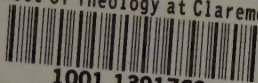


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# THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING and related treatises

EDITED BY PHYLLIS HODGSON

102

departed fro ye ne: pat ȝ  
speke of in ȝi litil pistle  
of ȝiey. ȝis is ȝe cloude  
of unknowynge: ȝis is pat  
ȝue loue put in ȝurete of  
ȝpȝit: ȝis is ȝe aſke of ȝ  
teſtament: ȝis is demis be  
unite: ȝis wiſdom & ȝis  
dewy: ȝis lȝty deſknes  
& ȝis unknowyn lūnyges

ȝis is it pat ſetty ȝee in  
ſilence as wele ȝio ȝouy  
tes as ȝio wordes. ȝis  
makty ȝi ȝiey ful ſchorte

In ȝis ȝou aȝte leymid  
to forſake ȝe world and  
to diſpiſe it. And ȝ' more  
is: In ȝis ȝou aȝte leymid  
to forſake & diſpiſe ȝm on  
ne ſelf aſter ȝe techis of

*luc<sup>9</sup>* ȝiſt in ȝe goſpel ſetyn  
ȝus. ȝu quis vult venire  
poſt me abneget ſemetym  
collat crucem ſuam & ſequat  
me. ȝat is: who ſo wole to

*a* me aſter me late hym beſe  
ȝis ȝos & folow me. As if  
he ſeide ȝus to ȝm vnderſta  
dyng accordyng to oure mat  
who ſo wil come meekly not  
wy me bot aſter me to ȝe  
blis of heuē or to ȝe moune

of pſectiō. for ȝiſte ȝede be  
fore biſkynde & we comy aſ  
ter biſſace. ȝis bynde is  
more wouy ȝen ȝace & ȝee  
is more wouy ȝen oure byn  
de. And in ȝis he latey us  
weȝyn fully: ȝat we moue  
on no wiſe folow hym to ȝe  
moune of pſectiō: as it ſal  
ly to be in ȝe vſe of ȝis wek.  
Bot ȝif it be ony ſciēd & led  
by ȝace: and ȝat is ful  
ſoye. For wite ȝou ȝat wel  
& alle heſe vnto ȝee: ȝat  
ȝis wyȝyng ſcholen ouſ  
ȝede or heſe: ȝat ȝof al ȝ  
biſ ȝee ȝus pleyuſly & ȝus  
boofſſy ſet ȝee to ȝis wek:  
Neuȝeles ȝit ȝe ſele veȝehy  
wy ouȝm ȝiſt or ſonte: ȝat  
almyȝty god wy ȝis ȝace  
behouey alȝates be ȝe cheef  
ſteȝy & worchei: ouȝer wy  
mene or wy ouȝm. And ȝ'  
onhy or any of heſe vnto ȝee  
bot ȝe conſent and ſuffey  
ȝaȝyng: ȝat ȝis conſent  
& ȝis ſuffyng: ſchal be in  
ȝe tyme of ȝis wek actu  
ely diſpoſid & abhē to ȝis  
wek in ȝurete of ȝpȝit: &  
ſomehy ſome up to ȝi ſouey

*b* & late hy forſake hym ſelf



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# Analecta Cartusiana

EDITOR

DR. JAMES HOGG

3

## The Cloud of Unknowing and related treatises

EDITED BY

PHYLLIS HODGSON

1982

INSTITUT FÜR ANGLISTIK UND AMERIKANISTIK  
UNIVERSITÄT SALZBURG  
A-5020 SALZBURG  
AUSTRIA





# The Cloud of Unknowing

AND RELATED TREATISES ON  
CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

The Book of Privy Counselling

The Epistle of Prayer

The Epistle of Discretion

Hid Divinity

Benjamin Minor, The Study of Wisdom

Of Discerning of Spirits

EDITED FROM THE MANUSCRIPTS BY

PHYLLIS HODGSON

EXETER

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1982

The Cloud  
of Unknowing

THE CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

The Book of Peter Damian

The Spirit of Prayer

The Spirit of Prayer

The Spirit of Prayer

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1981

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and its related treatises began half a century ago. The present new edition has evolved gradually from two dissertations originally presented to the University of Oxford in supplication for the Degrees of Bachelor of Letters and Doctor of Philosophy, their subsequent publication in a modified form by the Early English Text Society (O.S. 218 [1944] and O.S. 231 [1955], with later reprints), and from a continuous revision of introductory matter and commentary in the light of the editor's own further investigations and of the published research of the growing number of interested scholars at home and abroad.

The influence of those who originally inspired the undertaking, especially of Abbot Justin McCann and Miss Dorothy Everett, still remains strong. All the many other acknowledgements made with gratitude in the Prefaces to the earlier editions are likewise still valid.

In recent years further indebtedness has been incurred. The editor thanks all those who have generously permitted her to see the results of their research before publication—particularly Father James Walsh and The Revd. Professor Edmund Colledge for the introduction to their edition of the Latin version of *The Cloud* in Pembroke College MS. 221; Professor A. J. Bliss and Professor S. S. Hussey for the gift of their typescript editions of the text of Book I and Book II of Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*; and Professor Valerie Lagorio for her extensive Bibliography of *The Cloud* author. She is also much beholden to Professor Lagorio for her strong encouragement and effective help towards publication.

Publication in 1982 was made possible by the good offices of the editor of the *Analecta Cartusiana*, a series founded in 1970 for the study of Carthusian history and spirituality, which, though not an official organ of the Order itself, has managed to survive, at least partially, through the generosity of the Reverend Father of the Grande Chartreuse and a number of priors of individual Charterhouses. She expressly thanks its editor, Dr James Hogg, for his ready help and guidance. She also thanks Miss K. Rosemary Barnes for sustained and constructive help with the reading of the proofs in the final stages before publication.

PHYLLIS HODGSON.





# CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
ABBREVIATIONS . . . . .	i
FOREWORD . . . . .	v
INTRODUCTION	
THE AUTHOR AND HIS WORKS	
(a) <i>THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR</i> . . . . .	ix
(b) <i>THE CANON OF HIS WORKS</i> . . . . .	xii
(c) <i>THE MANUSCRIPTS</i> . . . . .	xiv
DOCTRINE AND COUNSEL . . . . .	xxi
THE HERITAGE FROM TRADITION	
SOURCES AND PRESENTATION . . . . .	xxix
CONTEMPLATION . . . . .	xxx
<i>The Mystic Way</i> . . . . .	xxxii
THE MEDIEVAL CONCEPT OF THE NATURE OF MAN . . . . .	xxxv
<i>Soul, Spirit</i> . . . . .	xxxv
<i>Mind</i> . . . . .	xxxvi
<i>Reason</i> . . . . .	xxxvii
<i>Imagination</i> . . . . .	xxxviii
<i>Will</i> . . . . .	xxxviii
<i>Love</i> . . . . .	xxxix
THE DIONYSIAN TRADITION AND THE PRAYER OF LOVE	
WITHOUT KNOWING . . . . .	xli
INDIVIDUALITY IN PRESENTATION . . . . .	l
POSTSCRIPT . . . . .	lvii
THE TREATISES	
THE TEXT AND ITS FOOTNOTES . . . . .	lxi
<b>þe Clowde of Vnknowyng</b> . . . . .	1
<b>þe Book of Priue Counseling</b> . . . . .	75
<b>A Pistle of Preier</b> . . . . .	101
<b>A Pistle of Discrecioun of Stirings</b> . . . . .	109
<b>Deonise Hid Diuinite</b> . . . . .	119
<b>A Tretyse of þe Stodye of Wysdome þat men clepen</b> <b>Beniamyn</b> . . . . .	129
<b>A Tretis of Discrecyon of Spirites</b> . . . . .	147
COMMENTARY . . . . .	155
GLOSSARY . . . . .	203
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	229



## ABBREVIATIONS

### SIGLA OF MANUSCRIPTS QUOTED

#### BRITISH LIBRARY

Har <sup>1</sup>	Harleian 674.
Har <sup>2</sup>	Harleian 2373.
Ro <sup>1</sup>	Royal C xxvi.
Ro <sup>3</sup>	Royal D v.
Ar	Arundel 286.
Pw	Represented by Pepwell's printed edition.

#### UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE

Kk	Kk. vi. 26.
CP	Ff. vi. 31.
Pem	Pembroke College 221, Cambridge (Latin version).

#### BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD

Bo	Bodleian 576.
Do	Douce 262.
U	University College.

#### ST. HUGH'S CHARTERHOUSE, SUSSEX

Pa	Parkminster, D 176.
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Other Sigla, *see Introd.*, pp. xv-xvi.

### PRINTED WORKS

<i>A. V.</i>	Authorized Version.
<i>Benj. Maj.</i>	<i>Benjamin Major</i> (Latin).
<i>Benj. Min.</i>	<i>Benjamin Minor</i> (Latin).
<i>B. M.</i>	<i>Benjamin Minor</i> (Middle English translation).
<i>Col.</i>	Colossians.
<i>Com.</i>	<i>Commentary</i> .
<i>Cor.</i>	Corinthians.
<i>D.</i>	Glossary reference to <i>A Pistle of Discrecioun of Stirings</i> .
<i>D. H. D.</i>	Early English Text Society edition of <i>Deonise Hid Diuinite</i> .
<i>Deut.</i>	Deuteronomy.
<i>De VII Itin.</i>	<i>De Septem Itineribus Aeternitatis</i> of Rudolph of Biberach.
„ „ I.i. etc.	De primo itinere. Distinctio i, etc.
<i>De Trin.</i>	<i>De Trinitate</i> of St. Augustine of Hippo.
<i>E. E. T. S.</i>	Early English Text Society edition (O.S. Original Series).
<i>Enarr. in Ps.</i>	<i>Enarrationes in Psalmos</i> of St. Augustine.
<i>Ephes.</i>	Ephesians.
<i>Exod.</i>	Exodus.
<i>Ezech.</i>	Ezechiel.
<i>FCEMN.</i>	<i>14th-Century English Mystics Newsletter</i> .

Gal.	Galatians.
Gen.	Genesis.
Grausem	'Le <i>De Contemplatione</i> du Chartreux Guigues Du Pont'.
Heb.	Hebrews.
H.D.	Glossary reference to <i>Hid Diuinite</i> .
Hom. in Ezech.	<i>Homiliarium In Ezechielem Libri</i> of St. Gregory the Great.
Hos.	Hosea.
In Cant.	<i>Sermones in Cantica Canticorum</i> of St. Bernard of Clairvaux.
Introd.	<i>Introduction</i> .
Isa.	Isaiah.
Jas.	James.
Jer.	Jeremiah.
Kirch.	C. Kirchberger <i>Richard of St. Victor</i> .
Ladder	<i>A Ladder of Foure Ronges</i> .
Matt.	Matthew.
Mor.	<i>Moralium Libri</i> (Commentary on Job) of St. Gregory.
O.E.D.	Oxford English Dictionary.
P.	Glossary reference to <i>A Pistle of Preier</i> .
P.C.	Glossary reference to <i>pe Book of Priue Counseling</i> .
Pet.	Peter.
P.G.	Patrologiae cursus completus series Graeca.
P.L.	Patrologiae cursus completus series Latina.
Phil.	Philippians.
Priue Counseling	<i>The Book of Priue Counseling</i> .
Prov.	Proverbs.
Ps.	Psalms.
R.A.M.	<i>Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique</i> .
Rev.	Revelation.
Rolt	C. E. Rolt, <i>Dionysius the Areopagite</i> .
Rom.	Romans.
S.	Glossary reference to <i>A Tretis of Discrecyon of Spirites</i> .
Scala	<i>Scala Claustralium</i> of Guigo II.
Scale	Walter Hilton, <i>Scale of Perfection</i> . (Often quoted from MS. Harleian 6579.)
Song of Sol.	Canticles.
Spirites	<i>A Tretis of Discrecyon of Spirites</i> .
S.T.	<i>Summa Theologica</i> of St. Thomas Aquinas.
„ Ia IIae	Prima Secundae; the first section of Part II.
„ q. =	quaestio, question; a. = article; ad = reply to.
Stirings	<i>A Pistle of Discrecioun of Stirings</i> .
Thess.	Thessalonians.
Tim.	Timothy.
Viae Sion	<i>Viae Sion lugent</i> of Hugh of Balma.
„ I i etc.	Caput Primum, Particula I etc.
Vulg.	Vulgate.
Wisd. of Sol.	Book of Wisdom.
Zech.	Zechariah.

## MISCELLANEOUS

add.	added	<i>n.</i>	note.
<i>c.</i>	circa.	O.E.	Old English
<i>c.</i> , cap.	caput, capitulum.	O.Fr.	Old French.
cf.	compare.	O.N.	Old Norse.
ch(s)	chapter(s).	op. cit.	in the work quoted.
col.	column.	p., pp.	page, pages.
d.	died.	<i>passim</i>	in every part.
ed.	edited by.	r.; v.	recto; verso.
et seq.	and what follows.	t.	toma.
f.	folio.	<i>trs.</i>	transpose.
ibid.	in the same place.	vol.	volume.
L.	Latin.	†	indicates a group of related MSS.
lit.	literally.	<	originated from.
loc. cit.	in place quoted.	>	developed into.
M.E.	Middle English.	20/4 <sup>63</sup> etc.	number of page, line and its footnote.
MS(S).	Manuscript(s).		

## GLOSSARY

<i>acc.</i>	accusative.	<i>possess.</i>	possessive.
<i>adj.</i>	adjective.	<i>pp.</i>	past participle.
<i>adv.</i>	adverb.	<i>pr. p.</i>	present participle.
<i>adv. gen.</i>	adverbial genitive.	<i>pr.</i>	present.
<i>comp.</i>	comparative.	<i>pr. 3 s.</i>	third person singular present indicative.
<i>conj.</i>	conjunction.	<i>pt.</i>	past.
<i>dat.</i>	dative.	<i>pt. 3 s.</i>	third person singular past indicative.
<i>f.</i>	feminine.	<i>prep.</i>	preposition.
<i>imp.</i>	imperative.	<i>pron.</i>	pronoun.
<i>impers.</i>	impersonal.	<i>refl.</i>	reflexive.
<i>int.</i>	interjection.	<i>s.</i>	singular.
<i>interr.</i>	interrogative.	<i>subj.</i>	subjunctive.
<i>m.</i>	masculine.	<i>sup.</i>	superlative.
<i>n.</i>	noun.	<i>v.</i>	infinitive of verb.
<i>pass.</i>	passive.		
<i>pl.</i>	plural.		





## FOREWORD

### *This edition and its predecessors*

This is the first collection of the Middle English texts of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and the six shorter treatises, associated with it in early manuscripts and akin in themes and presentation. These Middle English texts have already appeared among the publications of The Early English Text Society:

O.S. No. 218, 1944  
(Reprinted 1958, 1973)

*The Cloud of Unknowing* and *The Book of Privy Counselling*, ed. Phyllis Hodgson.

O.S. No. 231, 1955  
(Reprinted 1958)

*Deonise Hid Diuinite*, ed. Phyllis Hodgson. (This volume contains two short original works, *A Pistle of Preier*, *A Pistle of Discrecioun of Stirings* and three translations from the Latin. *Deonise Hid Diuinite* is a translation of the *Mystica Theologia* of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *A Tretyse of þe Stodye of Wysdome þat Men Clepen Beniamyn* an abridged paraphrase of Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin Minor*, *A Tretis of Discrecyon of Spirites* drawn mainly from St. Bernard's *Sermones De Diversis* xxiii and xxiv.)

The E.E.T.S. editions were based on a collation of all the manuscripts then known. MS. 122, Trinity College, Dublin, unfortunately, was discovered too late for full comparison. The accompanying apparatus (O.S. No. 218, pp. i-xix; O.S. No. 231, pp. ix-xviii) included an ample account of the manuscripts' format, handwriting and probable date, and also a list of the contents of each. Footnotes to the text recorded the variant readings of the important manuscripts as well as a representative selection from versions considered inferior. The Introductions discussed the relationship of the manuscripts and the language of the more important, the author and the canon of his works, his subject-matter and source material. At least thirty-four manuscripts with versions of one or more of these treatises are extant (*see below*).<sup>1</sup> It was

<sup>1</sup> See *Introd.*, pp. xiv-xvi.

impossible to establish genetic relationship from the variant readings. Though some major groupings were persistent, the history of transmission could not be recovered because of the great number of random agreements, the result probably most often of coincidence, sometimes of the contamination caused by lateral conflation. There have been progressive modernizations, at least two major recensions, and in some manuscripts a tendency towards free paraphrase.

Part I (c) below lists the manuscripts with their sigla. Only Har<sup>1</sup> and Kk contain all seven treatises, though Har<sup>2</sup>, obviously close to Kk, omits only *Deonise Hid Diuinite*. Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> were proved to be three of the most reliable texts. Har<sup>1</sup> is by some years the earliest, and its language is among the most consistent. To repeat the lengthy and detailed discussion already published would be supererogatory. Har<sup>1</sup> again provides the basic text here; suggested emendations are almost always drawn from the collation recorded in the two E.E.T.S. editions.

In the present edition the apparatus to the treatises has been reworked, and re-estimated. It deals afresh with the author, his subject-matter and his traditional heritage. Textual notes have been greatly reduced. The related treatises are reviewed as a corpus.

In the last few decades *The Cloud of Unknowing* has become widely known through modernizations and translations into foreign languages. Such editions, however, tend to paraphrase, and thus sacrifice finer points of style and often part of the significance. If a version in current spelling remains close to the original, the difficult passages remain obscure. The editor is convinced that it is better to retain the works in their Middle English form. Her problem has been to marshal information for the non-linguist interested in mystical prayer as well as for the student of Middle English literature, who might be only superficially and indirectly acquainted with the concepts of mysticism and theology. For both it is imperative to read what the fourteenth-century author actually wrote. The *Glossary* is therefore extensive, and is often supplemented in the *Introduction* and *Commentary*. These should be consulted, for vocabulary, which might look familiar and in its context seems to make sense, often bears a different meaning from that of today. Moreover, many images, words, and phrases have gathered complex overtones through traditional associations, or are given a special load to bear in *The Cloud* author's idiosyncratic teaching.

## INTRODUCTION



## THE AUTHOR AND HIS WORKS

### (a) *THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR*

Recent and far-reaching research has increased the general understanding of *The Cloud of Unknowing* and *The Book of Priue Counseling*, but not yet produced the final solution to the problem of authorship. All still remains conjecture. For the present editor, their author retains the anonymity which, she suspects, he studiously sought and his contemporaries respected. Unless serendipity brings to light, either in England or abroad, some conclusive contemporary record which survived the Dissolution, the contents and style of the writings attributable to him must still provide the clues to authorship. With such material, however, only widely comparative investigations, computer-work comprehensive in each analysis, might provide a definitive assessment of individuality in composition.

The ascription of *The Cloud* to Walter Hilton, first made in the late fifteenth century by the Carthusian, James Greenhalgh, still has its adherents, though so far it has not been supported by decisive evidence. Hilton's writings, indeed, often provide an illuminating commentary on topics common to them and more sketchily treated in *The Cloud*. It is not relevant here to show that sometimes the suppositions of *The Cloud* and *The Scale of Perfection* differ significantly. The *Bibliography* contains many articles already written on that argument.<sup>1</sup> It is assumed rather that there were two comparable writers belonging to some district in the central area of the north-east Midlands in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, possibly trained and connected with the same religious centre. Scores of parallel passages make it evident that one, or both, knew the other's work. Towards the end of *Angels' Song* Hilton appears to give warning against the danger inherent in one of *The Cloud's* dominant themes, the 'nakyd mynd' of God. Both writers were experienced spiritual directors, providing guidance mainly for aspirants to the contemplative life. Their lucid instructions prove them both adept in psychological analysis, pathfinders in introspection and recollection, men of learning, creatively eclectic in their use of their common traditional sources, displaying richly those qualities for which medieval English mystical prose is renowned, e.g. practical moderation in their counsel about physical asceticism, a sensitive understanding and a sympathy combined with down-to-earth outspokenness, a mastery of pithy and at times lofty eloquence in the vernacular. About Hilton there are glimmerings of

<sup>1</sup> See Section III.

information in contemporary documents, and, though unproven, these are possibly the best indication so far as to the kind of career the author of *The Cloud* might have pursued.<sup>2</sup>

*The Cloud* author barely mentions his own state and degree of life, and those isolated references are veiled and inconclusive, and at times occur in uncertain textual readings. Nevertheless, his obvious training in the Arts, and above all his unobtrusive and completely assimilated scholarship in Theology suggest that he was a graduate, either of Oxford, or, like Hilton, of Cambridge. Like a priest, he gives the blessing at the end of *The Cloud*, *Preier and Discrecion of Stirings*, whether ordained to the priesthood when already professed as a religious, or simply to minister as a secular parish priest. He appears to live as a recluse (ch. 23, 31/29-32), possibly after some experience of communal life (see ch. 53). In the dubious readings of *The Cloud* ch. 10 (see 20/4<sup>63</sup>) he seems to dissociate himself from the bond by vow to some religious order. In *Stirings* (114/9 et seq.) he vehemently urges his disciple against any undertaking of abnormal ascetic discipline as regards 'silence & spekyng, fastyng & etyng, onlines & companye, comoun cloþing of Cristen mens religion and singulere abites of diuerse & deuised broþerhedes'. He is silent concerning any vow of Obedience or the regular observance of the Divine Office. Rather, as he repeatedly declares, conformity should always be to 'þe statute & þe ordinance of alle Holy Chirche'. He definitely associates himself with those living the contemplative life. It is possible that there is some truth in his self-comparison to Bezeleel, ch. 73, but this is in a passage too closely derivative to be unequivocally acceptable as confession (see *Introd.*, pp. xxxiii-xxxiv). Yet he speaks with the conviction of one who had tried the intellectual discipline and technique he insists on and found it to work, and with the fervour of one who had attained at least some experience of Union with God in this special prayer of 'Love without knowing'.

<sup>2</sup> According to A. B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500* (Cambridge, 1963), Hilton belonged to Cambridge University and could have been that Walter de Hilton B.C.L. of the Lincoln diocese included in a university roll of papal graces and granted the reservation of a canonry and prebend of Abergwili, 28th January 1371, and who in 1375 was probably practising in the Ely consistory.

Two manuscripts of Hilton's own works give him a 'mastership' in Canon Law, probably studied after ordination to priesthood. In his *Epistola ad quemdam seculo enunciare volentem*, he advised a priest who was also a canon lawyer to give up his legal work and follow his vocation as he himself had done. From *De Imagine Peccati* and *De Utilitate et Prerogatiuis Religionis* it has been deduced that Hilton himself tried the solitary life of a hermit, c. 1384, but found it unsatisfactory. In *De Utilitate* he encouraged Adam Horsley to persevere in his intention to leave the Exchequer and enter religion as a Carthusian of Beauvale Priory near Nottingham, which Horsley did, c. 1383-85. Probably soon afterwards Hilton himself became an Augustinian Canon at the Priory of St. Peter, Thurgarton, near Southwell, Notts. There he died on the Vigil of the Feast of the Annunciation, 24th March 1396. See Joy Russell Smith, 'In Defence of the Veneration of Images', *Dominican Studies*, vol. vii (1954).



There is positive evidence, however, for some close relationship with the contemplative Carthusian Order, which considerably influenced not only the contents of *The Cloud* but also the transmission of its text. Living an eremitical life in their individual 'houses', (cots), and inspired by the ideal of the Desert Fathers, the Carthusian monks had long sought the solitude of spirit and practised the affective prayer urged by this Middle English writer. *The Cloud's* prayer of 'aspirations'<sup>3</sup> had been recommended in the ideal set out in the pioneer *Consuetudines* of Guigo I,<sup>4</sup> fifth prior of the Grande Chartreuse, possibly in 1127. *The Cloud's* definition of Contemplation and the stages towards it closely follows that of the ninth prior, Guigo II (c. 1173-80), in his *Scala Claustralium*, c. 1.<sup>5</sup> *The Cloud's* general background is drawn from the standard mystical treatises of the Fathers and Doctors of the Western Church, which would be available in university and most monastic libraries; its central theme, derived ultimately from the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, is too close, both in its selection of ideas and actual expression,<sup>6</sup> to the presentation by a favourite Carthusian writer, Hugh of Balma (Prior of Chartreuse de Meijorat en Bresse 1289-1304), to be mere coincidence. Both writers were similarly preoccupied with the same kind of transcendental experience of Union with God above and beyond reason. The affinity between the spiritual tone of *The Cloud* and the emotional and intellectual austerity of the Carthusian vocation was so great that it is hardly surprising that that Order was foremost in its transmission of the Middle English text.

No official contemporary document, however, has come to light in which the Order claimed him. James Greenhalgh, Carthusian of Sheen and busy student of mystical theology, who annotated *Cloud* MSS. Harleian 2373 and Pembroke 221, ascribed *The Cloud* to Walter Hilton, who ended his days as an Augustinian Canon. On the other hand Richard Methley of Mount Grace, who translated the Pembroke text, probably thought that *The Cloud* was a Carthusian work. At the end of the first chapter of this late fifteenth-century Latin translation (Pem, f. 4b) a note reads: 'Hoc loco attende, lector, quod communis status est laycorum, specialis clericorum, vel religiosorum, singularis solitariorum, scilicet, heremitarum anachoritarum, vel precipue cartusiensium, unde videtur quod cuidam carthusiensi hic liber compositus fuit, quia . . .

<sup>3</sup> See 10/6 et. seq., 12/21-30, *Preier* 105/28-37.

<sup>4</sup> See *Com.* 9/25.

<sup>5</sup> See *Com.* 39/24-25, *Introd.*, p. xxxi<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See *Introd.*, pp. xlv-xlix.



non solent moderni de approbata religione exire ad heremum vt antiquitus sed ad Cartusienses'.

All the arguments for and against Carthusian authorship have so far been inconclusive, and can be countered. In favour, it has been pointed out<sup>7</sup> that anonymity was traditional in the Order. Moreover, since Latin was their accepted language at the time, a Carthusian writing in the vernacular would have been reluctant to declare his Order. There is also the supposition that a Carthusian, a procurator for example, might have been charged with the direction of an illiterate lay-brother, and continued to counsel him in English when it was believed that his disciple had a real vocation for the life of contemplative prayer. It might be added that this supposition, though not circumstantiated, is not contradictory to the information given in *Cloud* ch. 1 and has some slight support from the evidence of ch. 35 (39/24-26) and ch. 70 (70/10-14) that the recipient was possibly ignorant of Latin. But all this is too vague to produce a final answer.

The evidence of the transmission of the text does not help much either. Flourishing increasingly after 1370, the nine Carthusian priories were zealously collecting and copying vernacular writings on mystical prayer. Several of their manuscripts still extant include copies of works by Richard Rolle, Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, the *Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden*, even *The Book of Margery Kempe of Lynne*. However, annotations in their manuscripts establish lasting interest. The manuscripts of *The Cloud*, copied and like *The Mirror* also translated into Latin, were repeatedly read and commented on up to the Dissolution, and indeed later.

### (b) THE CANON OF HIS WORKS

*The Cloud*, *Prive Counseling*, and the five minor treatises to some extent complement and elucidate each other. Their resemblances in style and vocabulary are consistent with common authorship. The external evidence for this theory, however, is scanty, and the supposition rests finally on the selection of subject-matter, repeated emphases, distinctive presentation, and the imprint in each of the same personality.

The compilers of medieval manuscripts showed a tendency to collect related pieces. The manuscripts described below bring some support for common authorship, but their evidence is insufficient. Two of the best and early MSS., Har<sup>1</sup> and Kk, contain all seven treatises; a third, Har<sup>2</sup>, omits only *Hid Diuinite*. The later Bo omits

<sup>7</sup> I am indebted to Dr. James Hogg and Dr. Michael Sargent for information about some of these arguments.

*Stirings*, *Hid Diuinite* and *Benjamin Minor*. Ten of *The Cloud* MSS. have also *Priue Counseling*. The shorter treatises, moreover, circulated together; CP contains *Preier*, *Stirings*, *Spirites*; the early printed edition, apparently representing another MS., *Preier*, *Stirings*, *Spirites*, *Benjamin Minor*.

Only once is the author clearly explicit about 'oþer diuerse places of myn owne writyng':

'þis same werk . . . is þat reuerent affeccion & þe frute departid fro þe tre þat I speke of in þi lityl pistle of preier. þis is þe cloude of vnknowyng; þis is þat priue loue put in purete of spirit; þis is þe Arke of þe Testament. þis is Denis deuinite, his wisdom & his drewry, his lity derknes & his vnknowyn kunnynges.' (P.C. 87/42-88/3).

In view of its Prologue, which definitely associates the translation with *The Cloud* (119/4-7), it seems reasonable to identify *Deonise Hid Diuinite* with 'Denis deuinite'.

The *Commentary* relates individual passages in all the treatises to fundamental themes and similar expressions in *The Cloud*. Likenesses here show *Priue Counseling*, *Preier* and *Hid Diuinite* to be closely akin. Of the remaining treatises *Stirings* raises least doubt as to authorship. Its omission from the statement quoted above is of little consequence since *Stirings* is addressed to one not yet far advanced enough to be on the threshold of contemplative prayer. Nevertheless *Stirings* ultimately is a further statement of the efficacy of 'þe werk', since it develops the claim of *The Cloud* in ch. 42. It too moves towards the same goal, the attainment of unitive prayer through the practice of 'loue wipoute mene'. (Cf. *Stirings* 115/14-117/22, *Preier* 105/23-106/8; see below, p. xxiv). The verbal echoes of *The Cloud* in 'a blinde schote wip þe scharp darte of longing loue' which 'may neuer faile of þe prik . . . God' (115/23-24), 'a blinde stering of loue' (118/1), are only two of the many similarities in diction. The main subject of the first part of the epistle which leads up to this climax is that same discretion which grows with self-knowledge and brings discernment in matters of the spirit. These familiar themes (see *Introd.*, p. xxxv) develop from a cautionary reply to a disciple tempted to an extravagant bodily expression of his inner impulse. In its scriptural quotations and exegesis, its length and shape, *Stirings* closely resembles *Preier*.

Like *Hid Diuinite*, the two remaining treatises are translations of works by two of the writers who most influenced the eclectic author of *The Cloud*. Translation by its very nature is more difficult to assign than independent prose. These three translations associable with

*The Cloud* are markedly different from each other in method as in line of thought. *Hid Diuinite* is a close translation, *Benjamin Minor* a free and greatly abridged paraphrase, *Spirites* a neat dovetailing of parts from two of St. Bernard's *Sermons*, but with its long original interpolation it reads like an independent treatise. *Hid Diuinite* concentrates on unitive prayer itself; *Benjamin Minor* on the stages of preparation for it; *Spirites*, with its two themes of the recognition of sin and the sufficiency of Absolution on the essential beginning, the need for which is reiterated in *The Cloud*.

*Spirites* is the least mystical of all the treatises. It is not in letter form like the others, though it is planned and developed like *Preier* and *Stirings*. In its longest independent addition it looks towards their climax: the attainment of 'God contynouly wonyng in him . . . þe hiȝest & þe best partye of contemplacion' (149/28-30).

The authorship of *Benjamin Minor* remains the most conjectural. Of the many extant manuscripts of it, only four also contain *The Cloud*. The reference to 'þe Arke of þe Testament' among the author's other writings (*see above*) alludes not to *Benjamin Minor* but probably to Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin Major*, from which *The Cloud* drew in chs 71-73 and elsewhere. Yet *Benjamin* is sufficiently like the other *Cloud* treatises not to rule out common authorship, and more like them than other Middle English writings to commend the theory positively. Since *Benjamin Minor* provides the key to many an allusion it is at least useful to include it here.

### (c) THE MANUSCRIPTS

Various Modern Titles	Extant MSS. titles	Abbreviations used. Glossary References.
I <i>The Cloud of Unknowing</i>	<i>A Book of Contemplacyon þe whiche is clepyd þe clowde of vnknowyng, in þe whiche a soule is onyd wip God. þe Diuine Clowde of Vnkounyng. The Clowde of Contemplacion.</i>	( <i>The</i> ) <i>Cloud</i> None
II <i>The Book of Priue Counselling An Epistle of Priue Counsel (Counselling)</i>	<i>þe Book of Priue Counseling. A trefyde of pryuey conseyle. The pistle of pryuate counsell.</i>	<i>Priue Counseling</i> P.C.
III <i>An (The) Epistle of Prayer</i>	<i>A (The) pistle of Preier. How þou schalt dispose þee to preie.</i>	<i>Preier</i> P.
IV <i>An (The) Epistle of Discretion in (of) Stirrings. The Epistle of Discretion in the Stirrings of the Soule.</i>	<i>A pistle of discrecioun of (in) stirrings. A veray necessary Epystle of dyscrecyon in styrynge of the soule.</i>	<i>Stirings</i> D.
V <i>Denis Hid Diuinity</i>	<i>Deonise Hid Diuinite.</i>	<i>Hid Diuinite</i> H.D.

Various Modern Titles	Extant MSS. titles	Abbreviations used. Glossary References.
VI <i>Benjamin Minor</i> <i>The Study of Wisdom</i>	<i>A tretise of þe stodye of wysdome þat men clepen Beniamyn.</i> <i>The boke of the xii patriarkys.</i> <i>A tretise þat men callþ Richarde of Seynt Victor.</i> <i>A veray deuoute treatyse (named Benyamyn) of the myghtes and vertues of mannes soule, &amp; of the way to true contemplacyon, compyled by a noble &amp; famous doctoure, a man of grete holynes &amp; deuocyon, named Rycharde of Saynt Vyctore. A booke þ' Ricard of Seynt Victore maad vp þe historie of Joseph &amp; of his xii sones and is callid Beniamyn.</i>	<i>Benjamin</i> <i>B.M.</i> <i>B.</i>        <i>Benj. Min. = Latin text</i>
VII <i>The Treatise of Discerning of Spirits</i> <i>A Treatise of Discretion (in Knowing) of Spirits</i>	<i>A tretis of discrecyon of Spirites.</i> <i>A tretise (pystille) of discrecion in knowyng of spirites.</i> <i>A deuoute treatyse of dyscerninge of spyrites very necessarie for gostly lyuers.</i> <i>A tretys of iii dyuers þouetes þat come ofte to men &amp; ask to know to wipstond hem.</i> <i>A profytable ynformacyon techyng a man to knowe the kynd of spyrytlys whych ben good and whych not.</i>	   <i>Spirites</i> <i>S.</i>

The following collections contain one or more of these treatises:

## ENGLAND

## London

British Library MSS. (formerly British Museum)	Harleian 674 (Har <sup>1</sup> ) <sup>8</sup>	I-VII
	Harleian 2373 (Har <sup>2</sup> )	I-IV, VI, VII
	Harleian 959 (Har <sup>3</sup> )	I
	Harleian 993 (Har <sup>4</sup> )	VII
	Harleian 1022 (Har <sup>5</sup> )	VI
	Royal 17 C xxvi (Ro <sup>1</sup> )	I
	Royal 17 C xxvii (Ro <sup>2</sup> )	I
	Royal 17 D v (Ro <sup>3</sup> )	I
	Arundel 286 (Ar)	VI
	(W)	VI
Westminster School		

## Cambridge

## University Library MSS.

Ff. vi. 31 (CP)	III, IV, VII
Ff. vi. 33 (F)	VI
Ff. vi. 41 (Ff)	I, II
Ii. vi. 31 (I)	II
Ii. vi. 39 (Ii)	I, VI
Kk. vi. 26 (Kk)	I-VII
Corpus Christi College MS. 385 (CC)	VI

<sup>8</sup> The Sigla are adopted from the E.E.T.S. editions.

<i>Oxford</i>		
Bodleian Library MSS.	Douce 262 (Do)	I, II, V
	Bodleian 576 (Bo)	I, II, III, VII
University College	MS. 14 (U)	I
<i>Bristol</i>		
City Reference Library	MS. 6 (Br)	VII
<i>Liverpool</i>		
Cohen Library	MS. Ryl. F4. 10	
(University)	(Harmsworth) (H)	III
St. Hugh's Charterhouse,	MS. D 176 (Parkminster) (Pa)	I, II
Sussex		
Stonyhurst College, Lancs.	MS. A. VI. 60 (St)	I, II
Ampleforth Abbey	MS. 42 (Baker version) (A)	I, II
Other copies of AI exist at Downside Abbey (MSS. 10, 11), at Stanbrook Abbey (MS. 4) and at Thropton, All Saints; of A II, at Downside Abbey (MSS. 10, 14) and Stanbrook Abbey (MS. 3).		

## SCOTLAND

<i>Glasgow University</i>		
Hunterian Library	MS. 258 (U.4.16) (G)	VI

## EIRE

<i>Dublin</i>		
Trinity College Library	MS. 122 (Tr)	I, II

## UNITED STATES

<i>Boston Mass.</i>		
W. K. Richardson's	MS. 22 (R)	VI
Library		
<i>California</i>		
H. E. Huntington Library	MS. 127 (C)	VI

## LATIN VERSIONS

<i>Cambridge</i>		
Pembroke College Library	MS. 221 (Pem)	I
<i>Oxford</i>		
Bodleian Library	MS. 856 (Bo <sup>1</sup> )	I

## EARLY PRINTED TEXT

Henry Pepwell, London, 1521 (Pw)	III, IV, VI, VII
Copies in the British Library and in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.	

For quick reference:<sup>9</sup>

I	<i>Cloud</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Har <sup>2</sup>	Har <sup>3</sup>	Ro <sup>1</sup>	Ro <sup>2</sup>	Ro <sup>3</sup>	Ff	Ii	Kk	Do	Bo	U	Pa	St	A	Tr	Pem	Bo <sup>1</sup>
II	<i>Priue Counseling</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Har <sup>2</sup>	Ff	I	Kk	Do	Bo	St	A	Tr								
III	<i>Preier</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Har <sup>2</sup>	CP	Kk	Bo	H	Pw											
IV	<i>Stirings</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Har <sup>2</sup>	CP	Kk	Po	Pw												
V	<i>Hid Diuinite</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Kk																
VI	<i>B.M.</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Har <sup>2</sup>	Har <sup>5</sup>	Ar	W	F	Kk	CC	Ii	G	C	R	Pw					
VII	<i>Spirites</i>	Har <sup>1</sup>	Har <sup>2</sup>	Har <sup>4</sup>	CP	Kk	Bo	Br	Pw										

<sup>9</sup> This list is unlikely to be final. A seventeenth-century copy of *The Cloud* made by Robert Bacon, has recently been reported from the University Library, Hamburg. See Birrell, p. xvii.

Most of the manuscripts examined were obviously intended as manuals of devotion, easy to handle, written neatly and carefully, and with little elaboration. Many include alterations or corrections, probably from lateral collation with some other version. Though *The Cloud* was not published in any form until 1871, there are many indications of continuous circulation. Broadly speaking, the manuscripts represent transcription during more than three centuries, with two major recensions. Har<sup>1</sup> is the oldest, written in the early fifteenth century; Kk is possibly some fifty years younger, Har<sup>3</sup> St Ro<sup>1</sup> Ii U Tr Bo have been dated mid-fifteenth century, Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>3</sup> late. Pem records that it was completed on 8th August 1491; Do Bo were transcribed around 1500; Pa before 1535; Ro<sup>2</sup> late sixteenth century. A was transcribed in 1677.

The provenance of the manuscripts, their annotations, the scribes named and the signatures, presumably of later owners, reveal not only a widening circulation but also associations with men of mark in many walks of life. For example, the late sixteenth-century colophon in Pa<sup>10</sup> closely associates that manuscript with the Blessed William Exmewe, who suffered martyrdom in defence of the Church after Henry VIII claimed Supremacy and ordered the Dissolution of the monasteries in 1535. Andrew Boorde who transcribed *Priue Counseling* in Do was to become Suffragan Bishop of Chichester. In 1571, U was in the hands of John Juel, a controversial Bishop of Salisbury. Har<sup>1</sup> at one time belonged to Robert Bateman, a wealthy City Merchant who died in 1658. Ff was transcribed and prepared for the printer in 1647 by William Parish, Vicar of Tilney in Norfolk. The further copy of *The Cloud* recently come to light in Hamburg was made by Robert Bacon, a Puritan intellectual and a major figure among the early English Baptists. A Non-Juror, Richard Middleton Massey (d. 1743), at one time a keeper at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and subsequently a practising doctor, was an owner of Bo, which was later given to the Bodleian Library in 1770.<sup>11</sup>

Among religious orders some continuity of transmission is not surprising. Before the Dissolution four manuscripts at least were owned by the Carthusians. Har<sup>2</sup> Pem belonged to Mount Grace in Yorkshire, Do Pa to the London Charterhouse. The four transcriptions are themselves inter-connected, and there is ample evidence in their variant readings, corrections, and annotations,

<sup>10</sup> 'Liber domus salutacionis beatissime virginis Marie iuxta london ordinis Chartusiensis per M. Chawncy quem exaravit sanctus Wille. Exmewe.'

<sup>11</sup> This is a promising field of research, and a valuable start was made by T. A. Birrell, 'English Catholic Mystics in Non-Catholic Circles', *Doungside Review* (1976). Some of the above information was drawn from this series of articles.



that the extant manuscripts passed from one priory to another, and it is likely that their lost parent manuscripts did also. William Tregooze (d. 1514) transcribed *The Cloud*, Andrew Boorde *Priue Counseling* in Do for the London Charterhouse before 1521. The text of Pa is close to that of Do. Pem contains a Latin translation made by Richard Firth of Methley, a monk of Mount Grace, but its scribe was William Darker of Sheen (d. c. 1512). James Greenhalgh of Sheen (d. 1530) made additional editorial annotations to Har<sup>2</sup> Do and Pem. Pem contains also further marginal notes in different hands which prove how the text was assiduously studied for many decades.

Pa and the A text of the 'Baker' version both contain a recension, and so are unreliable in establishing the author's original text, but their interesting individual histories illuminate aspects of subsequent circulation. If Pa's ambiguous colophon was intended to ascribe authorship to the Blessed William Exmewe, the dating of *The Cloud* shows it to be erroneous. It is possible that it signifies that Exmewe was the copyist—it has been argued that the handwriting does not exclude that possibility—or perhaps Maurice Chauncy transcribed Pa from Exmewe's copy, or at Exmewe's bidding. It has been suggested that Chauncy took Pa with him from the London Charterhouse when fleeing to exile first near Bruges, then Paris and Louvain. If this volume was found among his possessions at his death in 1581, the date of the colophon would support the hypothesis that his fellow monks then recorded what they could vaguely remember having been told about Pa's associations. Pa later turned up in the collection of Sir Thomas Philipps, and today it rests at Parkminster, acquired by Carthusian monks for £12 in an auction sale in 1895.<sup>12</sup>

The Benedictine, Father Augustine Baker (1575-1641), in his commentary on *The Cloud* (known as *Secretum* or *Mysticum*, 1629)<sup>13</sup> gives an account of the ancestry of the 'Baker' version. The copy he knew was a sixteenth-century recension, probably made by one of the exiled Carthusians. Father Baker's manuscript came from the library of the Capuchin, Father Benet Canfield (William Fitch), on his death in 1611. Father Benet's association with *The Cloud* is relevant to any assessment of that work's circulation and influence, for he himself was the author of *The Rule of Perfection* and one of the important influences in the seventeenth-century renaissance of French mysticism. Father Baker from 1624-33 was a spiritual director of a newly formed community of English nuns at Cambrai.

<sup>12</sup> I am indebted to the Monks of Parkminster for showing me their unpublished monograph by an anonymous French Carthusian, 'The Autograph MS. of the Blessed William Exmewe'.

<sup>13</sup> Edited by Abbot Justin McCann in his editions of *The Cloud of Unknowing*.



His teaching is perpetuated in *Sancta Sophia*, a synthesis made by Dom Serenus Cressy, a fellow monk, and published posthumously in 1657. The Ampleforth manuscript of the 'Baker' version was transcribed by Dom Richard Reeve with the note: 'Transcribed 1677 ad laudem Dei; out ye Cambray copy of 1648, which was taken out of the old copy that was transcribed 1582'. Father Cressy himself abridged the 'Baker' version of *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling*, and a copy of this exists in the library of Colwich Abbey, transcribed by Dom Wilfrid Reeve in 1681.

The first printed edition, *The Divine Cloud*, ed. H. Collins, London, 1871, contains the 'Baker' version of *The Cloud* and Father Cressy's abridgement of *Priue Counseling*. Evelyn Underhill's modernized version of *The Cloud* (1911) was largely based on Har<sup>1</sup>, Abbot McCann's (1924, 1952) on a collation of Ii U Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Bo Do A. More recent versions have been based on the publications of the Early English Text Society.



## DOCTRINE AND COUNSEL

The doctrine of *The Cloud* treatises is traditional and orthodox; the counsel is personal, and directed in *The Cloud*, *Prive Counseling* and *Preier* to a disciple on the threshold of unitive prayer.<sup>1</sup> Both the doctrine selected and the counsel given are to be understood in the light of the author's explicit aim. His prime motive is to teach a 'special prayer' over and above the 'preiers þat ben ordeynid of Holy Chirche' (41/1-2). His reiterated distinction between common salvation and perfection, and more directly the strongly worded injunction in *The Cloud*'s Prologue, again repeated in ch. 74, make it clear that his teaching is intended solely for the contemplative, and not for others, even though they be 'ful good men of actiue leuyng'. For such as they it might sometimes be relevant, but only when they are specially stirred by grace to participate, like the perfect follower of Christ, 'in þe hiezst pointe of þis contemplatiue acte' (2/11-12).

The terms *Contemplation*, *Perfection*, *Union* (M.E. *oneheed* 'oneness') are in these treatises virtually synonymous. *Perfection* signifies the perfect love of God (*Preier* 102/20), 'none oþer cause to loue God fore bot God himself (ibid., 105/3-4). The state implied by all three words is succinctly defined in the *The Cloud*'s title (Har<sup>1</sup> Kk): 'A book of Contemplacyon in þe whiche a soule is onyd wiþ God', a definition further expounded in the recurrent fundamental phrase: 'bi grace . . . knit to God in spirite, & in oneheed of loue & acordaunce of wile'.<sup>2</sup> This is the highest good possible to man, the best part of Mary which shall never be taken from her.<sup>3</sup> It is to partake in this world of the Divine life of Eternity for which man was originally created (11/9-12) and to which grace recalls him (24/31-32). Fallen man, fashioned in God's 'image and likeness' might, through striving for perfection, regain the 'likeness' lost through sin, be 're-formed bi grace to þe first state of mans soule' (10/17).

*The Cloud* treatises are explicit that their goal is the Triune God of Christian revelation, 'þat maad þee, & bouzt þee, & þat graciousli haþ clepid þee to þis werk' (15/26-27). The higher reaches of unitive prayer are for one whose love has long been nourished by meditations on the Humanity of our Lord. This 'comon pleyn' way is essential (15/16-20, *P.C.* 91/25-32). The Gospels have already demonstrated in Jesus the exemplar of perfection (24/30-32,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See 17/39-41, 49/12-13, *P.C.* 77/40-42, 87/27-28, *P.* 106/6-8, 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> Luke x, 42; *Cloud* 29/15-18, *Stirings* 116/27-30.

46/41-42, *P.C.* 88/6-17, 90/1-7). Unitive prayer, which demands a crucifixion of selfhood, if offered for all men in general, will participate in the Lord's redemptive work (33/35-40). Grace holds primacy in the extended definition of Union quoted above. The whole progress of regeneration from the initial call to final attainment depends wholly on grace. God is 'first steryng & principaly mouyng'. *Priue Counseling* develops this theme at length (88/13-23, 93/2-94/3, cf. *Cloud* 9/1-3, 38/9-12, *et passim*; *Preier* 105/36-37, 106/21). There are no means by which to reach God save those given by God (*Stirings* 116/8-10, 117/20). God has first loved us; His love is the gift of grace, and through His love we love Him in return. The disciple to whom *The Cloud* was addressed has been 'led', then 'pulled' to his present state by operative grace (8/6-15). By common grace all who enter by 'the door' are saved (John x, 9); the contemplative is drawn further in towards perfection by a special grace (46/13-15, 36/1, *Priue Counseling* 92/12). But though such special grace is a free gift of God's love (8/2 *et seq.*, 38/9-11), *The Cloud* is emphatic that the contemplative must have 'a ful acordyng abilnes to resseyue' it (46/14-15). The reassurance, however, has already been given (38/18-20) that no one capable of receiving it will lack this grace. In brief, two things are needful for Union: 'þe goostly glewe of grace on God's partye', and loving 'consent in gladnes of sperite on þi partye' (*Preier* 106/21-22).

The *Cloud* author gave express instructions how to be actively 'disposid & ablid' to unitive prayer 'in purete of spirit' (*P.C.* 88/24-25). The first essential is to be sure of a vocation, and various tests were suggested (chs 74, 75; *P.C.* 94/26-95/36). Above all, the would-be contemplative must feel an overwhelming and unquenchable longing. Always, however, he must take counsel from an experienced director. Before he begins to engage in this special prayer his soul must be purified by the sacrament of Confession and Absolution, in accordance with 'þe statute and þe ordinaunce of alle Holy Chirche' (a phrase almost as recurrent as a refrain).

The recommended discipline to pursue is vindicated by a simple exposition of the underlying metaphysical principles—Being, Substance, and Cause. Through these the nature of Union is explained. Ever aware of the attendant dangers of misconception in spiritual endeavour, the author frequently exposes them in vivid passages memorable for their mordaunt humour. Contemplative prayer belongs wholly to the spirit, and the antics of novices and pseudo-contemplatives who have confused spiritual and physical attitudes are scathingly derided.

God is Pure Spirit, and is latently present in the deep centre of all that is, holding all his creatures in being. God is the soul's 'grounde

& purete of spirit' (*P.C.* 81/16-17), man's essential being, and is to be found in the 'higest & þe souereynest pointe' (41/12-13), i.e. in man's innermost spiritual centre, stripped of all accidentals. Both *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling* refute any suggestion of a total identity with God in union. When *The Cloud* quotes from the Scriptures that the perfect soul is 'clepid a god', it is only to underline the distinction: 'þouȝ þou be al one wiþ hym in grace, ȝit þou arte ful fer bineþe hym in kynde' (67/14-21). The soul is immeasurably and unchangeably different from God in nature and substance. Though God is immanent in all men as their cause and their continuing existence, in Himself He is infinitely transcendent, above and beyond the summation of all creatures. Man has being from God: God is Being. God alone is 'his owne cause & his owne being' (*P.C.* 76/1-2). Through grace, God tempers His Godhead that the soul may receive Him (10/22). Moreover, created being is never lost in mergence with the Uncreated. Man remains a 'mengid þing of two substaunces, a bodily & a goostly' (*P.* 107/20-22), two 'sere menes to come by to perfeccioun'. Each has its proper function, and at the Last Day both will have their reward (50/14-17, *P.* 107/23). The human soul attaining unitive prayer in the state of perfection becomes one with God only in the sense that it has lost all self-centred concern for and knowledge of its own being.

In ch. 8, *The Cloud's* summary of the distinctions between the lower and higher parts of the active and contemplative lives clearly indicates the degree of spiritual progress on which these treatises focus. As he begins the higher part of the contemplative life, the disciple must now learn 'to lift up þe fote of (his) loue, & step towards þat state & degre of leuyng þat is parfite, & þe laste state of alle' (8/16-17). The author's occasionally startling pronouncements on sin, on the most sacred meditations about Divine goodness in the Creation, Incarnation and Redemption, on angels, supernatural consolations and illuminations, appear in true perspective only within this scheme. Discursive thought has now served its purpose and must be superseded. Prayer henceforth is to be an act of the will. The mind must be emptied of every distracting concept so that love may take over. Hitherto the disciple has long wrestled to purify himself from sin and its effects, from the appetites of his senses, from the trammels of the world. In his further purgation his principal faculties are to strive beyond their normal functions towards an operation of total simplicity, single-pointedness. Unitive love transcends and differs in quality from the emotional response to Divine goodness and beauty from which it first sprang. It must develop resolutely into a totally exclusive choice. When the will cleaves to God alone and wills only God's will, then love is perfect.



'Love without knowing', therefore, is the gist of this author's counsel. This also is most often the meaning of his favourite term *werk*, though the word and its derivatives, through some hundred and fifty repetitions in *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling*, ultimately embrace the whole process towards perfection, intellectual, moral and spiritual, man's part and also God's:

'Þis is þe werk of þe soule þat moste plesip God' (9/19).

'Do on þi werk, & sekirly I behote þee it schal not fayle' in 'þe werk of only God' (34/18-20).

