

# Martyrdom of Anne Askew

## July 16, 1545 (some say 1546)

*Note from Pastor Kevin Lea: I have included three accounts of the martyrdom of Anne Askew so the reader can fully understand what the Catholics believe about Mass (their perversion of the biblical sacrament of communion) and how it differs from what the Bible teaches and what we believe as true Christians. Those who profess to be true believers in Jesus should be warned about this Catholic heresy.*

*Any professing believer who goes back to the Roman Church's belief that the bread of communion somehow becomes the literal body of Jesus; and that the wine of communion becomes the literal blood of Jesus should consider that they are joining with those who tortured and killed Anne Askew.*

*When you get to the end of this lengthy history lesson, ask yourself who you want to side with; Those like Anne Askew who have a simple faith in Jesus as their Savior, or those (the Catholic Church and her followers) who tortured and burned her to death for believing so. I, for one, will refuse (even if it kills me) to trample on the blood of this precious and courageous saint. I hope the reader will join me.*

~ by Dean Robinson

<http://www.baptistpillar.com/bd0226.htm>



## Anne Askew

*“That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.”*  
(1 Thessalonians 3:3)

We should take note of a very important truth revealed here. The apostle Paul says that of such afflictions we were appointed thereunto. The trials and testings that come into our lives as Christians are not accidents, they are appointments. Sufferings, afflictions, persecutions are not foreign to the believer. This is why Paul says *“that no man should be moved”* (troubled, disturbed). Romans 12:12 tells us we’re to be *“patient in tribulation;”* II Tim. 4:5 says, *“endure afflictions.”* We need not be afraid or surprised of anything that God purposes for us. We can be assured that God knows what He is doing and is in complete control. Such was the case with Anne Askew.

In the year of 1546, a Christian young lady at the tender age of 24-years-old was ruthlessly murdered, burned at the stake. Her name was Anne Askew. She was severely persecuted and imprisoned by King Henry VIII simply because of her stand against the heretical teachings of the Catholic church about the mass.

The Catholics teach that the “mass” is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who is really present on the altar; that He is offered to God for the living and the dead by the priest. They teach that upon the words of consecration by the priest, the wafer and the alcoholic wine literally change into the real flesh and blood of Christ (transubstantiation). They teach that the observance of the mass is a part of their salvation whereby the person actually eats the real flesh of Jesus. This practice and teaching has been traced back as far as the 9th century but it didn’t become official until it was declared a doctrine by Pope Innocent III in 1215. They base this heresy upon a literal interpretation of Matthew 26 and John 6.

History records that Anne Askew was a close friend and companion of the queen. Anne was known for circulating the Bible and other religious books, along with tracts in the palace and around the king’s courtyard. Anne was a godly and spiritual woman; she was a diligent student of the Bible and a sincere woman of prayer. The story is told that Anne’s oldest sister was engaged to marry a man who was a Catholic but the wedding never took place because she died. Therefore Anne was compelled by her father to take her sister’s place and marry the man. To say the least, it was an unhappy marriage for Anne. She eventually was driven out from her home by her husband. One of the accusations he made against her was this: “she (Anne) was the devoutest woman I’ve ever known for she began to pray always at midnight and continued for some hours in that exercise.”

One day while traveling to London, Anne was taken prisoner by a group of priests who were following her. One of the charges brought against her was her rejection of the Catholic mass. She was accused of holding to “the new learning,” that’s what the Catholics called the gospel. While in prison Anne was subjected to all kinds of torture in order to make her incriminate herself and confess the names of other Christians who believed like she did but she told them nothing. She was quoted as saying; “Then they did put me on the rack because I confessed no ladies or gentlemen to be of my opinion; and thereon they kept me a long time and because I lay still and did not cry, they took pains to rack me with their own hands till I was nigh dead.”

The rack was an instrument designed for stretching the body and pulling the body limbs out of socket. It was a large, wooden frame where the victim is laid on his back with his wrists and ankles fastened by cords or rope to two rollers at each end of the frame. These rollers or wheels are moved and turned in opposite directions until the limbs, the body parts are pulled out of their socket. There were other means of torture used in those days: branding parts of the body, severe beating with fists or whips, starvation, pour melted lead in the ears, cut off body parts and limbs (like the tongue), put out the eyes, suspend the body over a slow burning fire, etc.

In each of her questioning by the authorities, Anne exhibited great wisdom in her answers and baffled her enemies. They were amazed by her knowledge of the Word of God and her constant reference to it in answering their questions. On one occasion she was asked why she had said that she would rather read five lines in the Bible than hear five Catholic masses. She said this, “because the one did greatly edify me, and the other did not at all.”

In one of her interrogations she was asked if she had said that priests could not make the body of Christ: “I have read that God made man; but that man can make God, I never yet read, nor I suppose ever shall.”

