoned it should be a sufficient delay, whereby he might have another day. And with much alleging the impossibility of his being able to get a messenger to send forth, at the last, they put him apart, and agreed to give him a day eight days after, and called him in again, and commanded the officer to get him a messenger, as they did. And so Pointz sent him with letters to the English merchants, who at that time were at Barrois. Howbeit, he reckoned to get away before the return again of the messenger, for he perceived his tarrying there should have been his death. And therefore, to put in a venture to get away, that so he might save himself (for, if he had been taken, it would have been but death, for he had been prisoner there in their hands at that time about twelve or thirteen weeks), he tarried not the coming again of the messenger, but, in a night, by some means he conveyed himself off, and so, by God's help, at the opening of the town gate in the morning, he got away. And when it was perceived that he was gone, there was horse sent out after him, but, because he well knew the country, he escaped and came into England. But what more trouble followeth to Pointz after the same, it serveth not for this place to rehearse. Master Tyn-dale, still remaining in prison, was proffered an advocate and a procurer; for in any crime there, it shall be permitted to counsel to make answer in the law; but he refused to have any, saying, he would make answer for himself, and did: but, it is to be thought, his answer will not be put forth. Notwithstanding, he had so preached to them there who had him in charge, and such as was there conversant with him in the castle, that they reported of him, that if he were not a good Christian man, they knew not whom they might take to be one.

At last, after much reasoning, when no reason would serve, although he deserved no death, he was condemned by virtue of the emperor's decree, made in the assembly at Augsburgh (as is before signified), and, upon the same, brought forth to the place of execution, was there tied to the stake, and then strangled first by the hangman, and afterwards with fire consumed in the morning, at the town of Filford, A.D. 1536; crying thus at the stake



with a fervent zeal, and a loud voice, “Lord! open the king of England’s eyes.”

Such was the power of his doctrine, and the sincerity of his life, that during the time of his imprisonment (which endured a year and a half), it is said, he converted his keeper, the keeper’s daughter, and others of his household. Also the rest that were with Tyndale conversant in the castle, reported of him that if he were not a good Christian man, they could not tell whom to trust.

The procurator-general, the emperor’s attorney, being there, left this testimony of him, that he was “Homo doctus, pius, et bonus,” that is, “a learned, a good, and a godly man.”

The same morning in which he was had to the fire, he delivered a letter to the keeper of the castle, which the keeper himself brought to the house of the aforesaid Pointz in Antwerp, shortly after; which letter, with his examinations and other his disputations, I would, might have come to our hands; all which I understand did remain, and yet perhaps do, in the hands of the keepers daughter. For so it is of him reported, that as he was in the castle prisoner, there was much writing, and great disputation to and fro, between him and them of the university of Louvain (which was not past nine or ten miles from the place where he was prisoner), in such sort, that they all had enough to do, and more than they could well wield, to answer the authorities and testimonies of the Scripture, whereupon he most pithily grounded his doctrine.

That traitor,<sup>1</sup> worse than Judas to man’s judgment (only not comparing this to the case of Christ, and that the Scripture hath already judged Judas), was otherwise in the act—doing not so good; for Judas, after he had betrayed his Master and Friend, was sorry, acknowledged and confessed his fact openly, declared his Master to be the very Truth, and despising the money that he had received for doing the act, brought it again and cast it before them. This traitor Philips, contrariwise, not lamenting, but rejoicing in what he had done, not declaring the honest goodness and truth of his friend, but applying, in all that he could devise, to declare him to be false and seditious, and not despising the money that he had received, not bringing it again, but procuring and receiving more, wherewith to follow the suit against that innocent blood to the death; which case of things endured about one whole year and a half, in which he lost no time, but all that time followed Pointz with most diligent attendance to and fro, and from Louvain to Brussels, and to Filford, with process to have sentence against him. And having there no other thing to do, he applied himself to nothing else; which was not done with small expenses and charges, from whomsoever it came.

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<sup>1</sup> See Edition 1563, pages 519, 520.—ED.

And, as I have heard say there in that country, Master Tyndale found them in the university of Louvain with enough to do.