The supreme efficacy of love as the motive power of the soul is repeatedly claimed in trenchant aphorisms:

'Loue may reche to God in þis liif bot not knowing' (18/18; cf. 19/8-10).

'By loue may (God) be getyn & holden; bot bi þougt neiþer' (14/22-23).

'Bot euer whan reson defaileþ, þan list loue liue and lerne for to plei; for bi loue we may fynde him, fele him, and hit him euen in himself' (*Stirings* 115/31-33; cf. 115/7-11).

This same concept is differently expressed and further developed in the cardinal instruction:

'Mene God al, & al God, so þat nougt worche in þi witte & in þi wile, bot only God (44/7-8, cf. 9/13-15, 45/21).

A negative qualification, 'wiþouten mene' (i.e. without any intermediary concept), is sometimes added, as in *Priuer* 105/31; or one more positive: 'as he is in himself', as in *Priue Counseling* 97/16-21, *Priuer* 104/31-105/5. God is to be sought in His undifferentiated and absolute nature: 'þe nakid beyng of God himself only' 17/33, cf. 14/11-12, 'þe self substaunce of God' 67/5. Though Godhead comprises the Trinity (*see above*), analysis must at this stage proceed no further. Knowledge, which by its very nature must always fall short, is a hindrance, a cul-de-sac. God, infinitely and ineffably beyond mind, can never be comprehended by human intelligence, because human knowledge, naturally based on sense impressions and mental representations of created things, is always 'medelid wiþ sum maner of fantasie' (18/21). Only the bare concept of God existing is counselled, formless and nameless. 'I am' was the name revealed to Moses, and all God's qualities are 'hid & enstorid in þis litil worde IS' (*Priue Counseling* 80/39).

In response to a stirring to grace, the contemplative may feel an 'aspiration', a stirring of love to God, 'as it were vnauisid, speedly springing unto God as sparcle fro þe cole' (12/23-24). Fostered by the

technique urged by *The Cloud*, that tiny flame could grow, the single stirring multiply until stirrings become habitual and continuous:

'it is merueylous to noumbre þe sterynges þat may be in one oure' (12/24-25).

The soul 'may vnnoumerable tymes in one oure be reised into God sodenly wiþouten mene . . . þat is wiþouten messenger of any þougt in special causing þat stering' (*Preier* 105/31-35).

The *Cloud* group, however, seldom touch upon the consummation of the 'work', and then but briefly. It will be a total inner transformation, 'a sodeyn chaunging' (61/37), an intense awareness of divine habitation, 'þe sensible presence of God as he is in hymself' (*Preier* 104/29); 'þe liuely presence . . . of good gracious God, him owne dere self' (*Spirites* 149/19-21). It is always a 'goostly felyng' which is indescribable. The perfect soul is 'touched in affecciou' by a sudden inflooding of his consciousness, and 'illumind in þe reson by þe clere beme of euerlastyng liȝt' (*Preier* 104/28-30). This is a new condition of knowledge received in intellectual darkness and divinely infused, 'þe heiȝ wisdom of þe Godheed graciousli descendyng into mans soule', . . . 'sodenly & frely riftid of þe spirit inly in itself & vnformid' (*Priue Counseling* 81/30-31, 82/12-13). Its sudden irruption, like a flash of light, will reveal 'sum of his priuete', the contemplative's affection will be 'enflaumid wiþ þe fiire of his loue' (34/31-35). The writer cannot, or will not, say more:

'For of þat werke þat falliþ to only God dar I not take apon me to speke wiþ my blabryng fleschely tonge. . . . Bot of þat werk þat falleþ to man, whan he felip him sterid & holpin by grace, list me wel telle þee' (34/36-39).

The human co-operation advocated in the 'work' is kept firmly and vividly in the foreground. The term *werk* itself confutes any suggestion of passive inactivity. Grace is to be 'worcher & þou bot þe suffer' (39/2); yet before the ultimate attainment of passive union when God wholly takes over, the mind is never to be blankly inert, for the will must constantly be directed. This means that an intense activity of self-emptying and rejection is involved. This essential aspect of the 'work' is couched in figures complex in their interconnections. Two or more of the characteristic dominant images can imply the same condition to be striven for. The much-repeated 'naked intent', for example, is linked to 'chaste love' by nearly identical definitions in 32/24-28 and *Preier* 105/16-22.<sup>4</sup> In its one-pointedness, 'a blinde schote wiþ þe scharp darte of longing loue'

<sup>4</sup> Two separate aspects, however, are indicated: (a) a psychological experience of a highly conscious concentration on substance apart from qualities (b) a disinterested love.

which may never 'faile of þe prik-God' (*Stirings* 115/23-24) is like 'chaste love', the central theme of *Preier*. In its single aim, each must seek no reward, and be indifferent to personal satisfaction (Cf. *Cloud* 52/6-9, *Priue Counseling* 97/6-20). 'Naked entent' can be 'lappid & foulden in o worde- Loue' (15/30-34). 'Naked' is often paired with 'blind' to reinforce the concept of the absolute simplification of consciousness required. Thus: 'þis blinde beholdyng of þi nakid beyng', 'nakid blynde felyng of þin owne beyng', 'þi nakid blinde beyng', 'blynde beholdyng . . . nakid beholdyng', 'nakid siȝt & þe blynde felyng' etc.<sup>5</sup> The impression is accumulative. The very interchangeability of the epithets adds its own weight to the fundamental theme of the single aim.

These key epithets, moreover, illustrate the different aspects of the endeavour prescribed. The 'stirring of love' is repeatedly called 'blind' because the eye of understanding must be shut; the 'beholding' too will be paradoxically 'blinde' (17/33) because it must look in darkness. 'Naked' conveys the nature and cause of the 'blindness', for it adds the idea of 'stripping' or 'being stript'. 'Naked' signifies the necessary black-out or divestment of all imaginative and conceptual activities. The 'naked beyng' of God must not be clothed by any act of intellect whatever. The contemplative's 'entent' must be stript of all mental operations which hinder the single direction of the will. He must not only strive to release himself from all attachments to everything less than God, from sense impressions to those most spiritual, but must also abandon the very desire to seek to understand.

'schere away couetyse of knowyng, for it wil more let þee þan help þee' (39/6-7).

In the words of *Priue Counseling*, he must emulate the perfect lover who yearns 'only & vtterly to spoyle hymself of himself for þat þing þat he louiþ, & not admit ne suffre to be cloped bot only in þat þing þat he louiþ' (89/14-16). Ultimately he must lose even the simple consciousness of self (88/41-42).

The 'cloud' images pervading the first half of the major treatise symbolize the way. The connotations of 'nakedness' and 'blindness' amplify and stress the implications. The three images are tellingly combined in the definition of the higher part of contemplation which 'hongeþ al holy in þis derknes & in þis cloude of vnknowyng, wiþ a louyng steryng & a blinde beholdyng vnto þe nakid beyng of God himself only' (17/31-33).

Doctrine and counsel are interwoven in the 'cloud' passages and

<sup>5</sup> E.g. *P.C.* 83/16-17, 80/24, 82/39, 79/23-24.



references. To attain a single-pointedness of mind, a will that cleaves only to God, the contemplative must plunge deliberately into a 'darkness' or 'cloud'. The 'cloud' figure has a double aspect. There is the 'cloud of forgetting', self-imposed, into which man's travail is to thrust all distractions from his goal (34/14-16). There is the 'cloud of unknowyng' in which he will then find himself, which ever conceals the glory of God (26/24-25, 69/11-12). This fundamental symbol gathers meaning as the 'work' progresses. In the beginning it must be a 'cloud of un-knowing', of ceasing to know. It is a 'cloud of unknowing', i.e. ignorance, in the end. The 'cloud' is at first introduced to evoke the psychological reaction when the contemplative attempts to jettison his image-making faculty and discursive reason. This is a painfully obscure and troubled condition, for only obstruction seems ahead. The contemplative, nevertheless, must persevere without intermission, for the way to God 'behoueþ alweis be in þis cloude & in þis derknes (9/37). 'Smyte apon þat þicke cloude . . . wip a scharp darte of longing loue, & go not þens for þing þat befalleþ' (14/29-30). God will 'sumtyme parauenture seend oute a beme of goostly liȝt, peersyng þis cloude of vnknowyng þat is bitwix þee & hym, & schewe þee sum of his priuete' (34/31-33). Yet the supreme knowledge must be that though God may be consciously experienced, he remains incomprehensible. Evermore there will be a 'hize and a wonderful cloude of vnknowyng' which only love can pierce (26/22-25). When love is perfect, 'noȝwhere bodely' will then feel 'euerywhere goostly' (67/38-39). The nature of the 'blynde nouȝt' has changed. The soul will still be 'bleendid', but now the cause is transcendent 'habundaunce of goostly liȝt' (68/17).



## THE HERITAGE FROM TRADITION

### SOURCES AND PRESENTATION

The fourteenth-century author's vehement plea that *The Cloud* should come only into the hands of one purposing 'to be a parfite folower of Criste . . . in þe souereinnest pointe of contemplatife leuing'<sup>1</sup> has, in the twentieth century, been generally ignored. His treatises are widespread now in Europe and America and as far east as Japan. They are read chiefly in modernized translations and paraphrase. With so many undedicated readers today, 'rude' and 'boistous' in *Cloud* terminology, it seems fundamental to try to discover what their author himself intended. The following sections, therefore, seek primarily to supplement the preceding chapter, *Doctrine and Counsel*. They take stock of his major presuppositions, and set them against his basic sources.<sup>2</sup> Incidentally this provides some reliable evidence towards any assessment of the Middle English writer's individuality in thought and expression. Possibly it may also correct unsuspected errors of modern understanding. *The Cloud* in particular leaves an impression of freshness and originality, yet the subject-matter is drawn from common stock. There is little that is new either in precept or key imagery. Its author was heir to an unbroken tradition flowing from the early centuries of Christianity, and even before. However much his advocacy of the 'special' prayer sprang from a personal experience of its efficacy, the details of his guidance are to be understood most fully in the setting of medieval mystical theology, metaphysics and psychology. Major concepts are assumed in *The Cloud* which in the subsequent six centuries have radically changed. The Middle English terminology has its pitfalls too: words which formerly had a precise technical meaning are now used vaguely, others which look familiar then bore different connotations.

One major reservation is necessary. With the exception of the obvious translations, it is usually impossible to be sure of any immediate source. Of set purpose the author would not cite his authorities in *The Cloud*. Himself a trained theologian who had thoroughly assimilated what he had read, he was now paraphrasing and adapting theory for suggested practice, in directions simplified to help a young and less experienced disciple. Moreover, it is possible,

<sup>1</sup> Prolog 1/15-17.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed selection is to be found in J. P. H. Clark, 'Sources and Theology in *The Cloud of Unknowing*', *Downside Review*, vol. 98, 1980.

even probable, that he derived many of his allusions, not through first-hand acquaintance with all the many diverse individual writings he echoes, but rather from some one or more of the great thirteenth- and fourteenth-century encyclopaedic compilations. In these are to be found many of *The Cloud's* commonplaces, allusions and quotations from the same basic authorities, and similar mystical exegesis of the same Scriptural texts. In Hugh of Balma's *Viae Sion lugent* (alias *De Triplici Via, Theologia Mystica*)<sup>3</sup> occur many comparable passages on the special prayer of 'love without knowing'; in Rudolph of Biberach's<sup>4</sup> *De VII Itineribus Aeternitatis* the same background ideas drawn from the Fathers and Doctors<sup>5</sup> are associated with the mystical life of the spirit. Even if the Middle English author was familiar with some individual texts, St. Augustine's works were quoted and absorbed throughout the medieval Christian world; likewise St. Gregory's, often transmitting Augustinian thought; likewise St. Bernard's, who drew from both, and so on. The inherited tradition was accumulative. The present study must obviously be limited to central ideas, and their main traditional sources.

### CONTEMPLATION

In all seven treatises, even in *Of Discrecyon of Spirites*, an experience of mystical union with God is considered to be the crown of life on earth:

'God contynouly wonyng in him . . . liue in loue and in sȝt of þe hiȝe pees of þe Godheed, þe whiche is þe hiȝest & þe best partye of contemplacion þat may be had in þis liif' 149/28-30.

The terms *contemplation* and *perfection* and their respective derivatives are interchangeable, and their connotations precise. Their modern equivalents, *mysticism*, the *mystic*, *mystical*, have been too much abused by loose usage to be anything but vague. *Hid Diuinite* was the Middle English interpretation of the title *Mystica Theologia*, which Hugh of Balma had glossed as 'occultus sermo diuinus'.<sup>6</sup> The goal is a secret knowledge of God in a transcendental union, beyond the natural reach of man's mind. The New Testament repeatedly

<sup>3</sup> See below pp. xlv-xlix. Hugh was Prior of Chartreuse de Meijorat en Bresse (1289-1304).

<sup>4</sup> A German Franciscan, Lecteur at Studium Generale, Strasbourg, in the first half of the fourteenth century.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. St. Augustine (d. 430), St. Gregory the Great (d. 604), St. Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153). Their fundamental concepts were later transmitted by such authorities as St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), St. Bonaventura (d. 1274) Hugh (d. 1141) and Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173).

<sup>6</sup> *Viae Sion lugent* was printed among the *Opera Omnia S. Bonaventurae* from the Strasbourg edition of c. 1495 to that of A. C. Peltier (Paris, 1866), t. 8.

promises this.<sup>7</sup> Mystical writers of many countries through the ages have testified to its attainment. They have described an experience of 'perfection' on earth, for however brief a moment, which they believed to be a foretaste of the life to come. The English mystics of the late Middle Ages are the native counterpart of their widely-acclaimed contemporaries abroad, the German Eckhart (d. 1327), Tauler (d. 1361), Suso (d. 1365), St. Bridget of Sweden (d. 1373), St. Catherine of Siena (d. 1380), the Flemish Ruysbroek (d. 1381), the Low Countries Gerard Groot (d. 1384), the French Gerson (d. 1429)—to name but a few of a company possibly without parallel of Christian mystics and directors in the spiritual life.

'Contemplation' as a technical term goes back at least to the Greeks. In the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle it denoted a rewarding penetration of the inward significance of some truth by a mind at rest after long searching by dialectical process and scientific investigation. The term developed a more transcendental meaning in Neoplatonic teaching,<sup>8</sup> in which it described an apprehension of the Ultimate Good. Thence it was readily transferable to an advanced kind of Christian mystical prayer. *The Cloud's* sharp distinction between 'contemplation' and 'meditation' was traditional,<sup>9</sup> although the two were not often so emphatically set in opposition. The directive in *The Cloud* bids that all meditations, even the most sacred, on the Passion of Christ, 'þe kyndnes & werkes of God' be deliberately suppressed.<sup>10</sup> *Priue Counseling* elucidates and justifies *The Cloud's* teaching by expounding the theme of Meditation on the Humanity of Our Lord as an essential step towards the contemplative's spiritual experience of His Godhead.<sup>11</sup> In *Sermo in Cant. xx*,<sup>12</sup> St. Bernard had similarly distinguished between sensitive (*carnalis*) and 'spiritual' love, tracing the ascent from the one to the other; as love progresses, it will have reached its perfection when it is wholly transmuted to spiritual love.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. John xvi, 13-15; 1 Cor. ii, 12; 1 John iv, 12-13, 16.

<sup>8</sup> See below, pp. xli-xliii.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Guigo II (d. 1188), *Scala Claustralium* (ed. E. Colledge and J. Walsh, *Lettre Sur La Vie Contemplative*, [Paris, 1970]), II, p. 84: 'Meditatio est studiosa mentis actio, occultae veritatis notitiam ductu propriae rationis investigans. . . . Contemplatio est mentis in Deum suspensae quaedam supra se elevatio, eterne dulcedinis gaudia degustans'. Cf. Richard of St. Victor *Benjamin Major* I, 4: 'Contemplatio est libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula cum admiratione suspensa'.

<sup>10</sup> See 17/25-33, 14/4-12.

<sup>11</sup> This progression is more commonly taught. *De VII Itin.* III, iii summarizes the development, with close reference to *Benjamin Major*: 'Cogitatio, quae oritur ex imaginatione, transit in meditationem; meditatio, quae oritur ex ratione, transit et terminatur in speculationem. Speculatio, qui partim oritur ex ratione et partim ex intelligentia, transit et consummatur in intuitivam cognitionem.'

<sup>12</sup> *P.L.* t. 183, cols. 870-2; cf. also *De Diligendo Deo*, xv (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 998).



*The Mystic Way*

Many of *The Cloud* author's uncompromising statements, their individual slant, their omissions, are likewise to be understood only in reference to the practice of the 'special prayer'. His directions are for a disciple approaching the very threshold of unitive prayer, to help him to 'step towards þat state & degre of leuyng þat is parfite, & þe laste state of alle',<sup>13</sup> to reach a state 'abouen himself & vnder his God'.<sup>14</sup> When he introduces traditional schemes of spiritual progress, it is to emphasize the ultimate, and now for the disciple the immediate stage. 'Lesson, Meditacion & Oryson'<sup>15</sup> in turn are essential for beginners and those making progress (*profiteres*), 'bot not to hem þat be parfite, 3e, as it may be here'.<sup>16</sup> In a classification inspired by Richard of St. Victor, he repeatedly groups the mental and spiritual operations: 'wiþouten himself & bineep himself, wiþinne himself & euen wiþ himself, abouen himself'.<sup>17</sup>

He repeats the traditional distinction between the active and contemplative lives typified by Martha and Mary, as established by St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Thomas Aquinas, and introduced into the works of most medieval writers on mystical theology; he adds, however, his own subdivision. The higher part of contemplation 'hongeþ al holy in þis derknes & in þis cloude of vnknowyng'. Mary contemplated 'wiþ many a swete priue & a lysty loue put upon þat hize cloude of vnknowyng bitwix hir & hir God'.<sup>18</sup>

Clearly the traditional stages of the Mystic Way are assumed throughout: **Purgation, Illumination, Union (Perfection)**.<sup>19</sup> **Purgation**, overall, is the dominant theme. There are many incidental references to **Illumination** at various stages of the mystical ascent: e.g. 'diuerse wonderful swetnes & counfortes, ioyes' (69/8), the 'swetnes & counfortes . . . erles of þat mede . . . in blis' (50/16-24) . . . 'som taast of þe eendles swetnes' (11/7-8), but the director is more concerned that as soon as his disciple is touched by

<sup>13</sup> Ch. 1, 8/16-17.

<sup>14</sup> 17/37-38.

<sup>15</sup> The 'ladder' of *Scala Claustralium* has the four degrees: *lectio, meditatio, oratio, contemplatio* (p. 84). Cf. Hugh of St. Victor's *Eruditionis Didascalicae* v, 9 (*P.L.* t. 176, col. 797): 'Quatuor sunt in quibus nunc exercetur vita iustorum, et quasi per quosdam gradus ad futuram perfectionem subleuatur, videlicet *lectio, sive doctrina, meditatio, oratio, operatio*.'

<sup>16</sup> 39/30-31.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. 17/34-41, chs 62, 67. Cf. *Benjamin Minor* lv (*P.L.* t. 196, col. 40): 'Extra nos corporalia, intra nos spiritualia, supra nos divina'; *Benjamin Major* II xvi (col. 95): 'Alia ergo sunt quae supra se, alia quae vident in se atque alia quae vident sub se'; IV i (col. 135): 'supra hominem, et humanae rationis modum'; ii (col. 136): 'quaedam infra rationem . . . quaedam . . . supra rationem. Et inter haec sunt alia quaedam media . . . '.

<sup>18</sup> 17/31-32, 26/19-21.

<sup>19</sup> This generally accepted outline of the ascent dates at least from *The Celestial Hierarchy* of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, and was traditionally ascribed to him.

grace with an overwhelming upsurge of love he should press on with the special prayer of 'love without knowing'. When he enlarges on Illumination, it is only to point to inherent dangers of misconception, or to instruct his disciple to 'haue a maner of rechelnes' towards it (51/39), and rather concentrate on the 'special prayer'. 'Alle swetnes & counfortes, bodily or goostly' are to this 'as it were accyidentes, be þei neuer so holy' (51/23-25).

About **Union** itself *The Cloud* treatises say little. *Preier* (104/28-30) repeats without development the traditional Augustinian formula of union in cognition and love, possibly following *Benjamin Minor* iv.<sup>20</sup>

'touched in affeccioun bi þe sensible presence of God . . . illumind in þe reson by þe clere beme of euerlastyng liȝt'.<sup>21</sup>

*The Cloud* itself declares: 'of þat werke þat falliþ to only God dar I not take apon me to speke wiþ my blabryng, fleschely tonge; & schortly to say, alþof I durst, I wolde not' (34/36-38).

*Priue Counseling* presents the theme of Divine enlightenment in Union through an anagogical exegesis of Proverbs iii, 13-14, 21-26:

'hiȝe goostly wisdom, sodenly & frely riftid of þe spirit inly in itself & vnformid . . . impossible to be streinid or to falle vnder þe worching of naturele witte' (82/12-14).

Whatever degree of contemplation *The Cloud* author had himself attained, it is concealed. When in chs. 71-73 he treated the different modes of the grace of contemplation (suddenly in ecstasy; not in ecstasy but after long effort; in habitual practice), he borrowed Richard of St. Victor's symbol of the Ark, and his typology of the three men involved with it—Moses, Aaron and Bezeleel. He compared himself with Bezeleel, but in a passage closely following his source:

'in þis werk . . . I here, þof I be a wreche vnworþi to teche any creature, þe office of Bezeleel, makyng & declaryng in maner to þin handes þe maner of þis goostly arke. Bot fer betir & more worþely þen I do, þou maist worche, ȝif þou wilt be Aaron . . . contynuely worching þerin for þee & for me' (72/16-21).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> 'Lya (Affectio) est divina inspiratione inflammata; Rachel est ratio divina reuelatione illuminata' (col. 4); *B.M.* 133/27-29. Cf. St. Bernard, *Serm. in Cant.* XLIX 4 (col. 1018): 'Duo . . . beatae contemplationis excessus: in intellectu unus, et alter in affectu; unus in lumine, alter in fervore, unus in agnitione, alter in devotione'.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Cloud* 34/31-35. See below, p. xlvii<sup>75</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Benjamin Major* V i (col. 169): 'Ecce nos in hoc opere quasi Beseleel officium suscepimus qui te ad contemplationis studium instructionem reddere . . . curauimus. Longe tamen meipsum in hac gratia praecedis, si ex his quae audis adjutus intrare praeualeas usque ad interiora velaminis.'

It cannot be assumed that he resembled Bezeleel in the other details,<sup>23</sup> but it is possible.<sup>24</sup>

The range of **Purgation** indicated in *The Cloud* treatises extends from the first turning towards God through grace and faith to the last state of an experienced union, when the indwelling Spirit wholly takes over. The arid feeling of dereliction just before final attainment, well testified in mystical writings of all times and vividly described in *Priue Counseling*, is actually the ultimate Purgation of all self-hood.<sup>25</sup> To be capable thereby of such infused contemplation is to have regained the soul's pristine 'likeness' to its Creator by the eradication of all the 'unlikeness' of self-centredness. The Christian asceticism is a long, austere, and progressive discipline involving body and soul, and culminating only in the final state of beatitude. God is Pure Spirit, and only in purity of the spirit can the contemplative finally attain to Divine Union.

*The Cloud* group collectively covers the whole ascent, from the recognition of individual sins and moral reform by the acquisition of virtues, and the purification of the intellect, to the utmost concentration in the spirit. *Discrecyon of Spirites* teaches how to discern and counteract individual temptations to sin. *Benjamin Minor* methodically delineates the purification of the bodily senses and the affections, the imagination, and the disposition of reason leading to contemplation proper. As necessary preliminaries to unitive prayer, *Preier* also summarizes in abstract terms the qualities portrayed by Lya's family from Ruben to Isachar.<sup>26</sup>

*The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling*, written specifically to exhort, encourage, and guide those already called to the contemplative life, make only passing references to the earlier phases of the ascent. The separate virtues are all comprehended in the two fundamental concepts of Humility and Charity.<sup>27</sup> In the higher spiritual devotion recommended, sins are to be regarded as one whole, as 'a birþen bounden togeders' (25/14-15), felt as 'a lumpe (none oþer þing þan þiself)', 40/32. The purgative way henceforth lies towards perfect love of God for Himself and of all else, including oneself, for God.

'Discretion' is a key-word throughout *The Cloud* treatises,<sup>28</sup> and to

<sup>23</sup> E.g. iv, xxii (col. 166): 'absque ullo mentis excessu'; (vi, col. 168): 'Sed tunc quasi juxta Bezeleel exemplum in idipsum ex proprio opere proficimus, cum in eandem gratiam nostro studio et labore artem comparamus'. Cf. 72/8-10: 'Somtyme we profite in þis grace by oure owne goostly sleight, holpyn wiþ grace, & þan ben we licnid to Bezeleel'.

<sup>24</sup> See P.C. 87/8-10.

<sup>25</sup> 95/37-97/14.

<sup>26</sup> See below, pp. xxxix; B.M. 130/figure.

<sup>27</sup> See *Cloud*, ch. 12.

<sup>28</sup> 'Discretion' rightly appears in the titles of *Stirings* and *Spirites*. The one unmasks impulses that seem at first sight to be holy, and the other distinguishes between the good and the bad



attain it is essential. Joseph (= Discretion), Rachel's first born son, signifies the indispensable, full awareness of the relationship between self and God. Reason must know that the soul in God's image and essential dignity is yet alienated in present wretchedness. Only this will engender that hatred of selfhood, which is true humility and the condition for the perfect love and experience of God.

The final purgation is to liberate the spirit from the busy operations of the intellect, so that with undistracted attention, it is free to offer itself wholly to God in the prayer of 'love without knowing'.

### THE MEDIEVAL CONCEPT OF THE NATURE OF MAN

The concentrated notes which form chs 63-67 remind the disciple of the nature of man, selecting those aspects relevant to the 'special prayer'. Their gist is commonplace, chiefly from Patristic sources.<sup>29</sup> Though these chapters might have been added later,<sup>30</sup> they are nevertheless central to the basic theme that the contemplative is returning Godwards to fulfill the purpose of his creation. In addition, for the modern reader, these chapters elucidate the medieval connotations of such repeated terms as *soul*, *spirit*, *mind*, *reason*, *imagination*, *will*, *sensuality*, and, most important, *love*.

#### *Soul, Spirit*

Man, as St. Augustine taught, consists of body and soul, everlastingly and indissolubly united in one substance (cf. 50/15-17). The soul, the inner man, is created in God's image and likeness (Gen. i, 26). To the soul belong mind, reason and will, 'secundum quas capaces Dei sumus'.<sup>31</sup> The image of the Uncreated Trinity is

<sup>28</sup> *cont.*]

spirits that speak to the soul. More generally 'discretion' is the essence of the repeated proverb: 'Betyr is list þen liþer strengje' added to the translation of *Benjamin Minor* (*B.M.* 142/20) and quoted in *The Cloud* (48/17-18) and *Preier* (107/5-6). The repeated instruction is to seek counsel as 'þe rediest getyng of discrecioun'. *B.M.* 142/17-18.

What Joseph typifies, therefore, is of great importance. See *Com.* 142/34-36. Characteristics from *Benj. Min.* lxxvii-lxxxi, not developed in *B.M.*, and variations upon them, occur in many chapters of *The Cloud*. E.g. Joseph has developed an instinctive discernment of what is right conduct in all states. He has trained the virtues and rehabilitated the vices; he recognizes the dangers of the spiritual ascent and anticipates the wiles of the Devil. He imposes moderation in all religious behaviour except in loving attention to God. He uses wisely the gifts of grace, and can turn physical infirmity to spiritual enrichment, distraction to an increase in self-knowledge.

<sup>29</sup> St. Augustine's *De Trinitate* is the basic text.

<sup>30</sup> See *Com.* 64/6-66/28.

<sup>31</sup> *De VII Itin.* Prol. iii, quoting from St. Augustine. Cf. *De Trin.* XIV 8: 11 (*P.L.* t. 42, col. 1044): 'quippe . . . imago ejus est, quo ejus capax est, ejus particeps esse potest'.

imprinted on the created structure of the human mind. As the Father generated the Word and the Holy Spirit proceeds from Both, so the mind comprehends the reason and the will (64/17-19). That 'image' is eternal, but through the Fall, man defaced the 'likeness'; he must needs be reformed 'bi grace to þe first state of mans soule' (10/17).<sup>32</sup> The mind must again be 'ocupyed wiþ no maner of þyng þat is bodely or goostly, bot only wiþ þe self substaunce of God' (67/4-5). *The Cloud* treatises point out the way.

The words 'soul' and 'spirit' tend to be interchangeable, but 'soul' is the more general, and in many passages in *The Cloud* treatises the two are distinguishable.<sup>33</sup> Though of the same substance, the soul is the animating principle, the spirit its higher power, separable from the corporeal, and able to rise beyond itself.<sup>34</sup> The 'likeness' will be restored when the soul is again 'knit to God in spirite, & in oneheed of loue & acordaunce of wile' (17/40-41). In the highest point of the spirit God is always latent, and there He is to be found.

*Qui adhaeret Deo, unus spiritus est cum illo.*<sup>35</sup>

Hence the assertion that union is possible in 'þe higest & þe souereynest pointe of þe spirit' (41/12-13). As in *Benjamin Major*,<sup>36</sup> this peak (L. *apex*) is identified with the soul's innermost depth:

'þe depnes of spirit, þe whiche is þe heigt . . . in goostlynes alle is one' (41/24-25).

### *Mind*

'Mind' represents the first of man's three principal faculties, and corresponds to St. Augustine's *Memoria*, alias *Mens*.<sup>37</sup> In some respects it resembles the modern concept of the 'unconscious'; its habit is to retain, as a treasury or storehouse. It not only knows itself

<sup>32</sup> 'Haec igitur trinitas mentis non propterea Dei est imago, quia sui meminit mens, et intelligit ac diligit se; sed quia potest meminisse, et intelligere et amare a quo facta est' (*De Trin.* XIV xii, col. 1048).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. 49/14-15, *P.C.* 77/40-42, *P.* 106/7-8, 13-14.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Richard of St. Victor. *De Exterminatione Mali* III, xviii (col. 1114): 'spiritus . . . anima . . . una eadem que simplicisque naturae substantia . . . sed, cum ad distinctionem ponitur gemina vis ejusdem essentiae, una superior per spiritum, alia inferior per animam designatur'. Kirch., p. 247.

<sup>35</sup> I Cor. vi, 17. Quoted in *Preier* (106/9-10), as in countless medieval treatises of mystical theology.

<sup>36</sup> *Benj. Maj.* IV, 23, col. 167: 'Sed in humano procul dubio animo idem est summum quod intimum, et intimum quod summum. . . . Quid igitur est montis verticem . . . quam summum et intimum mentis sinum ascendere.' Kirch., p. 179.

<sup>37</sup> St. Augustine varied his triad; *mens*, *notitia*, *amor* IX, cols 961-5; *memoria*, *intelligentia*, *voluntas* X, cols 982-4; *memoria Dei*, *intelligentia*, *amor* XIV, cols 1044-9. His *memoria* = the soul's memory of God, its Creator.

as existent, but also contains the past and the present, the memory of concrete things and sensations as well as abstract ideas, likewise the tenets of faith, and the results of the investigation of reason and the experiences of emotion. Mind is passive, and 'worcheþ not itself' (64/17). Reason and Will with their respective handmaids, Imagination and Sensuality, are active.<sup>38</sup> Reason and Will are called 'principal', for they 'worchen in pure spirit wiþouten any maner of bodelines' (64/35). Imagination and Sensuality are subsidiary because they work through the senses. By including these last two *The Cloud* author superimposed upon St. Augustine's triad the fourfold scheme of *Benjamin Minor*, cc. iii-vi.

### Reason

Man's intellectual faculty, by grace created in the image of God, Who is Intellectual Being, has not entirely lost its former glory:

'a clere beholding of þi kindly witte, preentid in þi reson wiþinne in þi soule . . . is a beme of þe licles of God' (16/24-27).<sup>39</sup>

Reason is the 'ige of þi soule' (13/42, 39/38), an Augustinian image.<sup>40</sup> Reason illumined by grace plays a major part in the ascent towards God. In *Benjamin Minor* Rachel (Reason) seeks for Wisdom. Through Joseph, her first-born son (Discretion), Reason learns to recognize sin and its remedy (cf. *Cloud*, ch. 35). Through meditation which arises from reason the eye may be 'openid bi grace for to see þi wrechidnes, þe Passion, þe kyndnes & þe wonderful werkes of God in his creatures bodily & goostly'. Reason establishes the proper intention of prayer, having recognized God as the highest Good.

Reason seeks always to know. Her operations and their achievement are often denoted by such associated M.E. words as *can*, *kunnyng*, *þoȝt*, *þinkyng*, *knowyng*, *understanding*. Images of what is real or imaginary (= *fantasie* L. *phantasia*, lit. 'making visible') are essential before she can start.

'Wiþoutyn ymaginacioun reson may not knowe' (*B.M.* 129/19-20). *Benjamin Major* provided a widely accepted classification of the nature and grades of knowledge: through the senses, the imagination, the reason, the intellect or intelligence, and lastly intellectual intuition through grace which transcends reason's highest natural knowledge.

<sup>38</sup> 'alle þees toure miȝtes & þeire werkes mynde conteneþ & comprehendþ in itself' (64/18-19).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. St. Aug. *De Civitate Dei* XXII, xxiv, 2 (*P.L.* t. 41, col. 789): 'non in eo (i.e. homine) tamen penitus extinctus est, quaedam velut scintilla rationis in qua factus est ad imaginem Dei'.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *De Ordine* II, iii (*P.L.* t. 32, col. 999): 'ratio ita . . . in mentibus, ut in oculis est aspectus'.

Reason proceeds discursively by investigation and dialectic,<sup>41</sup> from one thing arriving at the knowledge of another.<sup>42</sup> *Understanding* denotes an 'inner sight', a grasp of some inherent significance: e.g. through true meditation on the Scriptures the intelligence is illumined by grace with understanding. Thus to the very threshold of unitive prayer reason acts as guide, but there is the limit. There are no images by which reason can reach and know the Absolute Fullness of God as He is in Himself. Rachel dies when Benjamin (Contemplation) is born.<sup>43</sup> The further knowing mentioned in *P.C.* 81/30-32, is a suprarational experience, divinely infused, ineffable, and above and beyond natural understanding. When the perfect soul is 'illumind in þe reson by þe clere beme of euerlastyng lȳt' (*P.* 104/30), the soul is 'bleendid . . . for habundaunce of goostly lȳt' (68/17):<sup>44</sup>

'euermore he schal fynde . . . a cloude of vnknowyng . . . bitwix hym and his God' (69/11-12).

### *Imagination*

Imagination, Reason's 'handmaid', is the mind's image-forming power. As an intermediary between the bodily senses and the reason, it provides images from the outer world, from abstracts of which the reason can form concepts, and thus rise to the knowledge of invisible things. 'Byfore er man synned', imagination was controlled by reason. Now it provides obstacles and pitfalls for the unwary contemplative. Imagination has become a 'foule jangler' (*B.M.* 129/26), producing distracting images when he would pray, or ministering disordered images of bodily creatures, 'or elles sum fantasye, þe whiche is nouȝt elles bot a bodely conseyte of a goostly þȳng, or elles a goostly conseyte of a bodely þȳng . . . euermore feynid & fals' (65/27-30).<sup>45</sup>

### *Will*

Through will, 'we chese good, after þat it be determinid wiþ reson; & þorow þe whiche we loue God, we desire God, & resten us wiþ ful likyng & consent eendli in God' (65/9-11). The will is the affective

<sup>41</sup> Cf. St. Augustine *De Ordine* II, xi, 30 (*P.L.* t. 32, col. 1009): 'Ratio est mentis motio, ea quae discuntur distinguendi et connectendi'.

<sup>42</sup> See *Summa Theologica*, q. 82, a. 4.

<sup>43</sup> *Benj. Min.* lxxiii (col. 52): 'quia cum mens hominis supra se ipsum rapitur, omnes humanae ratiocinationis, angustias supergreditur'. Kirch., p. 111.

<sup>44</sup> The image of light, frequently introduced by St. Augustine, was Scriptural in origin; e.g. John i, 4, 9.

<sup>45</sup> The author repeatedly draws attention to these dangers. His individual dry and caustic humour is seen best at play in chs 51, 52, 57, 58, which give examples of the sorry antics of inexperienced would-be contemplatives led astray by their imagination.

faculty, 'þi goostly herte' (52/29), which impels human affections (= feelings) towards a chosen end. Classical psychology established the four fundamental affections from which all other feelings are composed: *Amor*, *Timor*, *Gaudium*, *Tristia*.<sup>46</sup> *Lya* (*Affectio*), who gives birth to proper feelings in due order, is set in contrast to Rachel, the intellectual principle; and *Lya* is dominant in the preparatory stages of contemplation (see figure *B.M.* 130). In contemplative prayer will is 'þe louyng myzt' to which God is 'al comprehensible at þe fulle' (10/37).<sup>47</sup>

'By loue may he be getyn & holden; bot bi þougt neiþer' (14/23). In *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling* the will and love are so closely akin that in many passages the words are interchangeable.<sup>48</sup> That they are distinguishable, however, can be seen in the recurrent phrase: 'in oneheed of loue & acordaunce of wille'.

### Love

'Love' in *The Cloud* treatises, like 'intent', is an act of the will.<sup>49</sup> The prescribed intent is to love God exclusively for Himself,<sup>50</sup> 'as he is in himself', 'wipouten mene' (i.e. 'intermediary'),<sup>51</sup> and with 'no mesure' (44/22).<sup>52</sup> This degree of love for God is 'Charity', the greatest of the theological virtues (1 Cor. xiii, 13). According to Pauline and Johannine theology in particular, therein lie the means for the restoration of the 'image', the soul, to God's 'likeness',<sup>53</sup> and the interpretation of the Divine mystery of the working of God to draw the soul back to Him. Cf. *Priue Counseling*:

'þe grounde & þe strengþe of þis worching schal be seen nougt elles bot þe glorious gifte of loue' (82/26-27).

<sup>46</sup> See *Com.* 131/5.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *De VII Itin.* VI, vi (from St. Aug.): 'Voluntas habet unum proprium actum, qui est actus tenendi, sive amplexandi, et quasi possidendi: quos actus non potest habere intellectus'.

<sup>48</sup> Subsequent accretions to the meaning of L. *affectio* explain the relationship of the several closely associated words *affeccionun*, *loue*, *will* in these treatises. Originally signifying 'a disposition towards . . . caused by some influence', L. *affectio* took on the meaning of 'a fixed disposition, a frame of mind, a state of feeling', and hence 'love'. In late Latin of the sixth century, *affectio* also denoted the 'ability of willing, inclination, volition'. Cf. the alternation in St. Augustine's triads between *Voluntas* and *Amor*.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *De VII Itin.* I, i: 'amor autem est actus voluntatis'; 'intentio proprie et principaliter est actus voluntatis'.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *De Doctrina Christiana* I, xxvii (*P.L.* t. 34, col. 29): 'Diligendum est . . . Deus vero propter seipsum . . . et omnis homo in quantum homo est, diligendus est propter Deum, Deus vero propter seipsum'; *ibid.*, III, xvi; St. Bernard *In Cant.*, quoted in *De VII Itin.* III, v: 'intendere et quaerere solum Deum propter ipsum solum'.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *De VII Itin.* IV, vi: '. . . verus amor, sive charitas, nullum patitur medium inter se et objectum, quod est Deus, sed vehementer tendit in ipsum immediate'.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. St. Bernard *De Diligendo Deo* I (col. 974): 'Causa diligendi Deum, Deus est: modus, sine modo diligere. Cf. *De VII Itin.* IV, iii: 'Modus amandi Deum est quod sit sine modo et mensura'.

<sup>53</sup> E.g. Eph. iv, 22-24; Col. iii, 9-10.



*Deus est Charitas* I John iv, 8. God is Uncreated Love. The Holy Spirit is God's love. Grace is a gratuitous gift of the Holy Spirit. God's love for man has been revealed in the Creation and Redemption, and now again in the call of grace to perfection. The 'steryng of loue—þat is þe werk of only God' (34/18-19; cf. *P.C.* 98/34-35). Thus 'we love God because He first loved us'<sup>54</sup> (I John, iv, 19). We love God with God's love.<sup>55</sup>

Thus the orthodox concept of perfection is comprised in the succinct totality of the reiterated key phrase:

'knit to God by grace in spirite, & in oneheed of loue & acordaunce of wile'.

Though this phrase has already been analysed as a definition of Union (*see Introd.*, p. xxi), a closer consideration of the soul's faculties and their potentialities has given insight not only into the significant order of the sequence of ideas, but also into their essential oneness. *The Cloud* author carefully guarded against the term 'deification'<sup>56</sup> found in many of his basic sources, choosing rather to stress their usual amplification that the created can reach no identity of substance with the Uncreated. Love alone can establish a unity, and that 'in spirite' (I Cor. vi, 17). Though latent in every creature, 'þi grounde & þi purete of spirit' *P.C.* 81/16-17, God is there to be found in 'þe souereynest pointe'.

'as verrelly is a soule þere where it louiþ, as in þe body þat teueþ bi it & to þe whiche it geueþ liif' (62/35-36).<sup>57</sup>

Concurrence of will is the essential beginning and end of such mutual love. God wills that all creatures exist solely for Himself, their Highest Good. The contemplative's intent is no other. Emptied of self-will, the cause of alienation from God, and willing only what God wills, the soul is capable of being filled with the Divine life.

'whoso had a trewe desire for to be at heuyn, þen þat same tyme he were in heuen goostly' (62/29-31).<sup>58</sup>

In contemplation God is and always must be allowed to be 'þe worcher'. Man's active part is to prepare himself to receive that gift of grace. The most purely spiritual operation of the will is the prayer of Aspiration. The work of preparation for it taught in *The Cloud* and

<sup>54</sup> Rom. v 5; I Cor. iii, 16; Gal. ii, 20; Phil. ii, 13; John xvii, 21-22; I John iv, 12-13, 16, 17.

<sup>55</sup> I.e. love created in man. Cf. *Summa Theologica* IIa, IIae, 23 a. 2.

<sup>56</sup> See ch. 67, *Com.* 67/14. The concept of 'deification' was based on Ps. lxxxi, 6 (Vulg.).

<sup>57</sup> This is based on commonplaces. Cf. Matt. vi, 21, St. Bernard *De praecepto et dispensatione* xx (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 892): 'Neque enim praesentior spiritus noster est ubi animat, quam ubi amat'; *De VII Itin.* IV, iv, a. 2: 'sicut vita corporis est anima, per quam movetur et sentit; ita vita fidei est caritas, per quam operatur actus virtutum et Spiritus Sancti'.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Phil. iii, 20.



*Priue Counseling* is the practice of the prayer of 'Love without knowing'.

### THE DIONYSIAN TRADITION AND THE PRAYER OF LOVE WITHOUT KNOWING

Though the first chapter of the *Mystical Theology* of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite is unquestionably cardinal for any study of *The Cloud's* particular guidance, the author obviously oversimplified in his statement that

DIONYSIUS  
AND HIS  
BACKGROUND

'whoso wil loke Denis<sup>59</sup> bookes, he schal fynde þat his wordes wilen cleerly aferme al þat I haue seyde or schal sey, fro þe biginnyng of þis tretis to þe ende' (70/7-9).

His claim needs modification even with reference to the central guidance on unitive prayer; his background has been shown to be largely Augustinian. The two ultimate influences are by no means incompatible. Before his conversion, St. Augustine, like Dionysius, was steeped in Neoplatonic philosophy, which profoundly coloured his thought later. Indeed, Dionysian teaching was welcomed in Paris in the twelfth century because of its many resemblances to that of St. Augustine. In one vital feature *The Cloud* author is closer to St. Augustine. Dionysius's overlay of Christian theology barely concealed his Neoplatonic<sup>60</sup> foundation. St. Augustine fully reinterpreted the acceptable principles of this pagan philosophy in accordance with the Bible's revelation of the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, its concept of man created in God's image and subsequent alienation from God through self-will, his way of recovery through the acquisition of moral virtues, his need at every stage of that Free Gift of grace that had operated in his creation and redemption.

Neoplatonism is therefore doubly pertinent to *The Cloud's* heritage. Its influence is most obvious in *Priue Counseling*. The relevant tenets are summarized below:

In the triad of his metaphysical system Plotinus postulated:<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> For the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, see *Com.* 119/2-3.

<sup>60</sup> The system of the Neoplatonic school of philosophy current A.D. 190-529, as represented by its outstanding exponents, Plotinus (d. c. 269), Porphyry, his contemporary and biographer, and Proclus (d. c. 485), brought together the converging metaphysics of Plato and oriental speculation, especially from India.

Though Neoplatonism was officially banned by a Christian Roman Emperor in A.D. 529, it was very much alive in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Albertus Magnus founded a Neoplatonic school at Cologne. Eckhart was so much under its influence that he was called the 'Plotinus of his age'. See D. Knowles 'The Influence of Pseudo-Dionysius on Western Mysticism' in *Christian Spirituality* ed. P. Brooks (London, 1975).

<sup>61</sup> The scheme is based on the *Enneads* of Plotinus, the primary statement of Neoplatonism, and the one which influenced St. Augustine. Though Proclus was a more immediate influence on Dionysius, to summarize his re-statement would introduce some complexities not relevant to *The Cloud*. See *Enneads* V, 3, 14.

I *The One*

From the One all that has existence has emanated by stages from the celestial down to the creatures and things of earth.

The One is Superessence, and beyond Otherness, and above all distinctions, which limit. The One is not even Being, for that implies non-Being. Having no qualities, or variations, the One is therefore wholly unlike everything that is known. It is beyond description and concept, everlasting, immoveable and without change. Like the sun's radiation, the One generously overflows from Itself, whilst remaining in Itself unchanged.

- II The One first engenders *Nous*, variously translated as e.g. Universal Intellectual Spirit, Mind, Intellect, Intelligence. This is the One's vision of Itself. The seer and the seen are one. Cf. the sun analogy again, where what gives light and the lighting of what is lit are the same. *Nous* is the light by which the One sees Itself. It first sees Itself as Being, and then as the prototype of all forms and patterns which give shape to all that exists below.

- III Universal **Soul** (or Life) is generated from the energy overflowing from *Nous* as *Nous* from The One.

Soul invests with form, animates and sustains with life all things in heaven and earth, each an image of the prototype from which it proceeds.

Soul pours downwards first into celestial bodies, and so to material bodies, nature and the world of sense, animating terrestrial bodies and manifesting Itself diminishingly in ever greater multiplicity and diversity; the further from the source, the lower in the scale of creation. Matter is the limit to which Soul comes. Matter in itself is nothing.

The human souls, therefore, participate in Universal Soul, whence all souls have a common origin and ground. But, rising higher, each soul is also an image of Universal Intellect. To approach Divine Intellect man must know his own soul when it is most like its source. When bodily things are shed, what is left will be an image of Divine Intellect.

In *Enneads* xvi Plotinus further postulated a double movement in the universe: (i) downward from the One, (ii) upward back towards the One. Like water in a fountain, II and III unceasingly flow down and return to their source. The human soul by its very nature longs to return. Its lower part clings to its body and lives by the senses; the higher is still attached to its Source. A centre at the apex of its intellectual being is still conjoined with the One. The way back therefore lies within every individual. The soul must strive to retrace

the processes of descent, working upwards and inwards from phenomena to the unity of Universal Soul, then to contemplation of the Divine Exemplars of things, the highest unity attainable by a self-conscious being. At this stage of simplification there will still be the duality of self and the One. The culmination is to be attained only in ecstasy, a state of not-knowing but experiencing. 'To be in itself alone, and not in being, is to be in the One.'

Even before Dionysius, *The Cloud's* characteristic guidance towards Union through the 'naked intent' and 'love without knowing' had many precedents. The negative, affective Mystic Way by Apophatism, i.e. by denial and rejection, had been practised in Asia, and especially in India, long before the Christian era. In Christian mystical theology the *via negativa* and the *via affirmativa* already existed together in the works of the second-century St. Clement of Alexandria. The two ways, seemingly opposite, paradoxically move towards the same goal, for both liberate the soul from all ties to the world and selfhood, and through total abandonment find their culmination in God Himself through love. Before the thirteenth century, the affirmative way was the more commonly followed in the west. Intellectual and speculative, this leads to unitive prayer by a progressive understanding of Divine goodness as revealed in the Creation, the Incarnation, and Redemption. In accordance with Apostolic teaching, it is Christocentric, and rises through devotion to the Humanity of Jesus to the worship of His Divinity.

The influence of the teaching on the *via negativa* was to grow ever increasingly in the west. It was given momentum by the last great flowering of Greek philosophy in Neoplatonism, which soon spread from Alexandria to the Greek Church and the Roman. It gathered the symbol of 'the cloud of unknowing' which provided the Middle English title at least as early as the *Stromatum* of St. Clement (*see Com.* 122/18). For *The Cloud's* recognized source (*see Hid Diuinite*, 119/2-7), Dionysius himself had drawn his inspiration from St. Gregory of Nyssa's exegesis of Exodus xxiv, 13-18 in *De Vita Moysis* (P. G. t. 44, 317). In these basic texts Mount Sinai symbolized the mount of perfection. When Moses was purified not only from sin but also from all attachments to things below God, and had reached the limit of his own natural powers, he entered that cloud on the summit which obscured the world and likewise veiled God. In the darkness of that thick cloud where nothing was seen, he heard the word of God. The darkness paradoxically proved the way to Light.

In the Middle Ages, however, Dionysius was accepted as the most authoritative exponent of the *via negativa* because, from his pseudonym, he was believed to be St. Paul's Athenian convert, and in close

association with the Apostolic circle. For the introduction of his works to the West see *Com.* 119/2-3. Latin translations, commentaries, and Dionysian-inspired writings proliferated from the twelfth century onwards.<sup>62</sup> The Dionysian stream was gradually merging with the main European tradition, and in the process modified and amplified. *Hid Diuinite* itself was partly based on the Latin version of John Sarracenus, partly on the *Paraphrase (Extractio)* of Thomas Gallus, Abbot of Vercelli (Vercellensis), with some collation with his *Explanatio (Commentary)* and probably with the *Gloss*.<sup>63</sup>

In one of *The Cloud* author's rare acknowledgements, the Prologue to *Hid Diuinite* specifically recognizes this authority:

'to declare þe hardnes of it, I haue moche folowed þe sentence of þe Abbot of Seinte Victore, a noble & a worþi expositour of þis same book' (119/8-10).

Thus he insists on the exercise of the will, and on the power of love to attain to a surpassing immediate knowledge of God. Vercellensis had taught that the supreme cognitive mystical apprehension of God in union is achieved by a special faculty of the soul which he called 'principalis affectio' and set far above the normal cognitive faculties of imagination, reason, and intellect:

'(Dionysius) putauit summam vim cognitiuam esse intellectum, cum sit alia que non minus excedit intellectum quam intellectus rationem vel ratio ymaginacionem, scilicet principalis affectio. Et ipsa est scintilla sinderisis que sola unibilis est spiritui diuino.'<sup>64</sup>

The *Paraphrase (Extractio)* was included in the great compilation of Dionysian texts of the University of Paris.<sup>65</sup> Vercellensis, in turn, became a major influence on later exponents of Dionysian mystical theology in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These, in practical studies of the Way, further developed the doctrine of the non-intellectual nature of the final ascent to Union. Among their largely unedited Latin treatises, many as yet unexplored and, one

<sup>62</sup> Richard of St. Victor, for example, was among those chiefly responsible for transmitting Dionysian concepts up to and beyond the Renaissance. It is possible that the Middle English images of the 'cloud of unknowing' and the 'cloud of forgetting' were derived from *Benjamin Major*. Dionysius himself spoke of the 'darkness' (*caligo ignorantiae*). Richard juxtaposes *nubes ignorantiae* and *nebula obliuionis*; cf. 'Quid enim est ad diuinæ vocationis accessum nebulam intrare nisi mente excedere, et per obliuionis nebulam quasi adjacentium memoria mente caligare' V 2; 'Juste mirari debeas quomodo concordat nubes ignorantiae cum nube illuminatae intelligentiae' IV 22.

<sup>63</sup> See *Com.* 119/8-9.

<sup>64</sup> Vercellensis's commentary quoted from Merton College MS. 69, f. 131b.