The story is told that Anne spent her last hours in writing a strong denial of a report which had been passed around that she had recanted, denied the faith. She concluded her account of what really happened with this prayer: “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.” Time and time again while she was being beaten and tortured and put on the rack, the authorities of her day tried to persuade her to renounce and deny her faith in the Lord but she never gave in. Her reply and answer to their threats was that she would rather die than deny her faith. And that’s exactly what it came down to.

On the day of her execution, this dear, godly woman had to be carried in a chair to the stake to be burned because she was unable to walk any longer, due to the fact that she had been tortured so much. When they brought her to the stake, she was fastened to it by a chain in order to hold up her body. It has been recorded that there was such a large gathering of people assembled to watch the burning of Anne Askew that they had to literally push the crowd back far enough in order to make room to burn her at the stake.

At the last moment, a written pardon from the king was offered to her upon the condition that she would recant. Her reply was that she had not come to the stake to deny her Lord and Master. Therefore gunpowder was poured all over her body and then the fire was ordered to be put under her. Her crime was the denial of the mass. One of the last things she wrote she said: “So this is the heresy that I hold and for it must suffer death.” As one writer wrote: “She kept the faith to her God, enduring shame and agony with meek unshaken constancy. O none but Christ, none but Christ could have made the weakness of a delicate woman so strong, the feebleness of a mortal creature so triumphant.”

On that day in 1546, Anne Askew ended her long trial of agonies as she entered the flames of fire as a blessed sacrifice unto God, leaving us an incredible example to follow: that with every last breath God gives us, we should offer our bodies as a sacrifice unto God for His honor and glory. “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*” (Romans 12:1-2) As a child of God, you belong to the Lord; your body is the temple of God for the Holy Spirit indwells every believer. It is our privilege, our opportunity, our duty to glorify and magnify the Lord Jesus Christ in and through our body as “*instruments of righteousness unto God.*”

Philippians 1:20 could be said to be true of not only of the apostle Paul, but also of Anne Askew: “*According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.*” What we must realize and understand is this: the Lord is not so much concerned about whether or not you are willing to die for Him. The question that needs to be answered and determined in our hearts is: are you willing to live for Him?

(The story of Anne Askew was taken from “Memorials of Baptist Martyrs” by J. Newton Brown; “Foxye’s Book of Martyrs” by John Foxye; and “A History of the Baptists” by Thomas Armitage.)

## **The Martyrdom of Anne Askew: Determined To Stand Alone**

[http://teachers.henrico.k12.va.us/freeman/guengerich\\_a/BBL/KingsQueens/Tudor/askew.htm](http://teachers.henrico.k12.va.us/freeman/guengerich_a/BBL/KingsQueens/Tudor/askew.htm)

Before Anne Askew’s executioners could burn her at the stake, they had to tie her to a chair. Askew had been so severely tortured, her legs and arms so twisted upon the rack that she could not stand.

In fact, Askew's interrogators had been sufficiently cruel to warrant that the Constable of the Tower of London, Sir Anthony Kinston—no stranger to witnessing torture—left the chamber disgusted and outraged. He hurried to the court of Henry VIII to beg for justice on her behalf.

Lord Chancellor Thomas Wriothesley and a chap named Richard Rich took up the interrogation personally upon Kinston's desertion. They intensified their efforts, but Wriothesley and Rich could not get Askew to implicate Queen Catherine Parr into a protestant scheme as they had hoped. They had believed that they could embroil Henry's sixth queen in a heretical plot and rid themselves of a woman they suspected was far too sympathetic to the protestant cause, too much a spokeswoman for the Seymour faction of the king's Privy Council. Without Catherine Parr, their own influence would increase. Surely Askew would say what they wanted her to say. Surely they would be able to arrest the queen next.

It may seem odd that the English king would persecute protestants since he was himself protestant. Indeed, Henry broke with the Catholic Church and founded the Anglican faith, but he was quite unlike Martin Luther in his basis for his rift with Rome. Luther tacked his 95 thesis on his Wittenberg Church door because he had 95 points of theological disagreement with the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Henry had precisely zero. Henry, once named by the Pope Leo X himself as "Fidei Defensor"[Defender of the Faith] (1521), looked only to resolve his Great Matter (1533), the difficulty of ridding himself of Catherine of Aragon, his wife of twenty-three years who had only bore him one pitiful daughter so that he could marry the more beautiful—or at least more exotic—Anne Boleyn.

Four wives later (Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard, then Catherine Parr), Henry remained ardently Catholic in his convictions despite heading The Church of England. He would not consent to protestant nonsense, any more than he would endure Catholic monasteries. Anne Askew was a protestant nuisance, a reformer and a preacher. Henry was not about to allow protestant dissidents to voice their freethinking opinions.