And yet, in all that while, if they had not taken to help them an ordinance of the emperor's making (which ordinance was made by the advice and counsel of the pope's soldiers, for the upholding of his kingdom, and also joined with his own law's), they knew not else how to have brought him to his death by their disputing with him in the Scriptures; for he was permitted to dispute, in answering to them, by writing. And that traitor Philips was not satisfied with that, but he knew that he should have money enough, as himself before had said to Pointz. But, as when Judas did run away with the bag when he went to betray Christ, with which he went his way, the other apostles thought he had gone to have bought things necessary (although he went to appoint with the Jews for the taking of his master, Christ), so, in like manner, this traitor Philips, the same morning that he brought his treachery to purpose, with bringing Master Tyndale into the hands of God's enemies, took money of him under a colour of borrowing, and put it into his bag, and then incontinent went his ways therewith, and came with his company of soldiers, who laid hands upon him as before, and led him away. And about one whole year and a half after, he was put to death at Filford, with fire; and, albeit this Philips rejoiced awhile after he had done it, yet the saying so goeth, that he not long time after enjoyed the price of innocent blood, but was consumed at last with lice.

The worthy virtues and doings of this blessed martyr, who, for his painful travails and singular zeal to his country, may be called, in these our days, an apostle of England, it were long to recite. Among many others, this, because it seemeth to me worthy of remembrance, I thought not in silence to overpass, which hath unto me been credibly testified by certain grave merchants, and some of them also such as were present the same time at the fact, and men yet alive; the story whereof is this: There was at Antwerp on a time, amongst a company of merchants as they were at supper, a certain juggler, who, through his diabolical enchantments of art magical, would fetch all kinds of viands and wine from any place they would, and set them upon the table incontinent before them, with many other such like things. The fame of this juggler being much talked of, it chanced that as Master Tyndale heard of it, he desired certain of the merchants, that he might also be present at supper, to see him play his parts. To be brief, the supper was appointed, and the merchants, with Tyndale, were there present. Then the juggler, being required to play his feats, and to show his cunning, after his wonted boldness began to utter all that he could do, but all was in vain. At last, with his labour, sweating, and toiling, when he saw that nothing would go forward, but that all his enchantments were void, he was compelled openly to confess, that there was some man present at supper,

who disturbed and lotted all his doings. So that a man, even; in the martyrs of these our days, cannot lack the miracles of true faith, if miracles were now to be desired.

As concerning the works and books of Tyndale, which extend to a great number, thou wast told before, loving reader! how the printer hereof<sup>1</sup> mindeth, by the Lord's leave, to collect them all in one volume together, and put them out in print. Wherefore it shall not greatly at this time be needful to make any several rehearsal of them. And as touching his translation of the New Testament, because his enemies did so much carp at it, pretending it to be so full of heresies; to answer therefore to their slanderous tongues and lying lips, thou shalt hear and understand what faithful dealing and sincere conscience he used in the same, by the testimony and allegation of his own words, written in his epistle to John Frith, as followeth, "I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give our reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllabic of God's word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches, might be given me," &c.

And as ye have heard Tyndale's own words, thus protesting for himself, now let us hear likewise the faithful testimony of John Frith, for Tyndale his dear companion and brother, thus declaring in his answer to Master More, as followeth:

The Testimony of John Frith, in his Book of the Sacrament,  
concerning William Tyndale.

And Tyndale I trust liveth, well content with such a poor apostle's life as God gave his Son Christ, and his faithful ministers in this world, who is not sure of so many mites, as ye be yearly of pounds, although I am sure that for his learning and judgment in Scripture, he were more worthy to be promoted than all the bishops in England. I received a letter from him, which was written since Christmas, wherein, among other matters, he writeth this: 'I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches, might be given me. Moreover, I take God to witness to my conscience, that I desire of God to myself in this world, no more than that, without which I cannot keep his laws,' &c. Judge, Christian reader, whether these words be not spoken of a faithful, clear, innocent heart. And as for his behaviour, it is such that I am sure no man can reprove him of any sin, howbeit no man is innocent before God, who beholdeth the heart.