<sup>65</sup> See H. F. Dondaine *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Rome, 1953).



suspects, more awaiting discovery, the nearest extant relation to *The Cloud* might one day be found.

There is encouragement for such investigation in the evidence of arresting examples of affinity between *The Cloud* treatises and some known texts of Carthusian spirituality. A comparison with the *Viae Sion lugent*<sup>66</sup> of Hugh of Balma<sup>67</sup> proved very fruitful. Embedded also in the *De Contemplatione* of one of Hugh's followers, Guigo (or Guido) de Ponte,<sup>68</sup> are various themes and images associable with *The Cloud*'s 'work'. Scattered resemblances to the *Scala Claustralium* of Guigo II<sup>69</sup> are commented on elsewhere in the present Introduction and Commentary.<sup>70</sup> The distinctive passage on 'aspirations', or 'elevations' in *Cloud* 12/21-30, which is echoed and expanded in *Preier* 105/28-35, reflects a devotion recommended by the Carthusian Guigo I,<sup>71</sup> but it might have been recalling more directly the Prologue of *Viae Sion lugent*. There and elsewhere Hugh amplified his own definition of the 'wisdom' of Dionysius:

A  
COMPARISON  
WITH HUGH  
OF BALMA

'Quae idem est quod extensio amoris in Deum per amoris desiderium'

by adding that the soul

'propter multas flammigeras amoris affectiones, sive aspirationes, supra seipsam Creatoris sui dextera sublevata citius quam cogitari possit, sine omni cogitatione praevia, vel concomitante, quotiescumque placet, centies vel millesies de die, vel de nocte in

<sup>66</sup> *Viae Sion lugent* was printed among the *Opera Omnia S. Bonaventurae* from the Strasbourg edition of c. 1495 to that of A. C. Peltier, t. 8 (Paris, 1866).

<sup>67</sup> MS. Douce 262 (Do, c. 1500) of *The Cloud of Unknowing* includes also (ff. 119a-127b) *Expositio Super Quedam Verba Libri Beati Dionisii De Mistica Theologia*. In a work not yet published, 'The Cloud of Unknowing' and 'The Mirror of Simple Souls' in the *Latin Glossed Translations* by Richard Methley of Mount Grace Charterhouse, ed. James Walsh and Edmund Colledge, it is suggested that the Dionysian passages might well have been drawn from Hugh of Balma's version of Sarracenus's translation. I am indebted to the editors for allowing me to see a draft of their introduction.

The compiler of a short Middle English treatise, *Via Triplex*, extant in British Library MSS. Add. 37790 and Add. 37049, certainly saw a connection between Hugh of Balma and *The Cloud* author. The first two sections consist of a simplified translation from the Purgative and Illuminative Ways of *Viae Sion lugent*; the third section on the *Via Unitiva*, *The Oned Waye* (MS. Add. 37790, ff. 235a-236a), substitutes for part of Hugh's version *Cloud* ch. 3, 9/12-25, *Preier* 106/9-17, *Stirings* 115/20-29.

<sup>68</sup> A monk of the Grande Chartreuse (d. 1297). Most of the following references are drawn from J. P. Grausem, 'Le De Contemplatione du Chartreux Guigues du Pont', *R.A.M.*, t. 10, 1929, pp. 259-89. The quotations are from MS. Bibliothèque Nationale 14978.

<sup>69</sup> The ninth Prior of the Grande Chartreuse (c. 1173-1180), who died in 1188. The man who succeeded him as Procurator was to become St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln.

<sup>70</sup> See pp. xxxi<sup>9</sup>, xxxii<sup>15</sup>, *Com.* 31/35, 38/18-21, 39/26-27, 42/32-33, 59/37-38.

<sup>71</sup> See *Com.* 9/25.

Deo afficitur, ad ipsum solum possidendum innumerabilibus desideriiis aspirando'.<sup>72</sup>

This spontaneous elevation, the 'blind stering', lies at the core of *The Cloud's* teaching, while in the Latin treatise 'flammigeras affectiones' ('aspirations') frequently recur. Both writers assert that the ascent of love is the surest, the easiest, and the shortest way: cf. 'certissima et levissima', III, iv, 'citius quam cogitari possit'. Prol., *Cloud* 9/25-26, 10/4-5. The way, moreover, is open to the simplest of folk: cf. 'quantum simplex, vel laicus'; 'simplex vetula, vel rusticus pascualis' III, iv; *P.C.* 76/17-37. At the call of grace, a sudden propulsion of the soul towards God, there need be no delay. The contemplative will not then be presumptuous to leave all meditations and other forced acts of devotion to abandon himself in immediate acts, i.e. to plunge into the darkness, reaching out for God as He is in Himself ('ipsum solum tangere' III, i, cf. *P.C.* 97/16-17, 23, *P.* 104/29, 'wipouten mene' 39/12-13, *P.* 105/31-35. 'Mens supra se provecta, movetur immediate in Deum . . . sine etiam commixtione alterius cujuscumque creaturae superioris, vel inferioris' III, iv).

As his acknowledgements indicate, Hugh, like the author of *The Cloud*, wished to be known only as a disciple and commentator on Dionysius's doctrine; he also worked from the texts of Sarracenus and Vercellensis, while keeping in mind the teaching of Richard of St. Victor.

*The Cloud* and *Viae Sion lugent* both fix the attention chiefly on that stage of Illumination when forced acts of devotion should give place to a higher spiritual activity. From the instruction on Purgation onwards, all has been presented with the attainment of contemplation in mind. Both texts set 'love' against 'knowing' in vehement opposition through their authors' conviction that only the most rigorous rejection of any distinct activity of intellect will finally unify the mind to concentrate on the highest goal. Time and again Hugh expounds, phrase by phrase, just those quotations from the Areopagite's *Mystical Theology* c. I which underlie *The Cloud's* practical instruction:

'et sensus derelinque et intellectuales operationes, et omnia sensibilia et intelligibilia, et omnia non existentia et existentia: et sicut est possibile, ignote consurge ad ejus unionem qui est

<sup>72</sup> Cf. III, iv: 'Unde ista consurrectio, quae per ignorantiam dicitur, nihil aliud est nisi immediate moveri per ardorem amoris sine omnis creaturae speculo, absque praevia cogitatione, sine etiam motu intelligentiae concomitante; ut solus affectus tangat, et in ipso actuali exercitio nihil cognoscat speculativa cognitio, et ille est oculus quo sponsus in *Canticis* a sponsa dicitur vulnerari'. Cf. *Stirings* 115/19-29.



super omnem substantiam et cognitionem. Etenim excessu tui ipsius . . .' (see *H.D.* 120/8-25).

Like Hugh, *The Cloud* author would totally reject not only the perceptions of the physical and spiritual senses, but also every intellectual concept of creatures, of angels, or even of the goodness of God, to reach what alone is left—Divine Essence, by grace to be experienced in a mode of being. Both understood the difficulty and painfulness<sup>73</sup> of this total effort in the early stages, but believed that by practice in the exercise the aspirations might become habitual and continuous. Twice Hugh dwells on the epigram from *Divine Names*, which is the only acknowledged direct quotation in *The Cloud*, and is introduced to justify and summarize its particular teaching:

Sapientia est dignissima Dei cognitio, per ignorantiam cognita'  
III, i. 'Sapientia est Dei divinissima cognitio per ignorantiam cogniti III, iv.'<sup>74</sup>

Both treatises give the same two complementary reasons why the infinite and uncreated nature of God can never be comprehended by the human intellect, finite and created. At its highest level the intellect cannot work 'sine omni medio': 'docet primam causam per effectum' III, iv; 'intelligentia capere non sufficit', since always 'ex communicatione carnis corruptae, phantasiis est admixtus' III, i.

The crowning experience for both is a wisdom divinely infused and ineffable, wholly unlike the highest wisdom of the human intellect, and different in proportion from the understanding divinely infused of heavenly things in Illumination. This wisdom is 'Denis deuinite, his wisdom and his drewry, his lizty derknes & his vnknowyn kunnynges', which in *Priue Counseling* (88/1-5) is identified with 'þe werk'. The language of both is inspired by the initial prayer of *Mystical Theology* (cf. *H.D.* 119/12-22). The Source lies hidden in a darkness which shines with the greatest light when that darkness is absolute.<sup>75</sup> This is the 'hiȝe goostly wisdom, sodenly & frely riftid of þe spirit inly in itself', 'vnformid . . . impossible to be streinid or to falle vnder þe worching of naturele witte' (*P.C.* 82/12-14); 'goostly wisdom in verrey contemplacion & heiz sauour of þe Godheed' (81/23-24), 'þe louely beholding of God as he is' (86/22).

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *Quaestio Unica*, appended to *Viae Sion*: 'Quid enim faciat animus si non poterit cogitare de Deo, vel Trinitate, vel angelis? Videtur etiam tunc esse quasi in nube . . .'.

<sup>74</sup> The variations are both apposite to *The Cloud's* teaching.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *Viae Sion* III, i, commenting on *Divine Names*, ch. vii: 'quando mens . . . unita est super-splendentibus radiis, inscrutabili et profundo sapientiae splendore illuminata'. *Prolog.* 'Super omnem intellectum, per amoris affectum . . . ista affectum inflammat, intellectum illuminat'. In a Dionysian context this oft-quoted phrase takes on a further significance. Cf. above p. xxxiii.

The total number of correspondences elsewhere is arresting, though it includes many familiar commonplaces, e.g.

'Quia ubi amat, ibi proprie inhabitat.' II, ii.

'Sicut anima est vita corporis, sic amor vita spiritum.' II, ii. Cf. 62/35-36.

Frequently the works concur in auxiliary themes: e.g.

The foremost comprehension of God as a mode of being (*passim*).

The help of angels and saints in the work, III, iii. Cf. 9/19-21.

The way of love without knowing to be pursued without intermission in act, or intention, II, ii. Cf. 44/22-30. Neither makes the customary recommendation of a return to earlier spiritual exercises when, through human frailty, concentration fails.

'Iterum et iterum consurgit, et iterum infra seipsam cadit.' III, i. Cf. 12/27-30.

The special prayer advocated as the way to perfection, and the final destruction of sin.

The intercession of this kind of prayer for all men without distinction; thus its link with Christ's own sacrifice through self-abnegation, I, ii. Cf. 33/35-40.

The proper posture of the body in prayer: 'specialiter necesse est, quod corpus totaliter sit erectum, et facies versa ad coelum superius; quia secundum dispositionem affectionum animae necesse est esse conformitatem corporis, et secundum dispositionem actionis spiritui respondentem', III, iii. Cf. *Cloud* ch. 61.

At least two difficult statements in the Middle English works gain in intelligibility from a comparison with a slightly longer version in *Viae Sion*:

'þat parfite steryng of loue þat byginneþ here is euen in noumbre wiþ þat þat schal last wiþouten ende in þe blis of heuen; for al is bot one' 29/16-18.

'quae est simplex et unica, quae in amore viventibus incipit in praesenti vita; quia amor ille, quo sponsus in vita ista diligitur, idem est numero cum illo, quo in aeternitate gloriae gubernatori omnium unietur', II, ii.

'þou boþe seest þi God & þi loue' *P.C.* 97/14-15.

'non solum esse ipsum absolute respiciatur, sed et modus apprehendendi ipsum . . .', III, iv.

If, however, the same selection of favourite images expressing *The Cloud's* central teaching exists also in some possible Latin source, then that treatise is not yet widely known. Drawing from common

tradition, *De VII Itin.*, and *Viae Sion* often prefer different images and collocations.

Though Hugh of Balma once has 'spiritus . . . in suo summo apice constitutus' (Prol.), his oft-recurrent phrase is some variant of 'in supremo apice affective constituta'.

'je higest & je  
souereynest  
poine of je  
spirit'  
41/12-13.

There are some likenesses in passages on Aspirations. Cf. 'flammigeras affectiones' *passim*; 'scintillantibus affectionibus' *Viae Sion* III, i; III, ii. Guigo de Ponte also has 'scintillantes affectiones'. Such imagery, however, was traditional, see Vercellenis 'scintilla synterisis' above, p. xlv.

'sparcle fro je  
cole' 12/24.

In one passage (f. 225r, Grausem, p. 274) Guigo introduces two images similar to those of *The Cloud*:<sup>76</sup>

'Deus . . . multotiens ipsi anime quasdam rivulas facit in ipsa caligine, per quas rivulas quodammodo secretis aspirationibus bonitas Dei attingitur; id est, quasdam acutas sagittas piarum affectionum<sup>77</sup> infundit anime penetrantes suam caliginem, quibus facientibus spiritualiter et suaviter gustat que divina sunt, saporando non videndo.'

'(God) wil sumtyme . . .  
seend oute a beme of goostly  
lit, peersyng jis cloude of  
vnknowing' 34/31-32.  
'smyte apon jat picke cloude  
wij, a scharp darte of longing  
loue' 14/29-30.

Cf. 'intellectus oculus totaliter excaecatur' *Viae Sion* III, iv, 'clausis oculis . . . (nec videt, nec intelligit)' Guigo f. 230v. Again this metaphor was widespread, probably in accordance with the traditional exegesis of Cant. iv, 9.

'blind'  
(felyng,  
beyng).

Similar collocations with Latin *nudus*, or its vernacular equivalent, were common in the fourteenth century, and can be paralleled in the writings of continental mystics.<sup>78</sup> An early fifteenth-century compilation from earlier Latin treatises and under the original title of part, *De Adhaerendo Deo*, possibly by a Bavarian Benedictine, Johannes von Kastl, closely resembles *The Cloud*'s phraseology (see *Com.* 9/31) in *nuda formaque adhaesione* c. i; *nudo ac simplici ac puro intellectu et affectu* c. iv; *nuda et expedita mente vacare et adhaerere Deo* c. x; *nudam sine phantasmatis et imaginibus* c. viii.

'naked'  
(intent,  
being,  
beholdyng,  
felyng).

In short, the imagery of *The Cloud* no less than its thought is drawn from the heritage of tradition. It remains to be considered how far the author's individuality is traceable in his manner of presentation.

<sup>76</sup> But see below, p. liv, et seq.

<sup>77</sup> Vercellenis also has 'acutas sagittas, volatile scilicet amoris'.

<sup>78</sup> E.g. Eckhart speaks of Divine Being as *nudum ens*. Ruysbroek *Spiritual Espousals* (trans. E. Colledge [London, 1952]): 'he meets God without mean . . . darkness, nakedness and nothing'. II, iv, c. xxxvi, p. 162: 'essential nakedness . . . wanting manner and without reason', III, iv, c. ix, p. 190. Also the 'blinde nouȝt, noȝwhere' of *Cloud* ch. 68 were figurative concepts favoured by Tauler, e.g. Sermon for the 12th Sunday after Pentecost, in which he preaches that Nothing and the contemplative's nothingness become one.

## INDIVIDUALITY IN PRESENTATION

Despite their ubiquitous indebtedness to the common stock of basic traditional sources, their author's reticence about himself, and their anonymity, the independent treatises,<sup>79</sup> and above all *The Cloud*, bear the stamp of a lively individuality. This is no less distinct than that in Richard Rolle's or Julian of Norwich's passages of spiritual autobiography, and possibly more perceptible than that of Walter Hilton in his comprehensive and well-proportioned account of the whole progress of the inner life, *The Scale of Perfection*. *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling* are virtually practical handbooks on the 'prayer of love without knowing', the earliest in our vernacular. With the Dionysian abstruse doctrine of Divine Transcendence and Incomprehensibility as fulcrum, they succeed in communicating the possibility of human transcendency of self in language which emulates Dionysius's own in grasping a concept beyond metaphor and symbolism, e.g.

'Wher anoper man wolde bid þee gader þi miztes & þi wittes holiche wiþinne þiself, & worschip God þere . . . þus wil I bid þee. Loke on no wyse þat þou be wiþinne þiself . . . Noȝwhere . . . þere wolde I haue þee . . . For whi noȝwhere bodely is euerywhere goostly'.<sup>80</sup>

These Middle English treatises have the impact of personal monographs, reinforced in *The Cloud* by the absence of the common medieval framework of development by the exegesis of Scriptural quotations.

They have the immediacy of a teacher's presence, who wins confidence by his individual voice of authority. He speaks with the conviction of one who had known his method to work.<sup>81</sup> He seems himself to have felt the touch of grace from the homely personal details of its effects.<sup>82</sup> His sympathetic anticipation of his disciple's psychological reactions when he attempts the 'work' seems to spring from personal experience of frustrating blankness,<sup>83</sup> dereliction,<sup>84</sup> of being clogged by sin.<sup>85</sup>

It has been suggested that the twenty-four-year-old disciple (11/32) on the threshold of contemplative prayer, to whom *The Cloud*

<sup>79</sup> Considerable differences in length and style make generalizations on certain aspects of the minor treatises impracticable here. For these see *Commentary*.

<sup>80</sup> See ch. 68.

<sup>81</sup> E.g. 9/28-39, 19/6-8.

<sup>82</sup> *P. C.* 95/19-36.

<sup>83</sup> See 9/28-30, 13/18-20.

<sup>84</sup> See *P. C.* 95/37-96/23.

<sup>85</sup> E.g. 40/31-33, 43/29-30, 45/33-37.

and probably *Priue Counseling* were addressed, was fictive and representative, a literary convention adopted to provide a frame of reference, yet this particular teacher is intimately involved, and at times his colloquial or urgent manner has the directness of an actual discourse (e.g. 48/8-14, 50/38-51/5, 53/3-4). The personal tone obtrudes when he explains his motives (18/15-17, 23/23-26, 27/25-26, 48/11-12), betrays that he is hurt and vexed by detractors incapable of perceiving the essential simplicity of his 'work' (*P.C.* 76/19-37), irritated by humbugs posturing an empty show of spirituality (ch. 53), and possibly over-anxious that distinction should be made between the corporeal metaphor and its spiritual import (*passim*). He corrects the misconceptions due to inexperience by ridicule and by exaggerating a hypothesis to an absurdity (e.g. 21/18-24, 23/7-10). The 'I' of the writer, and the repeated use of the imperative for exhortation and command, hold teacher and taught close together. To his disciple he can be magisterial and stern: ('Here maist þou see þat I coueite souereinte of þee. & trewly so I do, & I wol haue it'. *P.C.* 87/7-8; but compassion is latent in his severity. He can be blunt and biting ('Loke þat þou be none ape' *Stirings* 113/21-22; 'lache not ouer-hastely, as it were a gredy grehounde' 48/28-29). He is particularly deft at wielding his favourite weapon of cutting irony to castigate folly and presumption (ch. 53).

The specific statement of his sublime goal, the austere totality of his demand, the pervasive and sympathetic understanding of the pain of the effort required, his wry humour seasoned with caustic wit, his warm affection, and his explicit concern everywhere to keep his pupil on the track: these single this teacher out. He has an identity, though he lacks a name.

Practicality marks his guidance. Not only was he a pioneer in translating Dionysian mystical theology into English, he followed its implications in his directions how to approach contemplative prayer. Doctrine is applied rather than expounded; theory has often been converted into a recommended exercise, statement to exhortation. Action is prescribed in a specific situation, and if his justification for it necessitates abstruse speculations on Transcendence and Immanence, the nature of time (ch. 4), the working of grace, the explanations are brief and clearly expressed in simple language and without technical jargon. The would-be contemplative is informed in detail how he will know if he is called to 'the work'. Sure of his calling, after Absolution and with the consent of his spiritual director, he must set about it without delay and with no fear of presumption (35/17-19, 36/23-25, 73/26-29). He must press on in intention at least, without ever falling back on his former discursive acts of devotion: ('do forþ euer more & more, so þat þou be euer



doynge' 38/38-39). He is offered constructive suggestions how to overcome the babel of distractions, from petty mundane hindrances to the subtle resistance of selfhood; and, furthermore, how to turn these to profit and a means of grace (ch. 32). The dichotomy of God and sin are never forgotten; but when the aim lies beyond the consciousness of sin (chs 13-16), he must be content to feel 'synne a lump' (40/30), and not analyse it further. He must always be cautious about all sensations of comfort—sounds, gladness, or sweetness—that reward his prayer, welcome these when they are proved to spring from the spirit, but not be despondent when they depart (chs 48-50). When he is stirred by grace, he must 'lat þat þing do wiþ þee & lede þee wherso it list . . .' (39/1-2); he must try to hide his urgent desire from God, lest the spiritual state be adulterated by 'any rude medelyng of any bodelines' (49/32). To help him to concentrate and hold his faculties passively receptive, the simplest of activities is recommended: his 'naked intent' might be 'lappid & foulden in o worde . . . take þee bot a litil worde of o silable; for so it is betir þen of two, for euer þe schorter it is, þe betir it acordeþ wiþ þe werk of þe spirite. & soche a worde is þis worde **God** or þis worde **Loue** (15/30-34). This word will suffice in all his effort (15/37-16/3). A different technique is outlined in *Priue Counseling*, which formulates more precisely the stages in complete self-surrender. The 'naked intent' shall start from bare acceptance and a simple consciousness of the existence of God and the existence of self. First the contemplative must 'lappe & cloþe þe felyng of . . . God (89/9-10), in the 'blynde felyng' of his own 'nakid beyng', 'zit neuerþeles my wille is, & þat was myn entent in þe beginning, þat þou schuldest forȝete þe felyng of þe beyng of þiself as for þe felyng of þe beyng of God. & for þis skyle I prouid þee in þe bigynnyng þat God is þi beyng' (88/40-89/1). It is as if he were to pray: 'þat at I am, Lorde, I offre vnto þee, wiþoutyn any loking to eny qualite of þi beyng, bot only þat þou arte as þou arte' (75/26-28); 'þat at I am, Lorde, I offre vnto þee, for þou it arte' (76/14).

LITERARY  
ART

*The Cloud* ranks high among the 'glorious prose' of the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>86</sup> The manner of writing in it seems distinguishable.<sup>87</sup> Similar qualities of mind are reflected in the style of the related treatises. Though they vary somewhat according to theme, yet each is overall trenchant. The sentences move; the trailing sentence is comparatively rare. There is commonly control, precision, a variety of expression well sprinkled with pithiness. A

<sup>86</sup> See R. W. Chambers, *On the Continuity of English Prose* (London, 1932), a pioneer work which has been and still is an inspiration to many who follow on his trail.

<sup>87</sup> See *Hid Diuinite*, pp. xlvii-lviii for an analysis of *The Cloud* author's style.



great part of each consists of measured prose, based on a balance of comparison or contrast. Balance satisfies both the mind and the ear by its effect of completion. The rhetorical figure of antithesis sharpens the presentation of the thought, itself often antithetic. Monotony is avoided by variation in phrasal length and the placing of stress. Assonance makes an unobtrusive yet effective contribution. The abundant alliteration is cleverly deployed, and is usually unostentatious. In varied and complex patterns, it is far more often functional than merely decorative; it serves to point an antithesis, weight a balance, or give to many an important statement the incisiveness of epigram.

Yet authorship is not to be discovered by a general impression of sentence structure or of the ornaments introduced. *The Cloud* author drew from the same heritage of prose writing as his contemporaries. This was a blend of two age-long traditions, native and Latin. Much has already been written on the continuity of English prose from the Old English translations of King Alfred and the Homilies of Aelfric and Wulfstan and through the highly expressive devotional treatises of the thirteenth century, *Ancrene Wisse* most widely known among them. The resources of a rich legacy were at hand: a variety of prose rhythms—the native alliterative phrases of two or three strongly stressed syllables in limited patterns among a few unstressed syllables, the cadences of colloquial speech, the patterns of Latin rhetorical prose and its more spacious and complex rhythms; for adornment, a fund of homely, vivid and down-to-earth illustrations from homiletic sources, and from learned Latin treatises a wide range of symbolism, the different levels of Scriptural exegesis, the Scholastic dialectic of discussion which set contraries in opposition, a wealth of Latin figures of thought, word-patterns, and ornaments as described in numerous medieval manuals of Grammar and Rhetoric; not least the recommendation of the various devices appropriate for the different levels of style, from the elevated to the ordinary and low. To establish individual authorship from manner of writing alone would obviously require definitive statistics from far-reaching comparisons and detailed analyses.

More surely than in sentence-structure and in types of rhetorical ornament, this author's individual literary art is recognizable in his creative use of figurative expression. Though many of his similitudes and metaphors are stock, drawn from the devices of the native tradition of homily—'See by ensauple' (60/32, 57/17, etc.), which had long clothed abstract doctrine in vivid and concrete imagery, in the Biblical manner blending the natural and the supernatural, full of familiar detail and lively observation—nevertheless he frequently startles by juxtaposition of strikingly dissociated ideas. Arresting

parallels occur throughout his independent writings, so remote in their dramatic circumstances from the spiritual matter in hand that they preclude any misconception through literalness whilst illuminating the theme. Thus: the short prayer will pierce heaven like the scream of 'Fire' at midnight (ch. 37). Sharp contrast occurs when the sham religious comport themselves 'as þei were sturdy scheep betyn in þe heed' (54/17), 'as a worme were in þeire eres' (54/18-19), their arms threshing the air as they speak 'as hem nedid for to swymme ouer a grete water' (55/9-10). The *Commentary* on the racy chapter 53 indicates how little of it is taken from its widely accepted source. The inexperienced pseudo-contemplative gapes 'as he wolde kacche flies' (ch. 57); those sceptical about the call of grace are like 'þoo wrechid wommen . . . þat sleen here owne children whan þei ben newe borne' (*P.C.* 85/23-25); immature contemplative prayer is like green fruit hanging on the tree or newly picked, 'setting the teeth on edge' (*P.* 107/1-2); a stirring to devotion might be 'conceyuid on ape maner' (*D.* 113/3). Their range of subject surprises equally. The heretic is 'licned to wode men hauyng þis custume, þat euer whan þei haue dronken of a faire cup, kast it to þe walle & breke it' (59/39-60/1); discretion in spiritual matters is linked with practice in Black Magic and the necromancer's expertise in outwitting the Devil (ch. 55; *see Com.* 57/21); compared with the light in Dionysian darkness, the light of natural knowledge is like the 'derknes of þe moneschine in a mist at midwinters nigt' (*P.C.* 82/17-18).

His most evocative language is used in the account of his 'special prayer', its pain in the early stages, 'a goostly felyng' of nought, 'nouȝwhere wrouȝt . . . alle þe specyal dedes of sinne . . . peyntid þerapon' (68/24-27), the intensity of effort demanded. The 'cloud' symbol is inherited, but in its Middle English contexts it communicates the very effect of the mental experience. Nothing could be more frustrating in its multiple indefiniteness:

'fonde for to peerse þat derknes abouen þee, & smyte apon þat þicke cloude of vnknowyng wiþ a scharp darte of longing loue' (14/28-30).

'þis combros cloude of vnknowyng bitwix him & God' (35/22-23).

The feeling of obstruction is intensified elsewhere by the communicative image of the contemplative's own feeling of encumbrance:

'synne, þus conielȝd in a lumpe (none oþer þing þan þiself)' (40/31-32).

'þis foule stynkyng lump of synne, as it were onȝd & congelid wiþ þe substaunce of þi beyng' (44/10-11).

The metaphorical blending of the physical and the spiritual is equally expressive of the great activity involved in the urgent, forceful reaching up towards God. Active verbs signifying violent physical energy are accumulated to give this effect. 'Wrastlyng wiþ þat blynde nouȝt' (68/8), the contemplative must 'smyte' (14/29), 'bete' (15/38, 21/15, 32/16) upon the thick cloud above; distractions are to be 'casten down' (14/26), so 'treed him fast doun' (14/38), 'put hem & holde hem fer doun vnder þe cloude of forȝetyng (15/21-22), 'put doun . . . & keuer' (18/15-16), 'stalworþly step abouen . . . treed hem down . . . as ofte as þei rise, as ofte put þeim doun' (36/27-32), 'smyte doun & be besy to schere away . . . ' (37/39), 'schere away couetyse of knowyng' (39/6), etc.

The distinctive metaphors, 'naked' and 'blind'<sup>88</sup> are employed with a verbal dexterity. They are frequently paired in variable collocations, as in *Priue Counseling*, 79/23-83/9:

'þe blynde beholdyng of þi nakid beyng'; 'nakid blynde felyng of þin owne beyng'; 'þi nakid blinde beyng'; 'blynde beholdyng . . . nakid beholdyng'; 'nakid siȝt & þe blynde felyng', etc.

Their very interchangeability in these permutations further underlines the fundamental concept that the utmost simplification of consciousness is essential for the singleness of the contemplative aim.

One of the key phrases, 'þe hiȝest & þe souereynest pointe of þe spirit' (41/12-13) is loaded with meaning by a different technique. Every adjective and noun in it bears overtones of association. *souereynest*, defining that depth of the soul in which God latently dwells, echoes the Dionysian *super-* 'wholly transcendent'. *hiȝest* recalls 'innermost', synonymous with it in unitive prayer;<sup>89</sup> it can also connote a degree of quality besides that of elevation; *hiȝest pointe* brings to mind the Latin *summus* (*supremus*) *apex*, the 'summit' of the figurative mount of perfection and the peak of the spiritual ascent. But *pointe* itself could translate *acies* 'point of weapon', a common alternative to *apex*<sup>90</sup> in Latin descriptions of the mystic's goal. The innermost depth of the spirit, the soul's unitive faculty, the single-pointedness of approach are all present in 'pointe'. Such evocative use of words encourages further connecting, whether the author intended it or not, as between:

'holde þee . . . contynowly in þe first poynte of þi spirit' (*P.C.* 80/22-23). 'Peerse þat derknes . . . wiþ a sharp darte of longing loue' (14/28-30).

<sup>88</sup> These are interpreted above in *Doctrine*, p. xxvi.

<sup>89</sup> See 41/24-25.

<sup>90</sup> E.g. 'in secretiori tranquille mentis acie sive apice' Guigo de Ponte, Grausem, p. 281.

'Soche a blinde schote wiþ þe scharp darte of longyng loue may neuer faile of þe prik,<sup>91</sup> þe whiche is God' (*Stirings* 115/23-24).

Perhaps the most telling literary devices of *The Cloud* are those of Irony and Paradox. Irony is chiefly used didactically, to expose by ridicule and in some passages to correct the obliquities of men who 'loue God so longe on þis maner þat þei schul go staryng wood to þe deuil' (54/33-34). Chs 51, 52, and above all 53, provide many examples. His butt is frequently the would-be contemplative, who, through too literal an understanding due to inexperience, confuses the spiritual and the physical (e.g. 47/20-39, 58/26-59/3). Because they are heedless of counsel, many such 'þat han in licnes forsaken þe world . . . haue becomen þe deuels seruantes & his contemplatyues' (27/19-23).

'þe deuil haþ his contemplatyues, as God haþ his' (48/2-3). These include the religious hypocrites who try to 'stufte hem & vnderput hem on iche a side for fallyng, wiþ many meek pipyng wordes & contenaunces of deuocion, more lokyng after for to seme holy in sigt of men, þen for to be so in þe sigt of God & his aungelles' (56/9-12); the heretic, not choosing to go 'þe streyte wey to heuen' who 'schul goo þe softe wey to helle' (58/13-14); also the officious busybodies reprimanding other people's faults. 'þei sey þat þei ben steryd þerto by þe fiire of charite & of Goddes loue in þeire hertes, & trewly þei liþe, for it is wiþ þe fiire of helle wellyng in þeire braynes & in þeire ymaginacion' (57/1-4); and not forgetting the learned 'swollen wiþ pride & wiþ corioustie of moche clergie & letterly conning' which turns them not into 'meek scolers & maystres of deuinite or of deuocion, bot proude scolers of þe deuil & maysters of vanite and of falsheed' (16/32-35).

The paradoxes are equally pervasive, reflecting the central theme of his basic Dionysian source: 'þe moste goodly knowyng of God is þat, þe whiche is knowyn bi vnknowyng' (70/5-6); 'in þat (a man) knoweþ noping, he is maad to be knowyng abouen mynde' (*H.D.* 123/24-25); hence 'liþty derknes . . . vnknowyn kunnynges' (*P.C.* 88/2-3) and the much reiterated 'blinde beholdyng' (17/33, etc). There is a related paradox when he commends the 'lewedist' that is 'wisest' (*P.C.* 77/6), the highest knowledge which is ignorance, and the ignorance which is the truest knowledge, or when he designates the Divine Darkness as Superabundant Light, the Nought as All, and total self-abandonment as, in verity, self-realization.

<sup>91</sup> By its associations, this characteristic image is linked with the 'target' figure, 'þe prik' 13/43, *D.* 115/24, þe poynt & þe pricke *D.* 115/16-17.

## POSTSCRIPT

Implicitly and paradoxically, this segmented *Introduction* has produced the evidence of *The Cloud* author's own genius for synthesis.

It seems congruous to have ended on Irony and Paradox, for the *Introduction* itself contains many inherent oppositions and much that is contrary to expectation. The search for borrowed concepts and derived imagery brought to light appreciable individual elements of presentation. *The Cloud* author demotes reason in passages outstanding in intellectual content, precise psychological observation, and logical control. He refutes discursive reasoning by a discursive method, promotes imageless worship by analogy and illustration, and in vivid, sensuous, often concrete imagery and emotive diction urges a total abstraction from all forms and shapes provided by reason, imagination or the sensory faculties. His anonymity, humble and, one suspects, determined, has from the beginning of the present century encouraged a continual and widespread search for his identity. His writings were intended for only a few in his own day, and those the initiated, yet now they are generally accessible in three continents, and widely esteemed as primary documents of English mysticism and masterpieces of medieval English prose. With broad eclecticism, this author disseminated the doctrine of centuries before him, and for six centuries *The Cloud* has been esteemed as a spiritual classic. Though now the religious outlook and the understanding of human psychology are in general greatly changed, it was still possible for an eminent theologian and scholar in this age to acclaim him as 'the most subtle and incisive, as well as the most original, spiritual writer in the English language'.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>92</sup> D. Knowles, *The English Mystical Tradition* (London, 1961), p. 67.







## THE TREATISES



## THE TEXT AND ITS FOOTNOTES

The text is that of MS. Harleian 674 (Har<sup>1</sup>), with occasional emendations indicated by [ ], which are based on an extensive collation with the other manuscripts and suggested mainly when the basic text is obviously inferior. Contractions have been expanded, modern word-division, punctuation and capitalization supplied.

The minimal footnotes are drawn from the aforesaid collation of the known MSS. (see Introd., p. vii). Their variant readings were discussed in the Early English Text Society editions of *The Cloud*, pp. xix-xxvii, and *Deonise Hid Diuinite*, pp. xviii-xxii, where reasons were given for the choice of MSS. for full collation.

The same sigla are adopted here, arranged according to the main groupings previously established, which show how some of the versions are more closely related to each other than to any of the rest.

For *The Cloud*, three groups were postulated, the third group further divisible into three:

Har<sup>1</sup>; Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>2</sup>: U Ro<sup>3</sup>: Pa Do Bo Ff.

The seven MSS. of *The Cloud* finally chosen for detailed collation were Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa. Similarly for *Priue Counseling*, Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa; for *Hid Diuinite*, Har<sup>1</sup> Kk. Spelling, grammatical, and dialectal variants, too frequent to be recorded in the footnotes, were considered in Section F, Language, pp. xxvii-li (*The Cloud*).

These groupings were confirmed by the agreement of variants in the other four treatises which are to be found in some of the same MSS. as *The Cloud*. Some modification, however, was necessitated by the additional manuscripts. Thus for *Benjamin Minor* two main groups were discernible, each further subdivisible:

Har<sup>1</sup>: Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; Ar Har<sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G W Ii, inclusive of F C R: W Ii.

Again two main groups for *Spirites*, *Preier*, and *Stirings*, each also subdivisible:

*Spirites* Har<sup>1</sup>: Har<sup>4</sup> CP Br; Kk Har<sup>2</sup>: Bo Pw.

*Preier* Har<sup>1</sup>: CP; Kk Har<sup>2</sup>: Bo Pw.

*Stirings* Har<sup>1</sup>: CP; Kk Har<sup>2</sup>: Pw.

Grouping alone can give no sure proof of an original reading. Every combination of the above manuscripts is to be found, though the majority of these contradictory indications of relationship might

well be explicable as a coincidence of common scribal errors which have occurred independently in the course of frequent transcription, or in certain instances they may be the result of conflation. Moreover, though one can deduce that certain readings in a lost parent text of some group were probably closest to the original, the extant manuscripts within every group have each a number of unique readings. All extant versions are demonstrably several times removed from the original text.

Har<sup>1</sup> proved the clear choice for the basic text. It is among the earliest of the MSS., consistent in its language, numerically has the fewest unique readings, and contains the complete text of all seven treatises. Footnotes are essential, however, since further scrutiny of the groupings establishes that though some unique readings might possibly be original, yet they must be carefully examined as suspect.

The lengthy footnotes in the previous editions were intended to illustrate the amount of variation, the relationship of the MSS., and their respective merits. The present footnotes focus on Har<sup>1</sup>. They chiefly indicate where the basic text appears to be inferior, or where an alternative reading possibly better represents the original. Manifest errors, or scribal corrections in the same hand, are tacitly ignored, unless they might have some further significance. In *The Cloud*, the agreement of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> against Har<sup>1</sup> must be carefully weighed; in *Preier*, *Stirings* and *Spirites* the agreement of CP Kk Har<sup>2</sup>. In the first group of *Spirites*, the parent text of Har<sup>4</sup> CP Br has probably the greater authority. The vast majority of the variants for all the treatises, slight and in themselves inconclusive, are not recorded.

*Other MSS.* indicates the remaining MSS., i.e. generally a unique reading in Har<sup>1</sup>.

To avoid tediousness in the footnotes to the minor treatises with their additional manuscripts and sometimes larger groups, the symbol † following the MS. denotes that this reading is representative of a group, or groups. Thus

<i>Preier</i>	Kk †	= Kk Har <sup>2</sup> Bo Pw.
<i>Stirings</i>	Kk †	= Kk Har <sup>2</sup> Pw.
<i>Benjamin Minor</i>	Ar †	= Ar Har <sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G W Ii, or occasionally Ar Har <sup>5</sup> and at least five of the rest.
<i>Spirites</i>	Har <sup>4</sup> †	= Har <sup>4</sup> CP Br.
	Kk †	= Kk Har <sup>2</sup> Bo Pw.

The expansion to be understood varies from treatise to treatise because of their varying numbers of versions with consequent modification in groupings.

HERE BYGYNNIÞ A BOOK OF CONTEMPLACYON,  
ÞE WHICHE IS CLEPYD

ÞE CLOWDE OF VNKNOWYNG,<sup>1</sup>

IN ÞE WHICHE A SOULE IS ONYD WIÞ GOD.

Here biginneþ þe preyer on þe prologe.

f. 17b

God, unto whom alle hertes ben open, & unto whom alle wille spekiþ, & unto whom no priue þing is hid: I beseche þee so for to clense þe entent of myn hert wiþ þe unspekable gift of þi grace þat I may parfiteliche loue þee, & worþilich preise þee. Amen.

5

Here biginneþ þe prolog.

In þe name of þe Fader & of þe Sone & of þe Holy Goost.

I charge þee & I beseche þee, wiþ as moche power & vertewe as þe bonde of charite is sufficient to suffre, whatsoeuer þou be þat þis book schalt haue in possession, ouþer bi propirte ouþer by keping, 10 by bering as messenger or elles bi borrowing, þat in as moche as in þee is by wille & auisement, neiþer þou rede it, ne write it, ne speke it, ne ȝit suffre it be red, wretyn, or spokyn, of any or to any, bot ȝif it be of soche one or to soche one þat haþ (bi þi supposing) in a trewe wille & by an hole entent, purposed him to be a parfite folower of 15 Criste, not only in actyue leuyng, bot in þe souereinnest pointe of contemplatife leuing þe whiche is possible by grace for to be comen to in þis present liif of a parfite soule ȝit abiding in þis deedly body; & þerto þat doþ þat in him is,|&, bi þi supposing, haþ do longe tyme f. 18a before, for to able him to contemplatiue leuyng by þe vertuous 20 menes of actiue leuyng. For elles it acordeþ noþing to him.

&, ouer þis, I charge þee & I beseche þee, bi þe autorite of charite, þat ȝif any soche schal rede it, write it, or speke it, or elles here it be red or spokin, þat þou charge hem, as I do þee, for to take hem tyme 25 to rede it, speke it, write it, or here it, al ouer. For, parauenture, þer is som mater þerin, in þe beginnyng or in þe middel, þe whiche is hanging & not fully declared þer it stondeþ; & ȝif it be not þere, it is sone after, or elles in þe ende. Wherefore, ȝif a man saw o mater & not anoþer, parauenture he miȝt ligty be led into errour. & perfore, in eschewing of þis errour boþe in þiself & in alle oþer, I preye þee 30 par charite do as I sey þee.

<sup>1</sup> Har<sup>1</sup> Kk; *om.* Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>3</sup>; þe diuynne clowde of vnknowynge Ro<sup>1</sup> Pa; The Cloude of Contemplasion U.

Fleschely ianglers, opyn<sup>2</sup> preisers & blamers of himself or of any  
 oþer, tiping tellers, rouners & tutilers of tales, & alle maner of  
 pinchers: kept I neuer þat þei sawe þis book. For myn entent was  
 neuer to write soche þing unto hem. & þerfore I wolde þat þei medel  
 5 not þerwiþ, neiþer þei ne any of þees corious lettred or lewed men.  
 f. 186 Ȝe, þouȝ al þat þei be ful good men of actiue leuyng, ȝit þis mater  
 acordeþ noþing to hem; bot ȝif it be to þoo men þe whiche, [þ]ouȝ al  
 þei stonde in actyue bi outward forme of leuyng, neuerþeles ȝit bi  
 inward stering after þe priue sperit of God, whos domes ben hid, þei  
 10 ben ful graciously disposid, not contynowely as it is propre to verrey  
 contemplatyues, bot þan & þan to be parceners in þe hieȝst pointe of  
 þis contemplatiue acte: ȝif soche men miȝt se it, þei schuld by þe  
 grace of God be greetly counforted þerby.

þis book is distyngwid in seuenti chapitres & fiue. Of þe whiche  
 15 chapitres, þe last chapitres<sup>3</sup> of alle techē som certeyn tokens by þe  
 whiche a soule may verreyly preue wheþer he be clepid of God to be a  
 worcher in þis werk or none.

Here biginneþ a table of þe chapitres.

þe first chapitre Of foure degrees of Cristen mens leuing; & of þe  
 20 cours of his cleping<sup>4</sup> þat þis book was maad vnto.

þe secound chapitre A schort stering to meeknes, & to þe werk of  
 þis book.

þe þrid chapitre How þe werk of þis book schal be wrouȝt, & of þe  
 worþines of it bifore alle oþer werkes.

25 þe feerþe chapitre Of þe schortnes of þis werk, & how it may not be  
 comen to by þe corioustee of witte, ne by ymaginacion.

f. 19a þe fifþe chapitre þat in þe tyme of þis werk alle þe creatures þat euer  
 haue ben, ben now, or euer schal be, & alle þe werkes of þoo  
 same creatures, scholen be hid vnder þe clowde of forȝetyng.

30 þe six chapitre A schort conceyte of þe werk of þis book, tretid by  
 questyon.

þe seuenþ chapitre How a man schal haue him in þis werk agens  
 alle þouȝtes, & nameli agens alle þoo þat risen of his owne  
 corioustee of kunnyng & of kyndely witte.

35 þe eȝt chapitre A good declaryng of certeyn doutes þat may falle in  
 þis werk, tretid bi questyon: in distroioing of a mans owne  
 corioustee of konnyng & of kyndely wit; & in distynging of þe  
 degrees & þe partyes of actyue leuyng & contemplatiue.

þe ninþe chapitre þat, in þe tyme of þis werk, þe minde of þe holiest  
 40 creature þat euer God maad letteþ more þen it profiteþ.

<sup>2</sup> opyn] *ins.* Har<sup>1</sup>; *om.* other MSS.

<sup>3</sup> chapitres] chapytir Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> cleping] callynge *and elsewhere* Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.



þe teenþe chapitre How a man schal knowe when his þoȝt is no sinne; & ȝif it be synne, when it is deedly & when it is venial.

þe elleuenþ chapitre þat a man schuld charge iche þoȝt & iche stering after þat it is, & alweis<sup>5</sup> eschewe rechelesnes in venial synne. 5

þe twelfþe chapitre þat by vertewe of þis werk sinne is not only distroied, bot also vertewes ben getyn.

þe þritteenþ chapitre What meeknes is in itself, & when it is parfite & when it is inparfite.

þe fourtene chapitre þat wiþoute inparfite meeknes coming before, 10 f. 19b it is impossible a sinner to come to þe parfite vertewe of meeknes in þis liif.

þe fiftene chapitre A schort profe aȝens þeire errour þat seien þat þer is no parfiter cause to be mekid under þen is þe mynde of a mans owne wrechidnes. 15

þe sixtene chapitre þat bi vertewe of þis werk, a sinner trewly turned & clepid to contemplacion comeþ sonner to perfeccion þan bi any oþer werk; & bi it sonnest may gete of God forȝeuenes of synnes.

þe seuentene chapitre þat a verrey contemplatiif list not medel 20 hym of actiue liif,<sup>6</sup> ne of anyþing þat is doon or spoken aboute him, ne ȝit to answeere to his blamers in excusing of himself.

þe eigtene chapitre How þat ȝit into þis day alle actyues pleynen hem of contemplatyues, as Martha did on Mary; of þe whiche pleynyng ignoraunce is þe cause. 25

þe ninetene chapitre A schort excusacion of him þat maad þis book, teching how alle contemplatiues schuld haue alle actyues fully excusid of þeire pleinyng wordes & dedes.

þe twenty chapitre How Almyȝty God wil goodly answeere for alle þoo þat, for þe excusing of himself, list not leue þe besines 30 aboute þe loue of hym.

þe on and twenti chapitre þe<sup>7</sup> trewe exposicion of þis Gospel worde: Mary haþ chosen þe best partye.

þe two and twenty chapitre Of þe wonderful loue þat Crist had to Mari, in persone of alle sinners trewly turned & clepid to þe 35 grace of contemplacion.

þe þre and twenti chapitre How God wol answeere & puruey for f. 20a hem in sperite, þat for besines aboute his loue list not answeere ne puruey for himself.

þe foure and twenti chapitre What charite is in itself, & how it is 40 sotely & parfitevely contened in þe werk of þis book.

<sup>5</sup> alweis] algate (-ys) Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> liif] lyuyng Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> þe] A Kk Har<sup>2</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

þe fiue and twenti chapitre þat in þe tyme of þis werk a parfite soule haþ no special beholding to any o man in þis liif.

þe six and twenti chapitre þat wiþoute ful specyal grace, or longe vse in comoun grace, þe werk of þis book is riȝt trauelous; & in þis werk, whiche is þe werk of þe soule holpen by grace, & whiche is þe werk of only God.

þe seuen and twenti chapitre Who schuld worche in þe<sup>8</sup> gracious werk of þis book.

þe eȝt and twenti chapitre þat a man schuld not presume to worche in þis werk before þe tyme þat he be lawfully clensid in consience of alle his specyal dedes of synne.

þe nine and twenti chapitre þat a man schuld bidingly trauaile in þis werk, & suffre þe pine þerof, & deme no man.

þe þritti chapitre Who schuld blame & reprove oþer mens defautes.

þe one and þritti chapitre How a man schuld haue hym in beginning of þis werk azens alle þouȝtes & steringes of sinne.

þe two and þritti chapitre Of two goostli sleȝtes þat ben helpli to a goostli beginner in þe werk of þis book.

þe þre and þritti chapitre þat in þis werk a soule is clensid boþe of his special sinnes & of þe pine of hem, & ȝit how þer is no parfite rest in þis liif.

f. 206 þe foure and þritti chapitre þat God ȝeueþ þis grace freely wiþouten any mene, & þat it may not be comen to wiþ menes.

þe fiue and þritti chapitre Of þree menes in þe whiche a contemplatiif prentise schuld be ocupied: in reding, þinkyng & preiing.

þe six and þritti chapitre Of þe meditacions of hem þat contynuely trauailen in þe werk of þis book.

þe seuen and þritti chapitre Of þe special preiers of hem þat ben contynowel worchers in þis werk of þis book.

þe eȝt and þritti chapitre How & whi þat schort preier perceþ heuen.

þe nine and þritti chapitre How a parfite worcher schal preie, & what preier is in itself; & ȝif a man schal preie in wordes, whiche wordes acorden þan moste to þe propirte of preier.

þe [fourti] chapitre þat in þe tyme of þis werk, a soule haþ no special beholding to any o vice in itself ne to any o vertew in itself.

þe on and fourti chapitre þat in alle oþer werkes bineþe þis men schuld kepe discrecion; bot in þis none.

<sup>8</sup> þe] þis Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

- þe two and fourti chapitre þat by indiscrecion in þis men schal  
kepe dis[c]recion in alle oþer þinges; & sekerly elles neuer.
- þe þre and fourti chapitre þat alle wetyng & felyng of a mans  
owne being must nedelynges be lost, ȝif þe perfeccion of  
þis werk schal verrely be felt in any soule in þis liif. 5
- þe foure and fourti chapitre How a soule schal dispose it on þe  
owne partie for to distroie alle wetyng & feling of þe owne being.
- þe fyue and fourti chapitre A good declaring of somme certein  
disseites þat mowen falle in þis werk.
- þe sixe and fourti chapitre A good teching how a man schal flee 10 f. 21a  
þees disseites, & wirche more wiþ a listines of spirite þen wiþ  
any<sup>9</sup> boistousnes of body.
- þe seuen and fourti chapitre A sleȝ teching of þis werk in purte  
of spirite; declaryng how þat on o maner a soule schuld  
schewe his desire unto God, & on þe contrary unto man. 15
- þe eȝt and fourti chapitre How God wol be seruid boþe wiþ body &  
wiþ soule, & reward men in boþe; & how men schul knowe  
when alle þoo sounes & swetnes þat fallen into þe body in  
tyme of preier ben boþe good & iuel.
- þe nine and fourti chapitre þe substaunce of alle perfeccion is not 20  
elles bot a good wile; & how þat alle sounes, counfortes, &  
swetnes, þat mowe falle in þis liif, ben to it bot as it were  
accidentes.
- þe fifty chapitre Whiche is chaste loue; & how in som creatures  
soche sensible counfortes ben<sup>10</sup> bot seelden, & in som riȝt ofte. 25
- þe one & fifty chapitre þat men schuld haue grete warnes, so þat  
þei vnderstonde not bodili þing þat is ment goostly; & namely  
it is good to be war in vnderstanding of þis worde IN & of þis  
worde UP.
- þe to & fifti chapitre How þeese ȝong, presumtuuous dissiples mis- 30  
understonden þis worde IN; & of þe deseites þat folowen  
þeron.
- þe þre and fifti chapitre Of diuerse unseemly continaunces þat  
folowen hem þat lacken þe werk of þis book.
- þe foure and fifti chapitre How þat bi vertewe of þis werk a man is 35 f. 21b  
gouernid ful wisely & maad ful seemly, as wel in body as in soule.
- þe fyue and fifti chapitre How þei ben disseiued, þat folowen þe  
feruour of spirite in reprouyng of sinne wiþouten discrecion.
- þe six and fifti chapitre How þei ben disseiued [þat]<sup>11</sup> lenen more to  
þe corioustie of kyndely witte, & of clergie learned in þe scole of 40  
men, þan to þe comoun doctrine & counsel of Holi Chirche.

<sup>9</sup> any] rudenes or *add. other MSS.*

<sup>10</sup> ben] ere Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; ar Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> and elsewhere.

<sup>11</sup> þat] at *add. Har<sup>1</sup>.*

þe seuen and fifti chapitre How þees ȝong, presumptuous dissiples  
misunderstonden þis oþer worde UP; & of þe deseites þat  
folowen þeron.

þe eȝt and fifti chapitre þat a man schal not take ensauple of  
5 Seinte Martyn & of Seinte Steuen, for to streine his  
ymaginacion bodily upwardes in þe tyme of his preier.

þe nine and fifty chapitre þat a man schal not take exsauple at  
þe bodily assencion of Criste, for to streine his ymaginacion  
upwardes bodily in þe tyme of preier; & þat tyme, stede, &  
10 bodi, þeese þre schulden be forȝeten in alle goostly worching.

þe sixty chapitre þat þe heize & þe next wey to heuen is ronne bi  
desires, & not bi pases of feet.

þe on and sixti chapitre þat alle bodili þing is soget unto goostli  
þing, & is rewlid þerafter bi þe cours of kinde, & not  
15 aȝensward.

