

The words of Menas, in hys tormentes. All the world is not to be weyed with one soule saued.

in his mouth being in the midst of his tormentes. There is nothing in my minde that can be compared to the kingdome of heauen. Neither is all the world, if it were weyed in balance able to be conuerced with the price of one soule. And sayd, who is able to separate vs from the loue of Iesus Christ our Lord: that afflictioe of anguish? And more ouer (said he) I haue thus learned of my Lord & my king, not to feare them which kill the body and haue no power to kill y^e soule, but to feare him rather, who hath power to destroy both bodye and soule in hell fire. To make the story short, after manifold tormentes borne of him, and suffred, when the last sentence of death was vpon him pronounced which was to be beheaded: Menas being then had to the place of execution said: I giue thee thanks my Lord god, which hast so accepted me to be found a partaker of thy precious death, & hast not giuen me to be deuoured of my fierce enemies, but hast made me to remaine constant in thy pure faith vnto this my later end: And so this blessed soldier fighting valiantly vnder the banner of Christ, lost his head, & was his soule. Symeon Metaphraste, tom. 4. In the which autor there foloweth a long narration of the miracles of this holy man, which here for breuityes sake I doe omit.

The prayer of Menas at his death.

Menas martyred.

Symeon Metaphr. tom. 5.

The story of 40. martyrs.

Basilus in a certayne Sermon of 40. Martyrs rehearseth this story not unworthy to be noted. There came (said he) into a certayne place (which place he maketh no mention of) the Emperours Marshall or officer, with the entree which the Emperour had set out against the Christians, that whosoever confessed Christ, should after maner of tormentes suffer death. And first they did proudly laboure certain which should detest & accuse the Christians whom they had found out, or had layde wayte for: vpon this they took the gibbet, the wheele, & the whips were brought forth: At the terrible sight wherof, the hearts of all the beholders did shake & tremble. Some for feare did flee, some did stand in doubt what to do: Certaine were so terrified at the beholding of these engines & tormenting instruments that they denied their faith. Some other began the gamey and for a time did abide the conflict and agony of martyrdom, but vntill they were weary, by the intolerable paines of these tormentes, made they wacke of their consciences, & lost the glory of their confession. Among other of these were at that time yong gentlemen all soldiers, which after the Marshall had shewed the Emperours will, and required of all men the obedience of the same: freely & boldly of their owne accord confessed themselves to be Christians & declared to him their names. The Marshall some what amazed at this their boldnes of speech, stode in doubt, what was best to do. Yet forthwith he goeth about to win them with faire words, aduertising them to consider their youth, neither that they should change a cruel and vntimely death, for as sweete and pleasant life: After that hee promyseth them money, and honorable offices in the Emperours name. But they little esteeming all these thinges breake forth into a long and bolde oration, affirming that they did neither desire life, dignitie, nor money, but onely the celestiaall kingdome of Christ, saying further that they are ready for the loue and faith they haue in god, to indure the afflictioe of the wheele, the croffe, and the fire. The rude Marshall being herewith offended, deuised a newe kinde of punishment. Hee layed out in the middle of the citie a certayne great pond, wherof hee layd full, vpon the cold Northerly winde, for it was in the winter time, wherof hee caused them to be put all that night, but they being merry & comforting one another, received this their appointed punishment, and sayd, as they were putting of their clothes: we put off (said they) now not our clothes, but we put of y^e old man, corrupt with the decept of cocupiscence. we giue thee thanks O Lord, that with this our appeall we may also put of by thy grace, the sinfull man: for by means of the Serpent we once put on sin, and by the meane of Iesus Christ we now put him off. When they had thus said: they were brought naked into y^e place where they felt moste vehement colde: in so much that all the partes of their bodies were stark & stille therewith. Alas as it was daye, they yet hauing breath, were brought into the fire, wherof they were consumed, and their ashes thowne into the flud. By chance there was one of the company more lively, and not so neere dead as the rest, of whom y^e executioners taking pittie, laide vnto his mother standing by, that they would saue his life. Thee shee with her owne handes taking her sonne brought him to the pile of wood where y^e residue of his fellowes (crooked for cold) did lie ready to be burnt, admonished him to accomplish the blessed iourney he had taken in hand with his companions. Basil.

Tormentes brought out to certifie the Christians.

The courageous boldnes, and Christian confession of these 40. martyrs.

Martyrdom and death for Christ, preferred before life and riches of this world.

The Martyrs in a cold ponde all a winters night.

The Martyrs taken out of the pond were cast into the fire. A good mother caring more for the soule then for the body of her sonne. Ex. Basil. in Serm. de 40. Martiribus. Another story of 40.

of Armenia, vnder Licinius, if the story be not the same with this, Niceph. 202 om.

