**uthor:** Kempe, Margery, b. ca. 1373.

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¶ Here begynneth a shorte treatyse of contemplacyon taught by our lorde Ihesu cryste / or taken out of the boke of Margerie kempe of lyn*n*.

She desyred many tymes that her hede myght be smyten of with an axe vpon a blocke for the loue of our lorde Ihesu. Thenne sayd oure lorde Ihesu in her mynde. I thanke the doughter that thou woldest dye for my loue / for as often as thou thy*n*kest so thou shalt staue the same mede in heuen / as yf thou suffredest the same dethe / & yet there shall no man slee the.

¶ I assure þe in thy mynde / yf it were possyble me to suffre payne ageyne / as I haue done afore / me were leuer to suffre as moche payne as euer I dyde for thy soule alone / rather than thou sholdest departe fro me euerlastynge.

¶ Doughter thou mayst no better please god than to thy*n*ke contynually in his loue. Than she asked our lorde Ihesu cryste / how she sholde best loue him

¶ And our lorde sayd / haue mynde of thy wyckednes and thynke on my goodnes.

¶ Doughter yf thou were the haberyon / or ye here fastynge brede & water / & yf þu saydeste euery day a thousande pater n*oste*r. thou sholde not please me so well as thou dost whan þu art in scylence / & suffrest me to speke in thy soule

¶ Doughter for to byd many bedes / it is good to them that cannot better do / & yet it is not profyte. But it is a good way towarde perfeccyon. For I tell the doughter / they that be grete fasters / & grete doers of penau*n*ce. they wolde that it shold be holde the beste lyf / And they that gyue them to many deuocyons / they wolde haue that þe best lyfe. And tho that gyuen moche almesse / they wolde that it were holden the best lyfe. And I haue often tolde þe doughter / that thynky*n*ge / wepynge / & hye co*n*templacyon is þe best lyf in erthe / & thou shalt haue more meryte in heuen for one yere thynkynge in thy mynde than for an hondred yere of prayeng wt thy mouth & yet thou wylte not beleue me. for thou wylte byd many bedes.

¶ Doughter yf thou knewe how swete thy loue is to me / þu woldest neuer do other thy*n*ge but loue me with all thy herte.

¶ Dought yf thou wylt be hye wt me in heuen kepe me alway in thy mynde as moche as yu mayst & forgete not me at thy mete / but thynke alway þt I fyt in thy herte & knowe euery thought þt is therin both good and badde.

¶ Doughter I haue suffred many paynes for thy loue / therfore þu hast gret cause to loue me ryght wel for I haue bought thy loue full dere.

¶ Dere lorde I praye the late me neuer haue other Ioye in erth but mournynge & wepynge for thy loue / for me thynketh lorde / though I were in hel / yf I myght wepe there & mourne for thy loue as I do here / hell sholde not noye me / but it sholde be a maner heuen / for thy loue putteth away al maner of drede of our gostly enemye / for I had leuer be there as longe as þu woldest & please the / than to be in this worlde & dysplease the / therfore good lorde as thou wylte so mote it be.

¶ She had grete wonder that our lorde wolde become man / & suffre so greuous paynes for her þt was so vnkynde a creature to hym. And than wt grete wepy*n*ge she asked our lorde Ih*es*u how she myghte beste please hy*m*. & he answered to her soule saynge doughter haue mynde of thy wyckednes & thynke on my goodnes / than she prayed many tymes & often these wordes. Lorde for thy goodnes haue merci on my grete wyckednes / as certeynly as I was neuer so wycked as þu arte good ne neuer may be thoughe I wolde. for yu arte so good þt þu mayst no better be & therfore it is gret wonder þt euer ony man sholde be departed fro the without ende.

¶ Whan she sawe the crucyfyxe / or yf she sawe a man had a wou*n*de or a best. Or yf a man bete a childe afore her / or smote an hors / or an other beste wt a whype / yf she myght se it or here it. she thought she sawe our lorde beten or wou*n*ded lyke as she sawe in the man or in the beste.

¶ The more she encreased in loue & in deuocyon / the more she encreased in sorowe & contrycyon / in lownesse & mekenesse / & in holy drede of our lorde Ihesu & in knowlege of her owne freylte. So that yf she sawe ony creature be punysshed / or sharpely chastysed / she wolde thynke that she had ben more worthy to be chastysed than þt creature was for her vnkyndnes ayenst god. Than wolde she wepe for her owne synne. & for compassyon of that creature.

¶ In noo thynge that þu doost or sayest doughter þu mayst noo better please god / than beleue that he loueth the. For yf it were possyble yt I myght wepe wt the. I wolde wepe with the for the compassyon þt I haue of the.