þe two and sixti chapitre How a man may wite when his goostly  
werk is bineep him or wiþouten him, & when it is euen wiþ him  
or wiþinne him, & when it is abouen him & vnder his God.

f. 22a þe þre and sixti chapitre Of þe miȝtes of a soule in general; & how  
20 minde in special is a principal miȝt, conprehending in it alle  
þe oþer miȝtes & alle þoo þinges in þe whiche þei worchen.

þe foure and sixti chapitre Of þe oþer<sup>12</sup> two principal miȝtes, reson  
& wil; & of þe werk of hem bifore sinne & after.

þe fiue & sixti chapitre Of þe first secondary miȝt, ymaginacion  
25 bi name; & of þe werkes, & of þe obedience of it unto reson  
bifore sinne & after.

þe six and sixti chapitre Of þe oþer secondari miȝt, sensualite bi  
name; & of þe werkes, & of þe obedience of it vnto wille bifore  
sinne & after.

30 þe seuen and sixty chapitre þat whoso knoweþ not þe miȝtes of a  
soule & þe maner of here worching may liztly be disseiued in  
vnderstanding of goostly wordes & of goostly worching; &  
how a soule is maad a god in grace.

þe eȝt and sixti chapitre þat noȝwhere bodili is eueriwhere goostly;  
35 & how oure vtter man c[l]epiþ þe werk of þis book nowȝt.

þe nine and sixti chapitre How þat a mans affeccion is meruey-  
lously chaunged in goostly felyng of þis nouȝt, when it is  
noȝwhere wrouȝt.

þe seuenty chapitre þat riȝt as bi þe defailing of oure bodely wittes  
40 we bigine redeliest to kom to knowing of goostli þinges, so by  
þe defailing of oure goostly wittes we biginne moste redeliest<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> oþer] toþire Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U and elsewhere.

<sup>13</sup> redeliest] redely other MSS.

to com to þe knowing of God, soche as is possible bi grace to be had here.

þe on and seuenti chapitre þat som may not come to fele þe f. 22b  
perfeccion of þis werk bot in tyme of rauischynge, & som mowe  
haue it when þei wil, in þe comoun state of mans soule. 5

þe two and seuenti chapitre þat a worcher in þis werk schuld not  
deme ne þynke of anoþer worcher as he feleþ in himself.

þe þre & seuenti chapitre How þat after þe licnes of Moyses, of  
Beseleel, & of Aaron, medeling hem aboute þe Arke of þe  
Testament, we profite on þre maners in þis grace of con- 10  
templacion; for þis grace is figured in þat Arke.

þe foure and seuenti chapitre How þat þe mater of þis book is  
neuermore red or spoken, ne herde red or spoken, of a soule  
disposid þerto, wiþouten feling of a verrey acordaunce to þe  
effecte of þe same werk; & of rehersing of þe same charge þat 15  
is wretin in þe prolog.

þe fife and seuenti chapitre Of somme certein tokenes bi þe  
whiche a man may proue wheþer he be clepid of God to  
worche in þis werk.

& here eendep þe table of þe chapitres. 20

Goostly freende in God, I preie þee & I beseche þee þat þou wilt  
haue a besi beholding to þe cours & þe maner of þi cleeping. & þank  
God hertely, so þat þou maist þorow help of his grace stonde stifly, in  
þe state & þe degree & in þe fourme of leuyng þat þou hast  
ententiuely purposed,<sup>14</sup> agens alle þe sotil assailinges of þi bodily & 25  
goostly enemyes, & winne to þe coroun of liif<sup>15</sup> þat euermore lastep.  
Amen.

Here biginneþ þe first chapitre.

f. 23a

Goostly freende in God,<sup>16</sup> þou schalt wel vnderstonde þat I fynde,  
in my boistous beholding, foure degrees & fourmes of Cristen mens 30  
leuyng; & ben þese: Comoun, Special, Singuler, & Parfite. þre of  
þese mow be bigonnen & eendid in þis liif; & þe ferþe may bi grace  
be bigonnen here, bot it schal euer laste wiþouten eende in þe blis of  
heuen. & riȝt as þou seest how þei ben set here in ordre, ilch one  
after oþer, first Comoun, þan Special, after Syngulere, & last 35  
Parfite: riȝt so me þynkeþ þat, in þe same ordre & in þe same cours,  
oure Lorde haþ of his grete mercy clepid þee & ledde þee unto him bi  
þe desire of þin herte.

For first þou wote wel þat when þou were leuyng in þe comoun

<sup>14</sup> in þe state . . . purposed] *can.* Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>; *om.* other MSS. See Commentary.

<sup>15</sup> liif] blysse other MSS.

<sup>16</sup> in God] *om.* other MSS.



degree of Cristen mens leuyng in companie of þi wordely freendes,  
 it semeþ to me þat þe euerlasting loue of his Godheed, þorow þe  
 whiche he mad þee & wrougt þee when þou were nougt, & siþen  
 bougt þee wiþ þe prise of his precious blood when þou were loste in  
 5 Adam, miȝt not suffre þee be so fer fro him in forme & degree of  
 leuyng. & þerfore he kyndelid þi desire ful graciously, & fastnid bi it  
 a lyame of longing,<sup>17</sup> & led þee bi it into a more special state & forme  
 f. 23b of leuyng, to be a|seruaunt of þe special seruauntes of his; where þou  
 miȝtest lerne to liue more specialy & more goostly in his seruise þan  
 10 þou dedist, or miȝtest do, in þe comoun degree of leuyng bifore. &  
 what more? Ȝit it semeþ þat he wolde not leue þee þus lightly, for loue  
 of his herte, þe whiche he haþ euermore had vnto þee siþ þou were  
 ouȝtes. Bot what did he? Seest þou nougt how lystly & how  
 graciously he haþ<sup>18</sup> pulled þee to þe þrid degre & maner of leuing, þe  
 15 whiche hiȝt Synguleer? In þe whiche solitari forme & maner of  
 leuyng þou maist lerne to lift up þe fote of þi loue, & step towards  
 þat state & degre of leuyng þat is parfite, & þe laste state of alle.

Here biginneþ þe secound chapitre.

Look up now, weike wreche,<sup>19</sup> & see what þou arte. What arte  
 20 þou, & what hast þou deserued, þus to be clepid of oure Lorde?  
 What weri wrechid herte & sleping in sleupe is þat, þe whiche is not  
 waknid wiþ þe drawȝt of þis loue & þe voise of þis cleping? Bewar  
 now,<sup>20</sup> wreche,<sup>21</sup> in þis while wiþ þin enemye; & holde þee neuer þe  
 holier ne þe beter for þe worþines of þis cleping & for þe singuler  
 f. 24a 25 fourme of leuyng þat þou arte in; bot þe more|wrechid & [werid],<sup>22</sup>  
 bot ȝif þou do þat in þee is goodly, bi grace & bi counsel, to lyue after  
 þi cleping. & insomochel þou schuldest be more meek & louyng to þi  
 goostly spouse, þat he, þat is þe Almyȝty God, Kyng of kynges &  
 Lorde of lordes, wolde meek hym so lowe vnto þee, &, amonges alle  
 30 þe flok of his scheep, so graciously wolde chese þee to be one of his  
 speciales, & siþen set þee in þe stede of pasture, where þou maist be  
 fed wiþ þe swetnes of his loue, in erles<sup>23</sup> of þin heritage, þe kingdome  
 of heuen.

Do on þan, I preie þee, fast. Look now forwardes, & lat be  
 35 bacwardes. & see what þee faileþ, & not what þou haste: for þat is þe  
 rediest getyng & keping of meeknes. Alle þi liif now behoueþ algates

<sup>17</sup> longing] louynge Ro<sup>1</sup> U; loue Ro<sup>3</sup>; loue *add.* Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> haþ] pryuyli *add.* Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

<sup>19</sup> weike wreche] *can.* Har<sup>1</sup>; *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; þou weyke (very Pa) wreche *add.* Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

<sup>20</sup> now] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; þou Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

<sup>21</sup> wreche] *can.* Har<sup>1</sup>; *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>22</sup> werid] cursid Har<sup>1</sup> Pa.

<sup>23</sup> erles] ernes Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U; Ernest Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.



to stonde in desire, gif þou schalt profite in degre of perfeccion. þis  
 desire behoueþ algates be wrougt in þi wille bi þe honde of Almyti  
 God & þi consent. Bot oo þing I telle þee: he is a gelous loue &  
 suffreþ no felawship, & him list not worche in þi wille bot gif he be  
 only wiþ þee bi hymself. He askeþ none helpe, bot only þiself. He wil 5  
 þou do bot loke on hym & late him alone. & kepe þou þe windowes &  
 þe dore for flies & enemies assailyng. & gif þou be willy to do þis, þee  
 þar bot meekly put apon him wiþ preier, & sone wil he help þee. Put f. 24b  
 on þan: lat see how þou berest þee. He is ful redy, & doþ bot abideþ  
 þee. Bot what schalt þou do, & how schalt þou put? 10

Here biginneþ þe brid chapitre.

Lift up þin herte vnto God wiþ a meek steryng of loue; & mene  
 himself, & none of his goodes. & þerto loke<sup>24</sup> þee lope to þenk on ougt  
 bot on hymself, so þat nougt worche in þi witte ne in þi wille bot only  
 himself. & do þat in þee is to forȝete alle þe creatures þat euer God 15  
 maad & þe werkes of hem, so þat þi þougt ne þi desire be not directe  
 ne streche<sup>25</sup> to any of hem, neiþer in general ne in special. Bot lat  
 hem be, & take no kepe to hem.

þis is þe werk of þe soule þat moste plesip God. Alle seintes &  
 aungelles han ioie of þis werk, & hasten hem to helpe it in al here 20  
 myt. Alle feendes ben wood whan þou þus doste, & prouen<sup>26</sup> for to  
 felle it in alle þat þei kun. Alle men leuyng in erþe ben wonderfuli  
 holpen of þis werk, þou wost not how. Je, þe soules in purgatori ben  
 esed of þeire peine by vertewe of þis werk. þiself arte clensid & maad  
 vertewos by no werk so mochel. & git it is þe lighest werk of alle, 25  
 when a soule is holpen wiþ grace in sensible liste, & sonnest done.  
 Bot elles it is hard & wonderful to þee for to do.

Lette[not] þerfore, bot trauayle þerin tyl þou fele lyst. For at þe f. 25a  
 first tyme when þou dost it, þou fyndest bot a derknes, & as it were a  
 cloude of vnknowyng, þou wost neuer what, sauynȝ þat þou felist in 30  
 þi wille a nakid entent vnto God. þis derknes & þis cloude is,  
 howsoeuer þou dost, bitwix þee & þi God, & letteþ þee þat þou maist  
 not<sup>27</sup> see him cleerly by lȝt of vnderstonding in þi reson, ne fele him  
 in swetnes of loue in þin affeccion. & þerfore schap þee to hide in þis  
 derknes as longe as þou maist, euermore criing after him þat þou 35  
 louest; for gif euer schalt þou fele him or see him, as it may be here,  
 it behoueþ alweis be in þis cloude & in þis derknes. & gif þou wilte  
 besily trauayle as I bid þee, I triste in his mercy þat þou schalt come  
 þerto.

<sup>24</sup> loke] þat *add.* other MSS.

<sup>25</sup> streche] reche other MSS.

<sup>26</sup> prouen] fondyn Ro<sup>1</sup> U. Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> not] nowþire other MSS.

Here beginneþ þe feerþe chapitre.

But forþi þat þou schalt<sup>28</sup> not erre in þis worching, & wene þat it be oþerwise þen it is, I schal telle þee a lityl more þerof, as me þinkeþ.

þis werk askeþ no longe tyme er it be ones treulich done, as sum  
 5 men wenen; for it is þe schortest werke of alle þat man may ymagyn.  
 It is neiþer lenger ne schorter þen is an athomus; þe whiche  
 f. 25b athomus, by þe diffinicion of trewe philisophres in þe|sciens of  
 astronomye, is þe leest partie of tyme; & it is so litil þat, for þe  
 littilnes of it, it is undepartable & neizhonde incomprehensible. þis is  
 10 þat tyme of þe whiche it is wretyn: Alle tyme þat is zouen to þee, it  
 schal be askid of þee how þou haste dispendid it. & skilful þing it is  
 þat þou zeue acompte of it; for it is neiþer lenger ne schorter, bot  
 euen acording to one only steryng þat is wiþinne þe principal  
 worching miȝt of þi soule, þe whiche is þi wille. For euen so many  
 15 willinges or desiringes—& no mo ne no fewer—may be & aren in  
 one oure in þi wille, as aren athomus in one oure. & gif þou were  
 reformid bi grace to þe first state of mans soule, as it was bifore  
 sinne, þan þou schuldest euermore, bi help of þat grace, be lorde of  
 þat stering or of þoo sterynges; so þat none zede forby, bot alle þei  
 20 schulde streche into þe souerein-desirable & into þe heigest  
 wilnable þing, þe whiche is God.

For he is euen mete to oure soule by mesuring of his Godheed; &  
 oure soule euen mete unto him bi worþines of oure creacion to his  
 ymage & to his licnes. & he by himself<sup>29</sup> wiþouten moo, & none bot  
 25 he, is sufficient at þe fulle, & mochel more, to fulfille þe wille & þe  
 f. 26a desire of oure soule. & oure soule, |bi vertewe of þis reformyng grace,  
 is mad sufficient at þe fulle to comprehende al him by loue, þe  
 whiche is incomprehensible to alle create knowable miȝt, as is aungel  
 & mans soule. (I mene by þeire knowyng & not by þeire louyng, &  
 30 þerfore I clepe hem in þis caas knowable miȝtes).

Bot s[e]þ<sup>30</sup> alle resonable creatures, aungel & man, haþ in hem,  
 ilchone by hemself, o principal worching miȝt, þe whiche is clepid a  
 knowable miȝt, & anoþer principal worching miȝt, þe which is  
 clepid a louyng miȝt: of þe whiche two miȝtes, to þe first, þe whiche  
 35 is a knowyng miȝt, God, þat is þe maker of hem, is euermore  
 incomprehensible; & to þe secound, þe whiche is þe louyng miȝt, in  
 ilch one diuersly<sup>31</sup> he is al comprehensible at þe fulle, insomochel þat  
 o louyng soule only in itself, by vertewe of loue, schuld comprehende  
 in it hym þat is sufficient at þe fulle—& mochel more, wiþoute  
 40 comparision—to fille alle þe soules & aungelles þat euer may be. &

<sup>28</sup> schalt] schuldest *other MSS.*

<sup>29</sup> -self] one *other MSS.*; and elsewhere.

<sup>30</sup> seþ] siþ Har<sup>1</sup>; seþ Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>; see U Ro<sup>3</sup>. See *Commentary*.

<sup>31</sup> diuersly] seerly *other MSS.*

þis is þe eendles merueilous miracle of loue, þe whiche schal neuer take eende; for euer schal he do it, & neuer schal he seese for to do it. See, who bi grace see may, for þe felyng of þis is eendles blisse; & þe contrary is eendles pyne.

And þerfore whoso were refourmyd by grace þus to continow|in 5 f. 26b  
keping of þe sterynges of þe<sup>32</sup> wille, schuld neuer be in þis liif—as he may not be wipouten þees sterynges in kynde—wipouten som taast of þe eendles swetnes; & in þe blisse of heuen wipouten þe fulle food. & þerfore haue no wonder þof I stere þee to þis werk. For þis is þe werk, as þou schalt here after, in þe whiche man schuld haue 10  
contynowed ȝif he neuer had synned, & to þe whiche worching man was maad, & alle þing for man, to help him & forþer him þerto, & by þe whiche<sup>33</sup> a man schal be reparaild agein. & for þe defaylyng in þis worching a man falleþ depper & depper in synne, & ferþer & ferþer fro God. & by kepyng & contynowel worching in þis werk only, 15  
wipouten mo, a man euermore riseþ hier & hier fro synne, & nerer & nerer vnto God.

& þerfore take good keep into tyme, how þat þou dispendist it. For noþing is more precious þan tyme. In oo litel tyme, as litel as it is, may heuen be wonne & lost. A token it is þat time is precious: for 20  
God, þat is ȝeuer of tyme, ȝeueþ neuer two tymes togeder, bot ich one after oþer. & þis he doþ for he wil not reuerse þe ordre or þe ordinel cours in þe cause of his creacion. For tyme is maad for man, & not man for tyme. & þerfore God, þat is þe rewler of kynde, wil not in þe ȝeuyng of tyme go before þe steryng of kynde in a mans 25  
soule; þe whiche is euen acordyng to o tyme only. So þat man|schal f. 27a  
haue none excusacion agens God in þe Dome & at þe ȝeuyng of acompte of dispendyng of tyme, seiing:<sup>34</sup> ‘þou ȝeuest two tymes at ones, & I haue bot o steryng at ones.’

Bot soroufully þou seist now: ‘How schal I do? & siþ þis is soþ þat 30  
þou seist, how schal I ȝeue acompte of iche [tyme<sup>35</sup> seerly<sup>36</sup>]. I þat into þis day, now of foure & twenty ȝere age, neuer toke hede of tyme? Ȝif I wolde now amende it, þou wost wel, bi verrey reson of þi wordes wretyn before, it may not be after þe cours of kynde ne of comoun grace, þat I schuld mowe kepe or elles make aseep to any 35  
mo tymes þan to þoo þat ben for to come. Ȝe, & moreouer wel I wote, bi verrey proef, þat of þoo þat ben to come I schal on no wise, for habundaunce of freelte & slownes of sperite, mowe kepe one of an hondred; so þat I am verrey conclude in þeese resons. Help me now, for þe loue of Iesu!’

<sup>32</sup> þe<sup>2</sup>] *hys other MSS.*

<sup>33</sup> whiche] *worchyng add. other MSS.*

<sup>34</sup> seiing] þus *add. other MSS.*

<sup>35</sup> tyme] þing *Har<sup>1</sup>.*

<sup>36</sup> seerly] *diuersly Har<sup>1</sup>.*

Riȝt wel hast þou seide 'for þe loue of Iesu'. For in þe loue of Iesu þere schal be þin help. Loue is soche a miȝt þat it makiþ alle þing comoun. Loue þerfore Iesu, & alle þing þat he haþ it is þin. He by his Godheed is maker & ȝeuer of tyme. He bi his Manheed is þe  
 5 verrey keper of tyme. & he, bi his Godheed & his Manheed togeders, is þe trewist domesman & þe asker of acompte of dispending of tyme. Knyt þee þerfore [to]<sup>37</sup> him by loue & by beleue; & þan by vertewe of  
 f. 27b þat knot þou schalt be comoun parcener wiþ|him & wiþ alle þat by loue so ben knittyd vnto him; þat is to sey, wiþ oure Lady Seinte  
 10 Mary, þat ful was of alle grace in kepyng of tyme, wiþ alle þe aungelles of heuen þat neuer may lese tyme, & wiþ alle þe seintes in heuen & in erþe, þat by þe grace of Iesu kepen tyme ful iustly in vertewe of loue.

Loo! here liþ counforte; construe þou cleerly & pike þee sum  
 15 profite. Bot of oo þing I warne þee amonges alle oþer: I cannot see who may trewliche chalenge comunite þus wiþ Iesu & his iust Moder, his hiȝe aungelles & also wiþ his seyntes, bot ȝif it be soche one þat doþ þat in hym is, wiþ helping of grace, in kepyng of tyme; so þat he be seen to be a profiter on his partye, so litil as is, vnto þe  
 20 comunite, as ich one of hem doþ on his.

& þerfore take kepe to þis werk & to þe merueylous maner of it wiþinne in þi soule. For ȝif it be trewlich conceyued, it is bot a sodeyn steryng, & as it were vnauisid, speedly springing unto God as sparcle fro þe cole. & it is merueylous to noumbre þe sterynges þat  
 25 may be in one oure wrouȝt in a soule þat is disposid to þis werk. & ȝit, in o steryng of alle þeese, he may haue sodenly & parfiteley forȝeten alle create þing. Bot fast after iche steryng, for corrupcion of þe flesche, it falleþ doune aȝein to som þouȝt or to some done or  
 f. 28a vndone dede. Bot what|þerof? For fast after, it riseþ aȝen as sodenly  
 30 as it did bifore.

& here mowe men schortly conceyue þe maner of þis worching, & cleerly knowe þat it is fer fro any fantasie, or any fals ymaginacion, or queynte opinion; þe whiche ben brouȝt in, not by soche a deuoute & a meek blynde stering of loue, bot by a proude, coryous, & an  
 35 ymaginatiif witte. Soche a proude, corious witte behoueþ algates be born doun & stifly troden doun vnder fote, ȝif þis werke schal trewly be conceyuid in purete of spirite.

For whoso heriþ þis werke ouþer be red or spoken, & weneþ þat it may or schuld be comen to by trauayle in þeire wittes (& þerfore þei  
 40 sitte & sechin in þeire wittes how þat it may be, & in þis coriouste þei trauayle þeire ymaginacion, parauenture, aȝens cours of kynde, & þei feyne a maner of worching, þe whiche is neiþer bodily ne

<sup>37</sup> to] bi Har<sup>l</sup>.



goostly): trewly þis man, whatsoever he be, is perilously disseyuid; insomochel þat, bot gif God of his grete goodnes schewe his mercyful myracle & make hym sone to leue werk & meek hym to counsel of prouid worchers, he schal falle ouþer into frenesies, or elles into oþer grete mischeues of goostly sinnes & deuels disseites; þorow þe whiche 5 he may liztly be lorne, boþe liif & soule, wiþouten any eende. &| þerfore, for Goddes loue, beware in þis werk, & trauayle not in þi f. 28b wittes ne in þin ymaginacion on no wise. For I telle þee trewly, it may not be comen to by trauaile in þeim; & þerfore leue þeim & worche not wiþ þeim. 10

& wene not, for I clepe it a derknes or a cloude, þat it be any cloude congelid of þe humours þat fleen in þe ayre, ne zit any derknes soche as is in þin house on niztes, when þi candel is oute. For soche a derknes & soche a cloude maist þou ymagin wiþ coriouste of witte, for to bere before þin igen in þe liztest day of 15 somer; & also, aȝenswarde, in þe derkist nigt of wynter þou mayst ymagin a clere schinyng lizt. Lat be soche falsheed; I mene not þus. For when I sey derknes, I mene a lackyng of knowyng; as alle þat þing þat þou knowest not, or elles þat þou hast forȝetyn, it is derk to þee, for þou seest it not wiþ þi goostly ize. & for þis skile it is not 20 clepid a cloude of þe eire, bot a cloude of vnknowyng, þat is bitwix þee & þi God.

Here beginneþ þe fifþe chapitre.

& gif euer þou schalt come to þis cloude, & wone & worche þerin as I bid þee, þee byhoueþ, as þis cloude of vnknowyng is abouen þee, 25 bitwix þee & þi God, rixt so put a cloude of forȝetyng bineþ þee, bitwix þee & alle þe cretures þat euer ben maad. Þee|þinkeþ, f. 29a parauenture, þat þou arte ful fer fro God, forþi þat þis cloude of vnknowing is bitwix þee & þi God; bot sekirly, & it be wel conseyued, þou arte wel ferþer fro hym when þou hast no cloude of 30 forȝetyng bitwix þee & alle þe creatures þat euer ben maad. As ofte as I sey 'alle þe creatures þat euer ben maad', as ofte I mene, not only þe self creatures, bot also alle þe werkes & þe condicions of þe same creatures. I outetake not o creature, wheþer þei ben bodily creatures or goostly, ne zit any condicion or werk of any creature, 35 wheþer þei be good or iuel; bot schortly to sey, alle schuld be hid vnder þe cloude of forȝetyng in þis caas.

For þof al it be ful profitable sumtyme to þink of certeyne condicions & dedes of sum certein special creatures, neuerþeles zit in þis werke it profiteþ lityl or nouȝt. For why mynde or þinkyng of any 40 creature þat euer God maad, or of any of þeire dedes ouþer, it is a maner of goostly lizt; for þe ize of þi soule is openid on it & euen ficchid þerapon, as þe ize of a schoter is apon þe prik þat he schoteþ



to. & o þing I telle þee, þat alle þing þat þou þinkeſt apon it is abouen þee for þe tyme, & bitwix þee & þi God. & inſomochel þou arte þe ferþer fro God, þat ouȝt is in þi mynde bot only God.

- f. 29b    Ȝe, & ȝif it be cortesy & ſemely to ſey, in þis werk it profiteþ litil  
 5 or nouȝt to þinke of þe kyndenes or þe worþines of God, ne on oure Lady, ne on þe ſeintes or aungelles in heuen, ne ȝit on þe ioies in heuen: þat is to ſay, wiþ a ſpecial beholding to hem, as þou woldeſt bi þat beholding fede & encrees þi purpoſ. I trowe þat on no wiſe it ſchuld be ſo<sup>38</sup> in þis caas & in þis werk. For þoþ al it be good to þinke  
 10 [a]pon þe kindenes of God, & to loue hym & preiſe him for hem: ȝit it is fer betyr to þinke apon þe nakid beyng<sup>39</sup> of him, & to loue him & preiſe him for himſelf.

Here biginniþ þe ſixþe chapitre.

- But now þou aſkeſt me & ſeiſt: ‘How ſchal I þinke on himſelf, & what is hee?’ & to þis I cannot anſwere þee bot þus: ‘I wote neuer.’

- For þou haſt brouȝt me wiþ þi queſtion into þat ſame derknes, & into þat ſame cloude of unknowyng þat I wolde þou were in þiſelf. For of alle oþer creatures & þeire werkes—ȝe, & of þe werkes of God ſelf—may a man þorou grace haue fulheed of knowing, & wel to kon  
 20 þinke on hem; bot of God himſelf can no man þinke. & þerfore I wole leue<sup>40</sup> al þat þing þat I can þinke, & cheſe to my loue þat þing þat  
 f. 30a I cannot þinke. For whiþ he may wel be loued, bot not þouȝt. By loue may he be getyn & holden; bot bi þouȝt neiþer. & þerfore, þoþ al it be good ſumtyme to þinke of þe kyndnes & þe worþines of God in  
 25 ſpecial, & þoþ al it be a liȝt & a party of contemplacion: neuerþeles in þis werk it ſchal be caſten down & keuerid wiþ a cloude of forȝetyng. & þou ſchalt ſtep abouen it ſtalworþly, bot liſtely, wiþ a deuoute & a plesyng ſteryng of loue, & fonde for to peerſe þat derknes abouen þee. & ſmyte apon þat picke cloude of vnknowyng wiþ a ſcharp darte of  
 30 longyng loue, & go not þens for þing þat befalleþ.

Here biginniþ þe ſeuenþ chapitre.

- & ȝif any þouȝt riſe & wil prees algates abouen þee, bitwix þee & þat derknes, & aſche þee ſeiing: ‘What ſekist þou, & what woldeſt þou haue?’ ſey þou þat it is God þat þou woldeſt haue. ‘Him I  
 35 coueite, him I ſeche, & noȝt bot him.’ & ȝif he aſke þee what is þat God, ſey þou þat it is God þat maad þee & bouȝt þee, & þat graciously haþ clepid þee to his loue.<sup>41</sup> & in him ſei þou kanſt no ſkile. & þerfore ſey: ‘Go þou down aȝein.’ & treed him faſt down

<sup>38</sup> be ſo] helpe Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

<sup>39</sup> beyng] ſubſtaunce Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

<sup>40</sup> leue] leeſe Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> his loue] þi degre other MSS.

wip a steryng of loue<sup>42</sup> þof he seme to þee riȝt holy, & seme to|þee as f. 30b  
he wolde help þee to seke hym.

For, paraenture, he wil bryng to þi minde diuerse ful feire &  
wonderful pointes of his kyndnes, & sey þat he is ful swete & ful  
louyng, ful gracious & ful mercyful. & ȝif þou wilt here him, he 5  
coueiteþ no beter; for at þe last he wil þus jangle euer more & more  
til he bring þee lower<sup>43</sup> to þe mynde of his Passion. & þere wol he lat  
þe see þe wonderful kyndnes of God; & if þou here him, he kepeþ no  
beter. For sone after he wil lat þee see þin olde wrechid leuing; &  
paraenture, in seing & pinkyng þerof, he wil bryng to þi mynde 10  
som place þat þou hast wonid in before þis tyme. So þat at þe last,  
er<sup>44</sup> euer wite þou, þou schalt be scaterid þou wost neuer where. Þe  
cause of þis scateryng is þat þou herddist him first wilfully,  
answeredist him, resceiuedist him, & letest him allone.

& ȝit, neuerþeles, þe þing þat he seide was boþe good & holy; 15  
ȝe, & so holy þat what man or womman þat wenip to come to  
contemplacion wipoutyn many soche swete meditacions of þeire  
owne wrechidnes, þe Passion, þe kyndenes & þe grete goodnes & þe  
worpines of God comyng before, sekirly he schal erre & faile of his  
purpos. & ȝit, neuerþeles, it behoueþ a man or a womman, þat haþ 20  
longe tyme ben usid|in þeese meditacions, algates leue hem, & put f. 31a  
hem & holde hem fer doun vnder þe cloude of forȝetyng, ȝif euer  
schal he peerse þe cloude of vnknowyng bitwix him & his God.

þerfore, what tyme þat þou purposest þee to þis werk, & felest bi  
grace þat þou arte clepid of God, lift þan up þin herte vnto God wip a 25  
meek steryng of loue. & mene God<sup>45</sup> þat maad þee, & bouȝt þee, &  
þat graciousli haþ clepid þee to þis werk.<sup>46</sup> & resseiue none oþer þouȝt  
of God. & ȝit not alle þeese, bot þee list; for it suffiseþ inouȝ a naked  
entent directe vnto God, wipouten any oþer cause þen himself.

& ȝif þee list haue þis entent lappid & foulden in o worde, for þou 30  
schuldest haue betir holde þerapon, take þee bot a litil worde of o  
silable; for so it is betir þen of two, for euer þe schorter it is, þe betir it  
acordeþ wip þe werk of þe spirite. & soche a worde is þis worde GOD  
or þis worde LOUE. Cheese þee wheþer þou wilt, or anoþer as þe list:  
whiche þat þee likeþ best of o silable. & fasten þis worde to þin herte, 35  
so þat it neuer go þens for þing þat bifalleþ.

þis worde schal be þi scheeld & þi spere, wheþer þou ridest on pees  
or on werre. Wip þis worde þou schalt|bete on þis cloude & þis f. 31b  
derknes abouen þee. Wip þis worde þou schalt smite doun al maner

<sup>42</sup> loue] for *add.* Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> lower] downnere Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> er] or *other MSS.*, and *elsewhere*.

<sup>45</sup> God] loue *add.* Har<sup>1</sup>; loue god (*can.*) *add.* Ro<sup>1</sup>. See *Commentary*.

<sup>46</sup> þis werk] þi degre *other MSS.*

pougt vnder þe cloude of forȝeting; insomochel þat ȝif any pougt prees apon þee to aske þee what þou woldest haue, answeere him wiþ no mo wordes bot wiþ þis o worde.<sup>47</sup> & ȝif he profre þee of his grete clergie to expoune þe þat worde & to telle þee þe condicions of þat  
 5 worde, sey him þat þou wilt haue it al hole, & not broken ne vndon. & ȝif þow wilt holde þee fast on þis purpos, sekir be þou he wil no while abide. & whi<sup>48</sup> For þou wilt not late him fede him on<sup>49</sup> soche swete<sup>50</sup> meditacions<sup>51</sup> touchid before.

Here biginnip þe eigte chapitre.

10 But now þou askest me: 'What is he, þis þat þus preesiþ apon me in þis werk?' & wheþer it is a good þing or an iuel? ' & ȝif it<sup>52</sup> be an iuel þing, þen haue I merueyle', þou seist, 'whi þat he wil encrees a mans deuocion so mochel. For sumtyme me þink þat it is a passing counforte to listen after his tales. For he wil sumtyme, me þink,  
 15 make me weep ful hertly for pite of þe Passion of Criste, somtyme for my wrechidnes, & for many oþer skiles þat, me þinkeþ, ben ful holy, & þat done me mochel good. & þerfore me þinkiþ þat he schuld on no  
 f. 32a wise be iuel. & ȝif he be good, & wiþ his swete tales doþ me so moche good wiþal, þan I haue greet merueyle whi þat þou biddist me put  
 20 him down & away so fer vnder þe cloude of forȝetyng.'

Now sekirly me þinkeþ þat þis is a wel mouid questyon, & þerfore I þink to answeere þerto so febeli as I can. First, when þou askest me what is he, þis þat preseþ so fast apon þee in þis werk, profryng to help þee in þis werk: I sey þat it is a scharp & a clere beholding of þi  
 25 kindly witte, preentid in þi reson wipinne in þi soule. & where þou askist me þerof wheþer it be good or iuel: I sey þat it behoueþ algates be good in his kynde, for whi it is a beme of þe licnes of God. Bot þe vse þerof may be boþe good & iuel. Good, when it is openid bi grace for to see þi wrechidnes, þe Passion, þe kyndnes, & þe wonderful  
 30 werkes of God in his creatures bodily & goostly; & þan it is no wonder þof it encrees þi deuocion so<sup>53</sup> mochel as þou seist. Bot þen is þe vse iuel, when it is swollen<sup>54</sup> wiþ pride & wiþ corioustie of moche clergie & letterly conning as in clerkes, & makeþ hem prees for to be  
 f. 32b holden not meek scolers & maystres of deuinite or of deuocion, | bot  
 35 proude scolers of þe deuel & maysters of vanite & of falsheed. & in oþer men or wommen, whatso þei be, religious or seculers, þe vse &

<sup>47</sup> worde] *om. other MSS.*

<sup>48</sup> whi] Sykerly *add. other MSS.*

<sup>49</sup> on] wiþ *other MSS.*

<sup>50</sup> swete] *ins. Har<sup>1</sup>; om. other MSS.*

<sup>51</sup> meditacions] of god *add. other MSS.*

<sup>52</sup> it] he Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> so] ful *other MSS.*

<sup>54</sup> swollen] bolned *other MSS.*

þe worching of þis kyndely witte is þan iuel, whan it is swollen wiþ proude & corious skyles of wordely þinges & fleshely conceites, in couetyng of wordly worschipes & hauyng of riches & veyne plesaunce & flateringes of oþer.

& where þat þou askest me whi þat þou schalt put it doune vnder 5  
þe cloude of forþetyng, siþen it is so þat it is good in his kynde, & þerto when it is wel vsed, it doþ þee so mochel good & encreseþ þi deuocion so mochel: to þis I answere & sey þat þou schalt wel vnderstonde þat þer ben two maner of liues in Holy Chirche. Þe tone is actiue liif, & þe toþer is contemplatiue liif. Actiue is þe lower, & 10  
contemplatiue is þe hier. Actiue liif haþ two degrees, a hier & a lower; & also contemplatiue liif haþ two degrees, a lower & a hizer. Also þese two liues ben so couplid togeders, þat þof al þei ben diuers in som party, ȝit neiþer of hem may be had fully wiþouten som party of þe oþer; for whi þat party þat is þe heizer party of actiue liif, þat 15  
same party is þe lower party of contemplatiue liif. So þat a man may not be fully actiue, bot ȝif he be in party contemplatiue; ne ȝit fully contemplatiue (as it may be here), bot ȝif he be in partie actiue. Þe condicion of actiue liif is soche, þat it is boþe bygonne & eended in þis liif. Bot not so of contemplatiue liif; for it is bigonne in þis liif, & 20  
schal last wiþouten eende, for whi þat partie þat Mary chees schal neuer be taken away. Actiue liif is troublid & trauailid aboute many þinges; bot contemplatiue sitteþ in pees wiþ o þing.

Þe lower party of actiue liif stondeþ in good & honeste bodily werkes of mercy & of charite. Þe hier party of actiue liif & þe lower 25  
party of contemplatiue liif liþ in goodly<sup>55</sup> goostly meditacions, & besy beholding—vnto a mans owne wrechidnes wiþ sorow & contricion, vnto þe Passion of Crist & of his seruauntes wiþ pite & compassion, & vnto þe wonderful giftes, kyndnes, & werkes of God in alle his creatures, bodili & goostly, wiþ þankyng & preising. Bot þe hizer 30  
partye of contemplacion (as it may be had here) hongeþ al holy in þis derknes & in þis cloude of vnknowyng, wiþ a louyng steryng & a blinde beholdyng vnto þe nakid beyng of God himself only.

In þe lower partye of actiue liif a man is wiþouten himself & 35  
bineeþ himself. In þe hizer party of actiue liif & þe lower party of contemplatiue liif, a man is wiþinne himself & euen wiþ himself. Bot in þe hizer partie of contemplatiue liif, a man is abouen himself & vnder his God. Abouen himself he is, for whi he purposeþ him to wyne þeder bi grace, wheþer he may not come bi kynde; þat is to sey, to be knit to God in spirite, & in oneheed of loue & acordaunce 40  
of wile.

<sup>55</sup> goodly] good Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.



- & riȝt as it is impossible to mans vnderstondyng a man to come to þe higer party of actyue liif, bot if he seese for a tyme of þe lower party: so it is þat a man schal not mowe com to þe higer party of contemplatiue liif, bot ȝif he seese for a tyme of þe lower partye. & as  
 5 unleueful a þing as it is, & as moche as it wolde lette a man þat sat in his meditac[i]ons, to beholde þanne to his outward bodily werkes, þe whiche he had done or elles schul<sup>56</sup> do, þof al þei were neuer so holy werkes in hemself: sekirly as unlicly<sup>57</sup> a þing it is, & as moche wolde it let a man, þat schuld worche in þis derknes & in þis cloude of  
 10 unknowing wiþ an affectuous steryng of loue to God for himself, for to late any þouȝt or any meditation of Goddes|wonderful ȝiftes, kyndnes, & werkes in any of his creatures, bodily or goostly, rise apouen him to prees bitwix him & his God, þouȝ al þei be neuer so holy þouȝtes, ne so liking, ne so counfortable.  
 15 & for þis skile it is þat I bid þee put doun soche a scharp sotil þouȝt, & keuer him wiþ a þicke cloude of forȝetyng, be he neuer so holy, ne hote he þee neuer so weel for to help þee in þi purpos. For whi loue may reche to God in þis liif, bot not knowing. & al þe whiles þat þe soule woniþ in þis deedly body, euermore is þe scharpnnes of  
 20 oure vnderstonding in beholding of alle goostly þinges, bot most specialy of God, medelid wiþ sum maner of fantasie; for þe whiche oure werk schuld be vnclene, &, bot if more wonder were, it schuld lede us into moche errour.

Here biginniþ þe ninþe chapitre.

- 25 And þerfore þe scharp steryng of þin vnderstondyng, þat wile alweis prees<sup>58</sup> apouen þee when þou settest þee to þis blynd werk, behoueþ alweis be born doun; & bot þou bere him doun, he wile bere þee doun; insomochel þat whan þou wenest best to abide in þis derknes, & þat nouȝt is in þi mynde bot only God, & þou loke  
 f. 34b 30 witterly<sup>59</sup> þou schalt fynde þi mynde not ocupied in þis derknes, |bot in a cleer beholding of som þing beneeþ God. & ȝif it þus be, sekirly þen is þat þing abouen þee for þe time, & bitwix þee & þi God. & þerfore purpose þee to put doun soche clere beholdinges, be þei neuer so holy ne so likyng.  
 35 For o þing I telle þee: it is more profitable to þe helpe of þi soule, more worþi in itself, & more plesyng to God & to alle þe seintes & aungelles in heuen—ȝe! & more helply to alle þi freendes, bodily & goostly, quik & dede—soche a blynde steryng of loue vnto God for

<sup>56</sup> schul] schuld *other MSS.*

<sup>57</sup> unlicly] vnlefulle Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> wile alweis prees] neuer wil away preseþ Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> witterly] wittely Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>; wisely Pa.



himself, & soche a priue loue put<sup>60</sup> vpon þis cloude of vnknowyng; & beter þee were for to haue it & for to fele it in þin affeccion goostly, þen it is for to haue þe ige of þi soule openid in contemplacion or beholding of alle þe aungelles or seyntes in heuen, or in hering of alle þe mirþe & þe melody þat is amonges hem in blisse. 5

& loke þou haue no wonder of þis; for miȝtest þou ones se it as cleerly as þou maist bi grace com to for to grope it & feele it in þis liif, þou woldest þink as I say. Bot seker be þou þat cleer sigt schal neuer man haue here in þis liif; bot þe felyng mowe men haue þorow grace whan God voucheþsaaf. & þerfore lift up þi loue to þat cloude. Bot gif 10 I schal sey þe soþe, lat God drawe þi loue up|to þat cloude; & proue f. 35a þou þorou help of his grace to forȝete alle oþer þing.

For siþen a nakid minde of any þing vnder God, presyng aȝens þi wille & þi wetyng, putteþ þee ferþer fro God þan þou schuldest be nere it were, & letteþ þee, & makeþ þee inasmoche more vnable to 15 fele in experience þe frute of his loue: what trowest þou þan þat a mynde wetyngly & wilfully drawen apon þee wil hindre<sup>61</sup> þee in þi purpos? & siþen a mynde of any special seinte or of any clene goostly þing wil hindre<sup>62</sup> þee so moche, what trowest þou þan þat þe mynde of any man leuyng in þis wrechid liif, or of any maner of bodely or 20 wordely þing, wil hinder þee & let þee in þis werk?

I say not þat soche a nakid sodein þouȝt of any good & clene goostly þing vnder God, presyng aȝens þi wille or þi wetyng, or elles wilfully drawen apon þee wiþ auisement in encresing of þi deuocion, þouȝ al it be lettyng to þis maner of werk, þat it is þerfore iuel. Nay, 25 God forbede þat þou take it so. Bot I say, þof al it be good & holy, ȝit in þis werk it letteþ more þen it profiteþ—I mene for þe tyme. For whi sekirly he þat sekiþ God parfitely, he wil not rest him finaly in þe mynde of any aungel or seinte þat is in heuen.

Here bygynniþ þe tenþe chapitre.

30 f. 35b

But it is not þus of þe mynde of any man or womman leuyng in þis liif, or of any bodili or wordly þing, whatsoeuer þat it be. For whi a nakyd sodein þouȝt of any of hem presyng aȝens þi wile & þi wetyng, þof al it be no sinne arettid vnto þee—for it is þe pyne of þe original sinne presyng aȝens þi power, of þe whiche sinne þou arte clensid in 35 þi baptyme—neuerþeles ȝit, gif þis sodein steryng or þouȝt be not smetyn sone down, as fast for freelte þi fleshly herte is streynid þerby, wiþ sum maner of likyng gif it be a þing þat pleseþ þee or haþ plesid þee bifore, or elles wiþ sum maner of gruching gif it be a þing

<sup>60</sup> put] puttyng *other MSS.*

<sup>61</sup> hindre] blynd Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> hindre] blynde Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

f. 36a 5 þat þee þink greueþ þee or haþ greued þee before. þe whiche fastning,  
 þof al it may be in fleshly leuyng men & wommen þat ben in deedly  
 sinne before, deedly, neuerþeles in þee, & in alle oþer þat han in a  
 trewe wile forsaken þe wored,<sup>63</sup> soche a likyng or a gruching  
 fastnyng in þe flescheli herte is bot venial synne. þe cause|of þis is þe  
 grounding & þe rotyng of zoure entent in God, maad in þe  
 biginnyng of zoure leuyng in þat state þat ȝe stonde in,<sup>64</sup> bi þe  
 witnes & þe counsel of som discret fader.<sup>65</sup> Bot ȝif it so be þat þis  
 likyng or gruching fastnyng in þi fleshly herte & þeires be suffred  
 10 so longe to abide vnreproued, þat þan at þe last it is fastnid to þe  
 goostly herte (þat is to sey þe wile) wiþ a ful consent: þan it is deedly  
 synne.

& þis befallēþ when þow, or any of hem þat I speke of, wilfully  
 drawn apon ȝow þe mynde of any man or womman leuyng in þis  
 15 liif, or of any bodily or wordely þing ouþer; insomochē þat ȝif it be a  
 þing þe whiche greueþ or haþ greuid þee before, þer riseþ in þee a  
 teenful passion & an appetite of vengauce, þe whiche is clepid  
 Wraþ;<sup>66</sup> or elles a fel dedein & a<sup>67</sup> maner of wlatsonnes of þeire  
 persone wiþ dispitous & reprouyng þougtes, þe whiche is clepid  
 20 Enuye; or elles a werines & an vnlistines of any good ocupacion,  
 bodily or goostly, þe whiche is clepid Slewþ. & ȝif it be a þing þat  
 plesith þee, or haþ plesid þee before, þer riseþ in þee a passaunt<sup>68</sup>  
 delite for to þink on þat þing whatso it be; insomochel þat þou  
 retest þee in þat þougȝt, & finally fastnist þin herte & þi wille þerto,  
 f. 36b 25 & |fedest þi fleshely herte þerwiþ, so þat þee þink for þe tyme þat þou  
 coueitest none oþer welþe, bot to liue euer in soche a pees & rest wiþ  
 þat þing þat þou pinkest apon. Ȝif þis þougȝt þat þou þus drawest  
 apon þee, or elles resceyuest whan it is put unto þee, & þat þou  
 retest þee þus in wiþ delite, be worþines of kynde or of knowyng, of  
 30 grace or of degree, of fauour or of faireheed, þan it is Pride. & ȝif it  
 be any maner of worldly good, riches or catel, or what þat man may  
 haue or be lorde of, þen it is Couetyse. Ȝif it be deintuous metes &  
 drinkes, or any maner of delites þat man may taast, þen it is  
 Glotenie. & ȝif it be loue or plesaunce, or any maner of fleshly  
 35 daliaunce, glosing or flateryng of any man or womman leuyng in þis  
 liif, or of þiself ouþer, þan it is Lecherye.

<sup>63</sup> wored] & arte obliſchid vnto any degree in deuoute leuyng in Holi Chirche, whatso it be, priue or aperte, & þerto þat wil be rewlied not after þeire owne wille & þeire owne witte, bot after þe wille & þe counsel of þeire ſouereins, whatso þei be, religious or ſeculeres (*can.*) *add.* Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>3</sup>. See *Commentary*.

<sup>64</sup> in þat state . . . in] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> bi . . . fader] *can.* Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>2</sup>; *om.* other MSS.

<sup>66</sup> Wraþ] *Ire* other MSS.

<sup>67</sup> & a] in other MSS.

<sup>68</sup> passaunt] passyng other MSS.

Here biginniþ þe elleuen chapitre.

I say not þis for I trowe þat þou, or any oþer soche as I speke of, ben gilty & combrid wiþ any soche synnes; bot for I wolde þat þou chargedist iche a þougt & iche a steryng after þat it is, & for I wolde þat þou trauailedist besily to distroie þe first steryng & þougt of þees 5 þinges þat þou maist þus synne inne. For o þing I telle þee: þat who chargeþ not, or setteþ litil bi þe first þougt—*3e*, þouȝ al it be no sinne|vnto him—he, þat whosoever<sup>69</sup> þat he be, schal not eschewe f. 37a rechelesnes in venial sinne. Venial synne schal no man vtterly eschue in þis deedly liif. Bot rechelesnes in venial synne schuld 10 alweis be eschewed of alle þe [trewe]<sup>70</sup> dissiples of perfeccion; & elles I haue no wonder þof þei sone sinne deedly.

Here biginniþ þe twelfþe chapitre.

& þerfore, ȝif þou wilt stonde & not falle, seese neuer in þin entent, bot bete euermore on þis cloude of vnknowyng þat is bitwix þee & þi 15 God wiþ a scharpe darte of longing loue. & loþe for to þink on ouȝt vnder God. & go not þens for þing þat befallēþ. For þis is only bi itself þat werk þat distroieþ þe grounde & þe rote of synne. Fast þou neuer so mochel, wake þou neuer so longe, rise þou neuer so eerly, ligge þou neuer so harde, were þou neuer so scharp, *3e*, & ȝif it were 20 leueful to do—as it is not—puttest þou oute þin yȝen, cuttest þou oute þi tonge of þi mouþ, stoppedest<sup>71</sup> þou þin eren & þi nose neuer so fast, þouȝ þou schere awei þi preue membres & dedest<sup>72</sup> al þe pine to þi body þat þou miȝtest<sup>73</sup> þink: alle þis wolde<sup>74</sup> help þee riȝt nouȝt. Ȝit wil stering & rising of synne be in þee. 25

Ȝe, & what more! Wepe þou neuer so moche for sorow of þi sinnes or of þe Passion of Criste, or haue þou neuer|so moche mynde of þe f. 37b ioies of heuen, what may it do to þee? Sekirly moche good, moche helpe, moche profite, & moche grace wol it gete þee; bot in comparison of þis blinde steryng of loue, it is bot a litil þat it doþ, or 30 may do, wiþouten þis. Þis bi itself is þe best partye of Mary, wiþouten þees oþer. Þei wiþouten it profite[n]<sup>75</sup> litel or nouȝt. It distroieþ not only þe grounde & þe rote of sinne, as it may be here, bot þerto it geteþ vertewes. For & it be treuly conceyuid, alle vertewes scholen be sotely & parfityly conceyuid & felid compre- 35 hendid in it, wiþouten any medeling<sup>76</sup> of þe entent. & haue a man

<sup>69</sup> whosoever] whatsoever other MSS.

<sup>70</sup> trewe] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> puttest . . . cuttest . . . stoppedest] putte . . . cutte . . . stop other MSS.

<sup>72</sup> dedest] do other MSS.

<sup>73</sup> miȝtest] maste or kanst other MSS.

<sup>74</sup> wolde] wille other MSS.

<sup>75</sup> profiten] profiteþ Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>76</sup> medeling] blyndyng Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

neuer so many vertewes wiþouten it, alle þei ben medelid wiþ sum crokid entent, for þe whiche þei ben inparfite.

For vertewe is not elles bot an ordeinde & a mesurid affeccion, plainly directe vnto God for himself. For whi he in himself is þe clene  
 5 cause of alle vertewes; insomochel þat ȝif any man be sterid to any o  
 vertewe by any oþer cause medelid wiþ him—ȝe þof al it<sup>77</sup> be þe  
 cheef—ȝit þat vertewe is þan inparfite. As þus, bi ensaumple, may  
 be seen in o vertewe or two in stede of alle þe oþer. & wel may þeese  
 f. 38a two vertewes be meeknes &|charite, for whoso miȝt gete þeese two,  
 10 cleerly him nedid no mo: for whi he had alle.

Here byginnip þe þritteneþ chapitre.

Now lat see first of þe vertewe of meeknes: how þat it is inparfite  
 when it is caused of any oþer þing medelid wiþ God þof al it<sup>78</sup> be þe  
 cheef; & how þat it is parfite when it is caused of God by himself. &  
 15 first it is to weten what meeknes is in itself, ȝif þis mater schal cleerly  
 be seen & conceyuid; & þerafter may it more verrelly be conceyuid in  
 trewþ of sperite whiche is þe cause þerof.

Meeknes in itself is not ellis bot a trewe knowyng & felyng of a  
 mans self as he is. For sekirly whoso miȝt verrelly see & fele himself  
 20 as he is, þat he schuld verrelly be meek. Two þinges þer ben þe  
 whiche ben cause of þis meeknes, þe whiche ben þeese: On is þe  
 filþe, þe wrecchidnes, & þe freelte of man, into þe whiche he is fallen  
 by synne, & þe whiche algates him behouep to fele in sum partye þe  
 25 whiles he leuip in þis liif, be he neuer so holy. Anoper is þe ouer-  
 abundaunt loue & þe worþines of God in himself; in beholding of þe  
 whiche alle kynde quakip, alle clerkes ben foles, & alle seintes  
 f. 38b &|aungelles ben blynde; insomochel þat ne were þorow þe wisdam  
 of his Godheed þat he mesurid þeire beholdyng after þeire abilnes in  
 kynde & in grace, I defaile to sey what schuld falle of hem.

30 Þis secound cause is parfite; for whi it schal last wiþouten eende. &  
 þe toþer bifore is inparfite; for whi it schal not only faile at þe ende of  
 þis liif, bot ful ofte it may befalle þat a soule in þis deedly body, for  
 abundaunce of grace in multipling of his desire, as ofte & as longe as  
 God voucheþsaaf for to worche it, schal haue sodenly & parfityly lost  
 35 & forȝetyn alle wetyng & felyng of his beyng, not lokyng after  
 wheþer he haue ben holy or wrechid. Bot wheþer þat þis falle ofte or  
 seeldom to a soule þat is þus disposid, I trowe þat it lasteþ bot a ful  
 schort while. & in þis tyme it is parfityly mekyd, for it knoweþ & felip  
 no cause bot þe cheef. & euer whan it knoweþ & felip þe toþer cause  
 40 comounyng þerwiþ, þof al þis be þe cheef, ȝit it is inparfite meeknes.