But Kinston could not tolerate torture that was not legally applied. Ever since Henry VII had instituted The Star Chamber, the Tower had adhered to certain niceties of torture. One did not hang, draw, and quarter and disembowel men of noble birth. One did not rack a gentlewoman. These acts were saved for lesser folk.

Kinston's appeal to Henry VIII, begging that Askew be tortured like a lady, gained mild success with the king. Henry offered justice: He would allow Askew to recant her radical protestant drivel and she could live.

The problem with Henry's justice was that Anne Askew was not the sort of woman to recant. She was not even the sort to take her husband's surname. She was who she was. She believed what she believed. It was her bad luck that it was the sixteenth century in Tudor England.

When Askew was brought to her execution in Smithfield just outside of the London Wall, she was presented with the king's papers granting mercy should she decide to repent her earlier heretical statements. Nicholas Shaxton, a preacher who had just himself recanted, gave a sermon which Askew interrupted to reiterate her precepts of religious faith, the same argument for which she was about to be executed.

Transubstantiation [belief that the Catholic priest had the power to change the bread into the literal body of Jesus and the wine into the literal blood of Jesus], she argued, was a fallacy. The wine in the communion service did not change into the blood of Christ when blessed by the priest. She had read in the scriptures that God made man but, she dryly pointed out, she had not read that man could make God, nor, did she suppose, would she ever read such a notion in the holy scriptures.

Her point was not well taken. Askew's body was covered with gunpowder and the faggots beneath her broken feet were lit. Thus occurred the martyrdom of Anne Askew (16 July 1545).

Hence was Catherine Parr saved from the machinations of the king's ministers [because Anne Askew did not give her name, even under torture]—at least for the time being. Wriothesley and the king's Bishop Gardiner would have to get at the queen in another way.

Trouble most likely would have come Anne Askew's way with or without Catherine Parr. She was not one to go along with the status quo just because it was the path of least resistance.

Born in Lincolnshire to a wealthy family (1521), Askew objected when her father forced her to marry her dead sister's husband, Thomas Kyme. The two were unsuited for each other both in disposition and in theological belief. Askew refused her husband's name and despite bearing two children, refused to believe that her highest calling was to remain Kyme's wife and her children's mother.

An avid reader, Askew studied the scriptures, memorized entire passages, and attracted a following when she began to teach the radical protestant faith she felt compelled to follow. Unfortunately, her husband was not one of her devotees. He forbade not only her public preaching but all study of the scripture. Askew answered her husband's demands by leaving his "protection" and journeying to London where she quickly gained a still wider following. She may have come in contact with the queen during this time, although if Askew did meet with Catherine Parr, their contact was kept secret, as indeed, were most illegal protestant meetings. They may have known each other prior to this time. At any rate, when Askew was arrested upon her first offense of public preaching, the Queen Catherine Parr was reputed to have sent food and warm clothes to Askew and then helped to arrange her release.

Askew was freed from The Tower of London and told to cease her teaching, ordered to return to Kyme. Askew argued that her husband [who was not a protestant, but a Catholic] was an "unbeliever," and she asked instead for a divorce, citing Corinthians 7:15, a biblical passage which states that Christians need not stay "bound" or "yoked" to unbelievers, that God's peace would be granted to those who pursued devotion to God above a marriage tormented with issues of faith.

The court saw it differently. Askew, who had been forced to marry her sister's widower, no doubt thought that a king who had once chosen to marry his brother's widow, might have some sympathy when the relationship did not work out quite so favorably as all parties had originally hoped. Alas, the king missed the irony in their parallel situations, and Askew had not the clout to declare a new church and order her own divorce [As King Henry VIII had done]. She was sent back to Lincolnshire.

Twice more Askew left her husband to preach in London and twice more was she arrested. After her interrogators determined that she would not confess names of co-conspirators even under duress, she was condemned for heresy and sentenced to death (28 June 1545).

Askew's execution drew a great deal of attention. It was not that protestant executions were out of the norm so much as word of her likely fearlessness in the face of arrant cruelty drew an audience in anticipation of what promised to be a memorable event. They were not disappointed. The spectators repeatedly had to be pushed back from the flames for their own safety as Askew shouted out her faith even as her body went up in flames.

Naturally enough, eyewitness accounts were recorded and surreptitiously distributed. Drafts of these accounts were smuggled out of England to the continent, increasing Askew's already considerable fame. One protestant reformer and publisher, John Bale, printed a version of Askew's death although comparative drafts suggest that Bale edited, manipulated, and supplemented Askew's actual words, which he called her "Examinations" into what he thought was a helpful attempt to make her a weaker, more docile, more acceptably feminine martyr than was her nature.