In this fellowship and company of martyrs can not be left out and forgotte the story of Cyrus: This Cyrus was a Christian bozne in Alexandria, which being into Egypt, in the persecution of Dioclesianus, and Maximianus, led a solitary life in Arabia, being much spoken off for his learning and myracles, vnto whose company after a certayne tyme did Ioannes, bozne in the Citie of Edessa, beyond the ryuer Euphrates, ioyne himself, leauing the soldiers life which before that tyme he had exercised. But whilest as yet the same persecution raged in a city in Egypt called Canope, there was cast into prison for the confession of their faith, a certayne godly Christian woman, called Athanasia, and her three daughters, Theodiste, Theodota, and Eudoxia: wyth whom Cyrus was well acquainted. At whose infirmitie he much tearyng accompanied with his brother Iohn, came and visited them for their better confirmation: at which tyme Lyrianns was chiefe captaine and Lieutenant of Egypt, of whose wickednes and crueltie, especially agaynst women and maydens: Athanasius maketh mention in hys Apologies, and in his Epistle to those that lead a solitary life. Thys Cyrus therefore and Ioannes, being accused and apprehended of the Heathen men, as by whose persuasions, the maydens and daughters of Athanasia contumaciously, despised the Rods and the Emperours religion, & could by no meanes be brought to doe sacrifice, were after the publication of their constant confession put to death by the sword. Athanasia also and her three daughters being condemned to death. This history writeth Symeon Metaphrastes

Sebastian being bozne in the part of France called Gallia Narbonensis was a Christian, and was Lieutenant general of the bandward of Dioclesian the Emperour, who also encouraged many martyrs of Christ by his exhortations, vnto constancy, and kept them in the faith. He being therefore accused to the Emperour, was commaunded to be apprehended, and that he should be brought into the open ficke, where of his owne soldiers he was thrust through the body with innumerable arrows, and after that hys body was thowne into a taques or sink. Ambrosius maketh mention of this Sebastian the martyr in his Commentary vpon the 118. Psalme. & Symeon Metaphrastes amongst other Martyrs that suffered with Sebastian numbeth also these following: Nicoltranis wyth Zoe hys wyfe, Tranquillinus wyth Marcia hys wyfe: Tragus Claudius, Castor, Tiburtius, Castallus, Marcus, and Marcellinus wyth other moe.

Basilus in an other Sermon also maketh mention of one Barlaam being a noble and famous Martyr, which aduocated the tormentes of the executioners euen to the point of death, which thing when the tormentors sawe, they brought him and layd him vpon the altar, where they dyd bid to offer sacrifices to their idoles, and put fire & frankincense into his right hand wherof he had yet some strength, thinking that the same his right hand, by the heate & force of the fire, would haue scattered the burning incense vpon the altar and so haue sacrificed. But of that their hope, the persecutors tormentors were disappointed: for the flame eat round about his hand, and the same indured euen as though it had bene covered with hote embers, when Barlaam, recited out of the Psalms thus saying: Blessed is the Lord my God which teacheth my handes to fight.

To this narration of Basilus touching the Martyrdom of Barlaam, we will adde consequently another story of Ambrose: Hee making a certayne exhortation to certayne virgins in the same oration commendeth the marriages of Agricola & Vitalis, who suffered also in the same persecution vnder Dioclesian and Maximian (as they so affirme) at Bononie. This Vitalis was seruant to Agricola, who both together betooke themselves had made a compact to giue their liues wyth other Martyrs for the name of Christ, wherupon Vitalis, being sent before of his maister to offer himselfe to sacrifice, fell first into the hands of persecutors, who laboured about him by all manner of meanes to cause him to deny Christ, which when he would in no case do, but shortly perished in the confession of his faith, they began to exercise him with all kinde of tormentes: So vntill that there was no whole skinned left in all his body. So Vitalis in the midst of the agonie, & painful tormentes, after hee had in a short prayer, commended him selfe to God, gaue vp his life. After him the tormentors set vpon Agricola his Maister, whose vertuous manners & gentle conditions, became they were singularly well liked and known to the enemies, his suffering therefore was the longer deferred. But Agricola not aduancing the long delay and dying of, and prouoking his conquer

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Martyred in a colde ponde at Sebaltia.

Cyrus, Ioannes, Athanasia, with her three daughters. Theodiste, Theodota, Eudoxia, Martyrs.

The louing care of one Christian toward another.

Cyrus to doe others good, lost hys life.

The story of Sebastian Martyr. A worthy example of a captayne to be followed. Marcus, Marcellinus, Nicoltranis with Zoe hys wyfe. Tranquillinus with Marcia hys wyfe. Tragus, Claudius, Castor, Tiburtius, Castellus, Martyrs. Barlaam.

What desire the Heathen had by some meanes to allure the Christians to offer sacrifice.

Agricola, with hys seruant Vitalis, martyrs. Ex. Ambrose in Serm. de Virgines. Vitalis first martyred.