<sup>77</sup> it] he other MSS.

<sup>78</sup> it] he other MSS.



Neuerþeles ȝit it is good & algates must be had; & God forbede þat þou take it in any oþer maner þen I sey.

Here biginnip þe fouretene chapitre.

For þof al I clepe it inparfite meeknes, ȝit I had leuer haue a trewe knowyng & a felyng of myself<sup>79</sup> as I am, & sonner I trowe þat it schuld|gete me þe parfite cause & vertewe of meeknes bi itself, þen it scholde & alle þe seintes & aungelles in heuen, & alle þe men & wommen of Holy Chirche leuyng in erþe, religious or seculers in alle degrees, weren set at ones alle togeders to do not elles bot to prey to God for me to gete me parfite meeknes. Ȝe, & ȝit it is impossible a sinner to gete, or to kepe when it is getyn, þe parfite vertewe of meeknes wiþouten it.

& þerfore swink & swete in al þat þou canst & mayst, for to gete þee a trewe knowyng & a feling of þiself<sup>80</sup> as þou arte. & þan I trowe þat sone after þat þou schalt haue a trewe knowyng & a felyng of God as he is; not as he is in hymself, for þat may no man do bot himself, ne ȝit as þou schalt do in blisse boþe body & soule togeders; bot as he is possible, & as he voucheþsaaf to be knowen & felid of a meek soule leuyng in þis deedly body.

& þink not for I sette two causes of meeknes, one parfite & anoþer inparfite, þat I wil þerfore þat þou leue þe traueile aboute inparfite meeknes & set þe holy to gete þe parfite. Nay, sekirly, I trow þou schuldest neuer bryng it so aboute. Bot herfore I do þat I do: for I þink to telle þee & late þee see þe worþines of þis goostly excercise before al oþer excercise, bodili or goostly,|þat man kan or may do bi grace; how þat a preue loue put in clennes of spirite upon þis derk cloude of vnknowyng bitwix þee & þi God sotely & parfiteley conteneþ in it þe parfite vertewe of meeknes, wiþouten any special or clere beholding of any þing vnder God; & for I wolde þat þou knewest whiche were parfite meeknes, & settist it as a token before þe loue of þin herte, & dedist it for þee & for me; & for I wolde bi þis knowyng make þee more meek.

For oftymes it befallē þat lackyng of knowyng is cause of moche pride, as me þinkeþ. For parauenture, & þou knewest not whiche were parfite meeknes, þou schuldest wene, when þou haddest a lityl knowyng & a felyng of þis þat I clepe inparfite meeknes, þat þou haddest nighond getyn parfite meeknes; & so schuldest þou deceyue þiself, & wene þat þou were ful meek, whan þou were al belappid in foule stinkyng pride. & þerfore fonde for to trauaile aboute parfite meeknes; for þe condicion of it is soche, þat whoso haþ it & þe whiles he haþ it, he schal not sinne; ne ȝit mochel after.

<sup>79</sup> myself] a wrech *ins. in margin, add. Har<sup>1</sup>. See Commentary.*

<sup>80</sup> þiself] a wreche *ins., add. Har<sup>1</sup>.*



Here byginniþ þe fifteneþ chapitre.

f. 40a & trist stedfastliche þat þer is soche a parfite meeknes as I speke  
of, & þat it may be comen to þorow grace|in þis liif. & þis I sey in  
confusion of þeire errour, þat seyen þat þer is no parfiter cause of  
5 meeknes þen is þat þe whiche is reysid of þe mynde of oure  
wrechidnes & oure before-done synnes.

I graunte wel þat to hem þat han ben in customable sinnes, as I  
am myself & haue ben, it is þe moste needful & speedful cause: to be  
mekyd vnder þe mynde of oure wrechidnes & oure before-done  
10 synnes, euer to þe tyme be þat þe grete rust of oure<sup>81</sup> sinne be in grete  
party rubbid away, oure consience & oure counsel to witnes.

Bot to oþer þat ben as it were innocentes, þe whiche neuer sinned  
deedly wiþ an abidyng wil & auisement, bot þorow freelte &  
vnknowyng, & þe whiche setten hem to be contemplatyues—&  
15 to us boþe, gif oure counsel & oure concience witnes oure laweful  
amendement in contricion & in confession & in aseþ-makyng after  
þe statute & þe ordinaunce of alle<sup>82</sup> Holy Chirche, &, þerto, gif we  
fele us sterid & clepid bi grace to be contemplatiues also—þer is þan  
anoþer cause to be mekyd vnder, as fer abouen þis cause as is þe  
20 leuyng of oure Lady Seint Marye abouen þe leuyng of þe sinfulest  
penaunt in Holy Chirche, or þe leuyng of Criste abouen þe leuyng of  
any oþer man in þis liif, or elles þe leuyng of an aungel in heuen, þe  
f. 40b whiche neuer felid—ne schal|fele— freelte, is abouen þe liif of þe  
frelest man þat is here in þis woreld.

25 For gif it so were þat þer were no parfite cause to be mekyd vnder,  
bot in seyng & felyng of wrechidnes, þen wolde I wite at hem þat  
seien so what cause þei ben mekid vnder, þat neuer seen ne felen—  
ne neuer schal be in hem—wrechidnes ne steryng of synne: as it is of  
oure Lorde Iesu Criste, oure Lady Seinte Marye, & alle þe seintes  
30 & aungelles in heuen. To þis perfeccion, & alle oþer, oure Lorde  
Iesu Criste clepiþ us himself in þe Gospel, where he biddeþ þat we  
schuld be parfite by grace as he hymself is by kynde.

Here biginniþ þe sixteneþ chapitre.

Loke þat no man þink it presumpcion þat he þat is þe wrechidest  
35 sinner of þis liif dar take apon hym—after þe tyme be þat he haue  
lawfully amendid hym, & after þat he haue felt him sterid to þat liif  
þat is clepid contemplatiue, by þe assent of his counsel & his  
conscience—for to profre a meke steryng of loue to his God, priuely  
puttyng apon þe cloude of vnknowyng bitwix him & his God. When  
40 oure Lorde seyde to Marye, in persone of alle sinners þat ben clepid

<sup>81</sup> oure] *om. other MSS.*

<sup>82</sup> alle] *can. Har<sup>1</sup>.*

to contemplatiue liif: 'þi synnes ben forȝ[e]uen þee'—not for hir grete sorow, ne for þe mynde of hir synnes, ne ȝit for hir meeknes þat sche had in þe beholding of hir wrechidnes only. Bot whi þan? Sekirly for sche loued mochel—lo! here mowe men see what a priue f. 41a  
loue put<sup>83</sup> may purchase of oure Lorde, before alle oþer werkes þat 5  
man may þink.

& ȝit I graunte wel þat scho had ful mochel sorow, & weep ful sore for hir synnes, & ful mochel was sche mekid in mynde of hir wrechidnes. & so schuld we do, þat haue ben wrechis & customable synners al oure liiftyme, make hidous & wonderful sorow for oure 10  
synnes, & ful mochel be mekid in mynde of oure wrechidnes.

Bot how? Sekirly as Mary did. Scho, þof al scho myȝt not vnfele þe depe hertly sorow of hir synnes—for whi al hir liiftyme sche had hem wiþ hir whereso sche ȝede, as it were in a birþen bounden togeders & leide up ful priuely in þe hole of hir herte, in maner neuer 15  
to be forȝeten—neuerþeles ȝit it may be seide & affermyd by Scripture þat sche had a more hertly sorow, a more doelful desire, & a more deep ȝing, & more sche languischid, ȝe! niȝhonde to þe deep, for lackyng of loue, þof al sche had ful mochel loue—& haue no wonder þerof, for it is þe condicion of a trewe louer þat euer þe 20  
more he loueþ, þe more him longeþ for to loue—þan sche had for any mynde of hir synnes.

& ȝit sche wist wel, & felt wel in himself, in a sad soþfastnes, þat sche was a wreche moste foule<sup>84</sup> of alle oþer, & þat hir synnes had maad a deuision bitwix hir & hir God, þat sche loued so mochel; & 25  
also þat þei were in grete party cause of hir langwisching sekenes for lackyng<sup>85</sup> of loue. Bot what þerof? Cam sche þerfore doun fro þe heigt of desire into þe depnes of hir sinful liif, & serchid in þe foule stynkyng fen & donghille of hir synnes, serching þeim up bi one & bi one, wiþ alle þe circumstaunces of hem, & sorowed & weep so upon 30  
hem ich one bi hemself? Nay, sekirly sche did not so. & whi? For God lete hir wite by his grace wiþinne in hir soule þat sche schuld neuer so bryng it aboute. For so myȝt sche sonner haue reisid in himself an abelnes to haue efte synnid, þen to haue purchasid by þat werke any pleyn forȝeuenes of alle hir synnes. 35

& þerfore sche heng up hir loue & hir longing desire in þis cloude of unknowing, & lernid hir to loue a þing þe whiche sche myȝt not se cleerly in þis liif bi liȝt of vnderstondyng in hir reson, ne ȝit uerely fele in swetnes of loue in hir affeccion; insomochel þat sche had oftetyms lityl specyal mynde wheþer þat euer sche had ben a synner 40

<sup>83</sup> priue loue put] puttyng of loue *other MSS.*

<sup>84</sup> foule] vyle Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>85</sup> lackyng] wantyng *other MSS.*

or none. Ȝe! & ful oftymes I hope þat sche was so deeply [affecte]<sup>86</sup> in þe loue of his Godheed þat sche had bot riȝt lityl specyall beholdyng unto þe beute of his precious & his blessid body, in þe whiche he sate ful louely, spekyng & preching before hir; ne ȝit to anyþing elles, bodyly or goostly. Þat þis be soþ, it semip by þe Gospelle.

f. 42a Here bygynneþ þe seuentene chapitre.

In þe Gospel of Seinte Luke it is wretyn þat when oure Lorde was in þe hous of Martha hir sistre, al þe tyme þat Martha maad hir besy aboute þe digtyng of his mete, Mary hir sister sat at his feet. & in heryng of his worde, sche beheeld not to þe besines of hir sister, þof al hir besines was ful good & ful holy, for it is þe first party of actyue liif; ne ȝit to þe precioustest of his blessid body, ne to þe swete voyce & þe wordes of his Manheed, þof al it be beter & holier, for it is þe secound party of actyue liif & þe first of contemplatyue liif, bot to þe souereynest wisdom of his Godheed lappid in þe derk wordes of his Manheed: þeder beheeld sche wiþ al þe loue of hir hert. For fro þens list hir not remowe for noþing þat sche saw ne herde spoken ne done aboute hir; bot sat ful stille in hir body, wiþ many a swete priue & a<sup>87</sup> lysty loue put upon þat hiȝe cloude of vnknowyng bitwix hir & hir God.

For o þing I telle þee: þat þer was neuer ȝit pure creature is þis liif, ne neuer ȝit schal be, so hiȝe rauschid in contemplacion & loue of þe Godheed, þat þer ne is euermore a hiȝe & a wonderful cloude of vnknowyng bitwix him & his God. In þis cloude it was þat Marye was ocupied wiþ many a preue loue put. & whi? For it was þe best & þe holiest party of contemplacion þat may be in þis liif. & fro þis party hir list not remowe for no þing; insomochel þat whan hir sistre Martha pleynid hir to oure Lorde of hir, & bad him bid hir sistre rise & help hir, & lat hir not so worche & trauayle by herself, scho sat ful styll & answerid not wiþ o worde, ne schewid not as moche as a grucching contenance agens hir sistre, for any pleynthe þat scho couþe make. & no wonder: for whi<sup>88</sup> scheo had anoþer werk to do þat Martha wist not of. & þefore scheo had no leiser to listen<sup>89</sup> to hir, ne to answeere hir at hir pleynthe.

Lo! freende, alle þeese werkes, þees wordes, & þeese contenaunces, þat weren schewid bitwix oure Lorde & þeese two sistres, ben set in ensauple of alle actyues & alle contemplatyues þat han ben siþen in Holy Chirche, & schal be to þe Day of Dome. For by Mary is

<sup>86</sup> affecte] acfette Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> a] *om. other MSS.*

<sup>88</sup> whi] for (*can. Har<sup>1</sup>*) *add. Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.*

<sup>89</sup> listen] *tent other MSS.*

understonden alle contemplatyues, for þei schuld conforme here leuyng after hirs; & by Martha, actyues, on þe same maner, & for þe same skil in licnes.

Here bygynneþ þe eigttene chapitre.

& riȝt as Martha pleynid þan on Marye hir sistre, riȝt so ȝit into 5  
þis day alle actyues pleinen of contemplatyues. For & þer be a man  
or a womman in any companye of þis worlde—what companye  
soeuer it be, religious or seculers, I oute-take none—þe whiche man|  
or womman (wheþer þat it be) feleþ hym sterid þorow grace & bi f. 43a  
counsel to forsake alle outward besines, & for to sette hym fully for 10  
to lyue contemplatyue liif after þeire kunnyng & þeire concience,  
þeire counseyl acordyng: as fast þeire owne breþren & þeire sistres,  
& alle þeire nexte freendes, wiþ many oþer þat knowen not þeire  
sterynges ne þat maner of leuyng þat þei set hem to, wiþ a grete  
pleynyng spirite schal ryse apon hem, & sey scharply vnto hem þat it 15  
is noȝt þat þei do. & as fast þei wil reken up many fals tales, & many  
soþe also, of fallyng of men & wommen þat han ȝouen hem to soche  
liif before; & neuer a good tale of hem þat stonden.

I graunte þat many fallen & han fallen of hem þat han in licnes  
forsaken þe worlde. & where þei schuld haue becomen Goddes 20  
seruauntes & his contemplatyues, bicause þat þei wolde not reule  
hem bi trewe goostly counseyle þei haue becomen þe deuels  
seruauntes & his contemplatyues; & tornen<sup>90</sup> ouþer to ypocrites or to  
heretykes, or fallen into frenesies & many oþer mescheues, in  
sclaundre of alle Holy Chirche. Of þe whiche I leue to speke of at þis 25  
tyme, for troubling of oure mater. Bot neuerþeles hereafter, when  
God vouchepsaaf & ȝif nede be, men mowe sey somme of here  
condicions & þe cause of here fallinges.<sup>91</sup> & þerfore no more of þeym f. 43b  
at þis tyme; bot forþ of oure mater.

Here bygynneþ þe ninteneþ chapitre.

30

Som myȝt þink þat I do litil worschip to Martha, þat specyal seinte,  
for I lickyn hir wordes in pleining of hir sister vnto þeese wordly  
mens wordes, or þeires unto hirs. & trewly I mene none vnworschip  
to hir ne to þeim. & God forbede þat I schuld in þis werk sey anyþing  
þat miȝt be taken in reprouyng of any of þe seruauntes of God in 35  
any degre, & namely of his specyal seynte. For me þinkeþ þat sche  
schuld be ful wel had excusid of hir pleinte, takyng reward to þe  
tyme & þe maner þat sche seyde it in. For þat þat sche seyde, hir  
vnknowyng was þe cause. & no wonder þof<sup>92</sup> sche knewe not þat

<sup>90</sup> tornen] worpen *other MSS.*

<sup>91</sup> fallinges] fallyng Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> Pa.

<sup>92</sup> þof] if *other MSS.*



tyme how Marye was ocupied; for I trowe þat before sche had lityl herde of soche perfeccion. & also, þat sche seyde it was bot curtesly & in fewe wordes. & þerfore sche schuld always be had excusid.

- & so me þinkeþ þat þees wordly leuyng men & wommen of actyue  
 5 liif schuld also ful wel be had excusid of þeire pleyning wordes  
 touchid before, þof al þei sey boystously þat þei sey, hauyng  
 beholdyng to þeire ignoraunce. For whi rigt as Martha wist ful lityl  
 f. 44a what Marye hir sister did when sche pleynid of hir to oure Lorde:  
 rigt so on þe same maner þeese folk nowondayes wetyn ful lityl, or  
 10 elles nougt, what þeese zong desiples of God menen, whan þei sette  
 hem fro þe besines of þis woreld, & drawen hem to be Godes special  
 seruauntes in holines & rigtfulnes of spirit. & gif þei wist, treuly I dar  
 sey þat þei wolde neiþer do ne say as þei say. & þerfore me þinkeþ  
 alweis þat þei schuld be had excused, for whi þei knowen no betir  
 15 leuyng þen is þat þei liue in þeimself. & also whan I þink on myne  
 vnnoumerable defautes, þe whiche I haue maad myself before þis  
 tyme in wordes & dedes for defaute of knowyng, me þinkeþ þan gif I  
 wolde be had excused of God for myn ignoraunte defautes, þat I  
 schuld charitably & peteously haue oþer mens ignoraunte wordes &  
 20 dedes algates excusid. & sekirly elles do I not to oþer as I wolde þat  
 oþer did to me.

Here byginnip þe twenty chapitre.

- & þerfore me þinkeþ þat þei þat set hem to be contemplatyues  
 schuld not only haue actyue men excusid of þeire pleinyng wordes,  
 25 bot also me þinkeþ þat þei schuld be so ocupied in spirite þat þei  
 schuld take litel kepe, or none, what men did or seyde aboute hem.  
 f. 44b Þus did Marye, oure alþer exsauple, when Martha hir sistre  
 pleynid to oure Lorde. & gif we wil trewli do þus, oure Lorde wil do  
 now for us as he did þan for Marie.

- 30 & how was þat? Sekirly þus. Oure louely Lorde Iesu Crist, vnto  
 whom no priue þing is hid, þof al he was requerid of Martha as  
 domesman for to bid Mary rise & help hir to serue hym, neuerþeles  
 git, for he parceyuid þat Mary was feruently ocupied in sperit aboute  
 þe loue of his Godheed, þerfore curtesly, & as it was semely for him  
 35 to do bi þe wey of reson, he answerid for hir, þat for þe excusing of  
 himself list not leue þe loue of hym. & how answerid he? Sekirly not  
 only as domesman, as he was of Martha apelyd: bot as an aduoket  
 lawfully<sup>93</sup> defendid hir þat hym loued, & seide: 'Martha, Martha!'  
 Twies for spede he nemnid hir name; for he wolde þat sche herd him  
 40 & toke hede to his wordes. 'Þou arte ful besy,' he seyde, '& troubled  
 aboute many þinges.' For þei þat ben actyues behouen alweis to be

<sup>93</sup> lawfully] he *add. other MSS.*



besied & trauaylid aboute many diuerse þinges, þe whiche hem  
falleþ first for to haue to here owne vse, & siþen in dedes of mercy to  
þeire euen-Cristen, as charite askeþ. & þis he seide unto Martha, for  
he wolde lat hir wetyng þat hir besines was good & profitable to þe  
helpe<sup>94</sup> of hir soule. Bot forþi þat[sche schuld not þink þat it were þe  
best werke of alle þat man miȝt do, þerfore he echid to & seyde: 'Bot  
o þing is nessessary.'

5 f. 45a

& what is þat o þing? Sekirly þat God be loued & preysid by  
himself, abouen alle oþer besines, bodily or goostly, þat man may  
do. & forþi þat Martha schuld not þink þat sche miȝt boþe loue God  
& preise hym abouen alle oþer besines, bodily or goostly, & also  
þerto to be besy aboute þe nessessaries of þis liif, þerfore to deliuer  
hir of doute þat sche miȝt not boþe serue God in bodely besines &  
goostly togedir parfite—inparfite sche may, bot not parfite—he  
echid to & seyde þat Mary had chosen þe best partye, þe whiche  
schuld neuer be taken fro hir. For whi þat parfite steryng of loue þat  
byginneþ here is euen in noumbre wiþ þat þat schal last wiþouten  
ende in þe blis of heuen; for al is bot one.

10

15

Here bygynneþ þe on & twenty chapitre.

What meneþ þis: 'Marye haþ chosen þe best'? Wheresoeuer þe  
best is set or nemnyd, it askeþ bifore it þeese two þinges: a good & a  
beter; so þat it be þe best, & þe þryd in noumbre. Bot whiche ben  
þees þre good þinges, of þe whiche Marye chees þe best? Þre lyues  
ben þey not, for Holi Chirche makip no mynde bot of two—actyue  
liif & contemplatyue liif; þe whiche two lyues ben priuely vnder-  
stonden in þe story of þis Gospel by þees two sisters, Martha &  
Marye—by Martha actyue, by Marye contemplatyue. Wiþouten  
one of þeese two lyues may no man be saaf; & where no mo ben bot  
two, may no man chese þe best.

25

f. 45b

Bot þof al þer be bot two lyues, neuerþeles ȝit in þeese two lyues  
ben þre parties, ich one betir þen oþer. Þe whiche þre, ich one by  
hemself, ben specyaly set in þeire stedes before in þis writyng. For,  
as it is seide before, þe first party stondeþ in good & onest bodily  
werkes of mercy & of charite; & þis is þe first degree of actyue liif, as  
it is seyde bifore. Þe secound partye of þees two lyues liggeþ in good  
goostly meditacions of a mans owne wrechidnes, þe Passion of  
Criste, & of þe ioyes of heuen. Þe first partye is good, & þis partye<sup>95</sup> is  
þe betir, for þis is þe secound degree of actyue liif & þe first of  
contemplatyue liif. In þis partye is contemplatyue liif & actyue liif  
couplid togeders in goostly sibreden & maad sistres, at þe ensanple

40

<sup>94</sup> helpe] hele other MSS.

<sup>95</sup> partye] om. other MSS.

of Martha & Marye. þus hiȝe may an actyue come to contemplacion,  
& no hiȝer; bot ȝif it be ful seeldom & by a specyal grace. þus lowe  
may a contemplatiif com towards actyue liif, & no lower; bot ȝif it  
be ful seeldom & in grete nede.

f. 46a 5 þe þrid partye|of þees two lyues hangeþ in þis derk cloude of  
vnknowyng, wiþ many a priue loue put to God by himself. þe first  
partye is good, þe secounde is betir, bot þe þrid is alþer beste. þis is  
þe beste partye of Marye. & herfore it is plainly to wite þat oure  
Lorde seide not: 'Marye haþ chosen þe best liif'; for þer ben no mo  
10 lyues bot two, & of two may no man chese þe best. Bot of þees two  
liues 'Marye haþ chosen,' he seyde, 'þe best partye, þe whiche schal  
neuer be take from hir.' þe first partye & þe secounde, þof al þei ben  
boþe good & holy, ȝit þei eende wiþ þis liif. For in þe toþer liif, as  
now, schal be no nede to use þe werkes of mercy, ne to wepe for oure  
15 wrechidnes, ne for þe Passion of Criste. For þan, as now, schal none  
mowe hungre ne þirst, ne diȝe for colde, ne be seeke, ne housles, ne  
in prison, ne ȝit nede beryelles, for þan schal none mowe diȝe. Bot þe  
þryd party þat Marye chees, chese who bi grace is clepid to chese; or  
ȝif I soplier schal seye, whoso is chosen þerto of God, lat him listely  
20 lene þerto. For þat schal neuer be taken away; for ȝif it biginne here,  
it schal last wiþouten eende.

& þerfore lat þe voice of oure Lorde crie on þese actyues, as ȝif|  
f. 46b he seide þus now for us vnto hem, as he did þen for Marye to  
Martha, 'Martha, Martha!' 'Actyues, actyues! make ȝow as besi as  
25 ȝe kan in þe first partye & in þe secound, now in þe tone & now in þe  
toþer; &, ȝif ȝou list riȝt wel & fele ȝow disposid, in boþe two  
bodely.<sup>96</sup> & medel ȝow not of contemplatyues. Ȝe wote not what hem  
eyleþ. Lat hem sit in here rest & in here pley, wiþ þe þrid & þe best  
partye of Marye.'

30 Here bygynneþ þe two & twenty chapitre.

Sweet was þat loue bitwix oure Lorde & Marye. Moche loue had  
sche to hym; moche more had he to hir. For whoso wolde utterly  
beholde alle þe contynauce þat was bitwix hym & hir (not as a  
treufeler may telle, bot as þe story of þe Gospel wil witnes, þe whiche  
35 on no wise may be fals) he schulde fynde þat sche was so hertly set  
for to loue hym, þat no þing bineþe hym miȝt counforte hir, ne ȝit  
holde hir herte fro hym. þis is sche, þat same Marye, þat whan sche  
souȝt hym at þe sepulcre wiþ wepyng chere wolde not be counfortyd  
of aungele. For whan þei spak unto hir so sweetly & so louely, &  
40 seide: 'Weep not, Marye; for whi oure Lorde wham þou sekist is  
f. 47a resyn,| & þou schalt haue him, & se him lyue ful feyre amonges his

<sup>96</sup> bodely] boldely other MSS.; but corporaliter Pem.

disciples in Galile, as he higt', sche wolde not leue for hem, for whi hir þougt þat whoso souzt verrelly þe kyng of aungelles, hem list not leue for aungelles.

& what more? Sekirly whoso wil loke verrelly in þe story of þe Gospel, he schal fynde many wonderful poynte of parfite loue 5 wreten of hir to oure ensauple, & as euen acordyng to þe werke of þis writyng, as þei had ben set & wretyn þerfore. & sekirly so were þey, take whoso take may. & zif a man list for to se in þe Gospel wretyn þe wonderful & þe special loue þat oure Lorde had to hir, in persone of alle customable synners trewly turnid & clepid to þe grace 10 of contemplacion, he shal fynde þat oure Lorde miht not suffre any man or womman, ze, not hir owne sistre, speke a worde agens hir, bot zif he answerid for hir hymself. Ze, & what more! he blamid Symound Leprous in his owne hous, for he þougt agens hir. Þis was greet loue; þis was passing loue. 15

Here bygynniþ þe þre & twenty chapitre.

& trewly & we wil listely confourme oure loue & oure leuyng, inasmoche as in us is by grace & by conseil, unto þe loue|& þe f. 47b leuyng of Mary, no doute bot he schal answee on þe same maner now for us goostly, iche day, pryuely, in þe hertes of alle þoo þat 20 ouþer seyn or þinken agens us. I say not bot þat euermore sum men schul sey or þink sumwhat agens us, þe whiles we lyue in þe trauaile of þis liif, as þei did agens Marye. Bot I say, & we wol zeue no more kepe to þeire seiing, ne to þeire þinkyng, ne no more leue of oure goostly pryue werk for þeire wordes & þeire þouztes, þan sche did—I 25 sey þan þat oure Lorde schal answee hem in spirite, zif it schal be wel wiþ hem þat so seyn & so þinkyn, þat þei schul wiþinne fewe dayes schame wiþ þeire wordes & þeire þouztes.

& as he wol answee for us þus in spirite, so wol he stere oþer men in spirite to zeue us oure needful þinges þat longen to þis liif, as mete 30 & cloþes wiþ alle þeese oþer, zif he se þat [we]<sup>97</sup> wil not leue þe werke of his loue for besines aboute hem. & þis I sey in confusion of þeire errour, þat seyn þat it is not leueful men to sette hem to serue God in contemplatyue liif, bot zif þei ben sekir bifore of þeire bodily nessessaries. For þei sey þat God sendeþ þe kow, bot not by þe 35 horne. & trewly þei sey wrong of God, as þei wel kanne. For trist stedfastly þou, whatsoeuer þat þou be þat trewly tornest þee fro|þe f. 48a worlde vnto God, þat one of þe two God schal sende þee, wiþouten besines of þiself: & þat is, ouþer habundaunce of nessessaries, or strengþe in body & pacience in spirite to bere nede. What þar reche 40 wheþer man haue? For alle comen to one in verrey contemplatyues.

<sup>97</sup> we] he Har<sup>1</sup>.

& whoso is in dwere<sup>98</sup> of þis, ouþer þe deuel<sup>99</sup> is in his brest & reuiþ hym þe beleue, or elles he is not ȝit trewly turnyd to God as he schulde be, make he it neuer so queinte, ne neuer so holy skiles schewe þeragein, whatsoeuer þat he be.

- 5 & þerfore þou þat settest þee to be contemplatiif as Marye was, chese þee raþer to be mekyd vnder þe wonderful heigte & þe worþines of God, þe whiche is parfite, þan vnder þine owne wrechidnes, þe whiche is inparfite: þat is to sey, loke þat þi specyal beholdyng be more to þe worþines of God þen to þi wrechidnes. For  
10 to þeime þat ben parfityly mekid no þing schal defayle, neiþer bodily þing ne goostly. For whi þei haue God, in whom is alle plente; & whoso haþ him—ȝe, as þis book telleþ—him nedip nouȝt elles in þis liif.

Here bygynniþ þe foure & twenty chapitre.

- 15 & as it is seyde of meeknes, how þat it is sotely & parfityly comprehendid in þis lityl blynde loue put, when it is betyng upon þis  
f. 48b derke cloude of vnknowyng, alle oþer þinges|put down & forȝeten: so it is to vn[der]stonden of alle oþer vertewes, & namely of charite.

- For charite is not ellis to bemene to þin vnderstondyng bot loue of  
20 God for himself abouen alle creatures, & of man for God euen wiþ þiself. & þat in þis werke God is louyd for hymself & abouen alle creatures it semip ryȝt wel. For, as it is seide before, þat þe substaunce of þis werke is not elles bot a nakid entente directe vnto God for himself. A nakid entente I clepe it, for whi in þis werke a  
25 parfite prentis askip neiþer relesing of payne, ne encresing of mede, ne (schortly to sey) nouȝt bot himself; insomochē þat nouþer he rechip ne lokip after wheþer þat he<sup>100</sup> be in payne or in blisse, elles þat his wille be fulfyllid þat he loueþ. & þus it semip þat in þis werke God is parfityly loued for hymself, & þat abouen alle creatures. For  
30 in þis werke a parfite worcher may not suffre þe mynde of þe holiest creature þat euer God maad comoun<sup>101</sup> wiþ hym.

- & þat in þis<sup>102</sup> þe secound & þe lower braunche of charite vnto þine euen-Cristen is verrelly & parfityly fulfillid, it semip by þe profe. For whi in þis werke a parfite worcher haþ no special beholdyng vnto any  
49a 35 man by himself, wheþer þat he be|sib or fremmyd, freende or fo. For alle men þink hym iliche sib unto hym, & no man fremmid. Alle men him þink ben his freendes, & none his foen,<sup>103</sup> insomochel þat

<sup>98</sup> dwere] weere Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; dowte Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

<sup>99</sup> deuel] of helle *add.* Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>100</sup> he] schall *add.* other MSS.

<sup>101</sup> comoun] contynue Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>102</sup> þis] werk *add.* other MSS.

<sup>103</sup> foen] foo other MSS.



hym þink alle þoo þat pynen him, & done hym dissesse in þis liif, þei ben his ful & his specyal freendes, & hym þinkeþ þat he is sterid to wilne hem as moche good as he wolde to þe homliest freende þat he haþ.

Here biginnip þe fiue & twenty chapitre.

5

I say not þat in þis werke he schal haue a specyal beholding to any man in þis liif, wheþer þat he be freende or fo, sib or fremmyd. For þat may not be gif þis werke schal parfite be done, as it is whan alle þinges vnder God ben fully forȝetyn, as falliþ for þis werke. Bot I sey þat he schal be maad so vertuous & so charitable by þe vertewe of þis werke, þat his wille schal be afterwardes, whan he condesendiþ to comoun or to pray for his euen-Cristen—not fro alle þis werk, for þat may not be wiþouten grete synne, bot fro þe heigt of þis werk, þe whiche is speedful & needful to do sumtyme, as charite askiþ—as specialy þan directe to his foo as to his freende, his fremmyd as his sib. Ȝe! & somtyme more to his fo þen to his freende.

10

15

Neuerþeles in þis werk he haþ no leyser to loke after who is his frende or his fo, his sib or his fremmid. I say not þat he schal fele somtyme—Ȝe! ful ofte—his affeccion more homely to one, two, or þre, þen to alle þees oþer; for þat is leueful to be for many causis, as charite askiþ. For soche an homly affeccion felid Criste to Ihonn, & vnto Marye, & vnto Petre bifore many oþer. Bot I say þat in þe tyme of þis werk schal alle be iliche homly vnto hym; for he schal fele þan no cause bot only God. So þat alle schul be louyd plainly & nakidly for God, & as wel as himself.

f. 49b

20

25

For as alle men weren lost in Adam, & alle men, þat wiþ werke wil witnes þeire wille of saluacion, ben sauaid, & scholen be, by vertewe of þe Passion of only Criste—not in þe same maner, bot as it were in þe same maner—a soule þat is parfite affecte in þis werk, & onyd þus to God in spirit, as þe preof of þis werk witnessiþ, doþ þat in it is to maak alle men as parfite in þis werk as itself is. For riȝt as if a lyme of oure body felip sore, alle þe toþer lymes ben pined & disesid þerfore, or gif a lyme fare wel, alle þe remenaunt ben gladid þerwiþ: riȝt so is it goostly of alle þe limes of Holy Chirche. For Crist is oure hede, & we ben þe lymes, if we be in charite; & whoso wile be a parfite dissiple of oure Lordes, him behouiþ streyne up his spiritel in þis werk goostly for þe saluacion of alle his breþren & sistren in kynde, as oure Lorde did his body on þe cros. & how? Not for his freendes & his sib & his homely louers, bot generaly for alle mankynde, wiþouten any special beholding more to one þen to anoþer. For alle þat wylen leue sinne & axe mercy scholen be sauaid þorow þe vertewe of his Passion.

30

35

f. 50a

40

& as it is seyde of meeknes & charite, so it is to vnderstonden of



alle oþer vertues. For alle þei ben sotely comprehendid in þis litil loue put<sup>104</sup> touchid before.

Here byginnip þe six & twenty chapitre.

& þerfore trauayle fast awhile, & bete apon þis hize cloude of  
 5 vnknowyng, & rest sipen. Neuerþeles a trauayle schal he haue,  
 whoso schal vse hym in þis werk; ȝe, sekirly! & þat a ful grete  
 trauayle, bot ȝif he haue a more special grace, or elles þat he haue of  
 longe tyme vsid him þerin.

Bot I pray þee, wherin schal þat trauayle be? Sekirly not in þat  
 10 deuoute steryng of loue þat is contynuely wrougt in his wille, not by  
 himself bot by þe hande of Almyty God, þe whiche is euermore redy  
 to wirche þis werk in iche a soule þat is disposid þerto, & þat doþ þat  
 f. 50b in him is, & haþ do longe tyme|before, to able him to þis werk. Bot  
 wherin þan is þis trauayle, I prey þee? Sekirly þis trauayle is al in  
 15 tredyng doun of þe mynde of alle þe creatures þat euer God maad, &  
 in holdyng of hem vnder þe cloude of forȝetyng namyd before. In þis  
 is alle þe traueyle; for þis is mans trauayle, wiþ help of grace. & þe  
 toþer abouen—þat is to sey, þe steryng of loue—þat is þe werk of  
 only God. & þerfore do on þi werk, & sekirly I behote þee it schal not  
 20 fayle on hym.

Do on þan fast; lat se how þou berest þee. Seest þou not how he  
 stondeþ & abideþ þee? For schame! trauayle fast bot awhile, & þou  
 schalt sone be esid of þe gretnes & of þe hardnes of þis trauayle. For  
 þof al it be hard & streyte in þe bygynnyng, when þou hast no  
 25 deuocion, neuerþeles ȝit after when þou hast deuocion, it schal be  
 maad ful restful & ful list vnto þee, þat bifore was ful harde; & þou  
 schalt haue ouþer litil trauaile or none. For þan wil God worche  
 somtyme al by himself; bot not euer, ne ȝit no longe tyme togeders,  
 bot when him lyst, & as hym list. & þan wil þee þenk it mery to late  
 30 hym alone.

þan wil he sumtyme parauenture seend oute a beme of goostly  
 list, peersyng þis cloude of vnknowyng þat is bitwix þee & hym,  
 f. 51a &|schewe þee sum of his priuete, þe whiche man may not, ne kan  
 not, speke. þan schalt þou fele þine affeccion enflaumid wiþ þe fiire  
 35 of his loue, fer more þen I kan telle þee, or may, or wile, at þis tyme.  
 For of þat werke þat fallip to only God dar I not take apon me to  
 speke wiþ my blabryng fleschely tonge; & schortly to say, alþof I  
 durst, I wolde not. Bot of þat werk þat falleþ to man, whan he felip him  
 sterid & holpin by<sup>105</sup> grace, list me wel telle þee; for þerin is þe lesse  
 40 peril of þe two.

<sup>104</sup> loue put] puttyng of loue *other MSS.*

<sup>105</sup> by] of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>.

Here biginniþ þe seuē & twenty chapitre.

First & formest, I wil telle þee who schuld worche in þis werke, & when, & by what menes, & what discrecion þou schalt haue in it. Ȝif þou aske me who schuld worche þus, I answeere þee: alle þat han forsaken þe worlde in a trewe wille, & þerto þat ȝeuen hem not to actyue liif, bot to þat liif þat is clepid contemplatyue liif. Alle þoo schuld worche in þis grace & in þis werk, whatsoeuer þat þei be, wheþer þei haue ben customable synners or none.

Here biginniþ þe eigȝt & twenty chapitre.

But if þou aske me when þei schulen wirche in þis werk, þen I answeere þee, & I sey þat not er þei haue clensid þeire concience of alle þeire special dedis of sinne done bifore, after þe comoun ordinaunce of Holi Chirche.

For in þis werk a soule driep up in it al þe rote & þe grounde of sinne þat wil alweis leue in it after confession, be it neuer so besy. & þerfore whoso wil trauayle in þis werk, lat him first clense his concience; & siþen, when he haþ done þat in him is lawefully, lat him dispose him booldly bot meekly þerto. & lat him þink þat he haþ ful longe ben holden þerfro; for þis is þat werk in þe whiche a soule schuld trauaile alle his liiftime, þof he had neuer sinnid deedly.

& þe whiles þat a soule is wonyng in þis deedly flesche, it schal euermore se & fele þis combros cloude of vnknowyng bitwix him & God. & not only þat, bot in pyne of þe original sinne it schal euermore see & fele þat somme of alle þe creatures þat euer God maad, or somme of þeire werkes, wilen euermore prees in mynde bitwix him & God. & þis is þe rigȝtwise dome of God, þat man, when he had souereynte & lordschip of alle oþer creatures, forþi þat he wilfully maad him vnderloute to þe steryng of his soiettes, leuyng þe bidding of God & his maker, þat rigȝt so after whan he wolde fulfille þe bidding of God, he see & fele þat alle þe creatures þat schuld be bineep him proudly prees abouen hym, bitwix him & his God.

Here biginniþ þe nine & twenty chapitre.

& þerfore, whoso coueitþ to come to clennes þat he lost for synne, & to wynne to þat welþe þer alle wo wantiþ, him bihouiþ bidingly to trauayle in þis werke, & suffre þe pyne þerof, whatsoeuer þat he be, wheþer he haue ben a customable sinner or none.

Alle men han trauayle in þis werke, boþe synners & innocentes þat neuer synnyd greetly. Bot fer gretter trauayle hauen þoo þat haue ben synners þen þei þat haue ben none; & þat is greet skyle.

Neuerþeles, oftymes it befalliþ þat somme, þat haue ben horrible & customable synners, comen sonner to þe perfeccion of þis werk þen þoo þat ben none. & þis is þe merciful myracle of oure Lorde, þat so

specyaly zeuþ his grace, in wondryng of alle þis wored. Now trewly I hope þat on Domesday schal be fayre, when þat God schal be seen cleerly & alle his giftes. þanne schal somme þat now ben dyspysid & sette at lytil or nouȝt as comon synners, & paraenture somme þat  
 5 now ben horrible synners, sitte ful seemly wiþ seyntes in his sigt; when somme of þoo þat semen now ful holy & ben worschepid of men as aungelles, & somme of þoo<sup>106</sup> paraenture þat neuer ȝit synned deedly, schul sitten ful sory amonges helle calues.

Herby maist þou see þat no man schuld be demyd of oþer here in  
 10 þis liif, for good ne for yuel þat þey do. Neuerþeles dede may leuefully be demyd, bot not þe men, wheþer þei ben good or yuel.

f.52b Here byginniþ þe þritty chapitre.

But, I preye þee, of whom schal mens dedis be demyd? Sekirly of hem þat han power & cure of þeire soules, oþer zeuen in aperte by þe  
 15 statute & þe ordinaunce of Holy Chirche, or elles priuely in spirite at þe specyal steryng of þe Holy Goost in parfite charite. Iche a man beware þat he presume not to take apon hym to blame & reprove oþer mens defautes, bot ȝif he fele verrelly þat he be sterid of þe Holy Goost wipinne in his werke; for elles may he ful lightly erre in his  
 20 domes. & þerfore beware; deme þiself as þee list, bitwix þee & þi God or þi goostly fader, & lat oþer men allone.

Here biginniþ þe on & þritty chapitre.

& fro þe tyme þat þou felist þat þou hast done þat in þee is lawefully to amende þee at þe dome of Holy Chirche, þen schalt þou sette þee  
 25 scharply to worche in þis werk. & þan, ȝif it so be þat þi fordone specyal dedes wil alweis prees in þi mynde bitwix þee & þi God, or any newe þouȝt or steryng of any synne ouþer, þou schalt stalworþly step abouen it wiþ a feruent steryng of loue, & treed hem down vnder þi fete. & fonde to couer hem wiþ a þicke cloude of forȝetyng,  
 30 as þei neuer had ben don in þis liif of þee, ne of oþer man ouþer. & ȝif þei ofte rise, ofte put þeim down &, schortly to sey, as ofte as þei  
 f. 53a rise, as ofte put þeim down. | & ȝif þee þink þat þe traueyle be grete, þou mayst seek sleȝtes & wiles & priue sotiltees of goostly sleȝtes to put hem away: þe whiche [sotiltees]<sup>107</sup> ben betir lernyd of God by þe  
 35 profe þen of any man in þis liif.

Here byginniþ þe two & þritty chapitre.

Neuerþeles sumwhat of þis sotylte schal I telle þee, as me þink. Proue þou, & do betir ȝif þou betir maist.

<sup>106</sup> þoo] ȝit *add.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>107</sup> sotiltees] sleȝtes Har<sup>1</sup>.

Do þat in þee is to lat as þou wist not þat þei prees so fast apon þee, bitwix þee & þi God. & fonde to loke as it were ouer þeire schuldres, seching anoper þing: þe whiche þing is God, enclosid in a cloude of vnknowyng. & gif þou do þus, I trowe þat wiþinne schort tyme þou schalt be esid of þi trauayle. I trowe þat & þis sleight be wel & trewly 5 conceyuid, it is not elles bot a longing desire vnto God, to fele hym & see hym as it may be here. & soche a desire is charite; & it deseruiþ always to be esid.

Anoper sleight þer is; proue þou gif þou wilt. When þou felist þat þou maist on no wise put hem down, koure þou down under hem as a 10 cheitif & a coward ouercomen in batayle, & þink þat it is bot a foly to þee to stryue any lenger wiþ hem; & þerfore þou zeeldest þee to God in þe handes of þin enmyes. & fele þan þiself as þou were fordone for euer. Take good kepe of þis sleight, I prey þee; for me þink in þe profe of þis|sleyzt þou schuldest melt al to watre. & sekirly, me þink, & þis 15 f. 53b sleight be sotely conceyuid, it is not elles bot a trewe knowyng & a felyng of þiself as þou arte, a wrecche & a filþe, fer wers þen nouzt: þe whiche knowyng & felyng is meeknes. & þis meeknes deserueþ to haue God himself mixtely descendyng to venge þee of þine enemyes, for to take þee up & cherischingly drie þine goostly igen, as þe fader 20 doþ þe childe þat is in poynte to perische under þe mouþes of wilde swyne or wode bityng beres.

Here biginnþ þe þre & þritty chapitre.

Moo sleightes telle I þee not at þis tyme; for & þou haue grace to fele þe profe of þeese, I trow þat þou schalt cun betir lerne me þen I þee. 25 For þof al it schuld be þus, trewly git me þink þat I am ful fer þerfro. & þerfore I preye þee help me, & do þou for þee & for me.

Do on þan, & trauayle fast awhile, I preie þee; & suffre meekly þe pyne, gif þou mayst not sone wyne to þeese sleightes. For trewly it is þi purgatory. & þan whan þi pyne is al passid, & þi sleightes ben zouen 30 of God & graciously getyn in custume, þan it is no doute to me þat þou ne arte clensid not only of synne, bot also of þe pyne of synne. I mene of þe pyne of þi special fordone synnes, & not of þe pyne of þe original synne. For þat pyne schal always last on þee|to þi deep day, f. 54a be þou neuer so besi. Neuerþeles it schal bot litly dere þee, in 35 rewarde of þis pyne of þi specyal synnes; & git schalt þou not be wiþoutyn grete trauayle. For oute of þis oryiginal synne wil alday sprynge newe & fresche sterynges of synne; þe whiche þee behouip alday to smyte down, & be besy to schere away wiþ a scharpe double-eggid dreedful swerde of discrecion. & herby mayst þou see & lerne 40 þat þer is no soþfast sekynes, ne git no trewe rest in þis liif.

Neuerþeles, herfore schalt þou not go bac, ne git be ouer-ferd of þi faylyng. For & it so be þat þou mayst haue grace to distroye þe pyne



of þin fordone specyall dedes—in þe maner beforeseide, or betyr ȝif þou betyr mayst—sekir be þou þat þe pyne of þe orygynal synne, or elles þe newe sterynges of synne þat ben to comen, scholen bot ryzt lityl mowe dere þee.

- 5 Here bygynnyþ þe foure and [þritty]<sup>108</sup> chapitre.

& ȝif þou askest me by what menes þou schalt com to þis werk, I beseche Almyȝty God of his grete grace & his grete<sup>109</sup> curtesye to teche þee hymself. For trewly I do þee wel to wyten þat I can not telle þee. & þat is no wonder. For whi þat is þe werk of only God,  
f. 54b 10 specyally wrouȝt in what soule þat hym likiþ, wiþoutyn|any deseert of þe same soule. For wiþoutyn it no seynte ne none aungel can þenk to desire it. & I trowe þat oure Lorde as specyally & as ofte—ȝe! & more specyally & more ofte—wil uouchesaaf to worche þis werk in hem þat haue ben customable synners, þen in somme oþer þat neuer greuyd  
15 hym greetly in comparison of hem. & þis wil he do, for he wil be seen almercyful & almyȝty; & for he wil be seen to worche as hym lyst, where hym lyst, & when hym lyst.

& ȝit he ȝeuiþ not þis grace, ne worcheþ not þis werk, in ani soule þat is vnable þerto. & ȝit þer is no soule wiþoutyn þis grace, abil to  
20 haue þis grace: noo, wheþer it be a synner soule or an inocent soule. For neiþer it is ȝouen for inocense, ne wiþholden for synne. Take good kepe þat I sey wiþholden, & not wiþdrawen. Bewar wiþ errour here, I preye þee; for euer þe nere men touchen þe trewþ, more war men behoueþ to be of errour. I meen bot wel. Ȝif þou canst not  
25 conseyue it, legge [it]<sup>110</sup> bi þi syde tyl God come & teche þee. Do þen so, & hurt þee not.

Bewar wiþ pride, for it blasfemiþ God in his ȝiftes, & booldeniþ<sup>111</sup> synners. Were þou verrelly meek þou schuldest fele of þis werk as I sey: þat God ȝeuiþ it frely wiþouten any desert. Þe condicion of þis  
f. 55a 30 werk is|soche, þat þe presence þerof abliþ a soule for to haue it & for to fele it. & þat abilnes may no soule haue wiþoutyn it. Þe abilnes to þis werk is onyd to þe selue werk, wiþoutyn departyng; so þat whoso felip þis werk is abil þerto, & elles none; insomochel, þat wiþoutyn þis werk a soule is as it were deed, & can not coueite it ne desire it.  
35 For as moche as þou wylnest it & desirest it, so mochel hast þou of it, & no more ne no lesse; & ȝit is it no wil, ne no desyre, bot a þing þou wost neuer what, þat steriþ þee to wilne & desire þou wost neuer what. Reche þee neuer þof þou wite no more, I preye þee; bot do forþ euer more & more, so þat þou be euer doying.

<sup>108</sup> þritty] twenty Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> grete] *om. other MSS.*

<sup>110</sup> it] *om. Har<sup>1</sup>.*

<sup>111</sup> booldeniþ] blaundischip Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.



& gif I schal [soþelyer]<sup>112</sup> sey, lat þat þing do wiþ þee & lede þee wherso it list. Lat it be þe worcher, & þou bot þe sufferer; do bot loke apon it, & lat it alone. Medel þee not þerwiþ as þou woldest help it, for drede lest þou spille al. Be þou bot þe tre, & lat it be þe wriȝt; be þou bot þe hous, & lat it be þe hosbonde wonyng þerin. Be blynde in þis tyme, & schere away couetyse of knowyng, for it wil more let þee þan help þee. It suffisiþ inowȝ vnto þee þat þou fele þee steryd likyngly wiþ a þing þou wost neuer what, ellys þat in þi<sup>113</sup> steryng þou haue no specyal þougȝt of any þing vnder God, & þat þin entent be nakidly directe vnto God.

10

& gif it be þus, trist þan stedfastly þat it is only God þat steriþ þi f. 55b  
wyl & þi desyre, pleyndly by hymself, wiþouten mene ouper on his party or on þin. & be not feerd for þe deuyl, for he may not com so neer. He may neuer come to styrre a mans wil, bot occasyoneely, & by a fer mene, be he neuer so sotyl a deuyl. For sufficiently & wiþouten mene may no good aungel stire þi wil; ne, schortly to sey, no þing bot only God.

So þat þou mayst conceyue here by þese wordes sumwhat—bot moche more cleerly by þe profe—þat in þis werk men schul use no menes, ne ȝit men mowe not com þerto wiþ menes. Alle good menes hangen upon it, & it on no mene; ne no mene may lede þerto.

Here byginnip þe fiue & þritty chapitre.

Neuerþeles menes þer ben in þe whiche a contemplatiif prentys schuld be occupyed, þe whiche ben þese: Lesson, Meditacion, & Oryson. Or elles to þin vnderstandyng þei mowe be clepid: Redyng, þinkyng & Preiing. Of þese þre þou schalt fynde wretyn in anoþer book of anoþer mans werk moche betyr þen I can telle þee; & þerfore it nedep not here to telle þee of þe qualitees of hem. Bot þis may I telle þee: þese þre ben so couplid togedir, þat vnto hem þat ben biginners & profifers—bot not to hem þat be parfite, ȝe, as it may be here—þinkyng may|not goodly be getyn wiþoutyn redyng or heryng comyng before. Alle is one in maner, redyng & heryng; clerkes redyn on bookes, & lewid men redyn on clerkes, whan þei here hem preche þe worde of God. Ne preier may not goodly be getyn in bigynners & profifers wiþoutyn þinkyng comyng bifore. See by þe preof in þis same cours.

30 f. 56a

35

Goddes worde, ouper wretyn or spokyn, is licnid to a mirour. Goostly, þe ȝe of þi soule is þi reson; þi concience is þi visage goostly. & riȝt as þou seest þat gif a foule spot be in þi bodily visage, þe ȝe of þe same visage may not see þat spotte, ne wite wher it is, wiþoutyn a myrour or a teching of anoþer þan itself: riȝt so it is

<sup>112</sup> soþelyer] schortlyer Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>113</sup> þi] þis other MSS.

goostly. Wiþouten redyng or heryng of Godes worde, it is impossible to mans vnderstandyng þat a soule þat is bleendid in custom of synne schuld see þe foule spot in his conyence.

- & so folowyng, whan a man seeþ in a bodily or goostly myrour, or  
 5 wote by oþer mens techyng, wheraneintes þe foule spot is on his visage, ouþer bodily or goostly: þan at erst, & none er, he renniþ to þe welle to wasche hym. Ȝif þis spot be any specyal synne, þan is þis welle Holy Chirche, & þis water confession, wiþ þe circumstaunces. Ȝif it be bot a blynde rote & a steryng of synne, þan is þis welle  
 10 mercyful God, & þis water preyer, wiþ þe circumstaunces.  
 f. 56b & þus maist þou|se þat no þinkyng may goodly be getyn in byginners & profifers wiþoutyn redyng or heryng comyng before, ne preyng wiþouten þinkyng.

Here bygynniþ þe six & þritty chapitre.