Thus much out of Frith. And thus, being about to conclude and finish with the life and story of William Tyndale, it shall be requisite now that the reader do hear something likewise of his supplications made to the king and nobles of the realm, as they are yet extant in his works to be seen, and wor-

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<sup>1</sup> 'The printer hereof,' John Daye.—Ed.

thy in all ages to be marked, the tenor whereof tendeth to this effect as followeth.

Tyndale's Supplication to the King, Nobles, and Subjects of England.<sup>1</sup>

I beseech the king's most noble grace, well to consider all the ways by which the cardinal, and our holy bishops, have led him since he was first king; and to see whereunto all the pride, pomp, and vain boast of the cardinal is come, and how God hath resisted him and our prelates in all their wiles. We, having nothing to do at all, have meddled yet with all matters, and have spent for our prelates' causes more than all Christendom, even unto the utter beggaring of ourselves; and have gotten nothing but rebuke and hate among all nations, and a mock and a scorn of them whom we have most holpen. For the Frenchmen (as the saying is) of late days made a play, or a disguising, at Paris, in which the emperor danced with the pope and the French king, and wearied them; the king of England sitting on a high bench, and looking on. And when it was asked why he danced not, it was answered, that he sat there but to pay the minstrels their wages: as one who should say, we paid for all men's dancing. We monied the emperor openly, and gave the French king double and treble secretly; and to the pope also. Yea, and though Ferdinand had money sent openly to blind the world withal, yet the saying is, through all Dutch-land, that we sent money to the king of Poland, &c.

Furthermore, I beseech his grace also to have mercy on his own soul, and not to suffer Christ and his holy Testament to be persecuted under his name any longer, that the sword of the wrath of God may be put up again, which, for that cause, no doubt, is most chiefly drawn.

Thirdly, my petition is to his grace, to have compassion on his poor subjects, that the realm utterly perish not with the wicked counsel of our pestilent prelates. For if his grace, who is but a man, should die, the lords and commons not knowing who hath most right to enjoy the crown, the realm could not but stand in great danger.

My fourth suit and exhortation is to all the lords temporal of the realm, that they come and fall before the king's grace, and humbly desire his majesty to suffer it to be tried, who of right ought to succeed: and if he or she fail, who next, and who third. And let it be proclaimed openly; and let all the lords temporal be sworn thereto, and all the knights, and squires, and gentlemen, and at his coming, be made like to his, immortal; and follow the example of all your other dear brethren, who choose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Keep your conscience pure and undefiled, and say against that, nothing. Stick at necessary things, and remember the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ, saying, they find none but that will abjure, rather than suffer the extremity. Moreover, the death of them that come again after they have once denied, though it be accepted with God, and all that believe, yet it is not glorious: for the hypocrites say 'He must needs die; denying helpeth not. But, might it have holpen, they would have denied five hundred times; but seeing it would not help them, therefore, of pure pride and mere malice together, they spake with their mouths, what their conscience knoweth false.' If you give yourself, cast yourself, yield yourself, commit yourself, wholly and only to your loving Father; then shall his power be in you, and make you strong; and that so strong, that you shall feel no pain, which should be to

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<sup>1</sup> Ex lib. Tynd., 'Praxi prælatorum.'

another present death: and his Spirit shall speak in you, and teach you what to answer, according to his promise. He shall set out his truth by you wonderfully, and work for you above all that your heart can imagine:<sup>1</sup> yea and you are not yet dead, though the hypocrites all, with all that they can make, have sworn your death. ‘Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem;’ to look for no man’s help, bringeth the help of God to them that seem to be overcome in the eyes of the hypocrites: yea, it shall make God to carry you through thick and thin for his truth’s sake, in spite of all the enemies of his truth. There falleth not a hair, till his hour be come; and when his hour is come, necessity carrieth us hence, though we be not willing. But if we be willing, then have we a reward and thank.