¶ Our mercyfull lorde Ihesu cryste drewe this creture vnto his loue / & to the mynde of his passyon / that myght not endure to beholde a lepre / or an other seke man / specyally yf he had ony wou*n*des apperynge on hym. Soo she wepte as yf she had seen our lorde Ihesu with his woundes bledy*n*ge: & so she dyde in the syght of the soule / for thrugh the beholdynge of the seke man / her mynde was all rauysshed in to our lorde Ihesu / that she had grete mournynge and sorowy*n*ge þt she myght not kysse þe lepre whan she met them in the way for the loue of our lorde whiche was all contrarye to her desposycyon in the yeres of her youthe & prosperyte / for than she abhorred them moost.

¶ Doughter þu haste desyred in thy mynde to haue many preestes in the towne of lyn*n* / that myght sy*n*ge & rede nyght and day for to serue me / worshyp me / & prayse me / and thanke me for the goodnes þt I have do to the in erth / & therfore doughter I promyse the thou shalt haue mede & rewarde in heuen for the good wylles & good desyres / as yf thou haddest done them in dede.

¶ Doughter þu shalte haue as grete mede & as grete rewarde with me in heuen. for thy good seruyce & thy good dedes that thou haste do in thy mynde as yf thou haddest do þe same with thy bodely wyttes without forth.

¶ And doughter I thanke the / for the charyte that thou haste to all lecherous men & wy*m*men / for thou prayest for them & wepest for them many atere desyrynge þt it sholde delyuer them out of synne / & be as gracyous to them as I was to Mary maudeleyne / þt they myght haue as moche grace to loue me as Mary maudeleyne had / & with this condyc*y*on þu woldest þt eueryche of them sholde haue .xx. li. a yere to loue & prayse me / & doughter this grete charyte whiche þu hast to them in thy prayer pleaseth me ryght well / And doughter also I thanke the for þe charyte whiche þu hast in thy prayer whan þu prayest for all Iewes & sarasyns / & al hethen people þt they sholde come to crysten fayth / þt my name myght be magnyfyed in them Furthermore doughter I thanke the for general charyte þt þu hast to al people that be now in this worlde / & to al tho that. are to come vnto the worldes ende / þt thou woldest be hacked as smalle as flesshe to the potte for theyr loue / soo þt I wolde by thy deth saue them all fro dampnac*y*on yf it pleased me. And therfore doughter / for all these good wylles and desyres thou shalt haue ful mede & rewarde in heuen byleue it ryght wel & doute neuer a dele.

¶ She sayd good lorde I wolde be layde naked vpon an hurdel for thy loue al men to wonder on me & to cast fylth & dyrt on me: & be drawen fro town to towne euery day my lyfe tyme yf þu were pleased therby / & no ma*n*nes soule hyndred / thy wyll be fulfylled and not myne.

¶ Doughters as oftentymes as þu sayest or thy*n*kest worshypped be all the holy places in Iherusalem where cryst suffre bytter payne & passyon in thou shalt haue haue the same pardon as yf þu were wt thy bodely presence / both to thy selfe & to al the þt thou wylt gyue to.

¶ The same pardon þt was grau*n*ted the afore tyme. it was confermed on saynt Nycolas daye / þt is to say / playne remyssyon / & it is not only grau*n*ted to þe / but also to all tho þt beleue / & to all tho þt shall beleue vnto the worldes ende / that god loueth þe / & shall thanke god for the yf they wyl forsake theyr synne / & be in full wyll no more to tourne agayne therto. But be sorye & heuy for þt they haue done & wyll do due penaunce therefore / they shall haue the same pardon þt is grau*n*ted to thy selfe. & þt is all þe pardon þt is in Ier*usa*l*e*m / as was grau*n*ted þe whan þu were at Rafnys.

¶ That day that she suffred noo trybulacyon for oure lordes sake she was not mery ne gladde / as that daye whan she suffred trybulacyon.

¶ Pacyence is more worthe than myracles doyng

¶ Doughter it is more plesure to me þt thou suffre despytes / scornes / shames / & repreues / wro*n*ges / dyseases / than yf thyne hede were stryken thre tymes a day euery day in seuen yere.

¶ Lorde for thy grete payne haue mercy on my lytell payne.

¶ Whan she was in grete trouble / our lorde sayd / doughter I must nedes comforte þe. for now þu hast þe ryght way to heuen / By this way came I & all my dyscyples / for now þu shalt know þe better what sorowe & shame I suffred for thy loue / & þu shalte haue the more compassyon whan thou thynkest on my passyon.

¶ O my dere worthy lorde: these graces þu sholdest shewe to relygyous men & to prestes.

¶ Our lorde sayd to her ayen / nay nay doughter / for þt I loue best þt they loue not / & þt is shames / repreues / scornes / & despytes of þe people / & therfore they shall not haue this grace / for doughter he that dredeth þe shames of this worlde may not parfyghtly loue god.

¶ Here endeth a shorte treatyse called Margerie kempe de Lyn*n*. Enprynted in Fletestrete by Wynkyn de worde.

[Figure: ]