- 15 But it is not so wiþ hem þat contynuely worchen in þe werk of þis book. For þeire meditacions ben<sup>114</sup> as þei were sodein conseites & blynde felynges of þeire owne wrechidnes, or of þe goodnes of God, wiþoutyn any menes of redyng or heryng comyng before, & wiþoutyn any specyal beholdyng of any þing vnder God. Þees  
 20 sodeyn conseytes & þees blynde felynges ben sonner lernyd of God þen of man.

- I maad no force, þof þou haddest nowondayes none oþer meditacions of þin owne wrechidnes, ne of þe goodnes of God—I mene ȝif þou fele þee þus steryd by grace & by counseyl—bot soche as þou  
 25 mayst haue in þis worde SYNNE & in þis worde GOD, or in soche oþer, whiche as þe list; not brekyng ne expounyng þees wordes wiþ coryouste of witte, in beholdyng after þe qualitees of þees wordes, as þou woldest by þat beholdyng encrees þi deuocion. I trowe it schuld neuer be so in þis caas & in þis werk. Bot holde hem alle hole þee  
 30 wordes; & mene synne a lump, þou wost neuer what, none oþer þing bot þiself. Me þink þat in þis blynde beholdyng of synne, þus  
 f. 57a conielyd in a lumpe (none oþer þing þan þiself) it|schuld be no nede to bynde a woder þing þen þou schuldest be in þis tyme. & ȝit, paraenture, whoso lokid apon þee schuld þink þee ful sobirly  
 35 disposid in body, wiþoutyn any chaunging of contenaunce; bot sitting, or going, or liggyng, or lenyng, or stondyng, or knelyng, wheþer þou were in a ful sad restfulness.

Here bigynnyþ þe seuen & þritty chapitre.

- & riȝt as þe meditacions of hem þat contynouely worchen in þis  
 40 grace & in þis werk risen sodenly wiþoutyn any menes, riȝt so don

<sup>114</sup> ben] but *add. other MSS.*

þeire preiers. I mene of þeire specyal preiers, not of þoo preiers þat ben ordeynid of Holy Chirche. For þei<sup>115</sup> þat ben trewe worchers in þis werk, þei worschip no preier so moche; & þerfore þei do hem in þe fourme & in þe statute þat þei ben ordeynd of holy faders before us. Bot þeire specyal preiers risen euermore sodenly vnto God, wiþ- 5  
outyn any meenes or any premeditacion in special comyng before, or going þerwiþ.

& ȝif þei ben in wordes, as þei ben bot seldom, þan ben þei bot in ful fewe wordes; ȝe, & in euer þe fewer þe betir. Ȝe, & ȝif it be bot a lityl worde of o silable, me þink it betir þen of to, & more<sup>116</sup> acordyng 10  
to þe werk of þe spiryte; siþen it so is þat a goostly worcher in þis werk schulde euermore be in þe higest & þe souereynest pointe of þe sp[i]rit. Þat þis be soþ, se by ensauple in þe cours of kynde. A man or a womman, [affraied wiþ any sodeyn chaunce of fiir, or of mans f. 57b  
deep, or what elles þat it be, sodenly in þe heigt of his speryt he is 15  
dreuyn upon hast & upon nede for to crie or for to prey after help. Ȝe, how? Sekirly not in many woordes ne ȝit in o worde of two silabes. & whi is þat? For hym þinkeþ to<sup>117</sup> longe tariing, for to declare þe nede & þe werk of his spirit. & þerfore he brestiþ up hidously wiþ a grete spirit, & cryeþ bot a litil worde of o silable, as is 20  
þis worde FIIR or þis worde OUTE.

& riȝt as þis lityl worde FIIR steriþ raþer & peerseþ more hastely þe eren of þe herers, so doþ a lityl worde of o sylable, whan it is not only spoken or þouȝt, bot priuely ment in þe depnes of spirit, þe whiche is þe heigt (for in goostlynes alle is one, heigt & depnes, lengþe & 25  
brede). & raþer it peersiþ þe eres of Almyȝty God þan doþ any longe sauter vnmyndfully mumlyd in þe teep. & herfore it is wretyn þat schort preier peersiþ heuen.

Here biginnyþ þe eigȝ & þritty chapitre.

& whi peersiþ it heuen, þis lityl schort preier of o litil silable? 30  
Sikirly for it is preyed wiþ a fulle spirite, in þe heigt & in þe depnes, in þe lengþe & in þe breed of his spirit þat preieþ it. In þe heigt it is, for it is wiþ al þe myȝt of þe spirit. In þe depnes it is, for in þis lityl silable ben contyned alle þe wittis of þe spirit. In þe lengþe it is, for miȝt[it] euer fele as it felieþ, euer wolde it crie as it crieþ. In þe brede it 35 f. 58a  
is, for it wilniþ þe same to alle oþer þat it wilniþ to itself. In þis tyme it is þat a soule haþ comprehendid, after þe lesson of Seynte Poule, wiþ alle seyntes—not fully, bot in maner & in partye, as it is acordyng vnto þis werk—which is þe lengþe & þe breed, þe heigt &

<sup>115</sup> þei] þo other MSS.

<sup>116</sup> more] to add. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>117</sup> to] ouer other MSS.

þe depnes of Euerlastyng & Allouely, Almyty & Alle-witty God. þe euerlastyngnes of God is his lengþe; his loue is his breed; his myȝt is his heȝt; & his wisdam is his depnes. No wonder þof a soule, þat is þus nȝ confourmyd bi grace to þe ymage & þe licles of God, his  
 5 maker, be sone herde of God. Ȝe, þof it be a ful synful soule—þe whiche is to God as it were an enmye—& it myȝt þorow grace com to for to crye soche a lityl silable in þe heȝt & þe depnes, þe lengþe & þe breed of his spirit, ȝit he scholde for þe hidous noise of þis crye be alweis herde & holpen of God.

10 Se by ensaumple. He þat is þi deedly enmye, & þou here him so afraied þat he crye in þe heȝt of his spirit þis lityl worde FIIR, or þis worde OUTE: ȝit, wiþoutyn any beholdyng to hym for he is þin enmye, bot for pure pite in þin herte stirid & reisid wiþ þe doelfulnes of þis<sup>118</sup> crie, þou risist up—ȝe! þof it be aboute midwintirs nȝt—&  
 f. 58b 15 helpist hym to slecke his fiir, or for to styлле|hym & rest hym in hys diseise. A, Lorde! siþen a man may be maad so mercyful in grace, to haue so moche mercy & so moche pite of his enmye, not aȝenstonding his enmite, what pite & what mercy schal God haue þan of a goostly crye in soule,<sup>119</sup> maad & wrouȝt in þe heȝt & þe depnes, þe lengþe &  
 20 þe breed of his spirit, þe whiche haþ al by kynde, þat man haþ by grace, & moche more? Sekirly wiþoutyn comparison moche more mercy wil he haue; siþen so is þat þat þing þat is so had by kynde is nerer to iche a þing þen þat þe whiche is had by grace.

Here bigynnyþ þe nine & þritty chapitre.

25 & þerfore it is to preie in þe heȝt & þe depnes, þe lengþe & þe brede of oure spirit. & þat not in many wordes, bot in a lityl worde of o silable.

& what schal þis worde be? Sekyrlyche soche a worde as is best acordyng vnto þe propirte of preier. & what worde is þat? Lat us first  
 30 see what preier is propirly in itself, & þerafter we mowe cleerlier knowe what worde wil best acorde to þe propirte of preier.

Preyer in itself propirly is not elles bot a deuoute entent directe vnto God, for getyng of goodes & remowyng of yuelles.

& þan, siþen it so is þat alle yuelles ben comprehendid in synne,  
 35 ouþer by cause or by beyng, lat us þerfore, whan we wyl ententifly  
 f. 59a preie for remowyng of yuelles, ouþer sey or þink|or mene nouȝt elles, ne no mo wordes, bot þis lityl worde SYNNE. & ȝif we wil ententifly preie for getyng of goodes, lat us crie, ouþer wiþ worde or wiþ þouȝt or wiþ desire, nouȝt elles, ne no mo wordes, bot þis worde  
 40 GOD. For whi in God ben alle goodes, boþe by cause & by beyng.

<sup>118</sup> þis] his *other MSS.*

<sup>119</sup> a . . . soule] soule in (a) gostly crye *other MSS.*



Haue no merueile whi I sette þees [two]<sup>120</sup> wordes forby alle oþer. For & I couþe any schorter wordes, so fully comprehending in hem alle goodes & alle yuelles, as þees two wordes don, or ȝif I had be lernyd of God to take any oþer wordes ouþer, I wolde þan haue taken hem & lefte þees; & so I rede þat þou do. Stody þou not for no 5 wordes, for so schuldest þou neuer come to þi purpos ne to þis werk, for it is neuer getyn by stody, bot al only by grace. & þerfore take þou none oþer wordes to preie in—alþof I sette þees here—bot soche as þou arte sterid of God for to take. Neuerþeles, ȝif God stire þee to take þees, I rede not þat þou leue hem—I mene ȝif þou schalt preie in 10 wordes, & elles not; for whi þei ben ful schorte wordes.

Bot alþof þe schortnes of preier be greetly comendid here, neuerþeles þe oftnes of preier is neuer þe rapþer refreynid. For as it is seide before, it is preied in þe lengþe of þe spirite; so þat it schuld neuer sees tyl þe tyme were þat it had fully getyn þat þat it longid 15 after. Ensaumple of þis haue we in a man or a womman affraied in þe maner beforeseide. For we see|wel þat þei seese neuer crieng on f. 59b þis litil worde OUTE, or þis lityl worde FIIR, er þe tyme be þat þei haue in greet party getyn help of þeire angre.

Here bigynniþ þe fourty chapitre.

Do þou, on þe same maner, fille þi spirit wiþ þe goostly bemenyng of þis worde SYNNE, & wiþoutyn any specyال beholdyng vnto any kynde of synne, wheþer it be venial or deedly: pryde, wrapþe<sup>121</sup> or enuye, couetyse, slewþ, glotenie or lecherye. What þar reche in contemplatiues what synne þat it be, or how mochel a synne þat it 25 be? For alle synne hem þinkyþ—I mene for þe tyme of þis werk—iliche greet in hemself, when þe leest synne departeþ hem fro God, & letteþ hem of here goostly pees.

& fele synne a lumpe, þou wost neuer what, bot none oþer þing þan þiself. & crye þan goostly euer upon one: 'Synne, synne, synne; 30 oute, oute, oute!' Þis goostly crie is betyr lernid of God by þe proef þen of any man by worde. For it is best whan it is in pure spirit, wiþoutyn specyال þouȝt or any pronounsing of worde; bot ȝif it be any seeldom tyme, when for habundaunce of spiryт it brestiþ up into worde, so þat þe body & þe soule ben boþe fillid wiþ sorow & 35 kumbryng of synne.

On þe same maner schalt þou do wiþ þis lityl worde GOD. Fille þi spirit wiþ þe goostly bemenyng of it wiþoutyn any specyال|beholdyng 40 to any of his werkes—wheþer þei be good, betir, or alþer best, bodily or goostly—or to any vertewe þat may be wrouȝt in mans soule by

<sup>120</sup> two] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> wrapþe] *ire other MSS.*



any grace, not lokyng after wheþer it be meeknes or charite, pacyence or abstynence, hope, feiþ, or sobirnes, chastite or wilful pouerte. What þar reche in contemplatyues? For alle vertewes þei fynden & felyn in God; for in hym is alle þing, boþe by cause & by  
 5 beyng. For hem þink, & þei had God, þei had alle good; & þerfore þei coueyte noþing wiþ specyal beholdyng, bot only good God. Do þou on þe same maner, as forþ as þou maist by grace; & mene God al, & al God, so þat nouȝt worche in þi witte & in þi wile, bot only God.

& forþi þat euer þe whiles þou leuyst in þis wrechid liif, þee  
 10 behoueþ always fele in som partye þis foule stynkyng lump of synne, as it were onyd & congelid wiþ þe substaunce of þi beyng, þerfore schalt þou chaungably mene þees two wordes—SYNNE & GOD: wiþ þis general knowyng: þat & þou haddest God, þen schuldest þou lacke synne, & miȝtest þou lacke synne, þen schuldest þou haue God.

15 Here bigynnyþ on & fourty chapitre.

& forþermore, ȝif þou aske me what discrecion þou schalt haue in  
 f. 60b þis werk, þan I answer þee|& sey: 'Ryȝt none!' For in alle þin oþer doyngeþ þou schalt haue discrecion, as in etyng & in drynkyng, & in slepyng, & in kepyng of þi body fro outrageous colde or hete, & in  
 20 longe preiing or redyng, or in comounyng in speche wiþ þin euen-Crysten. In alle þees schalt þou kepe discrecion, þat þei be nouþer to mochel ne to lityl. Bot in þis werk schalt þou holde no mesure; for I wolde þat þou schuldest neuer seese of þis werk þe whiles þou leuyst.

25 I sey not þat þou schalt mowe euer contynow þerin iliche fresche; for þat may not be. For sumtyme seeknes & oþer vnordeind disposicions in body & in soule, wiþ many oþer needfulnes to kynde, wol let þee ful mochel, & oþtymes drawe þee down fro þe heigt of þis working. Bot I sey þat þou schuldest euermore haue it ouþer in  
 30 ernest or in game; þat is to sey, ouþer in werk or in wille. & þerfore for Godes loue beware wiþ seeknes as moche as þou maist goodly, so þat þou be not þe cause of þi febilnes, as forþ as þou maist. For I telle þee trewly þat þis werk askeþ a ful greet restfulnes, & a ful hole & a clene disposicion, as wele in body as in soule.

35 & þerfore for Godes loue gouerne þee discreetly in body & in  
 f. 61a soule, & gete þee þin hele as mochel|as þou mayst. And ȝif seeknes come azens þi power, haue pacyence & abide meekly Goddes mercy; & al is þan good inowȝ. For I telle þee trewly þat oþtymes pacyence in seeknes, & in oþer diuerse tribulacions, plesip God moche more þen  
 40 any likyng deuocyon þat þou mayst haue in þi hele.

Here biginnip þe two and fourty chapitre.

But parauenture þou askest me how þou schalt gouerne þee

discreetly in mete, & in slepe, & in alle þees oper. & herto I þink to  
 answere þee rigt schortli: 'Gete þat þou gete mayst.' Do þis werk  
 euermore wiþoutyn cesyng & wiþoutyn discrecion, & þou schalt wel  
 kun beginne & ceese in alle þin oper werkes wiþ a grete discrecion.  
 For I may not trowe þat a soule contynowyng in þis werk nigȝt & day 5  
 wiþoutyn discrecion schuld mowe erre in any of þees outward  
 doinges; & elles me þink þat he schuld alweis erre.

& þerfore & I migȝt gete a wakyng & a besi beholdyng to þis goostly  
 werk wiþinne in my soule, I wolde þan haue a rechelesnes in etyng &  
 in drynkyng, in sleping & in spekyng & in alle myn outward 10  
 doynges. For sekirly I trowe I schuld rapen<sup>122</sup> com to discrecion in  
 hem by soche a rechelesnes þan by any besy beholding to þe same  
 þinges, as I wolde bi þat beholdyng set a [merke]<sup>123</sup> & a mesure [in]<sup>124</sup>  
 |hem. Trewly I schuld neuer bryng it so aboute for ouȝt þat I couȝt f. 61b  
 do or sey. Sey what men seye wil, & lat þe preof witnes. & þerfore lift 15  
 up þin hert wiþ a blynde steryng of loue; & mene now synne, & now  
 God. God woldest þou haue, & synne woldest þou lacke. God  
 wanteþ þee; & synne arte þou sekir of. Now good God help þee, for  
 now hast þou need!

Here biginnip þe þre & fourty chapitre.

20

Look þat nouȝt worche in þi wit ne in þi wil bot only God. &  
 [fonde]<sup>125</sup> for to felle alle wetyng & felyng of ouȝt vnder God, & treed  
 alle down ful fer vnder þe cloude of forȝetyng. & þou schalt  
 vnderstonde þat þou schalt not only in þis werk forȝete alle oper  
 creatures þen þiself, or þeire dedes or þine, bot also þou schalt in þis 25  
 werk forȝete boþe þiself & also þi dedes for God, as wel as alle oper  
 creatures & þeire dedes. For it is þe condicion of a parfite louer, not  
 only to loue þat þing þat he loueþ more þen himself; bot also in maner  
 for to hate himself for þat þing þat he louiþ.

þus schalt þou do wiþ þiself: þou schalt loþe & be wery wiþ alle þat 30  
 þing þat worcheþ in þi witte & in þi wil, bot gif it be only God. For  
 whi sekirly elles, whatsoever þat it be, it is |bitwix þee & þi God. & no f. 62a  
 wonder þof þou loþe & hate for to þink on þiself, when þou schalt  
 alweis fele synne a foule stynkyng lumpe, þou wost neuer what,  
 bitwix þee & þi God: þe whiche lumpe is none oper þing þan þiself. 35  
 For þee schal þink it onȝd & congelid wiþ þe substaunce of þi beyng,  
 ȝe, as it were wiþoutyn departyng.

& þerfore breek down alle wetyng & felyng of alle maner of  
 creatures; bot most besily of þiself. For on þe wetyng & þe felyng of

<sup>122</sup> I schuld rapen] rapen to other MSS.

<sup>123</sup> merke] token Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>124</sup> in] by Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>125</sup> fond] proue Har<sup>1</sup>.

piself hangip wetyng & felyng of alle oþer creatures; for in rewarde of it, alle oþer creatures ben lightly forȝetyn. For, & þou wilt besily set þee to þe preof, þou schalt fynde, when þou hast forȝeten alle oþer creatures & alle þeire werkes, 3e, & þerto alle þin owne werkes, þat  
 5 þer schal leue ȝit after, bitwix þee & þi God, a nakid wetyng & a felyng of þin owne beyng: þe whiche wetyng & felyng behouip alweis be distroied, er þe tyme be þat þou fele sobfastly þe perfeccyon of þis werk.

Here biginnip þe foure and fourty chapitre.

10 Bot now þou askist me how þou maist distroie þis nakid wetyng & felyng of þin owen beyng. For paraenture þee þink þat & it were  
 f. 62b distroied, alle oþer lettynges|were distroied: & ȝif þou þinkist þus, þou þinkist rigt trewly. Bot to þis I answere þee, & I sey þat wiþoutyn a ful specyal grace ful frely ȝouen of God, & þerto a ful acordyng  
 15 abilnes to resseyue þis grace on þi partye, þis nakid wetyng & felyng of þi beyng may on no wise be destroyed.

& þis abilnes is not elles bot a stronge & a deep goostly sorow. Bot in þis sorow nedep þee to haue discrecion on þis maner: þou schalt beware in þe tyme of þis sorow þat þou neiþer to rudely streyne þi  
 20 body ne þi spirit, bot sit ful styлле, as it were in a slepyng sleȝt, al forsobbid & forsonken in sorow. Þis is trewe sorow; þis is parfite sorow; & wel were hym þat miȝt wyne to þis sorow.

Alle men han mater of sorow, bot most specyaly he felip mater of sorow þat wote & felip þat he is. Alle oþer sorowes ben vnto þis in  
 25 comparison bot as it were gamen to ernest. For he may make sorow earnestly þat wote & felip not onli what he is, bot þat he is. & whoso felid neuer þis sorow, he may make sorow, for whi he felid ȝit neuer parfite sorow.

Þis sorow, when it is had, clensiþ þe soule, not only of synne, bot  
 30 also of peyne þat he haþ deseruid for synne. & þerto it makip a soule abil to resseiue þat ioie, þe whiche reuiþ fro a man alle wetyng &  
 f. 63a felyng of his beyng. Þis sorow, ȝif it be trewly conseyuid, is ful|of holy desire; & elles miȝt neuer man in þis liif abide it ne bere it. For ne were it þat a soule were sumwhat fed wiþ a maner of counforte of  
 35 his rigt worching, elles schuld he not mow bere þe pyne þat he haþ of þe wetyng & felyng of his beyng. For as ofte as he wolde haue a trewe wetyng & a felyng of his God in purtee of spirit, as it may be here, & siþen felip þat he may not—for he findeþ euermore his wetyng & his felyng as it were ocupied & fillyd wiþ a foule stinkyng lumpe of  
 40 himself, þe whiche behoueþ alweis be hatid & be dispisid & forsaken, if he schal be Goddes parfite dissiple, lernid of hymself in þe mount of perfeccion—as ofte he goþ ni wood for sorow; insomochel, þat he wepiþ & weiliþ, striuiþ, cursiþ & banneþ, &, schortly to sey, hym

pinkip þat he berip so heuy a birpen of hymself þat he rechip neuer what worþ of him, so þat God were plesid. & zit in al þis sorow he desireþ not to vnbe, for þat were deuelles woodnes & despite vnto God. Bot hym listip rigt wel be; & he meniþ ful hertly þankyng to God for þe worþines & þe gift of his beyng, þof al þat he desire 5 vnseesingly for to lakke þe wetyng & þe felyng of his beyng.

Þis sorow & þis desire behouip iche a soule haue & fele in itself, ouþer in þis maner or in anoþer, as God voucheþsaa[f] for to lerne to his goostly|disciples, after his weelwylyng & þeire acordyng abylnes f. 63b in body & in soule, in degre & compleccion, er þe tyme be þat þei 10 mowe parfiteþly be onid vnto God in parfite charite—soche as may be had here gif God voucheþsaaf.

Here biginnip þe fiue & fourty chapitre.

Bot o þing I telle þee: þat in þis werk may a zong disciple, þat haþ not zit ben wel vsed & prouid in goostly worching, ful liztly be 15 disceyuid, &, bot he be sone war & haue grace to leue of & meek hym to counsel, paraenture be distroied in his bodily miȝtes, & falle into fantasie in his goostly wittes. & alle þis is longe of pride & of fleshlynes & corioustie of witte.

& on þis maner may þis disceite befallē. A zong man or a 20 womman, newe set to þe scole of deuocion, hereþ þis sorow & þis desire be red & spokyn, how þat a man schal lift up his herte vnto God, & vnseesingly desire for to fele þe loue of here God. & as fast in a corioustie of witte þei conceyue þees wordes not goostly, as þei ben ment, bot fleshly & bodily, & trauaylen þeire fleshly hertes 25 outrageously in þeire brestes. & what for lackyng of grace, þat þei deseruen, & pride & corioustie in hemself, þei streyne here veynes & here bodily miȝtes so beestly & so rudely, þat wiþinne schort tyme þei fallen ouþer into werynes & a maner of vnlisty febilnes in body & in soule, þe whiche makip|hem to wende oute of hemself & seke sum 30 fals & sum veyne fleshly & bodily counforte wiþoutyn, as it were for recreacion of body & of spirite. Or elles, gif þei falle not in þis, elles þei deserue—for goostly blyndnes & for fleshly chaufyng of þeire compleccion in þeire bodily brestis in þe tyme of þis feinid beestly & not goostly worchyng—for to haue þeire brestes ouþer enflaumid 35 wiþ an vnkyndely hete of compleccion, causid of misrewlyng of þeire bodies or of þis feinid worching, or elles þei conceyue a fals hete wrougt by þe feende, þeire goostly enmye, causid of þeire pride & of þeire fleshlines & þeire corioustie of wit.

& zit, paraenture, þei wene it be þe fiir of loue, getyn & kyndelid 40 by þe grace & þe goodnes of þe Holy Goost. Treuly of þis disceite, & of þe braunches þerof, spryngyn many mescheues: moche ypocrisie, moche heresy, & moche errour. For as fast after soche a fals felyng



comeþ a fals knowyng in þe feendes scole, riȝt as after a trewe felyng  
 comeþ a trewe knowyng in Gods scole. For I telle þee trewly þat þe  
 deuil haþ his contemplatyues, as God haþ his. þis disseite of fals  
 felyng, & of fals knowyng folowyng þeron, haþ diuerse & wonderful  
 5 variacions, after þe dyuerste of states & þe sotyl condicions of hem  
 þat ben disceyuid; as haþ þe trewe felyng & knowyng of hem þat ben  
 sauid.

f. 64b Bot I sette no mo disceites here|bot þoo wiþ þe whiche I trowe þou  
 schalt be assailid, ȝif euer þou purpose þee to worche in þis werk. For  
 10 what schuld it profite to þee to wite hou þees greet clerkis, & men &  
 wommen of oper degrees þen þou arte, ben disceyuid? Sikirly riȝt  
 nouȝt. & þerfore I telle þee no mo, bot þoo þat fallyn unto þee, ȝif þou  
 trauayle in þis werk. & forþi I telle þee þis, þat<sup>126</sup> þou schalt  
 bewar þerwiþ in þi worching, ȝif þou be assailid þerwiþ.

15 Here biginniþ þe six & fourty chapitre.

& þerfore for Goddes loue bewar in þis werk, & streyne not þin  
 hert in þi brest ouer-rudely, ne oute of mesure; bot wirche more wiþ  
 a list þen wiþ any liþer strengþe. For euer þe more listly, þe more  
 meekly & goostly; & euer þe more rudely, þe more bodely & beestly.  
 20 & þerfore bewar. For sekirly what beestly herte þat presumiþ for to  
 touche þe hiȝe mounte of þis werke, it schal be betyn away wiþ  
 stones. Stones ben harde & drie in her kynde, & þei hurte ful sore  
 where þei hit. & sekirly soche rude streynynges ben ful harde fastnid  
 in fleschlines of bodely felyng, & ful drie fro any wetyng of grace; &  
 25 þei hurte ful sore þe sely soule, & make it feestre in fañtasie feinid of  
 feendes. & þerfore bewar wiþ þis beestly ruednes, & learne þee to  
 loue listely wiþ a softe & a demure contenance, as wel in body as in  
 f. 65a soule. |& abide curtesly & meekly þe wil of oure Lorde, & lache not  
 ouer-hastely, as it were a gredy grehounde, hungre þee neuer so  
 30 sore. & gamenly be it seyde, I rede þat þu do þat in þee is,  
 refreyning þe rude & þe grete steryng of þi spirite; ryȝt as þou on no  
 wyse woldest lat hym wite hou fayne þou woldest see hym & haue  
 hym or fele hym.

þis is childly & pleyingly spoken, þee þink, parauenture. Bot I  
 35 trowe whoso had grace to do & fele as I sey, he schuld fele [God]<sup>127</sup>  
 gamesumli pley wiþ hym, as þe fadir doþ wiþ þe childe, kyssyng &  
 clipping, þat weel were him so.

Here bigynniþ þe seuen & fourty chapitre.

Loke þou haue no wonder whi þat I speke þus childly, & as it were

<sup>126</sup> þat] for other MSS.

<sup>127</sup> God] good Har<sup>1</sup> and most MSS. See Commentary.



folily & lackyng<sup>128</sup> kyndly discrecion; for I do it for certeyn skyles, & as me pinkeþ þat I haue ben sterid many day bope to fele þus & þink þus & sey þus, as weel to som oþer of my specyal freendes in God, as I am now vnto þee.

& o skyle is þis, whi þat I bid þee hide it fro God, þe desire of þine 5 herte: for I hope it schuld more cleerly com to his knowyng, to þi profite & in fulfylling of þi desire, by soche an hidyng, þan it scholde by any oþer maner of schewyng þat I trowe þou coudest ȝit schewe. & anoþer skyle is : for I wolde by|soche a hid<sup>129</sup> schewyng bryng þee f. 65b oute of þe boistoust of bodely felyng into þe purete & depnes of 10 goostly felyng; & so forþermore at þe last to help þee to knit þe goostly knot of brennyng loue bitwix þee & þi God, in goostly onheed & acordyng of wille.

Þou wost wel þis, þat God is a spirit; & whoso schuld be onid vnto hym, it behouþ to be in soþfastnes & deepnes of spirit, ful fer fro any 15 feynid bodely þing. Soþ it is þat alle þing is knowen of God, & noþing may be hid fro his wetyng, neiþer bodily þing ne goostly. Bot more aperte is þat þing knowyn & schewid vnto him, þe whiche is hid in depnes of spirit, siþ it so is þat he is a spirit, þan is any þing þat is medelid wiþ any maner of bodelines. For alle bodely þing is ferþer 20 fro God bi þe cours of kynde þen any goostly þing. By þis skile it semþ þat þe whiles oure desire is medelid wiþ any maner bodelines—as it is whan we stresse & streyne us in spirit & in body togeders—as longe it is ferþer fro God þen it schuld be, & it were done more deuoutly & more listely in sobirnes & in puretee & in depnes of 25 spirite.

& here maist þou see sumwhat & in party þe skil whi|þat I bid þee f. 66a so childly hele & hyde þe steryng of þi desire fro God. & ȝit I bid þee not pleynly hyde it, for þat were þe biddyng of a fole, for to bid þee pleynly do þat on no wise may be done. Bot I bid þee do þat in þee is 30 to hide it. & whi bid I þus? Sekirly for I wolde þat þou castedest it into depnes of spirite, fer fro any rude medelyng of any bodelines, þe whiche wolde make it lesse goostly, & ferþer fro God in as moche; & for I wote wel þat euer þe more þat þi spirit haþ of goostlines, þe lesse it haþ of bodelines & þe nerer it is God, & þe betyr it plesþ hym, & 35 þe more cleerly it may be seen of hym. Not þat his siȝt may be any tyme, or in any þing, more cleer þen in anoþer, for it is euermore vnchaungable; bot forþi it is more liche vnto hym, when it is in puretee of spirit, for he is a spirit.

Anoþer skyle þer is whi þat I bid þee do þat in þee is to late hym 40 not wite: for þou & I, & many soche as we ben, we ben so abył to conceyue a þing bodily, þe whiche is seyde goostly, þat parauenture,

<sup>128</sup> lackyng] wantyng *other MSS.*

<sup>129</sup> hid] hydyng *other MSS.*

f. 66b 5 & I had boden þee schewe vnto God þe steryng of þin herte, þou schuldest haue maad a bodily schewyng vnto hym, ouþer in contenaunce, or in voyce, or in worde, or in som oþer rude bodely streynyng, as it is when þou schalt schewe a þing þat is hid in þin|hert to a bodely man; & inasmoche þi werk schuld haue ben inpure. For on o maner schal a þing be schewid to man, & on anoþer maner vnto God.

Here biginnip þe eigþ & fourty chapitre.

I sey not þis for I wil þat þou leue any tyme, gif þou be stirid for to  
 10 preie wiþ þi mouþ, or for to brest oute, for habundaunce of deuocion in þi spirit, for to speke vnto God as vnto man, & sey som good worde as þou felist þee sterid, as ben þees: 'Good Iesu! Faire Iesu! Swete Iesu!' & alle þees oþer. Nay, God forbede þou take it þus! For trewly I mene not þus. & God forbede þat I schuld departe þat  
 15 God haþ couplid, þe body & þe spirit; for God wil be seruid wiþ body & wiþ soule, boþe togeders, as seemly is, & rewarde man his mede in blis boþe in body & in soule.

& in erles of þat mede, sumtyme he wil enflaume þe body of a deuoute seruaut of his here in þis liif—not onys or twies, bot  
 20 parauenture rigt ofte, & as him likip—wiþ ful wonderful swetnes & counfortes. Of þe whiche, som beþ not comyng fro wiþoutyn into þe body bi þe wyndowes of oure wittys, bot fro wiþinne, risyng & spryngyng of habundaunce of goostly gladnes, & of trewe deuocion in þe spirit. Soche a counforte & soche a swetnes schal not be had|  
 f. 67a 25 suspecte; &, schortly to sey, I trowe þat he þat felip it may not haue it suspecte.

Bot alle oþer counfortes, sounes, & gladnes, & swetnes, þat comyn fro wiþoute sodenly, & þou wost neuer whens, I prey þee haue hem suspecte. For þei mowe be boþe good & yuel; wrougt by a good  
 30 aungel, gif þei ben good, & by an yuel aungel, gif þei ben yuel. & þis may on no wise be yuel, gif þeire deseites of corioustie of witte & of vnordeynd streynyng of þe fleschely herte be remowed, as I lere þee, or betyr gif þou betir maist. & whi is þat? Sekirly for þe cause of þis counforte: þat is to sey, þe deuoute steryng of loue, þe whiche woneþ  
 35 in pure spirit. It is wrougt of þe hande of Almyty God wiþouten mene; & þerfore it behouip alweys be fer fro any fantasie, or any fals opynion þat may befall<sup>130</sup> to man in þis liif.

& of þe toþer counfortes & sounes & swetnes, how þou schuldest wite wheþer þei ben good or iuel, I þink not to telle þee at þis tyme.  
 40 & þat is for me þink þat it nedip not; for whi þou mayst fynde it wretyn in anoþer place of anoþer mans werk a þousandfolde betir

<sup>130</sup> be-] *ins.* Har<sup>1</sup>; *om.* other MSS.

þan I kan sey or write. & so maystow þis þat I set here, fer betir þan it is here. Bot what þerof? Þerfore schal I not lette, ne it schal not noye me to fulfille þe desire & þe steryng of þin|herte, þe whiche þou hast schewed þee to haue vnto me before þis tyme in þi wordes, & now in þi dedes. f. 67b

Bot þis may I sey þee of þoo sounes & of þoo swetnes þat comen in by þe wyndowes of þi wittes, þe whiche mowe be boþe good & iuel. Vse þee contynowly in þis blynde & deuoute & þis listy steryng of loue þat I telle þee; & þan I haue no doute þat it ne schal wel kun telle þee of hem. & gif [þou]<sup>131</sup> git be in partye astonied of hem at þe first tyme, & þat is bicause þat þei ben vncoupe, git þis schal it do þee; it schal bynde þin herte so fast þat þou schalt mowe on no wise geue ful grete credence to hem, er þe tyme be þat þou be eiper certefied of hem wipinne wonderfully by þe spirite of God, or elles wipouten by counsel of sum discrete fader. 10 15

Here bigginiþ þe nine & fourti chapitre.

& þerfore I preie þee, lene listely to þis meek steryng of loue in þin herte, & folow þerafter; for it wil be þi gyde in þis liif, & bring þee to blisse in þe toþer. It is þe substaunce of alle good leuyng, & wipouten it no good werk may be bygonne ne eendid. It is not elles bot a good & an acordyng wil vnto God, & a maner of weelpayednes & a gladnes þat þou felest in þi|wille of alle þat he doþ. f. 68a

Soche a good wille is þe substaunce of alle perfeccion. Alle swetnes & counfortes, bodily or goostly, ben to þis bot as it were accyidentes, be þei neuer so holy; & þei don bot hangen on þis good wil. Accyidentes I clepe hem, for þei mowe be had & lackyd<sup>132</sup> wipoutyn parbrakyng of it. I mene in þis liif; bot it nys not so in þe blis of heuen, for þere schul þei be onyd wip þe substaunce wipouten departyng, as schal þe body in þe whiche þei worche wip þe soule. So þat þe substaunce of hem here is bot a good goostly wil. & sekirly I trowe þat he þat felip þe perfeccion of þis wil, as it may be had here, þer may no swetnes ne no counforte falle to any man in þis liif, þat he ne is as fayne & as gladde to lacke it at Goddes wille as to fele it & haue it. 25 30

Here bigginiþ þe fifty chapitre.

& herby maist þou see þat we schulde directe alle oure beholding vnto þis meek steryng of loue in oure wille. & in alle oper swetnes & counfortes, bodily or goostly, be þei neuer so likyng ne so holy (gif it be cortesie & semely to sey) we schuld haue a maner of rechelesnes. 35

<sup>131</sup> þou] it Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>132</sup> lackyd] wanted *other MSS.*

- Ȝif þei come, welcome hem; bot lene not to moche on hem for ferde of febelnes; for it wol take ful mochel of þi myȝtes to bide any longe  
 f. 68b tyme in soche swete|felynges & wepynges. & parauenture þou mayst be steryd for to loue God for hem. & þat schalt þou fele by þis: ȝif þou  
 5 grocche ouermochē when þei ben away. & ȝif it be þus, þi loue is not ȝit neiþer chaste ne parfite. For a loue þat is chaste & parfite, þof it suffre þat þe body be fed & counfortid in þe presence of soche [swete]<sup>133</sup> felynges & wepynges, neuerþeles ȝit it is not gruchyng, bot ful wel apayed for to lacke hem at Goddes wille.
- 10 & ȝit it is not comounly wiþoutyn soche counfortes in som creatures; & in som oþer creatures soche swetnes & counfortes ben bot seldom. & alle þis is after þe disposicion & þe ordynaunce of God, al after þe profite & þe needfulnes of diuerse creatures. For som creatures ben so weike & so tendre in spirit, þat bot ȝif þei were  
 15 sumwhat counfortid by feling of soche swetnes, þei miȝte on no wise abide ne bere þe diuersete of temptacions & tribulacions þat þei suffre & ben trauaylid wiþ in þis liif of þeire bodily & goostly enmyes. & som þer ben þat þei ben so weike in body þat þei mowe do no grete penance to clense hem wiþ. & þees creatures wil oure Lorde clense  
 20 ful graciously in spirit by soche swete felynges & wepynges. & also, on þe toþer partye, þer ben sum creatures so stronge in spirit, þat þei kun pike hem counforte inowȝ wiþinne in þeire soules, in offryng up  
 f. 69a of þis reuerent|& þis meek steryng of loue & acordaunce of wille, þat hem nedeþ not mochel to be fedde wiþ soche swete counfortes in  
 25 bodely felynges. Whiche of þees ben holier or more dere wiþ God, one þen anoþer, God wote & I not.

Here biginniþ þe on & fifty chapitre.

- & þerfore lene meekly to þis blinde steryng of loue in þin herte. I mene not in þi bodily herte, bot in þi goostly herte, þe whiche is þi  
 30 wil. & be wel ware þat þou conceyue not bodily þat þat is seyde goostly. For trewly I telle þee þat bodely & fleshely conseytes of hem þat han corious & ymaginatyue wittys ben cause of moche errour.

- Ensaumple of þis maist þou see by þat þat I bid þee hele þi desire fro God in þat þat in þee is. For, parauenture, & I had boden þee  
 35 schewe þi desire vnto God, þou schuldest haue conceyuid it more bodily þen þou dost now, when I bid þee hele it. For þou wost wel þat alle þat þing þat is wilfully helid, it is casten into þe depnes of spyrity.

- & þus me þinkeþ þat it nediþ greetly to haue moche warnes in vnderstanding of wordes þat ben spokyn to goostly entent, so þat þou  
 40 conceyue hem not bodily, bot goostly, as þei ben mente. & namely it is good to be ware wiþ þis worde IN & þis worde UP, for in mys-

<sup>133</sup> swete] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.



conceyuyng of þees two wordes|hangeþ moche errour & moche f. 69b  
disseite in hem þat purposen hem to be goostly worchers, as me  
þinkeþ. Sumwhat wote I by þe profe, & sumwhat by herdsey; & of  
þees disseites list me telle þee a lityl, as me þinkeþ.

A zonge disciple in Goddes scole, newe turnid fro þe woreld, þe 5  
whiche weneþ þat for a litil tyme þat he haþ zouen him to penaunce  
& to preier, taken by counsel in confescion, þat he be þerfore abil to  
take apon hym goostly working, of þe whiche he heriþ men speke or  
rede aboute hym, or paraenture rediþ hymself, & þerfore whan he  
rediþ or hereþ spoken of goostly working, & namely of þis worde, 10  
how a man schal drawe alle his witte wiþinne hymself, or how he  
schal clymbe abouen himself,—as fast for blindnes in soule, & for  
fleschelines & coriouste of kyndely witte, þei misvnderstonde þees  
wordes, & wenen, for þei fynden in hem a kyndly couetyse to hid  
þinges, þat þei ben þerfore clepid to þat werke by grace; insomoche, 15  
þat ȝif counsel wil not acorde þat þei schul worche in þis werke, as  
sone þei fele a maner of grocchyng aȝens þeire counsel, & þinken—  
ȝe, & paraenture seyen to soche oþer as þei ben—þat þei kan fynde  
no man þat kan wite what þei mene fully. & þerfore as fast for  
boldnes|& presumption of þeire corious witte, þei leue meek preier 20 f. 70a  
& penaunce ouer-sone, & sette hem (þei wene) to a ful goostly werk  
wiþinne in here soule: þe whiche werk, & it be trewly conceyuid, is  
neiþer bodily working ne goostly working. &, schortly to sey, it is a  
working aȝens kynde, & þe deuel is þe cheef worcher þerof. & it is  
þe rediest wey to deþ of body & of soule, for it is woodnes & no 25  
wisdom, & lediþ a man euen to woodnes. & ȝit þei wene not þus, for  
þei purpose hem in þis werk to þink on nouȝt bot on God.

Here biginniþ þe two & fifty chapitre.

& on þis maner is þis woodnes wrouȝt þat I speke of. þei reden &  
heren wel sey þat þei schuld leue vtward working wiþ þeire wittes, 30  
& worche inwardes; & forþi þat þei knowe not whiche is inward  
working, þerfore þei worche wronge. For þei turne þeire bodily  
wittes inwardes to þeire body aȝens þe cours of kynde; & streynyn  
hem, as þei wolde see inwardes wiþ þeire bodily ȝen, & heren  
inwardes wiþ þeire eren, & so forþe of alle þeire wittes, smellen, 35  
taasten, & felyn inwardes. & þus þei reuerse hem aȝens þe cours of  
kynde, & wiþ þis coriouste þei trauayle þeire ymaginacion so  
vndiscreetly, þat at þe laste þei turne here brayne in here hedes.|& f. 70b  
þan as fast þe deuil haþ power for to feyne sum fals liȝt or sounes,  
swete smelles in þeire noses, wonderful taastes in þeire mowþes, & 40  
many queynte hetes & brennynges in þeire bodily brestes or in þeire  
bowelles, in þeire backes & in þeire reynes, & in þeire pryue membres.

& ȝit in þis fantasie hem þink þat þei haue a restful mynde of þeire



God wiþoutyn any lettyng of veyne þouȝtes. & sekirly so haue þei in maner, for þei ben so fillid in falsheed þat vanite may not dere hem. & whi? For he, þat same feende þat schuld ministre veyne þouȝtes to hem & þei were in good wey, he, þat same, is þe cheef worcher of þis  
 5 werk. & wite þou riȝt wel þat him list not lette hymself. Þe mynde of God wol he not put fro hem, for feerde þat he schuld be had in suspecte.

Here biginnip þe þre & fifti chapitre.

Many wonderful contenaunces folowen hem þat ben disseyuid in  
 10 þis fals werk, or in any spice þerof, forby þat doþ hem þat ben Goddes trewe disciples; for þei ben euermore ful semely in alle here contenaunces, bodily or goostly. Bot it is not so of þees oper. For whoso wolde or miȝt beholde vnto hem þer þei sitte in þis tyme, & it so were þat þeire izeliddes were open, he schulde see hem stare as þei  
 f. 71a 15 were wode, & [leigingly]<sup>134</sup> loke as þei sawe þe deuil. | Sekirly it is good þei be ware; for trewly þe feende is not fer. Som sette þeire igen in þeire hedes as þei were sturdy scheep betyn in þe heed, & as þei schulde diȝe anone. Som hangen here hedes on syde, as a worme were in þeire eres. Som pipyn when þei schuld speke, as þer were no  
 20 spirit in þeire bodies; & þis is þe propre condicion of an ypocrite. Som crien & whinen in þeire þrote, so ben þei gredy & hasty to sey þat þei þink; & þis is þe condicion of heretikes, & of hem þat wiþ presumption & wiþ curioustie of witte wil always meyntheyn errour.

Many vnordeynde & vnsemely contenaunces folowen on þis  
 25 errour, whoso miȝte parceyue alle. Neuerþeles, som þer ben þat ben so curious þat þei kun refreyne hem in grete partye whan þei comen before men. Bot miȝt þees men be seen in place where þei ben homely, þen I trowe þei schuld not be hidde. & neuerþeles ȝit I trowe þat whoso wolde streitly ȝeinsey þeire opynion, þat þei schuld sone  
 30 see hem brest oute in som partye; & ȝit hem þink þat alle þat euer þei do, it is for þe loue of God & for to meyntheyne þe treuþ. Now trewly I hope þat bot ȝif God schewe his merciful miracle to make hem sone  
 f. 71b leue of, þei schul loue God so longe on þis|maner þat þei schul go staryng wood to þe deuil. I sey not þat þe deuil haþ so parfite a  
 35 seruauant in þis liif, þat is desceyuid & infecte wiþ alle þees fantasies þat I sette here. & neuerþeles ȝit it may be þat one, [ȝe]<sup>135</sup> & many one, be infecte wiþ hem alle. Bot I sey þat he haþ no parfite ypocrite ne heretike in erþe, þat he ne is gilty in somme þat I haue seide, or paraenture schal sey, ȝif God voucheþsaaf.

<sup>134</sup> leigingly] þerto Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>135</sup> ȝe] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

For som men aren so kumbred in nice corious contenaunces in  
 bodily beryng, þat whan þei schal ouzt here, þei wriþen here hedes  
 onside queyntely, & up wiþ þe chin; þei gape wiþ þeire mouþes as þei  
 schuld here wiþ hem,<sup>136</sup> & not wiþ here eres. Som, when þei schulen  
 speke, poynten wiþ here fyngres, or on þeire fyngres, or on þeire 5  
 owne brestes, or on þeires þat þei speke to. Som kan nouþer sit stille,  
 stonde styлле, ne ligge stille, bot gif þei be ouþer waggyng wiþ þeire  
 fete,<sup>137</sup> or elles sumwhat doying wiþ þeire handes. Som rowyn wiþ  
 þeire armes in tyme of here spekyng, as hem nedid for to swymme  
 ouer a grete water. Som ben euermore smyling & leiþing at iche oþer 10  
 worde þat þei speke, as þei weren gigelotes & nice japyng jogelers  
 lackyng kontenaunce. Semeli cher were<sup>138</sup> wiþ sobre & demure|  
 beryng of body & mirþe in maner. f.72a

I say not þat alle þees vnsemely contenaunces ben grete synnes in  
 hemself, ne gif alle þoo þat done hem ben grete synners hemself. Bot 15  
 I sey if þat þees vnsemely & vnordeinde contenaunces ben gouerners  
 of þat man þat doþ hem, insomochel þat he may not leue hem whan  
 he wile: þan I sey þat þei ben tokenes of pride & coryouste of witte, &  
 of vnordeynde schewyng & couetise of knowyng. & specyaly þei ben  
 verrei tokenes of vnstabelnes of herte & vnrestfulnes of mynde, & 20  
 namely of þe lackyng of þe werk of þis book. & þis is only þe skile whi  
 þat I set so many of þees disceytes here in þis writyng; for whi þat a  
 goostly worcher schal proue his werk by hem.

Here biginniþ þe foure & fifti chapitre.

Whoso had þis werk, it schuld gouerne him<sup>139</sup> ful semely, as wele 25  
 in body as in soule, & make hym<sup>140</sup> ful fauorable vnto iche man or  
 womman þat lokyd apon hym;<sup>141</sup> insomochel þat þe worst fauored  
 man or womman þat leueþ in þis liif, & þei mihte come to by grace to  
 worche in þis werk, þeire fauour schuld sodenly & gracyously be  
 chaunged, þat iche good man þat hem sawe schulde be fayne & ioiful 30  
 to haue hem in companye, & ful mochil þei schuld þink þat þei|were f.72b  
 plesid in spirit & holpen by grace vnto God in þeire presence.

& þerfore gete þis gifte, whoso by grace gete may; for whoso haþ it  
 verely, he schal<sup>142</sup> wel kun gouerne hymself by þe vertewe þerof, &  
 alle þat longiþ vnto hym. He schuld wel zeue discrecion, gif nede 35  
 were, of alle kyndes & alle complexions. He schuld wel kun make

<sup>136</sup> hem] þer moupe *other MSS.*

<sup>137</sup> fyngres . . . brestes . . . fete] fynger . . . breest . . . fote *other MSS.*

<sup>138</sup> were] fulle fayre *add. other MSS.*

<sup>139</sup> him] þeim *other MSS.*

<sup>140</sup> hym] þeim *other MSS.*

<sup>141</sup> hym] þeim *other MSS.*

<sup>142</sup> schal] schuld *other MSS.*

hymselfliche vnto alle þat wiþ hym comouned, wheþer þei were customable synners or none, wiþoutyn synne in hymself, in wondryng of alle þat hym sawen, & in drawyng of oþer by helpe of grace to þe werk of þat same spirit þat he worcheþ in hymself.

- 5 His chere & his wordes schuld be ful of goostly wysdam, ful of fiire & of frute, spoken in sad soþfastnes, wiþouten any falsheed, fer fro any feynyng or pipyng of ypocrites. For sum þer ben þat wiþ alle þeire miȝte, inner & vtter, ymageneþ in þeire spekyng how þey mowe stuffe hem & vnderput hem on iche a side for fallyng, wiþ many  
 10 meek pipyng wordes & contenaunces of deuocion, more lokyng after for to seme holy in siȝt of men, þen for to be so in þe siȝt of God & his aungelles. For whi þees folk wil more charge & more sorow make for an vnordeynde contenance, or vnseemly or vnsittyng worde spoken  
 f. 73a byfore men, | þen þei wil for a þousande veyne þougtes & stynckyng  
 15 sterynges of synne wilfully drawn apon hem, or rechelesly voided<sup>143</sup> in þe siȝt of God & þe seyntes & þe aungelles in heuen. A, Lorde God! wher<sup>144</sup> þer be any pride wiþinne þer as soche meek pipyng wordes ben so plenteuous wiþoutyn, I graunte wel þat it is sittyngly & semely to hem þat ben meek wiþinne for to schewe meek & semely  
 20 wordes & contenance wiþoutyn, acordyng to þat meeknes þat is wiþinne in þe herte. Bot I sey not þat þei schul þanne be schewed in brokyn ne in pipyng voices agens þe pleyn disposission of þeire kynde þat spekyng hem. For whi gif þei ben trewe, þen ben þei spoken in soþfastnes, & in hoelnes of voyce, & of þeire spirit þat speken hem.  
 25 & gif he, þat haþ a pleyn & an open boystous voice by kynde, speke hem poerly & pypyngly—I mene bot gif he be seek in his body, or elles þat it be bitwix him & his God or his confessour—þan it is a verrey token of ypocrisie. I mene ouþer zong ypocri[t]e or olde.

- & what schal I more sey of þeese venemos disseites? Trewly I  
 30 trowe, bot gif þei haue grace to leue of soche pipyng ypocrisie, þat bitwix þat priue pride in þeire hertes wiþinne & soche meek wordes |  
 f. 73b wiþoutyn, þe sely soule may ful sone sinke into sorow.

Here biginnip þe fiue & fifty chapitre.

- Som men þe feende wyl disceyue on þis maner. Ful wonderfully he  
 35 wol enflaume here braynes to meinteigne Goddes lawe, & to distroie synne in alle oþer men. He wil neuer tempte hem wiþ a þing þat is aperte yuel. He makip hemliche besy prelates wakyng ouer alle þe degrees of Cristen mens leuyng, as an abbot ouer his monkes. Alle men wil þei reprove of þeire defautes, riȝt as þei had cure of þeire  
 40 soules. & git hem þink þat þei dur not elles for God. Bot þei telle hem

<sup>143</sup> voided] vsed other MSS.

<sup>144</sup> wher] wheþer other MSS. See Commentary.

here defautes þat þei see; & þei sey þat þei ben steryd þerto by þe fiire of charite & of Goddes loue in þeire hertes. & trewly þei lize, for it is wiþ þe fiire of helle wellyng in þeire braynes & in þeire ymaginacion.

þat þis is soþe, it semeþ bi þis þat foloweþ. þe deuil is a spirit, & of 5 his owne kynde he haþ no body more þen haþ an aungele. Bot ȝit neuerþeles, what tyme þat he or an aungele schal take any bodi by leue of God to maak any mynistracion to any man in þis liif: al after þe werk is þat he schal mynistre, þerafter in licnes is þe qualite of his body in som party. Ensawmple of þis we haue in Holy Writte. As 10 f. 74a ofte as any aungele was sente in body in þe Olde Testament & in þe Newe also, euermore it was schewed, ouþer by his name or by sum instrument or qualite of his body, what his mater or his message was in spirit. On þe same maner it fareþ of þe feende, for when he apereþ in body, he figureþ in som qualite of his body what his seruauntes 15 ben in spirit.