John Foxe's Book of Martyrs was less mild, more verifiably true to the actual event of Anne Askew's death according to eyewitnesses. Foxe's work, which chronicled the deaths of English Christians who died for their faith from the time of the Roman Empire to the reign of the Tudors, encouraged protestants during the English reformation and was so crucial to the propagation of the faith that in 1570, after protestantism was firmly established (Henry VIII died [1547] and a more continental brand of protestantism established itself within the Church of England), the book was ordered by Parliament to be placed in all Anglican churches. The account of Askew served as a favorite passage. Her story inspired ballads even into the seventeenth century.

--researched by C. F. and written by A. Baylor

Dave Hunt adds the following information in his book, *A Woman Rides the Beast*, where on page 395 he quotes the historian, Will Durant who wrote:

[King] Henry [VIII] was now the sole judge of what, in religion and politics, the English people were to believe. Since his theology was still Catholic in every respect except the papal power, he made it a principle to persecute impartially Protestant critics of Catholic dogma, and Catholic critics of his ecclesiastical supremacy...

Theological bonfires continue to the end of the reign... One [engulfed] a young woman, Anne Askew, who kept to her heresy through five hours of questioning [torture]. "That which you call your god," she said at her trial, "is a piece of bread; for proof thereof let it lie in a box three months, and it will be moldy."

## **In Anne Askew's Own Words Written While in Prison**

(from Foxe's Unabridged Book of Martyrs)

<http://www.exclassics.com/foxe/foxintro.htm>

### **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, as St. John declareth it, and not the stony temple itself.

So that the called the bread is but a remembrance of his death, or a sacrament of thanksgiving for it, temple in 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 is the Moses put over his face before the children of Israel, that they should not see the clearness thereof, 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 the Bible, that God dwelleth in nothing material, 'O king,' saith Daniel, 'be not deceived; 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.'

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

### **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?' I 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.

**1546. The sum of the Condemnation of me Anne Askew at the Guildhall.**

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 stance of 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 [communion wafer and cup – blessed by the priest to become the literal body and blood of Jesus] to be to Christ's body and blood. I said, 'Yea: for the same Son of God that was born be God, of the Virgin Mary, is now glorious in heaven, and will come again from thence at the latter day like as he went up. 2 And as for that ye call your God [the catholic wafer of the mass], 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 moldy, 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 without a quest.

My belief which I wrote to the council was this: That the sacramental concern- bread was left us to be received with thanksgiving, in remembrance of Christ's sacrificial 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 [Then they asked me], whether the bread in the box [that the Catholic priests put the bread of the Mass into in order to give to the people during the Mass] were God or no: I said, 'God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth.' 4 Then they demanded, 'Will you plainly deny Christ to be in the sacrament [bread wafer]?' I answered, that I believe faithfully the eternal Son of God not to dwell there; in witness whereof I recited again the history of Daniel 7, Acts 7, and 17, and Matt, 24, concluding thus : ' I neither wish death, nor yet fear his might; God have the praise thereof with thanks.'

Dan 7:13 "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. (NKJ)

Acts 7:48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: 49 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the Lord, or what is the place of My rest? 50 Has My hand not made all these things?' (NKJ)

Acts 17:24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. (NKJ)

Matt 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (NKJ)

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

I, Anne Askew, of good memory, although God hath given me the bread of touching adversity and the water of trouble, yet not so much as my sins have deserved, desire this to be known unto 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 [she was being accused of being a heretic]. And as concerning the supper of the Lord [She now compares the heresy of the Catholic Mass to what the Bible teaches], 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 Racking of Anne Askew in the Tower

In Anne's Own Words

### 547. 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 glosing 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, charging me upon my obedience, to show unto them, if I knew any man or woman of my sect [asked her to divulge the names of other protestants]. My answer was, that I knew none. Then they asked me of my lady of Suffolk, my lady of accuse Sussex, my lady of Hertford, my lady Denny, and my lady Fitzwilliam. To others - 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 compter [jail], 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 compter, 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: Refuseth 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 gentle- Put on women to be of my opinion, and thereon they kept me a long time; and the rack - 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 [fainted from the pain of torture], 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 Jesus 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 threaten-chancellor sent me word, if I would leave my opinion, I should want nothing, if I would not, I should forthwith go 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!

### 550 Anne Askew and Three Others Burned at the Stake.

Henry 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, 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 so 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. When all things were thus prepared to the fire, Dr. upon the Shaxton, who was then appointed to preach, began his sermon. Anne Askew, hearing and answering again unto him, where he said well, at her he confirmed the same; where he said amiss, “ There,” said she, “she burning, misseth, 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, king’s offering to her the king’s pardon if she would recant; who, refusing 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 luke on 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.