Fear not the threatening therefore, neither be overcome of sweet words, with which twain the hypocrites shall assail you; neither let the persuasions of worldly wisdom bear rule in your heart; no, though they be your friends that counsel you. Let Bilney be a warning to you, let not their visor beguile your eyes. Let not your body faint. He that endureth to the end shall be saved.<sup>2</sup> If the pain be above your strength, remember, ‘whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will give it you.’ And pray to your Father in that name, and he shall ease your pain, or shorten it. The Lord of peace, of hope, and of faith, be with you, Amen.

William Tyndale.

Two have suffered in Antwerp, ‘In die sanctæ crucis,’ unto the great glory of the gospel; four at Risele in Flanders, and at Lucca hath there one at the least suffered; and all the same day. At Rouen in France they persecute, and at Paris are five doctors taken for the gospel. See, you are not alone; be cheerful, and remember that among the hard hearted in England, there is a number reserved by grace; for whose sakes, if need be, you must be ready to suffer. Sir, if you may write, how short soever it be, forget it not, that we may know how it goeth with you, for our heart’s ease. The Lord be yet again with you with all his plenteousness, and fill you that you flow over, Amen.

If, when you have read this, you may send it to Adrian, do, I pray you, that he may know how that our heart is with you.

George Joy at Candlemas, being at Barrois, printed two leaves of Genesis in a great form, and sent one copy to the king, and another to the new queen, with a letter to N., to deliver them; and to purchase license, that he might so go through all the Bible. Out of this is sprung the noise of the new Bible; and out of that is the great seeking for English books at all printers and bookbinders in Antwerp, and for an English priest, that should print.

This chanced the ninth day of May.

Sir, your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not, for her sake, have the glory of God hindered.

William Tyndale.

Another notable and worthy Letter of Master William Tyndale,  
sent to the said John Frith, under the name of Jacob.

The grace of our Saviour Jesus, his patience, meekness, humbleness, circumspection,  
and wisdom, be with your heart, Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> To look for no man’s help, bringeth God’s help.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxii.

Dearly beloved brother Jacob, mine heart's desire in our Saviour Jesus, is, that you arm yourself with patience, and be cold, sober, wise, and circumspect, and that you keep you aloof by the ground, avoiding high questions, that pass the common capacity. But expound the law truly, and open the veil of Moses to condemn all flesh; and prove all men sinners, and all deeds under the law, before mercy have taken away the condemnation thereof, to be sin and damnable; and then, as a faithful minister, set abroad [astir] the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and let the wounded consciences drink of the water of him. And then shall your preaching be with power, and not as the doctrine of the hypocrites; and the Spirit of God shall work with you, and all consciences shall bear record unto you, and feel that it is so. And all doctrine that casteth a mist on those two, to shadow and hide them (I mean the law of God, and mercy of Christ), that resist you with all your power. Sacraments without signification refuse. If they put significations to them, receive them, if you see it may help, though it be not necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Of the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament, meddle as little as you can, that there appear no division among us. Barnes will be hot against you. The Saxons be sore on the affirmative: whether constant or obstinate, I commit it to God. Philip Melancthon is said to be with the French king. There be in Antwerp that say, they saw him come into Paris with a hundred and fifty horses, and that they spake with him. If the Frenchmen receive the word of God, he will plant the affirmative in them.<sup>2</sup> George Joy would have put forth a treatise of the matter, but I have stopped him as yet: what he will do if he get money, I wot not. I believe he would make many reasons little serving to the purpose. My mind is that nothing be put forth till we hear how you shall have sped. I would have the right use preached, and the presence to be an indifferent thing, till the matter might be reasoned in peace, at leisure, of both parties. If you be required, show the phrases of the Scripture, and let them talk what they will: for as to believe that God is everywhere, hurteth no man that worshippeth him nowhere but within in the heart, in spirit and verity; even so, to believe that the body of Christ is everywhere (though it cannot be proved), hurteth no man that worshippeth him nowhere save in the faith of his gospel.<sup>3</sup> You perceive my mind: howbeit if God show you otherwise, it is free for you to do as he moveth you.