Ensawmple of þis may be sene in one in stede of alle þees oþer. For as I haue conceyuid by som disciples of nygromauncye, þe whiche han it in scyence for to make aduocacion of wickyd spirites, & by som vnto whom þe feende haþ apperid in bodily licnes: þat in what 20 bodily licnes þe feend appereþ, euermore he haþ bot o nose-þerel, & þat is grete & wyde. & he wil gladly kast it up, þat a man may see in þerate to his brayne vp in his heed. þe whiche brayn is not elles bot þe fiire of helle, for þe feende may haue none oþer brayn. & ȝif he miȝt make a man loke in þerate, he kepeþ no beter; for at þat lokyng 25 he schuld lese his witte for euer. Bot a parfite prentys of nigromauncye knowiþ þis wel inowȝ, & kan wel ordeyne þefore, so þat he dere him not.

Herfore it is þat I sey, & haue seide, þat euermore whan þe deuil takip any bodi, he figureþ in som qualite of his body what his 30 f. 74b seruauntes ben in spirit. For he enflaumeþ so þe ymaginacion of his contemplatyues wiþ þe fiire of helle, þat sodenly, wiþoutyn discrecion, þei schete oute þeire corious conceites, & wiþouten any auysement þei wil take apon hem to blame oþer mens defautes ouer sone. & þis is for þei haue bot o nose-þerel goostly. For þat staunson 35 þat is in a mans nose bodely, & þe whiche departeþ þe to nose-þerel fro þe toþer, bitokeneþ þat a man schulde haue discrecion goostly, & kun disseure þe good fro þe iuel, & þe yuel fro þe worse, & þe good fro þe betyr, er þat he ȝaue any ful dome of any þing þat he herde or sawe done or spokyn aboute hym. & by a mans brayn is goostly vnder- 40 stonden ymagynacion; for kyndely it woneþ & worcheþ in þe heed.

Here biginniþ þe six & fifty chapitre.

Somme þer ben þat, þof al þei be not disceyued wiþ þis errour as



it is sette here, ȝit for pride & corioustē of kyndely witte & letterly kunnyng leuiþ þe comoun doctrine & þe counsel of Holy Chirche. & þees, wiþ alle here fautours, lenyn ouermoche to þeire owne knowyng. & for þei were neuer grounded in þis<sup>145</sup> meek blynde felyng & vertuous leuyng, þerfore þei|deserue to haue a fals felyng, feynid & wrougt by þe goostly enmye; insomoche þat at þe last þei brestyn up & blasphemyn alle þe seyntes, sacramentes, statutes & ordenaunces of Holy Chirche. Fleschly leuyng men of þe wored, þe whiche þinkyn þe statutes of Holy Chirche ouer-harde to be amendid by, þei lenen to þees heretikes ful sone & ful lyztly, & stalworply meyntheyne hem, & al is for hem þink þei lede hem a softer wey þen is ordeyned of Holy Chirche.

Now trewly I trowe þat who þat wil not goo þe streyte wey to heuen þat þei schul goo þe softe wey to helle. Iche man proue in hymself. For I trowe & alle soche heretikes, & alle þeire fautours, & þei miȝt cleerly be seen as þei scholen on þe last day, schulde be sene ful sone kumbrid in grete & horryble synnes of þe wored & þeire foule flessche priuely, wiþouten þeire apeerte presumpcion in meyntheynyng of errour. So þat þei ben ful properly clepid Antecriste discyples; for it is seide of hem þat for alle þeire fals fare in aperte, ȝit þei schul be ful foule lechors priuely.

Here biginnip þe seuē & fifti chapitre.

No more of<sup>146</sup> þees at þis tyme now; bot forþe of oure mater, how þat þees zonge presumptuous goostly|disciples misunderstoodē þis oþer worde UP.

For ȝif it so be þat þei ouþer rede, or here redde or spoken hou þat men schuld lift up here hertes vnto God, as fast þei stare in þe sterres as þei wolde be abouen þe mone, & herkyn when þei schul here any aungelles synge oute of heuen. Þees men willen sumtyme wiþ þe corioustē of here ymaginacion peerce þe planetes, & make an hole in þe firmament to loke in þerate. Þees men wil make a God as hem lyst, & cloþen hym ful richely in cloþes, & set hym in a trone, fer more curiously þan euer was he depeynted in þis erþe. Þees men wil maken aungelles in bodely lices, & set hem aboute ich one wiþ diuerse minstralsie, fer more corious þan euer was any seen or herde in þis liif.

Somme of þees men þe deuil wil disceyue<sup>147</sup> wonderfully. For he wil seende a maner of dewe—aungelles foode þei wene it be—as it were comyng oute of þe eire, & softly & sweetly fallyng in þeire mowþes;

<sup>145</sup> þis] *om. other MSS.*

<sup>146</sup> of] *on other MSS.*

<sup>147</sup> disceyue] *fulle add. other MSS.*



& þerfore þei haue it in costume to sitte gapyng as þei wolde kacche flies. Now trewly alle þis is bot disceyte, seme it neuer so holy; for þei haue in þis tyme ful emty soules of any trewe deuocion. Moche vanitee & falsheed is in þeire hertes, causid|of þeire corious f. 76a  
 worchyng, insomoch þat oftetymes þe deuil feyneþ queinte sounes 5  
 in þeire eres, queynte ligtes & schinyng in þeire igen, & wonderful smelles in þeire nosen; & al is bot falsheed.

& zit wene þei not so; for hem þink þat þei haue ensauple of Seynte Martyn of þis upward loking & worching, þat sawe by reuelacion God clad in his mantel amonges his aungelles, & of Seinte 10  
 Steuen þat sawe oure Lorde stonde in heuen, & of many oþer; & of Cryste, þat assendid bodily to heuen, seing his discyples. & þerfore þei sey þat we schul haue oure igen vpwardes.<sup>148</sup> I graunte wel þat in oure bodely obseruance we schul lifte up oure igen & oure hondes  
 gif we ben steryd in spirit. Bot I sey þat þe werke of oure spirit schal 15  
 not be directe neiþer upwardes ne donwardes, ne on o syde ne on oþer, ne forward ne backward, as it is of a bodely þing. For whi oure werke schuld be goostly, not bodely, ne on a bodely maner wrought.

Here biginniþ þe eigth & fifty chapitre.

For þat þat þei sey of Seynte Martyn & of Seinte Steuen, þof al 20  
 þei sie soche þinges wiþ þeire bodely igen, it was schewyd bot in myracle & in certefiing of þing þat was goostly. For wite þei ryzt|wel f. 76b  
 þat Seynte Martyn mantel come neuer on Crystes owne body substancyaly, for no nede þat he had þerto to kepe him fro colde; bot  
 by miracle & in licnes for alle us þat ben abel to be sauid, þat ben 25  
 onyd to þe body of Criste goostly. & whoso cloþeþ a pore man & doþ any oþer good deed for Goddes loue, bodily or goostly, to any þat haþ need, sekir be þei þei do it vnto Criste goostly, & þei schul be  
 rewardid as substancyaly þerfore as þei had done it to Cristes owne body. þus seiþ hymself in þe Gospel. & zit þouȝte he it not inowȝ, bot 30  
 gif he affermyd it after by miracle; & for þis skyle he schewed hym vnto Seynte Martyn by reuelacion.

Alle þe reuelacions þat euer sawe any man here in bodely licnes in þis liif, þei haue goostly bemenynges. & I trowe þat & þei vnto whome þei were schewid, or we for whome þei were schewid, had 35  
 ben so goostly, or couþe haue conceyuid þeire bemenynges goostly, þat þan þei had neuer ben schewed bodily. & þerfore late us pike of þe rouȝ bark, & fede us of þe swete kyriel.

Bot how? Not as þees heretikes done, þe whiche ben wel ligned to wode men hauyng þis custume, þat euer whan þei haue dronken of a 40

<sup>148</sup> vpwardes] vp didirwardis *other MSS.*

f. 77a faire cup, kast it to þe walle & breke it. þus|schul not we do, gif we wil wel do. For we schul not so fede us of þe frute þat we schul dispise þe tree; ne so drynke þat we schul breke þe cuppe when we haue dronken. þe tre & þe cuppe I clepe þis visible miracle, & alle semely  
 5 bodely obseruaunce<sup>149</sup> þat is acordyng & not lettyng þe werke of þe spirite. þe frute & þe drync I clepe þe goostly bemening of þees visible miracles, & of þees semely bodely obseruaunces, as is lifyng up of oure igen & oure handes vnto heuen. Jif þey be done by steryng of þe spyrit, þen ben þei wel done; & elles ben þei ypocrisie, & þen ben  
 10 þei fals. Jif þei ben trewe & contynen in hem goostly frute, whi schuld þei þan be dispisid? For men wil kysse þe cuppe, for wine is þerin.

& what þerof, þof oure Lorde, when he assendid to heuen bodely, toke his wey upwardes into þe cloudes, seing his moder & his  
 15 disciples wiþ here bodely igen? Schul we þerfore in oure goostly werk euer stare upwardes wiþ oure bodely igen, to loke after hym gif we mowe se hym sit bodely in heuen, or elles stonde, as Seinte Steuen did? Nay, sekirly he schewid him not vnto Seynte Steuen bodily in heuen forþi þat he wolde geue us ensauple þat we schuld in oure  
 f. 77b 20 goostly werk loke|bodely up into heuen, gif we mougt se hym as Seynte Steuen did, ouþer stondyng or sittyng or liggyng. For howso his body is in heuen—standyng, sittyng, or ligging—wote no man. & it nedip not to be wetyn; ne no more, bot þat his body is anhized<sup>150</sup> wiþ þe soule, wiþouten departing. þe body & þe soule, þe whiche is  
 25 þe Manheed, is onid wiþ þe Godheed wiþoutyn departyng also. Of his sittyng, his standing, his liggyng, nedip it not to wetyn, bot þat he is þere as him list, & haþ him in body as moste semely is vnto hym for to be. For gif he schewid hym liggyng, or stondyng, or sittyng, by reuelacion bodely to any creature in þis liif, it is done for sum goostly  
 30 bemenyng, & not for no maner of bodely beryng þat he haþ in heuen.

See by ensauple. By stondyng is vnderstonden a redynes of helping. & herfore it is seide comounly of oo frende to anoþer, whan he is in bodely batayle: 'Bere þee wel, felaw, & fyt fast, & giue not  
 35 up þe bataile ouer-ligly; for I schal stonde by þee.' He meneþ not only bodely stondyng, for paraenture þis batayle is on hors & not on fote, & paraenture it is [in]<sup>151</sup> going & not stondyng. Bot he meneþ, whan he seiþ þat he schal stonde bi hym, þat he schal be redy to helpe him.

f. 78a 40 For þis skyte it was|þat oure Lorde schewid him bodely in heuer.

<sup>149</sup> obseruaunce] obseruaunces Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>150</sup> anhized] aneid Kk; honede Har<sup>2</sup>; anhydd Ro<sup>1</sup>; oonyd U Ro<sup>3</sup>; Pa. See Commentary.

<sup>151</sup> in] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

to Seinte Steuen, when he was in his martirdome; & not to zeue us ensaunple to loke up to heuen. As he had seide þus to Seynte Steuen, in persone of alle þoo þat suffren persecucion for his loue: 'Loo, Steuen! as verrelly as I open þis bodely fyrmament, þe whiche is clepid heuen, & lete þee se my bodily stondyng, trist stedfastly<sup>152</sup> 5 þat as verrelly stonde I biside þee goostly, by þe myzt of my Godheed. & I am redy to helpe þee. & þerfore stonde þou stifly in þe feiþ, & suffre<sup>153</sup> booldely<sup>154</sup> þe fel buffetes of þoo harde stones; for I schal coroune þee in blis for þi mede, & not only þee, bot alle þoo þat suffren persecucion for me on any maner.' 10

& þus maist þou se þat þees bodely schewynges were done by goostly bemenynges.

Here biginniþ þe nine & fifti chapitre.

& gif þou sey ougt touching þe assencion of oure Lorde, for þat was done bodely & for a bodely bemenyng as wel as for a goostly, for 15 boþe he assendid verrey God & verrey Man: to þis wil I answepe þee, þat he had ben deed, & was clad wiþ vndeelines, & so schul we be at þe Day of Dome. & þan we schul be maad so sotyl in body|& in f. 78b soule togeders, þat we schul be þan [as]<sup>155</sup> swiftly where us liste bodely, as we ben now in oure þougte goostly; wheþer it be up or doune, on o syde or on oþer, bihinde or before. Alle I hope schal þan 20 be iliche good, as clerkes seyne. Bot now þou mayst not come to heuen not bodely, bot goostly. & git it schal be so goostly þat it schal not be on bodely maner: nowþer upwardes ne donwardes, ne on o side ne on oþer, behynde ne before. 25

& wite wel þat alle þoo þat setten hem to be goostly worchers & namely in þe werk of þis book, þat þof al þei rede 'lifte up' or 'go in', þof al þat þe werke of þis book be clepid a steryng, neuerþeles git hem behoueþ to haue a ful besy beholdyng, þat þis steryng streche<sup>156</sup> 30 neiþer up bodely ne in bodely, ne git þat it be any soche steryng as is from o stede to anoþer. & þof al þat it be sumtyme cleped a rest, neuerþeles git þei schul not þink þat it is any soche rest as is any abidyng in a place wiþouten remowing þerfro. For þe perfeccion of þis werke is so pure & so goostly in itself, þat & it be wel & trewly conceyuid, it sc[h]al be seen fer lengþid fro any steryng & fro any 35 stede.

& it schuld by sum skyle rapen be clepid a sodeyn chaungyng þen any|stedly steryng. For tyme, stede, & body, þees þre schuld be f. 79a

<sup>152</sup> stedfastly] fast *other MSS.*

<sup>153</sup> suffre] bode- (*can.*) *add.* Har<sup>1</sup>; bodily (*can.*) *add.* Kk.

<sup>154</sup> booldely] bodily Har<sup>2</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>155</sup> as] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>156</sup> streche] reche *other MSS.*

forzeten in alle goostly worching. & þerfore bewar in þis werk þat þou take none ensauple at þe bodely assencion of Criste, for to streyne þin ymaginacion in þe tyme of þi preier bodely upwardes, as þou woldest clymbe abouen þe mone. For it schuld on no wise be so  
 5 goostly. Bot gif þou schuldest assende into heuen bodely, as Criste did, þan þou migtest take ensauple at it; bot þat may none do bot God, as himself witnessiþ, seiing: 'Þer is no man þat may assende vnto heuen, bot only he þat descendid fro heuen, & bycome man for þe loue of man.' & gif it were possible, as it on no wise may be, ȝit it  
 10 schuld be for habundaunce of goostly worchyng, only bi þe mixt of þe spirit, ful fer fro any bodely stressyng or streyning of oure ymaginacion bodely, ouþer up, or in, on o side, or on oþer. & þerfore lat be soche falshede; it schuld not be so.

Here biginniþ þe sixty chapitre.

15 Bot now, paraurenture, þou seiste þat how schuld it þanne be. For þee þink þat þou haste verrey euidence þat heuyn is upwardes; for Criste assendid þedir bodely upwardes, & sente þe Holy Goost, as he hiȝt, comyng fro abouen bodely, seyng<sup>157</sup> alle his disciples; & þis is  
 f. 79b oure beleue. & þerfore|þee þink, siþen þou haste þus verrey  
 20 euidence, whi schalt þou not directe þi mynde upward bodely in þe tyme of þi preier?

& to þis wil I answeere þee so febely as I kan, & sey: siþen it so was þat Criste schuld assende bodely, & þerafter sende þe Holy Goost bodely, þen it was more semely þat it was upwardes & fro abouen,  
 25 þan ouþer donwardes & fro byneþen, byhinde or before, on o side or on oþer. Bot elles ne were þis semelines, him nedid neuer þe more to haue wente upwardes þen donwardes, I mene for nerenes of þe wey. For heuen goostly is as neiȝ doun as up, & up as down, bihinde as before, before as behynde, on o syde as oþer, insomoche þat whoso  
 30 had a trewe desire for to be at heuyn, þen þat same tyme he were in heuen goostly. For þe hiȝe & þe nexte wey þeder is ronne by desires, & not by pases of feet. & herfore seiþ Seinte Poule of himself & many oþer þus: 'Þof al oure bodies ben presently here in erþe, neuerþeles ȝit oure leuyng is in heuen.' He ment þeire loue & þeire desire, þe  
 35 whiche is goostly þeire liif. & sekirly as verrelly is a soule þere where it louiþ, as in þe body þat leueþ bi it, & to þe whiche it ȝeueþ liif. &  
 f. 80a þerfore ȝif we wil go to heuen goostly, it|nediþ not to streyne oure spirit neiþer up ne doune, ne on o syde ne on oþer.

Here biginniþ þe on & sixti chapitre.

40 Neuerþeles it is needful to lifte up oure ȝen & oure hondes bodely,

<sup>157</sup> seyng] vnseyng (vn- can. Ro<sup>1</sup>) Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>; seeyng U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa. See Commentary.



as it were vnto zone bodely heuen, in þe whiche þe elementes ben fastnid. I mene gif we ben sterid of þe werk of oure spirit, & elles nougt. For alle bodely þing is sogette vnto goostly þing & is reulid þerafter, & not aʒensward.

Ensaumple herof may be seen by þe assencion of oure Lorde; for 5  
whan þe tyme statute was icomen þat him likyd to weende to his Fader bodely in his Manheed—þe whiche was neuer, ne neuer may be, absent in his Godheed—þan migtely, by þe vertewe of þe Spirit God, þe Manheed wiþ þe body folowed in onheed of Persone. þe visibilite of þis was moste seemly & most acordyng to be upward 10

þis same subieccion of þe body to þe spirit may be in maner verrelly conceiued in þe preof of þis goostly werk of þis book by hem þat worchen þerin. For what tyme þat a soule disposeþ him effectuely to þis werk, þan as fast sodenly—vnwetyng himself þat worcheþ—þe body, þat parauenture bifore er he bygan was 15  
sumwhat heeldyng donwardes on o syde or on oþer for ese of þe flesche, by vertewe of þe spirit schal set|it vprigt, folowyng in maner f. 80b  
& in licnes bodely þe werk of þe spirit þat is maad goostly. & þus it is moste semely to be.

& for þis seemlines it is þat a man, þe whiche is þe seemliest 20  
creature in body þat euer God maad, is not maad crokid to þe erpewardes, as ben alle oþer beestes, bot uprigte to heuenwardes; for whi þat it schulde figure in licnes bodely þe werke of þe soule goostly, þe whiche falleþ to be uprigt goostly & not crokid goostly. Take kepe þat I sey uprigt goostly, & not bodely. For how schulde a soule, þe 25  
whiche in his kynde haþ no maner þing of bodelines, be streinid uprigt bodely? Nay, it may not be.

& þerfore beware þat þou conceyue not bodely þat þat is mente goostly, þof al it be spokyn in bodely wordes, as ben þees: UP or DOUN, IN or OUTE, BEHINDE or BEFORE, ON O SIDE or ON OþER. For þof 30  
al þat a þing be neuer so goostly in itself, neuerþeles ʒit gif it schal be spoken of, siþen it so is þat speche is a bodely werk wrougt wiþ þe tonge, þe whiche is an instrument of þe body, it behoueþ alweis be spoken in bodely wordes. Bot what þerof? Schal it þerfore be taken & conceyuid bodely? Nay, it bot goostly. 35

Here biginnip þe two & sixty chapitre.

& forþi þat þou schalt kun betir wite how þei schul be conceyued goostly, þees wordes þat ben spoken bodely, þerfore I þink to declare to þee þe goostly|bemenyng of somme wordes þat fallyn to goostly f. 81a  
worching; so þat þou mayst wite cleerly wiþouten errour when þi 40  
goostly werke is beneþe þee & wiþoutyn þee, & when it is wiþin þee & euen wiþ þee, & when it is abouen þee & vnder þi God.

Alle maner of bodely þing is wiþouten þi soule & beneþe it in



kynde. Ȝe, þe sonne & þe mone & alle þe sterres, þof al þei be abouen þi body, neuerþeles ȝit þei ben beneþe þi soule.

Alle aungelles & alle soules, þof al þei be conformed & anowrnid wiþ grace & wiþ vertewes, for þe whiche þei ben abouen þee in  
 5 clennes, neuerþeles ȝit þei ben bot euen wiþ þee in kynde.

Wipinne in þiself in kynde ben þe miȝtes of þi soule, þe whiche ben þees þre principal: minde, reson, & wille; & secondary, ymaginacion & sensualite.

Abouen þiself in kynde is no maner of þing bot only God.

10 Euermore where þou fyndest wreten þiself in goostlines, þan it is vnderstonden þi soule, & not þi body. & þen, al after þat þing is on þe whiche þe miȝtes of þi soule worchyn, þerafter schal þe worþines & þe condicion of þi werke be demid: wheþer it be bineþe þee, wipinne þee, or abouen þee.

15 Here bigynnip þe þre & sixty chapitre.

Mynde is soche a miȝte in itself, þat properly to speke & in maner it worcheþ not itself. Bot reson & wille, þei ben two worching  
 f. 81b miȝtes, & so is ymaginacion & sensualite also. & alle þees foure miȝtes & þeire werkes mynde conteneþ & comprehendeþ in itself. &  
 20 on none oþer wise it is seide þat þe mynde worcheþ, bot ȝif soche a comprehencion be a werke.

& herfore it is þat I clepe þe miȝtes of a soule, som principal, & som secondary. Not for a soule is departable, for þat may not be; bot for alle þoo þinges in þe whiche þei worchen ben departable, &  
 25 somme principal, as ben alle goostly þinges, & som secondary, as ben alle bodily þinges. Þe two principal worching myȝtes, reson & wille, worchen purely in hemself in alle goostly þinges, wiþouten help of þe oþer two secondary miȝtes. Ymaginacion & sensualite worchin beestly in alle bodely þinges, wheþer þei be present or  
 30 absente in þe body, & wiþ þe bodely wittes. Bot by hem, wiþouten helpe of reson & of wille, may a soule neuer come to for to knowe þe vertewe & þe condicions of bodely creatures, ne þe cause of þeire beynges & þeire making. <sup>158</sup>

& for þis skyle is reson & wille clepid principal miȝtes, for þei  
 35 worchen in pure spirit wiþouten any maner of bodelines; & ymaginacion & sensualite secondary, for þei worchen in þe body wiþ bodely instrumentes, þe whiche ben oure fiue wittes. Minde is clepid a principal myȝte, for it conteneþ in it goostly not only alle þe oþer  
 f. 82a miȝtes, bot þerto alle þo þinges in þe whiche þei worchen. Se by þe  
 40 profe.

<sup>158</sup> making] makynges Har<sup>1</sup>.

Here biginniþ þe foure & sixty chapitre.

Reson is a mygt þorou þe whiche we departe þe iuel fro þe good, þe iuel fro þe worse, þe good fro þe betir, þe worse fro þe worste, þe betir fro þe best. Before er man synned, miȝt reson haue done al þis by kynde. Bot now it is so blendid wiþ þe original synne þat it may not kon worche þis werk bot ȝif it be illuminid by grace. & boþe þe self reson, & þe þing þat it worcheþ in, ben comprehendid & contened in þe mynde.

Wille is a mygt þorou þe whiche we chese good, after þat it be determinid wiþ reson; & þorow þe whiche we loue God,<sup>159</sup> we desire God,<sup>160</sup> & resten us wiþ ful likyng & consent eendli in God. Before er man synnid, miȝt not wille be disceyuid in his chesyng, in his louyng, ne in none of his werkes; for whi it had þan by kynde to sauour iche þing as it was. Bot now it may not do so, bot ȝif it be anointed wiþ grace. For oftymes, bicause of infeccion of þe original synne, it sauoreþ a þing for good þat is ful yuel, & þat haþ bot þe licnes of goode. & boþe þe wille & þe þing þat it wilniþ þe mynde conteneþ & comprehendþ in it.

Here biginniþ þe fiue & sixty chapitre.

Imagynacion is a miȝt þorow þe whiche we portray alle ymages of absent & present þinges. | & boþe it, & þe þing þat it worcheþ in, ben contened in þe mynde. Byfore er man synned, was ymagynacion so obedyent vnto þe reson—to þe whiche it is as it were seruaunt—þat it mynystrid neuer to it any vnordeynde ymage of any bodely creature, or any fantasy of any goostly creature. Bot now it is not so. For bot ȝif it be refreyned by þe liȝt of grace in þe reson, elles it wil neuer sese, sleping or wakyng, for to portray dyuerse vnordeynd ymages of bodely creatures; or elles sum fantasye, þe whiche is nouȝt elles bot a bodely conseyte of a goostly þing, or elles a goostly conseyte of a bodely þing. & þis is euermore feynid & fals, & ane[x]te<sup>161</sup> vnto errour.

Þis inobedyence of þe ymaginacion may clerly be conseuyd in hem þat ben newlynges tornid fro þe worlde vnto deuocion in þe tyme of here preier. For before þe tyme be þat þe ymaginacion be in grete partye refreynid by þe liȝt of grace in þe reson—as it is in contynowel meditacion of goostly þinges, as ben þeire wrechidnes, þe Passion & þe kyndenes of oure Lorde God, wiþ many soche oþer—þei mowe in no wise put away þe wonderful & þe diuerse þouȝtes, fantasies & ymages, þe whiche ben mynystred & preentid in

<sup>159</sup> God] goode *other MSS.*

<sup>160</sup> God] goode *other MSS.*

<sup>161</sup> ane[x]te] aneste Har<sup>1</sup>.

peire mynde by þe liȝte & þe<sup>162</sup> corioustee of ymaginacyon. & alle þis inobedyence is þe pyne of þe original synne.

f. 83a Here biginniþ þe six & sixty chapitre.

Sensualite is a miȝte of oure soule, rechyng & regnyng in þe  
 5 bodely wittes, þorow þe whiche we haue bodely knowyng & felyng of  
 alle bodely creatures, wheþer þei be likyng or gruchyng. & it haþ two  
 partyes: one þorow þe whiche it beholdeþ to þe needfulnes of oure  
 body, anoþer þorow þe whiche it serueþ to þe lustis of þe bodely  
 wittys. For þis same miȝt is it þat gruchiþ when þe body lackyþ þe  
 10 needful þinges vnto it, & þat in þe takyng of þe nede stereþ us to take  
 more þan nedith in fedyng & forþeryng of oure lustys. It grochiþ in  
 lackyng of likyng creatures, & lustely is delited in þeire presence. It  
 grochiþ in presence of mislikyng creatures, & it is lustely plesid in  
 þeire absence. Boþe þis miȝt & þe þing þat it worcheþ in ben  
 15 contened in þe mynde.

Before er man synnid was þe sensualite so obedyent vnto þe wille  
 —vnto þe whiche it is as it were seruaunt—þat it ministred neuer  
 vnto it any vnordeinde likyng or groching in any bodely creature, or  
 in<sup>163</sup> any goostly feynyng of likyng or mislikyng maad by any goostly  
 20 enmye in þe bodely wittes. Bot now it is not so; for bot gif it be reulyd  
 by grace in þe wille, for to suffre meekly & in mesure þe pyne of þe  
 f. 83b original synne—þe whiche it felith in absence of needful likyng|& in  
 presence of speedful groching—& þerto also for to streyne it fro luste  
 in presence of needful lykyng, & fro lusty plesaunce in absence of  
 25 speedful groching, elles wil it wrechidly & wantounly weltre, as a  
 swine in þe myre, in þe welþes of þis worlde & þe foule flessche so  
 mochel, þat alle oure leuyng schal be more beestly & fleschly þen  
 ouþer manly or goostly.

Here biginniþ þe seuen & sixty chapitre.

30 Loo, goostly freende [in] to soche wrechidnes as þou here mayst  
 see ben we fallen for synne! & þerfore what wonder is it þouȝ we be  
 blyndely & liȝtly disseyuid in vnderstondyng of goostly wordes & of  
 goostly worchyng, & namely þoo þe whiche knowyn not ȝit þe  
 myȝtes of þeire soules & þe maners of þeire worchyng?

35 For euer whan þe mynde is ocupied wiþ any bodely þing, be it  
 taken to neuer so good an eende, ȝit þou arte bineþe þiself in þis  
 working, & wiþouten þi soule. & euer whan þou felist þi mynde  
 ocupied wiþ þe sotil condicions of þe myȝtes of þi soule & þeire  
 workinges in goostly þinges, as ben vices or vertewes of þiself or of

<sup>162</sup> & þe] of other MSS.

<sup>163</sup> in] can. Har<sup>1</sup>.

any creature þat is goostly & euen wiþ þee in kynde, to þat eende þat þou miȝtest by þis werke lerne|to knowe þiself in forþring of f. 84a  
 perfeccion: þen þou arte wiþinne þiself & euen wiþ þiself. Bot euer when þou felist þi mynde occupyed wiþ no maner of þyng þat is bodely or goostly, bot only wiþ þe self substaunce of God, as it is & 5  
 may be in þe preof of þe werk of þis book: þen þou arte abouen þiself & vnder<sup>164</sup> þi God.

Abouen þiself þou arte: for whi þou atteynest to come þedir by grace, wheþer þou mayst not come by kynde; þat is to sey, to be onyd to God in spirit & in loue & in acordaunce of wille. Byneþe þi 10  
 God þou arte: for whi þof al it may be seide in maner þat in þis tyme God & þou ben not two bot one in spirit—insomoeche þat þou or anoþer for soche onheed þat feleþ þe perfeccion of þis werk may soþfastly, bi witnes of Scripture, be clepid a God—neuerþeles ȝit þou arte bineþe hym. For whi he is God by kynde wiþouten biginnyng; & 15  
 þou þat sumtyme were nouȝt in substaunce & þerto after when þou were by his miȝt & his loue maad ouȝt, wilfully wiþ synne madest þiself wors þen nouȝt: only bi his mercy wiþouten þi desert arte maad a God in grace, onyd wiþ him in spirit wiþouten departyng, boþe here & in blis of heuen wiþouten any eende. So þat, þouȝ þou be al<sup>165</sup> 20  
 |one wiþ hym in grace, ȝit þou arte ful fer bineþe hym in kynde. f. 84b

Loo, goostly freende! herby maist þou see sumwhat in partye þat whoso knowiþ not þe myȝtes of þeire owne soule, & þe maner of þeire worchyng, may ful lightly be disseyued in vnderstandyng of wordes þat ben wretyn to goostly entent. & herfore maist þou see sumwhat 25  
 þe cause whi þat I durst not pleyndly bid þee schewe þi desire vnto God; bot I bad þee childly do þat in þee is to hyde it & hele it. & þis I do for feerde lest þou schuldest conseyue bodily þat þat is mente goostly.

Here biginniþ þe eigȝt & sixty chapitre.

& on þe same maner, wher anoþer man wolde bid þee gader þi 30  
 miȝtes & þi wittes holiche wiþinne þiself, & worschip God þere—þof al he sey ful wel & ful trewly, ȝe! & no man trewlier & he be wel conseiuid—ȝit for feerde of disseite & bodely conceyuyng of his wordes, me list not byd þee do so. Bot þus wil I bid þee. Loke on no wyse þat þou be wiþinne þiself. & schortly wiþoutyn þiself wil I not 35  
 þat þou be, ne ȝit abouen, ne behynde, ne on o side, ne on oper.

‘Wher þan,’ seist þou, ‘schal I be? Noȝwhere, by þi tale!’ Now trewly þou seist wel;|for þere wolde I haue þee. For whi noȝwhere f. 85a  
 bodely is euerywhere goostly. Loke þan besily þat þi goostly werk be noȝwhere bodely; & þan whersoer þat þat þing is, on þe whiche 40

<sup>164</sup> vnder] byneþ other MSS.

<sup>165</sup> al] om. other MSS.



pou wilfully worchest in þi mynde in substaunce, sekerly þer art þou  
 in spirit, as verrely as þi body is in þat place þat þou arte bodely. &  
 þof al þi bodely wittes kon fynde þer noþing to fede hem on, for hem  
 þink it nouzt þat þou doste, 3e! do on þan þis nouzt, elles þat þou do  
 5 it for Goddes loue. & lete nouzt, þerfore, bot trauayle besily in þat  
 nouzt wiþ a wakyng desire to wilne to haue God, þat no man may  
 knowe. For I telle þee trewly þat I had leuer be so nowhere bodely,  
 wrastlyng wiþ þat blynde nouzt, þan to be so grete a lorde þat I miȝt  
 when I wolde be euerywhere bodely, merily pleiing wiþ al þis ouzt as  
 10 a lorde wiþ his owne.

Lat be þis eueriwhere & þis ouzt, in comparison of þis [nowhere  
 & þis]<sup>166</sup> nouzt. Reche þee neuer ȝif þi wittys kon no skyle of þis  
 nouzt; for [sekirly]<sup>167</sup> I loue it moche þe betir. It is so worþi a þing in  
 itself þat þei kon no skyle þerapon. Þis nouzt may betir be felt þen  
 15 seen; for it is ful blynde & ful derk to hem þat han bot lityl while  
 lokid þerapon. Neuerþeles, ȝif I schal soþlier sey, a soule is more  
 f. 85b bleendid in felyng of it for habundaunce of goostly liȝt, þen for any  
 derknes or wantyng of bodely liȝtte.<sup>168</sup> What is he þat clepiþ it nouzt?  
 Sekirly it is oure vtter man, & not oure inner. Oure inner man clepiþ  
 20 it Al; for of it he is wel lernid to kon skyle of alle þinges, bodely or  
 goostly, wiþouten any specyal beholdyng to any o þing by itself.

Here biginniþ þe nine and sixty chapitre.

Wonderfully is a mans affeccion varied in goostly felyng of þis  
 nouzt when it is nouȝwhere wrouzt. For at þe first tyme þat a soule  
 25 lokip þerapon, it schal fynde alle þe specyal dedes of sinne þat euer  
 he did siþen he was borne, bodely or goostly, priuely or derkly,  
 peyntid þerapon. & howsoeuer þat he torniþ it aboute, euermore þei  
 wil apere before his ȝen; vnto þe tyme be þat wiþ moche harde  
 trauayle, many sore sizinges, & many bitter wepynges he haue in  
 30 grete party rubbid<sup>169</sup> hem away.

Somtyme in þis trauayle him þink þat it is to loke þerapon as on  
 helle; for him þink þat he despeiriþ to wynne to perfeccion of goostly  
 rest oute of þat pyne. Þus fer inwards comyn many; bot for greetnes  
 of pyne þat þei fele & for lackyng of counforte þei go bak in  
 35 beholdyng of bodely þinges, sekyng fleschly counfortes wiþouten, for  
 lackyng of goostly þat þei haue not ȝit deseruyd, as þei schuld ȝif þei  
 had abeden.

f. 86a For he þat abidiþ felip somtyme som coumforte, | & haþ som hope  
 of perfeccion; for he felip & seep þat many of his fordone specyal

<sup>166</sup> nowhere & þis] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>167</sup> sekirly] *whi* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>168</sup> liȝtte] *witte other MSS.*

<sup>169</sup> rubbid] *waschen other MSS.*



synnes ben in grete partye by help of grace rubbid away. Neuerþeles  
 zit eueramonge he felip pyne; bot he þinkip þat it schal haue an ende,  
 for it wexip euer les & les. & þerfore he clepip it nougt helle<sup>170</sup> bot  
 purgatory. Somtyme he kan fynde no specyal synne wretyn  
 þerapon, bot zit hym þink þat it is synne a lumpe, he wote neuer 5  
 what, none oþer þing þan hymself; & þan it may be clepid þe staþil &  
 þe pyne of þe original synne. Somtyme hym þink þat it is paradis or  
 heuen, for diuerse wonderful swetnes & counfortes, ioyes & blessid  
 vertewes þat he fyndeþ þerin. Somtyme hym þink it God, for pees &  
 rest þat he findeþ þerin.

10

Ȝe! þink what he þink wil; for euermore he schal fynde it a cloude  
 of vnknowyng þat is bitwix hym & his God.

Here biginnyþ þe seuenthy chapitre.

& þerfore trauayle fast in þis nougt & þis nouȝwhere, & leue þin  
 outward bodely wittes |& alle þat þei worche in<sup>171</sup>; for I telle þee 15  
 trewly þat þis werk may not be conceyuid by hem.

For by þin ȝen þou maist not conceyue of any þing, bot ȝif it be by  
 þe lengþe & þe breed, þe smalnes & þe gretnes, þe roundnes & þe  
 swarennes, þe fernes & þe neernes, |& þe colour of it. & bi þin eren, f. 86b  
 not bot noise or sum maner of soun. By þin nose, not bot eiper 20  
 stynche or sauour. & by þi taast, not bot eiper soure or swete, salt or  
 fresche, bittyr or likyng. & bi þi feling, not bot ouþer hote or colde,  
 hard or tendre, soft or scharpe. & trewly neiþer haþ God ne goostly  
 þinges none of þees qualitees ne quantitees. & þerfore leue þin  
 outward wittes, & worche not wiþ hem, neiþer wiþinne ne wiþouten. 25  
 For alle þoo þat setten hem to be goostly worchers wiþinne, & wenen  
 þat þei scholen ouþer here, smel, or see, taast or fele goostly þinges,  
 ouþer wiþinne hem or wiþouten, sekerly þei ben deceyued &  
 worchen wronge aȝens þe cours of kynde. For kyndely þei ben  
 ordeynid þat wiþ hem men schuld haue knowyng of alle outward 30  
 bodely þinges, & on no wise by hem com to þe knowing of gostely  
 þinges.<sup>172</sup> I mene bi þeire werkes.

By þeire failinges we may, as þus: when we rede or here speke of  
 sum certeyn þinges, & þerto conceyue þat oure outward wittys kon not  
 telle us bi no qualitee what þoo þinges ben, þan we mowe be verely 35  
 certefied þat þoo þinges ben goostly þinges, & not bodely þinges.

On þis same maner goostly it fariþ [wiþin]<sup>173</sup> in oure goostly wittys,  
 when we trauailen aboute þe knowyng of God himself. For haue a  
 man neuer so moche goostly vnderstondyng in knowyng of alle|

<sup>170</sup> helle] elles *other MSS.*

<sup>171</sup> & . . . worche in] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>172</sup> & . . . gostely þinges] *ins. at foot of column in a different hand* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>173</sup> wiþin] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

f. 87a maad goostly þinges, ȝit may he neuer bi þe werk of his vnder-  
 stondyng com to þe knowyng of an vnmaad goostly þing, þe whiche  
 is nouȝt bot God. Bot by þe failyng it may; for whi þat þing þat it  
 failiþ in is noping elles bot only God. & herfore it was þat Seynte  
 5 Denis seyde: 'þe moste goodly<sup>174</sup> knowyng of God is þat, þe whiche is  
 knowyn bi vnknowyng.'

& trewly, whoso wil loke Denis bookes, he schal fynde þat his  
 wordes wilen cleerly aferme al þat I haue seyde or schal sey, fro þe  
 biginnyng of þis tretis to þe ende. On none<sup>175</sup> oþerwise þen þus list  
 10 me not alegge him, ne none oþer doctour for me at þis tyme. For  
 somtyme men þouȝt it meeknes to sey nouȝt of þeire owne hedes, bot  
 ȝif þei afermid it by Scripture & doctours wordes; & now it is turnid  
 into corioustee & schewyng of kunnyng. To þee it nedid not, &  
 þerfore I do it nouȝt. For whoso haþ eren, lat hem<sup>176</sup> here, & whoso is  
 15 sterid for to trowe, lat hem<sup>177</sup> trowe; for elles scholen þei not.

Here biginniþ þe on & seuenthy chapitre.

Somme þink þis mater so harde & so feerful<sup>178</sup> þat þei sey it may  
 not be comen to wiþouten moche stronge trauayle comyng before,  
 ne conceiuid bot seeldom, & þat in þe tyme of raulsching. & to þees  
 f. 87b 20 men wol I answeere as febely as I kan, & sey þat it is alle at þe  
 ordynaunce & þe disposicion of God, after þeire abilnes in soule þat  
 þis grace of contemplacion & of goostly worching is ȝouen to.

For som þer ben þat wiþoutyn moche & longe goostly excersise  
 mowe not com þerto; & ȝit it schal be bot ful seeldom, & in special  
 25 callyng of oure Lorde, þat þei schul fele þe perfeccion of þis werk:  
 þe whiche callyng is clepid raulsching. & som þer ben þat ben so  
 sotyl in grace & in spirit, & so homely wiþ God in þis grace of  
 contemplacion, þat þei mowe haue it when þei wolen in þe comoun  
 state of mans soule: as in sittyng, goyng, stondyng, or knelyng. & ȝit  
 30 in þis tyme þei haue fulle deliberacion of alle þeire wittis, bodely or  
 goostly, & mowe vse hem ȝif hem list: not wiþouten som lettyng, bot  
 wiþouten gret lettyng.<sup>179</sup> Ensaumple of þe first we haue by Moises, &  
 of þis oþer by Aaron, þe preest of þe temple.

For whi þis grace of contemplacion is figurid by þe Arke of þe  
 35 Testament in þe Olde Lawe, & þe worchers in þis grace ben figurid  
 by hem þat most medelid hem aboute þis arke, as þe story wol  
 witnes. & weel is þis grace & þis werk licnid to þat arke. For riȝt as in

<sup>174</sup> goodly] Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>. See Commentary.

<sup>175</sup> none] *om.* other MSS.

<sup>176</sup> hem] hym Kk Har<sup>2</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>177</sup> hem] hym Kk Har<sup>2</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>178</sup> feerd-] fere- other MSS.

<sup>179</sup> bot . . . lettyng] *ins. at foot of column in a different hand* Har<sup>1</sup>.

þat arke were contenid alle þe juelles & þe relikis of þe temple, riȝt so in þis lityl loue put ben contenid alle þe vertewes of mans soule, þe whiche is þe goostly temple of God.

Moyses, er he miȝt come to se þis arke, & for to wite how it schuld f. 88a  
be maad, wiþ grete longe trauayle he clombe up to þe top of þe 5  
mounteyne & wonid þere & wrouȝt in a cloude six daies: abidyng  
vnto þe seuenþ day, þat oure Lorde wolde vouchesaaf for to schewe  
vnto hym þe maner of þis arke-makyng. By Moises longe trauaile &  
his late schewyng ben vnderstonden þoo þat mowe not come to þe  
perfeccion of þis goostly werk wiþouten longe trauayle comyng before, 10  
& ȝit bot ful seeldom, & when God wil vouchesaaf to schewe it.

Bot þat þat Moises miȝt not come to se bot seeldom, & þat not  
wiþoutyn grete longe trauayle, Aaron had in his power, bicause of  
his office, for to se it in þe temple wiþinne þe veyle as ofte as him  
likid for to entre. & bi þis Aaron ben vnderstonden alle þoo þe 15  
whiche I spak of abouen, þe whiche by þeire goostly sleȝtes, [wiþ]<sup>180</sup>  
help of grace, mowen propre vnto hem þe perfeccion of þis werk as  
oft as hem likiþ.

Here biginniþ þe two & seuenti chapitre.

Lo! herby maist þou see þat he þat may not com to for to see & fele 20  
þe perfeccion of þis werk, bot wiþ grete<sup>181</sup> trauayle, & ȝit is it bot  
seeldom, & may liztly be disceyuid ȝif he speke, þink & deme oþer  
men as he felip in himself: þat þei mowe not com to it bot seeldom, & f. 88b  
þat not wiþouten greet trauaile. & on þe same maner may he be  
deceyuid þat may haue it whan he wil, ȝif he deme alle oþer þerafter, 25  
seing þat þei mowe haue it when þei wile. Lat be þis: nay, sekirly he  
may not þink þus. For parauenture, whan it likiþ vnto God,<sup>182</sup> þoo  
þat mowe not at þe first tyme haue it bot seeldom & þat not wiþouten  
grete trauayle, siþen after þei schulen haue it whan þei wile, as ofte  
as hem likiþ. Ensaumple of þis we haue of Moyses, þat first bot 30  
seeldome, & nouȝt wiþouten grete trauayle in þe mounte, miȝt not  
see þe maner of þe arke; & siþen after, as ofte as hym likid, sawe it in  
þe vaale.<sup>183</sup>

Here biginniþ þe þre & seuenti chapitre.

Þre men þer weren þat most principaly medelid hem wiþ þis arke 35  
of þe Olde Testament: Moyses, Bezeleel, Aaron. Moyses lernid in  
þe mounte of oure Lorde how it schuld be maad. Bezeleel wrouȝt it  
& maad it in þe vaale, after þe ensaumple þat was schewid in þe

<sup>180</sup> wiþ] bi Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>181</sup> grete] longe other MSS.

<sup>182</sup> God] þat (can. Har<sup>1</sup>) add. Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>183</sup> þe vaale] þe veyle (waile Har<sup>2</sup>) other MSS.

mounteyne. & Aaron had it in kepyng in þe temple, to fele it & see it as ofte as hym likid.

f. 89a 5 At þe licnes of þees þre, we profite on þre maners in þis grace of contemplacion. Somtyme we profite only by grace, & þan we ben licnid vnto Moises, þat for alle þe clymbyng & þe trauaile| þat he had into þe mounte, migt not com to se it bot seeldom; & zit was þat sigt only by þe schewyng of oure Lorde whan hym likid to schewe it, & not for any deseert of his trauayle. Somtyme we profite in þis grace by oure owne goostly sleigt, holpyn wiþ grace, & þan ben we licnid to 10 Bezeleel, þe whiche migt not se þe arke er þe tyme þat he had mad it by his owne trauayle, holpen wiþ þe ensauple þat was schewid vnto Moises in þe mounte. & somtyme we profite in þis grace by oþer mens teching. & þan ben we licnid to Aaron, þe whiche had it in keping & in costume to see & fele þe arke when hym list, þat Bezeleel 15 had wrougt & maad redy before to his handes.

Lo! goostly freende, in þis werk, þof it be childly & lewdely spoken, I bere, þof I be a wreche vnworþi to teche any creature, þe office of Bezeleel, makyng & declaryng in maner to þin handes þe maner of þis goostly arke. Bot fer betir & more worþely þen I do, þou 20 maist worche gif þou wilt be Aaron; þat is to sey, contynuely worching þerin for þee & for me. Do þen so, I prey þee, for þe loue of God Almyty. & siþen we ben boþe clepid of God to worche in þis f. 89b werk, I beseche þee for Goddes loue fulfille in| þi partye þat lackiþ of myne.

25 Here biginniþ þe foure & seuenti chapitre.

& gif þee þink þat þis maner of worching be not acording to þi disposicion in body & in soule, þou maist leue it, & take anoþer sauely wiþ good goostly counseile wiþoutyn blame. & þan I beseche þee þat þou wilt haue me excusid; for trewly I wolde haue profitid 30 vnto þee [in þis writyng]<sup>184</sup> at my simple kunnyng, & þat was myn entent. & þerfore rede ouer twyes or þries; & euer þe offer þe betir, & þe more þou schalt conceyue þerof; insomoche, parauenture, þat sum clause þat was ful harde to þee at þe first or þe secound redyng, siþen after þee schal þink it ful ligt.

35 Je! & it semip impossible to myn vnderstanding þat any soule þat is disposid to þis werk schuld rede it, or speke it, or elles here it red or spoken, bot gif þat same soule schuld fele for þat tyme a verrey acordaunce to þe effecte of þis werk. & þan, gif þee þink it doþ þee good, þank God hertly, & for Goddes loue prey for me.

40 Do þan so. & I prey þee for Godes loue þat þou late none see þis book, bot if it be soche one þat þee þink is liche to þe book; after þat

<sup>184</sup> in þis writyng] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.



pou fyndest wreten in þe book before, where it tellip what men & when þei schuld worche in þis werk. & gif þou schalt|late any soche f. 90a  
men see it, þen I preie þee þat þou bid hem take hem tyme to loke it al ouer. For parauenture þer is som mater þerinne, in þe beginnyng or in þe middes, þe whiche is hanging & not fully declarid þere as it 5  
stondeþ. Bot gif it be not þere, it is sone after, or elles in þe eende. & þus gif a man sawe o partye & not anoþer, parauenture he schuld ligthly be led into errour. & þerfore I preye þee do as I sey þee.

& gif þee þenk þat þer be any mater þerin þat þou woldest haue more openid þan it is, late me wetyn whiche it is & þi conceyte 10  
þerapon; & at my simple kunnyng it schal be amendid gif I kan.

Fleschly iangelers, glosers & blamers, roukers & rouners, & alle maner of pynchers, kept I neuer þat þei sawe þis book; for myn entent was neuer to write soche þing to hem. & þerfore I wolde not þat þei herde it, neiþer þei ne none of þees corious lettrid ne lewid 15  
men, 3e! alþof þei be ful good men in actyue leuyng; for it acordeþ not to hem.

Here bigginiþ þe fiue & seuenti chapitre.

Alle þoo þat [redyn or heren]<sup>185</sup> þe mater of þis book be red or spokin, & in þis redyng or hering þink it good & likyng þing, ben 20  
neuer þe raþer clepid of God to worche in þis|werk, only for þis f. 90b  
likyng steryng þat þei fele in þe tyme of þis redyng. For parauenture þis steryng comeþ more of a kyndely corioustie of witte þen of any clepyng of grace.

Bot gif þei wil proue whens þis steryng comeþ, þei mowe proue 25  
þus, gif hem likyþ. First lat hem loke gif þei haue done þat in hem is before, ablyng hem þerto in clensyng of þeire concyence, at þe dome of Holi Chirche, þeire counseil acordyng. 3if it be þus, weel is inasmoche. Bot gif þei wil wetyn more nere, lat hem loke gif it be euermore presing in þeire mynde more costumabely þen is any oþer 30  
of goostly excersise. & gif hem þink þat þer is any maner of þing þat þei do, bodely or goostly, þat is sufficiently done wiþ witnes of þeire concyence, bot gif þis priue litil loue put be in maner goostly þe cheef of alle þeire werk: & gif þei þus fele—þen it is a token þat þei ben clepid of God to þis werk. & sekirly elles not. 35

I say not þat it schal euer laste & dwelle in alle þeire myndes contynowely þat ben clepid to worche in þis werk. Nay, so is it nouȝt. For from a zong goostly prentys in þis werk þe actueel felyng þerof is ofttymes wiþdrawen for diuers skyles; somtyme for he schal not|take f. 91a  
ouer-homely þerapon & wene þat it be in grete party in his owne 40  
power, to haue it when him list & as him list. & soche a wenying were

<sup>185</sup> redyn . . . heren] *trs.* Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>.



pride. & euermore whan þe felyng of grace is wiþdrawen, pride is þe cause: not euer pride þat is, bot pride þat schuld be, ne were þat þis felyng of grace were wiþdrawen. & þus wenyn oftymes som zong foles þat God is þeire enemye, when he is þeire ful freende.

- 5 Somtyme it is wiþdrawen for þeire rechelesnes; & when it is þus, þei fele sone after a ful bitter pyne þat betiþ hem ful sore. Somtyme oure Lorde wil delaye it bi a cauteel, for he wol bi soche a delaiing make it growe & be had more in deintee, when it is newe founden & felt agein, þat longe had be lost. & þis is one of þe rediest &  
 10 souereynist token þat a soule may haue to wite bi, wheþer he be clepid or not to worche in þis werk: gif he fele after soche a delaying & a longe lackyng of þis werk, þat when it comeþ sodenly as it doþ, vnpurchasid wiþ any mene, þat he haþ þan a gretter feruour of desire & gretter loue-longing to worche in þis werk, þan euer he had  
 15 any before, insomochel þat oftymes I trowe he haþ more ioie of þe  
 f. 916 fynding|þerof, þen euer he had sorow of þe lesing. & gif it be þus, sekirly it is a token verrey wiþoutyn errorr þat he is clepid of God to worche in þis werk, whatsoeuer þat he be or haþ ben.

- For not what þou arte, ne what þou hast ben, beholdeþ God wiþ  
 20 his mercyful ige; bot þat [þat]<sup>186</sup> þou woldest be. & Seinte Gregory to witnes þat 'alle holy desires growen bi delaies; & gif þei wany[n] bi delaies, þen were þei neuer holy desires'. For he þat felip euer les ioye & les in newe fyndinges & sodeyn presentacions of his olde purposid desires, þof al þei mowe be clepid kyndely desires to þe  
 25 goode, neuerþeles holy desires weren þei neuer. Of þis holy desire spekiþ Seint Austyne & seiþ þat 'al þe liif of a good Cristen man is not elles bot holy desire'.

- Farewel, goostly freende, in Goddes blessing & myne! & I beseche Almighi God þat trewe pees, hole counseil, & goostly coumforte in  
 30 God wiþ habundaunce of grace, euirmore be wiþ þee & alle Goddes louers in eerþe. Amen.

HERE EENDIþ þE CLOWDE OF VNKNOWING<sup>187</sup>

<sup>186</sup> þat] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>187</sup> Here . . . Vnknowing] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>; Here endyth (the boke callyd Pa) the diuine clowde of vnknowyng Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa.