I guessed long ago, that God would send a dazing into the head of the spirituality, to catch themselves in their own subtlety, and I trust it is come to pass. And now methinketh I smell a counsel to be taken, little for their profits in time to come. But you must understand, that it is not of a pure heart, and for love of the truth, but to avenge themselves, and to eat the whore's flesh, and to suck the marrow of her bones.<sup>4</sup> Wherefore cleave fast to the rock of the help of God, and commit the end of all things to him: and if God shall call you, that you may then use the wisdom of the worldly, as far as you perceive the glory of God may come thereof, refuse it not; and ever among thrust in, that the Scripture may be in the mother tongue, and learning set up in the universities. But if aught be required contrary to the glory of God, and his Christ, then stand fast, and commit yourself to God, and be not overcome of men's persuasions; which haply shall say, We see no other way to bring in the truth.

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<sup>1</sup> Master Tyndale here beareth with time.

<sup>2</sup> By the affirmative, he meaneth the opinion which M. Luther and the Saxons do hold of the Sacrament.

<sup>3</sup> Master Tyndale again beareth with time.

<sup>4</sup> 'Eating the whore's flesh,' is to spoil the pope's church only for the prey and spoil thereof.

Brother Jacob, beloved in my heart! there liveth not in whom I have so good hope and trust, and in whom my heart rejoiceth, and my soul comforteth herself, as in you; not the thousandth part so much for your learning, and what other gifts else you have, as because you will creep alow by the ground, and walk in those things that the conscience may feel, and not in the imaginations of the brain; in fear, and not in boldness; in open necessary things, and not to pronounce or define of hid secrets, or things that neither help nor hinder, whether it be so or no; in unity, and not in seditious opinions: insomuch that if you be sure you know, yet in things that may abide leisure, you will defer, or say (till others agree with you), 'Methinks the text requireth this sense of understanding.' Yea, and if you be sure that your part be good, and another hold the contrary, yet if it be a thing that maketh no matter, you will laugh and let it pass, and refer the thing to other men, and stick you stiffly and stubbornly in earnest and necessary things. And I trust you be persuaded even so of me: for I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me. Moreover, I take God to record to my conscience, that I desire of God, to myself in this world, no more than that, without which I cannot keep his laws.

Finally, if there were in me any gift that could help at hand, and aid you if need required, I promise you I would not be far off, and commit the end to God. My soul is not faint, though my body be weary. But God hath made me evil favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow witted: your part shall be to supply what lacketh in me; remembering that as lowliness of heart shall make you high with God, even so meekness of words shall make you sink into the hearts of men. Nature giveth age authority, but meekness is the glory of youth, and giveth them honour. Abundance of love maketh me exceed in babbling.

Sir, as concerning purgatory and many other things, if you be demanded, you may say, if you err, the spirituality hath so led you, and that they have taught you to believe as you do. For they preached you all such things out of God's word, and alleged a thousand texts, by reason of which texts you believed as they taught you; but now you find them liars, and that the texts mean no such things, and therefore you can believe them no longer; but are as you were before they taught you, and believe no such thing: howbeit you are ready to believe, if they have any other way to prove it: for without proof you cannot believe them, when you have found them with so many lies, &c. If you perceive wherein we may help, either in being still, or doing somewhat, let us have word, and I will do mine uttermost.

My lord of London hath a servant called John Tisen, with a red beard, and a black-reddish head, and who was once my scholar: he was seen in Antwerp, but came not among the Englishmen. Whether he is gone an ambassador secret, I wot not.

The mighty God of Jacob be with you, to supplant his enemies, and give you the favour of Joseph: and the wisdom and the spirit of Stephen be with your heart, and with your mouth, and teach your lips what they shall say, and how to answer to all things. He is our God, if we despair in ourselves, and trust in him: and his is the glory. Amen.

I hope our redemption is nigh.

William Tyndale.

This letter was written A.D. 1533, in the month of January: which letter, although it do pretend the name of Jacob, yet understand, good reader, that it was written in very deed to John Frith, as is above told thee. For the more proof and evidence hereof, read Frith's book of the sacrament, and there thou shalt find a certain place of this epistle repeated word for word, beginning thus; "I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus to give a reckoning of our doing, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience," &c.; which epistle John Frith himself witnesseth that he received from Tyndale, as in his testimony above appeareth.