## ÞE BOOK OF PRIUE COUNSELING<sup>1</sup>

Goostly freende in God, as touching þin inward ocupacion as me pink þee disposid, I speke at þis tyme in specyal to þiself, & not to alle þoo þat þis writyng scholen here in general. For ȝif I schuld write vnto alle, þan I must write þing þat were acordyng to alle generaly. Bot siþ I at þis tyme schal write vnto þee in special, þerfore I write none oþer þing bot soche as me pink þat is moste speedful & acording to þin disposicion only. If eny oþer be so disposid as þou arte, to whom þis writing may profite as vnto þee, insomoch þe betir, for I am wel apaied. Neuerþeles, at þis tyme, þin owne inward disposicion is only by itself, as I may conceiue it, þe poynte & þe prik of my beholdyng. & þerfore to þee, in persone of alle oþer liche vnto þee, I sei þus: f. 92a

Whan þou comyst bi þiself þenk not before what þou schalt do after, bot forsake as wel good þouȝtes as uel þouȝtes. & prey not wiþ þi mouþ bot þee list riȝt wel; & þan, ȝif þou ouȝt schalt sey, loke not how mochel ne how litil þat it be, ne charge not what it is ne what it bemeniþ, be it orison, be it psalm, ympne or antime, or any oþer preyer, general or specyal, mental wiþinne enditid bi þouȝt or vocale wiþouten by pronounsing of worde. & loke þat noþing leue in þi worching mynde bot a nakid entent streching into God, not clopid in any specyal þouȝt of God in hymself, how he is in himself or in any of his werkes, bot only þat he is as he is. Lat hym be so, I prey þee, & make him on none oþer wise. Seche no ferþer in hym by sotiltee of witte. Þat<sup>2</sup> byleue [be]<sup>3</sup> þi grounde. Þis nakid entent, freely fastenid & groundid in verrey beleue, schal be nouȝt elles to þi þouȝt & to þi felyng bot a nakid þouȝt & a blynde feling of þin owne beyng: as ȝif þou seidist þus vnto God wiþinne in þi menyng, 'Þat at I am, Lorde, I offre vnto þee, wiþoutyn any loking to eny qualite of þi beyng, bot only þat þou arte as þou arte, wiþouten any more.' 25 f. 92b

Þat meek derknes be þi mirour & þi mynde hole. Þenk no ferþer of þiself þan I bid þee do of þi God, so þat þou be on wiþ hym in spirit as þus, wiþoutyn departyng & scatering of mynde. For he is þi being, & in him þou arte þat at þou arte, not only bi cause & bi beyng, bot also he is in þee boþe bi cause & bi beyng. & þerfore þenk on God as in þis werk as þou dost on þiself, & on þiself as þou dost on God, þat he is as he is & þou arte as þou arte, so þat þi þouȝt be not scaterid ne departid, bot onid in hym þat is al; euermore sauynȝ þis difference bitwix þee & him, þat he is þi being & þou not his. For þof it be so þat alle þinges ben in hym bi cause & bi beyng & he be in alle þinges here 35

<sup>1</sup> A trefyse of pryuey conseyll Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; The pistle of pryuate counsell Pa.

<sup>2</sup> Þat] Lat Har<sup>2</sup>, Lette Pa. *See Commentary.*

<sup>3</sup> be] by Har<sup>1</sup>.

cause & here being, ȝit in himself only he is his owne cause & his owne being. For as noþing may be wiþoutyn him, so may he not be wiþoutyn himself. He is being boþe to himself & to alle. & in þat he is only departid from alle þat he is being boþe of hymself & of alle;  
 5 & in þat he is one in alle & alle in him þat alle þinges han her beinges in him &<sup>4</sup> he is being of alle. Þus schal þi þouȝt & þi feling be onid wiþ hym in grace wiþoutyn departing, alle corious sechinges in þe queinte qualitees of þi blinde beyng or of his fer put bac; þat þi þouȝt be nakid & þi felyng noþing defoulid, & þou, nakidly as þou arte, wiþ  
 10 þe touching of grace be priuely fed in þi felyng only wiþ hym as he is; bot blyndly & in partie, as it may be here in þis liif, þat þi longing desire be euermore worching.

f. 93a Loke up þan ligȝly & sey to þi Lorde, ouþer wiþ mouþ or mening|of hert: 'Þat at I am, Lorde, I offre vnto þee, for þou it arte.' & þenk  
 15 nakidly, pleynly & boistously þat þou arte as þou arte, wiþoutyn any maner of corioustee.

Þis is litil maistrie for to þink, ȝif it were bodyn to þe lewdist man or womman þat leuiþ in þe comounist wit of kynde in þis liif, as me þenkiþ. & þerfore softly, mornynȝly & smylyngly I merueyle me  
 20 somtyme whan I here sum men sey (I mene not simple lewid men & wommen, bot clerkes [& men]<sup>5</sup> of grete kunnyng) þat my writyng to þee & to oþer is so harde & so heiz, & so curious & so queinte, þat vnneþes it may be conceiuid of þe sotelist clerk or wittid man or womman in þis liif, as þei seyn. Bot to þees men most I answere & sey  
 25 þat it is moche worþi to be sorowid, & of God & his louers to be mercyfully scornid & bitterly reprouid, þat now þees dayes not only a fewe folkes, bot generally nighond alle (bot ȝif it be one or two in a contrey of þe specyally chosen of God) ben so bleendid in here coryous kunnyng of clergie & of kynde þat þe trewe conceite of þis ligȝt werk,  
 30 þorow þe whiche þe boistousest [lewyd]<sup>6</sup> mans soule or wommans in þis liif is verely in louely meeknes onyd to God in parfite charite, may no more, ne ȝit so moche, be conceyuid of hem in sobfastnes of spirit, for her blyndnes & here corioustee, þen may þe kunnyng of þe grettest clerk in scole of a ȝong childe at his A.B.C. & for þis  
 35 blyndnes erryngly þei clepin soche simple teching corioustee of witte, whan, ȝif it be witterly lokyd, it schal be founden bot a symple & a ligȝt lesson of a lewid man.

For I holde him to lewyd & to boistous þat kan not þenk & fele þat himself is, not what himself is bot þat hymself is. For þis is pleynly  
 40 propriid to þe lewdist kow or to þe moste vnresonable beest (ȝif it miȝt be seide, as it may not, þat one were lewder or more vnresonable þen

<sup>4</sup> &] as Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>5</sup> & men] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> lewyd] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

anoþer) for to fele þe owne propre beyng. Moche more|þan it is f. 93b  
 proprid to man, þe whiche is singularly endowid wiþ reson abouen  
 alle oþer beestes, for to þenk & for to fele his owne propre beyng.

& þerfore com doun into þe lowest poynte of þi witte, þe whiche  
 sum man holdeþ by verrey preof þat it is þe higest, & þenk on þe 5  
 lewedest maner, bot bi sum man þe wisest, not what þiself is, bot þat  
 þiself is. For whi to þee for to þenk what þou arte in alle propirte  
 longeþ moche crafte of clergie & of kunnyng & moche sotil seching in  
 þi kyndely wittys. & þis hast þou done now many day wiþ help of  
 grace, so þat þou wost now as in partye, & as I suppose it is profitable 10  
 to þee for þe tyme, what þou arte: a man in kind<sup>7</sup> & a foule stinking  
 wreche by synne. Þou knowest wel how; & parauenture þee þenkiþ  
 sumtyme to wele alle þe filþis þat folowen & fallen to a wreche. Fy on  
 hem! Late hem go, I prey þee. Stire no ferþer in hem for ferde of  
 stynche. Bot for to þenk þat þou arte, mayst þou haue of þi lewydnes 15  
 & þi boistouste wiþoutyn any grete kunning of clergie or of kynde.

& þerfore, I prey þee, do no more now in þis caas bot þenk  
 boistously þat þou arte as þou arte, be þou neuer so foule ne so  
 wrechid; so þat þou haue beforetymes (as I suppose þou hast) ben  
 lawefully amendid of alle þi sinnes in special & in general, after þe 20  
 trewe counseil of Holi Chirche; for elles schalt þou neuer ne none  
 oþer by my consent be so bolde to take apon zow þis werk. Bot gif þou  
 fele þat þou hast done þat in þee is, þan schalt þou set þee to þis werk.  
 & þof al þou fele þiself zit þan so vile & so wrechid þat for kombraunce  
 of þiself þou wost not þiself what is best þee for to do wiþ þiself, þis þan 25  
 schalt þou do as I sei þee:

Take good gracyous God as he is, plat & pleyn as a plastre, &  
 legge it to þi seek self as þou arte. Or, gif I oþerwise schal sey, bere up  
 þi seek self|as þou arte & fonde for to touche bi desire good gracious f. 94a  
 God as he is, þe touching of whome is eendeles helpe by witnes of þe 30  
 womman in þe gospel: *Si tetigero vel fimbriam vestimenti eius, salua ero.* 'If  
 I touche bot þe hemme of his cloþing, I schal be saa[f].'<sup>8</sup> Miche more  
 schalt þou þan be maad hole of þi seeknes for þis heize heuenly  
 touching of his owne beyng, him owne dere self. Step up þan stifly &  
 taast of þat triacle; bere up þi seek self as þou arte vnto gracious God 35  
 as he is, wiþoutyn any corious or special beholdyng to eny of alle þe  
 qualitees þat longyn to þe beyng of þiself or of God, wheþer þei be  
 clene or wrechid, gracyous or kyndely, godli or manly. It chargeþ  
 not now in þee bot þat þi blynde beholdyng of þi nakid beyng be  
 gladli born up in listines of loue, to be knittid & onid in grace & in 40  
 spirit to þe precious beyng of God in himself only as he is, wiþouten  
 more.

<sup>7</sup> in kind] *ins. in different hand* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> saaf] saak Har<sup>1</sup>.



& þof al þat þi wantoun seching wittys kon finde no mete vnto hem in þis maner of doyng, & þerfore grochingly þei wilen bid þee algates to leue of þat werk & do sum good on here corious maner (for it semeþ to hem þat it is no þing worþ þat þou dost, & al is for þei kan no  
 5 skile þerapon), bot I wolde loue it þe betir, for bi þat it semip þat it is more worþi þen þei ben. & whi schuld I not þan loue it þe betir, & namely whan þer is [no]<sup>9</sup> werk þat I may do, ne þat may be wrougt in þe coriouste of any of my wittis, bodely or goostly, þat migt bring me so ny vnto God & so fer fro þe world as þis nakid litil felyng &  
 10 offring up of my blynde beyng wold do?

& þerfore, alþof þi wittis kon fynde no mete vnto hem in þis werk,  
 f. 94b & þerfore þei wolde haue þee away, ȝit loke þat þou leue not for hem, bot be þou here maystre. & go not bak in fedying of hem, be þei neuer so wode. Þan gost þou bak in fedying of þi wittes whan þou suffrest  
 15 hem seche in þe diuerse corious meditacions of þe qualitees of þi beyng; þe whiche meditacions, þof al þei be<sup>10</sup> ful good & ful profitable, neuerþeles, in comparison of þis blynde felyng & offring up of þi beyng, þei ben ful diuerse & scateryng from þe perfeccion of onheed, þe whiche fallip for to be bitwix God & þi soule. & þerfore  
 20 holde þee before in þe first poynt of þi spirit, þe whiche is þi beyng; & go not bak for nokyns þing, seme it neuer so good ne so holy þe þing þat þi wittis wolde lede þee vnto.

& fulfille þe counseil & þe teching of Salamon, seiing þus to his son: *Honora Dominum de tua substancia et de primiciis frugum tuarum da*  
 25 *pauperibus: et inplebuntur horrea tua saturitate et vino torcularia redundabunt.* 'Worschip þi Lorde wiþ þi substaunce, & wiþ þe first of þi frutes fede þou þe pore: & þi bernes scholen be fillid wiþ fulheed & þi grape stockes schul rebounde ful of wyne.' Þis is þe text þat Salamon spake to his sone bodely, as ȝif he had seyde to þin vnderstondyng, as I  
 30 schal sey in his persone vnto þee goostly:

'Þou goostly frende in God, loke þat alle corious seching in þi kyndely wittys left, þou do hole worschip to þi Lorde God wiþ þi substaunce, offring up vnto him plainly & holy þin owne self, al þat þou arte & soche as þou arte, bot generaly & not specyaly, (þat is,  
 35 wiþouten specyal beholdyng to þat þat þou arte), þat þi ȝit be not scaterid ne þi felyng defoulid, þe whiche wolde make þee les on wiþ þi God in purete of spirit. & wiþ þe first of þi frutes fede þou þe pore; þat  
 f. 95a is wiþ þe first of þi goostly or bodely qualitees, þe whiche ben|growen vp wiþ þee fro þe first bygynnyng of þi makyng into þis day.'

40 Alle þe giftes of kynde & of grace þat euer God ȝaue þee, I clepe hem þi frutes, wiþ þe whiche þou art holden to fostre & fede in þis liif,

<sup>9</sup> no] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> be] *sometye add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



boþe bodely & goostly, as wel alle þi breþren & sistren in kynde & in grace as þou arte þin owne propre self. Þe first of þees giftes clepe I þe first of þi frutes. Þe first gift in iche creature is only þe being of þ[at]<sup>11</sup> same creature. For þof it be so þat þe qualitees of þi beyng ben so fast onyd to þe self beyng as þei ben wiþoutyn departyng, ȝit, for þei hangen alle upon it, verely it may be clepid, as it is, þe first of þi giftes. & þus it is only þi beyng þat is þe first of þi frutes. For ȝif þou breide oute þe corious beholdyng of þin hert to eny or to alle þe sotil qualitees & þe worþi condicions þat fallen to þe being of man, þe whiche is þe nobelist beyng of maad þinges, euermore þou schalt fynde þat þe first poynte & þe pricke of þi beholdyng, whatsoeuer it be, is þi nakid being. As ȝif þou seidest þus in þiself in ich one of þi beholdynges, stering þiself by þe menes of þis beholdyng to þe loue & þe preising of þi Lorde God þat not only ȝaue þee to be, bot so nobli to be as þe qualitees of þi beyng wolen witnes in þi beholdyng, seiing þus: 'I am & I see & fele þat I am, & not only I am, bot so I am & so & so & so & so', rekenyng up in þi beholdyng alle þe qualitees of þi beyng in special. & þan, þat more þen al þis is, lap up alle þis in general & sey þus: 'Pat at<sup>12</sup> I am & how þat I am, as in kynde & in grace, alle I haue it of þee, Lord, & þou it arte. & al I offre it vnto þee principaly to þe preising of þee, for þe help of alle myn euyn-Cristen & of me.' & þus maist þou se þat þe first & þe poynte of þi beholding is moste substancialy set in þe nakid ȝit & þe blynde felyng of þin owne being. & þus it is only þi being þat is þe first of þi frutes.

Bot þof al it be þe first of ich one of þi frutes, & þof al þat þe oþer frutes hangyn alle vpon it, ȝit it spedij not now in þis caas to lap ne to cloþe þi beholdyng to it in eny or in alle þe corious qualitees of it, þe whiche I clepe þi frutes & in whiche þou hast ben trauailid before þis tyme. Bot it suffisij now vnto þee to do hole worschip vnto God wiþ þi substaunce & for to offre up þi nakid beyng, þe whiche is þe first of þi frutes, in contynowel sacrificz of preising of God, boþe for þiself & for alle oþer as charite askij, vnclopid wiþ eny qualite or special beholdyng þat on eny maner fallij or may falle vnto þe beyng of þiself or of any oþer, as þou woldest by þat beholding help þe nede, forþer þe spede, or encrese þe profite to perfeccion of þiself or of eny oþer. Lat be þis: it wil not be þus in þis caas trewly. For it profitij more soche a blynde comoun beholding to þe nede, þe spede, & þe perfeccion of þiself & of alle oþer in purete of spirit þen any special beholdyng þat eny man may haue, seme it neuir so holy.

Þis is soþ by witnes of Scripture, bi ensaumple of Crist & bi quik reson. For as alle men weren lost in Adam, for he fel fro þis onyng

<sup>11</sup> þat] þe Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> at] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

affeccion, & as alle, þat wiþ werk acordyng to here clepyng wol  
 witnes here wille of saluacion, ben sauid & schul be by þe vertewe  
 of þe Passioun of only Crist, offring himself up in verreiest sacrifici, al  
 f. 96a þat he was in general & not in|specyal, wiþoutyn special beholdyng  
 5 to any o man in þis liif, bot generaly & in comon for alle: rigt so a  
 verey & a parfite sacrificer of himself þus by a comon entent vnto alle  
 doþ þat in him is to knit alle men to God as effectuely as himself is.

& more charite may no man do þen þus to sacrificie himself for alle  
 his breþren & sistren in grace & in kynde. For as þe soule is more  
 10 worþi þen þe body, so þe knittyng of þe soule to God (þe liif of it) by þe  
 heuenly fode of charite is betir þan þe knittyng of þe body to þe soule  
 (þe liif of it) bi eny erþli fode in þis liif. Þis is good for to do bi itself  
 bot wiþoutyn þe toþer it is neuer weel done. Þis & þe toþer is þe betir;  
 bot þe toþer by itself is þe best. For þis bi itself deserueth neuer  
 15 saluacion; bot þe toþer bi itself, where þe plente of þis defailiþ,  
 deseruiþ not only saluacion bot ledeþ to þe grettist perfeccion.

For it nedith not now in encrease of þi perfeccion to go bak in fedyng  
 of þi wittys, as it is in beholdyng of þe qualitees of þi beyng, so þat þou  
 migtest by soche beholdyng fede & fille þin affeccion wiþ louely &  
 20 likyng felynges in God & goostly þinges, & þin vnderstandyng wiþ  
 goostly wisdom of holy meditacions in seching after þe knowyng of  
 God. For, gif þou wilt holde þee besily, as þou maist by grace,  
 euermore contynowly in þe first poynte of þi spirit, offring up vnto  
 God þat nakid blynde felyng of þin owne beyng, þe whiche I clepe þe  
 25 first of þi frutes, sekir be þou þat þe toþer hynder ende of Salamons  
 lesson schal be ful verrely fulfillid as he hoteþ, wiþouten besines of  
 þiself in corious seching & ransakyng wiþ þi goostly wittis amonges  
 eny of þe qualitees þat longin not only to þe beyng of þiself bot also to  
 þe beyng of God.

f. 96b 30 For wite þou rigt wel þat in|þis werk þou schalt no more  
 beholdyng haue to þe qualitees of þe being of God þan to þe qualitees  
 of þe beyng of þiself. For þer is no name, ne felyng ne beholdyng  
 more, ne so moche, acordyng vnto euerlastyngnes, þe whiche is  
 God, as is þat þe whiche may be had, seen & felt in þe blinde & þe  
 35 louely beholding of þis worde IS. For gif þou sey 'Good' or 'Faire  
 Lorde', or 'Swete', 'Merciful' or 'Rigtwise', 'Wise' or 'Alwitty',  
 'Migti' or 'Almigti', 'Witte' or 'Wisdom', 'Migte' or 'Strengþe',  
 'Loue' or 'Charite', or what oper soche þing þat þou sey of God: al it  
 is hid & enstorid in þis litil worde, IS. For þat same is to him only to  
 40 be, þat is alle þees for to be. & gif þou put to an hundrid þousand  
 soche swete wordes as ben þees—good, faire & alle þees oper—git  
 zedest þou not fro þis worde IS. & gif þou sey hem alle, þou puttest not  
 to it. & gif þou sey rigt none, þou takist not fro it. & þerfore be as  
 blynde in þe louely beholdyng of þe beyng of þi God as in þe nakid

beholdyng of þe beyng of þiself, wiþoutyn eny corious seching in þi wittys to loke after eny qualite þat longeþ to his being or to þine. Bot alle corioustie left & fer put bak, do worschip to þi God wiþ þi substaunce, al þat þou arte [as]<sup>13</sup> þou arte vnto alle him þat is as he is, þe whiche only of himself, wiþoutyn moo, is þe blisful being bope of 5 himself & of þee.

& þus schalt þou knittingly, & in a maner þat is meruelous, worschip God wiþ himself; for þat þou arte þou hast of him & he it is. & þof al þou haddest a biginnyng in þi substancial creacion, þe whiche was sumtyme nougt, zit haþ þi being ben euermore in hym 10 wiþoutyn beginnyng & euir schal be wiþoutyn ending, as himself is. & perfore oft I crie, & euer upon one:

‘Do worschip to þi God wiþ þi substaunce, & comoun profite to f. 97a alle þat ben men wiþ þe first of þi frutes; & þan schul þi bernies be fulfillid wiþ fulheed.’ Þat is, þan schal þi gostly affeccion be fillid wiþ 15 þe fulheed of loue & of vertuous leuyng<sup>14</sup> in God, þi grounde & þi purete of spirit. ‘& þi grape-stokes scholen rebounde ful of wyne.’ Þat is, þin inward goostly wittis, þe whiche þou arte wonte for to streine & presse togeders bi diuerse corious meditacions & resonable inuestigacions abouten þe goostly knowing of God & þiself in 20 beholdyng of his qualitees & of þine, scholen þan rebounde ful of wyne. By þe whiche wine in Holy Scripture is verrelly & mistely vnderstonen goostly wisdom in verrey contemplacion & heig sauour of þe Godheed.

& al þis schal be done sodenly, listely & graciously, wiþoutyn 25 besines or trauaile of þiself, only by þe mynistracion of aungelles þorow vertewe of þis louely blinde werk. For vnto it alle aungelles knowing done special seruisse as þe maiden<sup>15</sup> vnto þe lady.

In grete comendacion of þis listi sleig<sup>16</sup> worching, þe whiche in itself is þe heig wisdom of þe Godheed graciousli descendyng into mans 30 soule, knitting it & onyng it vnto himself in goostly sleigt & prudence of spirit, þe wise man Salamon brestip up & seip:

*Beatus homo qui inuenit sapienciam et qui affluit prudencia. Melior est adquisicio eius negociacione auri et argenti. Primi et purissimi fructus eius. Custodi, fili mi, legem atque consilium; et erit vita anime tue et gracia faucibus 35 tuis. Tunc ambulabis fiducialiter in via tua, et pes tuus non inpinget. Si dormieris, non timebis; quiesces et suavis erit sompnus tuus. Ne paueas repentino terrore, et irruent[e]s tibi potencias impiorum, quia Dominus erit in latere tuo et custodiet pedem tuum ne capiaris. Alle þis is to þin vnderstondyng þus: He is a blisful man þat may fynde þis onyng 40*

<sup>13</sup> as] þat Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> leuyng] lykyng Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa. See Commentary.

<sup>15</sup> maiden] -s Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>16</sup> sleig] sleigt Har<sup>1</sup>.

- f. 97<sup>b</sup> wisdom & þat may abounde in his|goostly worching wiþ þis louely sleight & prudence of spirit, in offring up of his owne blynde feling of his owne beyng, alle corious kunnyng of clergie & of kynde fer put bak. þe purchasing of þis goostly wisdom & þis sleight worching is betir
- 5 þan þe getyng of golde or of siluer. By þe whiche gold & siluer is moraly vnderstonden al oþer bodely & goostly knowyng, þe whiche is getyn bi corious seching & worching in oure kyndely wittis beneþe us, wiþinne vs or euen wiþ us, in beholdyng of eny of þe qualitees þat longyn to þe beyng of God or of eny create þing. & whi is it beter,
- 10 he putteþ to þe cause & seiþ: for *primi et purissimi fructus eius*. Þat is: 'for first and purest ben þe frutes of it.' & no wonder, for whi þe frute of þis worching is hiȝe goostly wisdom, sodenly & frely riftid<sup>17</sup> of þe spirit inly in itself & vnformid, ful fer fro fantasie, impossible to be streinid or to falle vnder þe worching of naturele witte. þe whiche
- 15 naturele witte, be it neuer so sotyl ne so holy, may be clepid in comparison of þis bot feynid folly formyd in fantome, as fer fro þe verrey soþfastnes whan þe goostly<sup>18</sup> sonne schinip as is þe derknes of þe moneschine in a mist at midwinters nigȝt fro þe brigtnesse of þe sonnebeme in þe clerest tyme of missomer day.
- 20 'Kepe, my sone', he seiþ, 'þis lawe & þis conseil' in þe whiche alle þe comaundementes & þe counselle, as wel of þe Olde Testament as of þe Newe, ben verely & parfityly fulfillid, wiþoutyn any special beholdyng to any one singularly in itself. & on oþer wise is not þis maner of worching clepid a lawe, bot for it conteneþ in it fully alle þe
- 25 braunches & þe frutes of þe lawe. For gif it be witterly lokid, þe grounde & þe strengþe of þis worching|schal be seen nouȝt elles bot þe glorious gifte of loue, in þe whiche, by þe teching of þe apostle, alle þe lawe is fulfillid: *Plenitudo legis est dileccio*. 'þe fulheed of þe lawe is loue.'
- f. 98<sup>a</sup> 30 & þis louely lawe & þis liuely conseil, gif þou kepe it, as Salamon seiþ, 'schal be liif to þi soule' wiþinne in softnes of loue to þi God, '& grace to þi chekes' wiþoutyn in þe trewest teching & þe semeliest gouernaunce of þi bodely beryng in outward forme of leuing to þin euyn-Cristen. & in þees two, þe tone wiþinne & þe toþer wiþoutyn, by
- 35 þe teching of Crist, 'hangeþ alle þe lawe & þe profezies': *In hiis enim duob[us] tota lex pendet et prophete: scilicet dileccio dei et proximi*.
- & þerfore, whan þou arte maad þus parfite in þi worching boþe wiþinne & wiþoutyn, þen schalt þou goo tristely groundid in grace, þe gide of þi goostly wey, loueli lifyng up þi nakid blinde beyng to þe
- 40 blisful beyng of þi God, þe whiche ben bot one in grace þof al ȝe ben diuerse in kynde. '& þe fote of þi loue schal not sporne.' Þat is to sey,

<sup>17</sup> riftid] reysed Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>18</sup> goostly] godly Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



from þou haue þe preue of þi goostly werk in continowaunce of spirit,  
 þan schalt þou not so lightly be lettyd & drawen bac by þe corious  
 questions of þi sotil wittys, as þou arte now<sup>19</sup> in þi<sup>20</sup> begynnyng. Or  
 elles þus: þen schal þe fote of þi loue neiþer snapir ne sporne on eni  
 maner of fantasie causid of þi corious seching in þi wittys. For whi  
 vtterly in þis werk, as it is seide before, is al corious seching in any of  
 þi kyndeli wittis fer put bak & fully forȝeten for ferde of fantasie or  
 any feinid falsheed þat may falle in þis liif, þe whiche in þis werk miȝt  
 defoule þe nakid felyng of þi blynde beyng & drawe þee away fro þe  
 worpines of þis werk.

For gif eny maner of special pouȝt of any þing, bot only of þi nakyd  
 blinde<sup>21</sup> beyng (þe whiche is þi God & þin entent), | come in þi mynde, f. 98b  
 þen arte þou away & drawen bac to worche in þe sleiȝt & þe corioustē  
 of wittys, in scatering & departyng of þee & of þi mynde boþe fro þee  
 & þi God. & þerfore holde þee hole & vnscaterid as forþ as þou maist  
 bi grace & bi sleiȝt of goostly contynowaunce. For in þis blinde  
 beholdyng of þi nakid beyng, þus onyd to God as I telle þee, schalt  
 þou do al þat þou schalt do: ete & drink, sleep & wake, go & sit, speke  
 & be stille, ligge & rise, stonde & knele, renne & ride, trauaile &  
 rest. Þis schalt þou iche day offre up vnto God as for þe moste  
 precious offring þat þou canst make. & it schal be þe cheef of alle  
 þi doynge, [in alle þi doynge,]<sup>22</sup> wheþer þei be actyue or con-  
 templatyue. For, as Salamon seiþ in þis processe, 'gif þou slepe' in þis  
 blynde beholdyng from al þe noise & þe steryng of þe fel fende, þe fals  
 world & þe freel flessche, 'þou schalt not drede any peril' ne any  
 deceyte of þe feende. For whi vtterly in þis werk he is masid & maad  
 blynde in a peynful vnknowyng & a wood wondryng to wite what  
 þou doost. Bot no force þerof, for 'þou schalt gracyously rest' in þis  
 louely onheed of God & þi soule; & 'þi sleep schal be ful softe', for it  
 schal be goostly fode & inly strengþe, as wel to þi body as to þi soule.  
 As þis same<sup>23</sup> Salamon seiþ sone after: *Vniuerse carni sanitas est*. 'It is  
 helpe to al þe freelte & þe seeknes of flesche.' & worþely; for siþ al  
 seeknes & corrupcion fel into þe flesche whan þe soule fel fro þis werk,  
 þan schal alle helpe come to þe flesche whan þe soule bi þe grace of  
 Iesu, þe whiche is þe cheef worcher, riseþ to þis same werk aȝein. &  
 þis schalt þou hope only to haue by þe mercy of Iesu & þi louely  
 consent. & þerfore I preie þee, wiþ Salamon here in þis processe, þat  
 þou stonde stifly in þis werk, euermore beryng up vnto hym þi louely  
 consent in listines of loue. *Et ne pauas repentino terrore* | *et irruentes tibi* f. 99a

<sup>19</sup> now] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>20</sup> þi] þe Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>21</sup> blinde] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>22</sup> in . . . doynge] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> same] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



*potencias impiorum.* ' & be not astonyed' wiþ any vnrestful drede, þof þe feend (as he wol) come 'wiþ a sodeyn feerdnes', bussching & betyng on þe walles of þin house þere þou sittest, or þof he stire any of his mighty lemys to rise & 'to renne in apon þee' sodenly, as it is wiþoutyn  
 5 any auyement. þus schal it be, wite þou rigt wel, þou whatsoever þat þou be þat settyst þee to worche trewly in þis werk, þou schalt verrelly see & fele, or elles smel, taste or here som astoniing maad by þe feende in some of þi<sup>24</sup> fyue wittys wiþoutyn. & al is done for to drawe þee downe fro þe heigt of þis precious worching. & þerfore take good  
 10 kepe of þin herte in tyme of þis tourment, & lene wiþ a tristi listines to þe loue of oure Lorde.

*Quia Dominus erit in latere tuo, et custodiet pedem tuum ne capiaris.* þat is: 'for oure Lorde schal be in þi side', redy & neiȝ to þin help, ' & he schal kepe þi fote', þat is, þe stiing up of þi loue bi þe whiche þou gost  
 15 to God, 'so þat þou schalt not be takyn' by no sleight ne gile of þin enemyes, þe feend & his fautours, þe worlde & þi flessche. Lo! frende, þus schal oure Lorde & oure loue mightyly, wisely & goodly sokoure, kepe & defende alle þoo þat for loue-trist þat þei fele in hym wylen vtterly forsake þe kepyng of hemself.

20 Bot where schal soche a soule be founden so frely fastnyd & foundid in þe feiþ, so fully mekid in nouȝtning of itself & so louely led & fed in þe loue of oure Lorde, wiþ ful knowing & felyng of his almightyheed, his vnwetyn wisdom & his glorious goodnes: hou he is one in alle & alle in hym, insomochil þat, wiþouty[n] ful ȝeeldyng up  
 25 vnto hym al þat of hym is, by hym & in hym, a louyng soule is neuermore verely mekyd in ful nouȝtning of itself? So þat for þis nobil nouȝtning of itself in verrey meeknes & þis hyȝe allyng of God  
 f. 99b in parfite|charite, it deserueþ to haue God (in whose loue it is deeply drenchid in ful & in fynal forsakyng of itself as nouȝt or lesse, ȝif  
 30 lesse myȝt be) mightyly, wisely & goodly sokouryng it & kepyng it & defendyng it fro alle aduersitees, bodyly & goostly, wiþoutyn besynes or trauayle, rewarde or auisement of itself.

Lateþ be ȝoure manly obieccions, ȝe half-mekyd soulis, & seiþ not in ȝoure resonable trasing þat soche a meek & an vtter forsakyng of þe  
 35 kepyng of a mans self, whan he felip hym þus touchid bi grace, is any temtyng of God, for ȝe fele in ȝoure reson þat ȝe dor not do so ȝowreself. N[o],<sup>25</sup> holde ȝow payed wiþ ȝoure parte, for it suffiseþ to þe sauuyng of ȝoure soules in actyue degree, & late oþer contemplatyue soulis alone þat doren. & muse ȝe not & merueyle ȝou not of here  
 40 wordes & of here werkes, þof al ȝou þenk hem passe þe cours & þe comoun dome of ȝoure reson.

<sup>24</sup> þi] þees Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>25</sup> No] ne Har<sup>1</sup>.

O, for schame! hou ofte schul ze rede & here, & neiþer zeue feiþ ne credence þerto? I mene þe þing þat alle oure olde Faders han wretyn & tauȝt before us, & þe þing whiche is þe frute & þe flour of alle Holy Scripture. Oup̄er it semip̄ þat ze ben blynde & mowen not wiþ bileue se þat ze rede or here; or elles ze ben touchid wiþ sum priue spice of enuye, þat ze mowe not trist so grete good to falle to zoure breþren for ze lackip̄ it zoureself. It is good ze beware, for zoure enmye is sotyl & in purpose to make zow to zeue more feiþ to zoure owne witte þan to olde teching of trewe Faders or to þe worching of grace & þe wille of oure Lorde.

Hou ofte haue ze red & herde, & of hou many bope holy, wise & trewe, þat as sone as Beniamyn was borne his moder Rachel deied? By Beniamyn contemplacion, by Rachel we vnderstonden reson. & as sone as a soule is touchid wiþ verrey contemplacion, as it is in þis|noble nouȝtning of itself & þis hiȝe allyng of God, sekerly & verreyly [ryȝt]<sup>26</sup> þan diȝeþ alle mans reson. & siþen ze reden þis<sup>27</sup> so ofte, not only of one or of two bot of ful many ful holy & ful worpi, whi beleuyn ze not it? & ȝif ze beleuyn it, how dore ze þan ransake & seche wiþ zoure reson in þe wordes & þe dedes of Beniamyn? By þe whiche Beniamyn ben vnderstonden alle þoo þat in excesse of loue ben rauisc[h]id<sup>28</sup> abouen mynde, þe prophete seiing þus: *Ibi Beniamyn adol[es]centulus<sup>29</sup> in mentis excessu.* Þat is to sey: 'Þere is Beniamyn, a zong childe, in excesse of mynde.' Loke perfore þat ze be not liche to þoo wrechid wommen in body þat sleen<sup>30</sup> here owne children whan þei ben newe borne. Beep ware, it is good, & setteþ not þe poynte of zoure presumptuous spere at þe migt, þe witte & þe wille of oure Lorde stifly in þat þat in zow is, & for blyndenes & lackyng of experience, as ze wolde bere hym down whan ze wene best to holde him up.

For siþ in þe first biginnyng of Holy Chirche in þe tyme of persecucion, dyuerse soules & many weren so merueylously touchid in sodeynthe of grace þat sodenly, wiþoutyn menes of oþer werkes comyng before, þei kasten here instrumentes, men of craftes, of here hondes, children here tables in þe scole, & ronnen wiþoutyn ransakyng of reson to þe martirdom wiþ seintes: whi schul men not trowe now, in þe tyme of pees, þat God may, kan & wile & doþ—ze! touche diuerse soules as sodenly wiþ þe grace of contemplacion? & þis I trowe he wil do ful graciously in chosyn soulis. For he wol worpely be knowen in þe eende, to þe wondryng of alle þe woreld. For soche

<sup>26</sup> [ryȝt] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> þis] þus Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>28</sup> [h] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> [es] o Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> sleen] kyllen Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

f. 100b a soule, þus loueliche nougtnyng itself[& þus heily allyng his God, schal ful graciously be kept from alle castyng down of his goostly or bodely enemyes, wipoutyn besines & trauaile of itself, only by þe goodnes of God; as þe godly reson askiþ, þat he trewly kepe alle þoo  
 5 þat for besines aboute hys loue forsakiþ & list not kepe himself. & no wonder þof þei be meruelously kept, for þei ben so<sup>31</sup> fully mekyd in booldnes & strengþheed of loue.

& whoso dar not do þis, [ & seiþ agens þis, ]<sup>32</sup> ouper þe deuil is in his brest & reuiþ him þe loue-trist þat he schuld haue to his God & þe  
 10 weelwilnes<sup>33</sup> þat he schuld haue to his euen-Cristen; or elles he is not ȝit as parfiteley mekid as hym nedid to be, I mene ȝif he purpose to þat liif þat is verrey contemplatyue. & þerfore þe þou not abasched þus to be mekid to þi Lorde, ne þus for to slepe in þis blynde beholding of God as he is, from alle þe noise of þis wickid worlde, þe fals feende &  
 15 þi frele flesche; for oure Lorde schal be redy to help þee & kepe þi fote þat þou be not takyn.

& wel is þis werk licnyd to a slepe. For as in þe slepe þe vse of þe bodely wittys is cesid, þat þe body may take his ful rest in fedyng & in strengþing of þe bodyly kynde: riȝt so in þis goostly sleep þe wantoun  
 20 questyons of þe wilde goostly wittys, ymaginatyue resons, ben fast bounden & vterly voidid, so þat þe sely soule may softly sleep & rest in þe louely beholding of God as he is, in ful fedyng & strengþing of þe goostly kynde.

& þerfore bynde in þi wittys in offryng up of þis nakid blynde  
 25 felyng of þin owne beyng. & loke euer, as I ofte sey, þat it be nakyd & not clad wiþ any qualite of þi beyng. For ȝif þou cloþe it wiþ any qualite, as wiþ þe worþines of þi beyng or wiþ any oþer priue condycion þat falliþ to be beyng of man forby þe beyng of eny oþer  
 f. 101a creature, þan as fast þou ȝeuest mete|to þi wittys, by þe whiche þei  
 30 han occasyon & a strengþe to drawe þee to many þinges, & so to be scaterid, þou woste neuer how. Beware bi þis disceite, I prey þee.

Bot now, parauenture, at þe sotil examinacion of þi corious wittys, bicause þei kun no skyle in þis werk, þou merueylist þee in maner of þis werk, & hast it suspecte. & þat is no wonder; for þou hast ben ȝit  
 35 hedirtoward ouer-wise in þi wittys to kun any skyle of any soche doying. & parauenture þou askyst in þin herte how þou schuldest wite wheþer þis werk were plesyng to God or not; or, ȝif it be plesaunt, how þat it may be þat it is so plesaunt as I sey þat it is. To þis I answer & sey þat þis questyon is moued of a corious witte, þe whiche  
 40 wil on no wise late þee consent to þis werk er þe tyme be þat þer be maad aseþ to þe coriouste þerof by sum feire skile.

<sup>31</sup> so] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>32</sup> & seiþ agens þis] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> weelwilnes] goode wille Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

& herfore schal I not lette; bot I schal in party make me liche to þee, fauoring þi proude witte, þat þou be aftirward liche vnto me, folowing my counseil wiþoutyn setting of merkes in þi meeknes. For, as witnessiþ Seinte Bernard: 'Parfite meeknes settiþ no merkes.'

þan settist þou merkes in þi meeknes whan þou wilt not fulfille þe 5  
counseil of þi souereyn goostly, bot gif þi witte se þat it be to do. Lo! here maist þou see þat I coueite souereinte of þee. & trewly so I do, & I wol haue it. I trowe loue steriþ me þerto more þen any abilnes þat I fele in myself in any heigt of kunnyng, or git of worching, or degree of my leuyng. God amende þat is amys, for he wote fully, & I bot in 10  
party!

Bot now (for to make aseep to þi proude witte) in comendyng of þis werk, trewly I telle þee þat gif a soule, þat is þus ocupied, had tonge & langage to sey as it felip, þan alle þe clerkes of Cristendome schuld wondre on þat wisdom. Je! & in comparision of it, al here grete 15  
clergie schuld seme|apeerte foly. & þerfore no wondre þof I kan not f. 101b  
telle þee þe worpines of þis werk wiþ my boystouse beestly tonge. & God forbede þat it scholde be so defoulid in itself for to be streynid vnder þe steringes of a fleshly tonge! Nay, it may not be, & certes it wil not be, & God forbede þat I schuld coueyte it! For al þat is spokyn 20  
of it is not it, bot of it. Bot now, siþen we mowe not speke it, lat us speke of it, in confusion of proude wittys, & namely of þine, þe whiche is only, occasionally at þe leest, þe cause of þis writyng at þis tyme.

At þe first, I aske of þee what is perfeccion of mans soule & whiche 25  
ben þe propirtees þat fallyn to þis perfeccion. I answer in þi persone, & I sey þat perfeccion of mans soule is not elles bot an oneheed maad bitwix God & it in parfite charitee. Þis perfeccion is so heiz & so pure in itself, abouen þe vnderstandyng of man, þat it may not be knowen ne perceyuid in itself. Bot þere where þe propirtees þat fallen to þis 30  
perfeccion ben verely seen & perceyuid, þere it is liche þat þe substaunce is aboundyng. & forþi it is to wite here wheche ben þe propirtees þat fallyn to perfeccion, in declaryng of þe nobilte of þis goostly excersise before alle oþer.

þe propirtees þat fallyn to perfeccion, þe which iche parfyte soule 35  
falleþ to haue, ben vertewes. & þan, gif þou wilt verely beholde to þis werk in þi soule & to þe propertee & þe condicion of iche vertewe diuersely, þou schalt fynde þat alle vertewes ben cleerly & parfityly comprehendid in it, wiþoutyn any crokyng or corrupcion of þe entent.

I touche no vertewe here in specyal, for it nediþ not; þou hast hem 40  
touchid in maner in oþer diuerse places of myn owne writyng. For þis same werk, gif it be verely conceyuid, is þat reuerent affection & þe frute|departid fro þe tre þat I speke of in þi lityl pistle of f. 102a  
preier. Þis is þe cloude of vnknowyng; þis is þat priue loue put in



purete of spirit; þis is þe Arke of þe Testament. Þis is Denis deuinite, his wisdom & his drewry, his ligty derknes<sup>34</sup> & his vnknowyn kunnynges. Þis is it þat settiþ þee in silence as wele fro pouztes as fro wordes. Þis makip þi preier ful schorte. In þis þou arte lernid to  
 5 forsake þe wored & to dispise it.

& þat more is, in þis þou arte lernid to forsake & dispise þin owne self, after þe teching of Crist in þe gospel, seiing þus: *Si quis vult venire post me, abneget semetipsum; tollat crucem suam et sequatur me.* Þat is: 'Whoso wole come after me, late hym forsake hymself, late hym  
 10 bere his cros & folow me.' As if he seide þus to þin vnderstandyng acording to oure mater: 'Whoso wil come meekly, not wiþ me bot after me, to þe blis of heuen or to þe mounte of perfeccion'. For Criste zede before bi kynde, & we comyn after bi grace. His kynde is more worþi þen grace, & grace is more worþi þen oure kynde. & in þis  
 15 he lateþ us wetyn fully þat we mowen on no wise folow hym to þe mounte of perfeccion, as it fallip to be in þe vse of þis werk, bot gif it be only sterid & led by grace.

& þat is ful soþe. For wite þou rízt wel, & alle liche vnto þee þat þis writyng scholen ouþer rede or here, þat þof al I bid þee þus pleynly &  
 20 þus booldly set þee to þis werk, neuerþeles zit I fele verely, wiþoutyn errour or doute, þat Almygty God wiþ his grace behoueþ algates be þe cheef sterer & worcher, ouþer wiþ mene or wiþoutyn; & þou only, or eny ouþer liche vnto þee, bot þe consenter & sufferer: sauyn þat þis consent & þis suffring schal be, in þe tyme of þis werk, actuely  
 25 disposid & ablid to þis werk in purete of spirit, & semely borne up to þi Souereyn, [as þou mayst be lernid by þe proef in þe goostly sixt of þi  
 f. 102b spirit.

& siþ so is þat God of his goodnes sterip & touchip diuerse soulis diuersely, as it is som wiþ mene & som wiþoutyn, who dar þan seie  
 30 þat God stereþ not þee in þis writyng, or eny ouþer liche vnto þee þat þis schal ouþer rede or here, only by me mene, þof I be vnworþi, sauyn his worschipful wille, þat hym likip to do as hym likip? I suppose it schal be þus: þe werk schal witnes whan þe proef worchip. & þerfore, I preie þee, dispose þee for to receyue þis grace of þi Lorde, & here  
 35 what he seiþ. 'Whoso wil come after me' (in þe maner beforeseide) 'late hym forsake hymself.' I prey þee, how may a man more forsake himself & þe wored, & more dispise himself & þe wored, þen for to dedein for to þink of eny qualite of here beinges?

For wite þou wel for certeyn þat, þof al I bid þee forþete alle þinges  
 40 bot þe blynde felyng of þi nakid beyng, zit neuerþeles my wille is, & þat was myn entent in þe biginning, þat þou schuldest forþete þe felyng of þe beyng of þiself as for þe felyng of þe beyng of God. & for

<sup>34</sup> derknes] myrknesse Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



þis skyle I prouid þee in þe bigynnyng þat God is þi beyng. Bot for me þouȝt þat þou were not ȝit abil sodenly to be liftid up to þe goostly felyng of þe being of God for rudenes in þi goostly felyng, þerfore, to late þee climbe þerto by degree, I bad þee first gnawe on þe nakid blinde felyng of þin owne being, vnto þe tyme þat þou miȝtest be maad able to þe hiȝe felyng of God bi goostly contynowaunce of þis priue werk. For þin owne<sup>35</sup> entent & þi desire schal be euer to fele God in þis worching. For þof al I bid þee in þe bigynnyng, bicause of þi boistoustē & þi goostly rudenes, lappe & cloþe þe felyng of þi God|in þe felyng of þiself, ȝit schalt þou after whan þou arte maad by contynowaunce more sleiȝ in clennes of spirit, nakyn, spoyle & vtterly vncloþe þiself of al maner of felyng of þiself, þat þou be able to be cloþid wiþ þe gracyous felyng of God self. 10 f. 103a

& þis is þe trewe condicion of a parfite louē, only & vtterly to spoyle hymself of himself for þat þing þat he louiþ, & not admit ne suffre to be cloþed bot only in þat þing þat he louiþ; & þat not only for a tyme, bot eendlesly to be vmbilappid þerin, in ful & fynal forȝetyng of hymself. Þis is þe werk of loue þat none may knowe bot he þat felip it. Þis is þe lesson of oure Lorde whan he seiþ: 'Whoso wil loue me, late hym forsake himself'; as who seiþ: 'Late him spoyle hymself of himself ȝif he wil be verely cloþid in me, þat am þe side garnement of loue & of lastyng þat neuer schal haue eende.' 20

& þerfore, euer whan þou beholdest to þi worchyng, & seest & felest þat it is þiself þat þou felest & not God, þen schalt þou make sorow earnestly, & hertely longe after þe felyng of God, euirmore desiryng wiþoutyn cesyng to forgo þe woful wetyng & þe foule felyng of þi blynde beyng; & coueite to fle fro þiself as from venym. & þan forsakyst þou þiself & dispisest þee ful felly, as þi Lorde biddeþ þee. & þan, whan þou coueitest so streitly, not for to vnbe—for þat were woodnes & dispite vnto God—bot to forgo þe wetyng & þe felyng of þi beyng (þe whiche behouiþ algates be, ȝif Goddes loue schal parfiteþ be felt as it may be here) & seest & felest þat on no wise þou maist come to þi purpose, for þer wil algates folow & go wiþ þi doying a nakid felyng of þi blynde beyng, be þou neuer so besy (bot ȝif it be any seeldom schort tyme whan God wol late þee fele hymself in habundaunce|of loue) þe whiche nakyd felyng of þi blynde beyng wol euirmore prees abouen þee, bitwix þee & þi God, as wolen in þi begynnyng þe qualitees of þi beyng bitwix þee & þiself: þan wol þee þenk it a wel<sup>36</sup> heuy & a ful peynful birþen of þiself. Ȝe! Jesu help þee þanne, for þan hast þou nede. For alle þe woo þat may be wiþoutyn þat is not a poynte to þat. For þan arte<sup>37</sup> þiself a cros to 30 f. 103b

<sup>35</sup> owne] *can.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> a wel] *fulle* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>37</sup> arte] *is* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

piself. & pis is trewe worching & wey to oure Lorde, as himself seiþ: 'Late hym bere his cros,' first in þe peynfulnes of hymself, & siþ 'folow me' into blis or into þe mounte of perfeccion, taastyng þe softenes of my loue in godly felyng of myself. Lo! here mayst þou see  
 5 þat þee behouip soroufully desire to forgo þe felyng of piself, & peynfully bere þe birpin of piself as a cros, er þou maist be onyd to God in goostly felyng of himself, þe whiche is parfite charite.

& here mayst þou se sumwhat & in partye fele, al after þat þou arte touchid & goostly merkid wiþ þis grace, þe worþines of þis werk before  
 10 alle oþer.

& I preie þee, how schuldest þou com to þis worching by þe vse of þi wittys? Sekirly neuer; ne ȝit by þi faire wise, þi sotyle & þi queinte ymaginacions & meditacions, ȝe, þof þei be of þi wrechid leuyng, þe Passion of Criste, þe ioies of oure Lady, or of alle þe seintes &  
 15 aungelles of heuen, or ȝit of eny qualite or sotilte or condicion þat perteynþ to þe beyng of piself or of God. Sekirly me had leuer haue soche a nakid blynde felyng of myself as I touchid before (not of my doynge bot of myself. Many men clepen here doynge himself, & it is not so; for one am I þat do, & anoþer aren my dedes þat ben done.  
 20 & þe same it is of God; for one is he in himself, & anoþer ben his werkes). & raþer it schuld breke myn herte in teres for lackyng<sup>38</sup> of felyng of God & for þe painful birpin of myself, & kyndil my desire in loue & desiryng after þe felyng of God, þan alle þe sotyle & þe queynte ymaginacions or meditacions þat man kan telle or may  
 25 fynde wretyn in book, be þei neuer so holy ne schewe þei neuer so feire to þe sotyle ȝe of þi corious witte.

Neuerþeles ȝit ben þees faire meditacions þe trewest wey þat a synner may haue in his begynnyng to þe goostly felyng of himself & of God. & me wolde þenk þat it were impossible to mans vnderstandyng—þof al God may do what he wil—þat a synner schuld com  
 30 to be restful in þe goostly felyng of himself & of God, bot ȝif he first sawe & felt by ymaginacion & meditacion þe bodely doynge of hymself & of God, & þerto sorowed for þat þat were to sorowen, & maad joie for þat þat were to joien. & whoso comeþ not in bi þis weye,  
 35 he comeþ not trewly; & þerfore he mote stonde þeroute, & doþ so whan he weneþ þat he is best þerin. For many weneþ þat þei ben wiþinne þe goostly dore, & ȝit stonden þei þeroute, & scholen do vnto þe tyme þat þey sechen meekly þe dore. & somme þer ben þat fynden þe dore sone, & comen inne raþer þen somme; & þat is longe on þe  
 40 porter pleynly, wiþoutyn prees or deseert of himself.

It is a merueilous housholde, goostlines, for whi þe Lorde is not only portour hymself, bot also he is þe dore: þe porter he is bi his

<sup>38</sup> lackyng] wantyng Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

Godheed, & þe dore he is by his manheed. Þus seiþ hymself in þe gospel:

*Ego sum ostium. Per me si quis introierit, saluabitur; et siue egredietur siue ingredietur, pascua inueniet. Qui vero non intrat per ostium sed assendit aliunde, ipse fur est et latro.* Þat is to þin vnderstondyng as gif he seide 5 þus acordyng to oure mater: 'I þat am almygty by my Godheed & may leuefully as porter late|in whom I wol, & bi what wey þat I wol, f. 104b  
git, for I wol þat þer be a comoun pleyne wey & an open entre to alle þat wolen come, so þat none be excusid by vnknowyng of þe wey, I haue clopid me in þe comoun kynde of man, & maad me so opyn þat 10  
I am þe dore by my manheed, & whoso entreþ by me, he schal be saaf.'

Þei entren by þe dore, þat in beholdyng of þe Passion of Criste sorowen here wickyndes, þe whiche ben cause of þat Passion, wiþ bitter reprouyng of hemself, þat deseruid & not suffrid, & pite & 15  
compassion of þat worþi Lorde, þat so vili suffrid & noþing deseruid; & siþen lifte up here hertes to þe loue & þe goodnes of his Godheed, in þe whiche he vouche[d]saaf<sup>39</sup> to meke hym so lowe in oure deedly manheed. Alle þees entren bi þe dore, & þei scholen be saaf. & wheþer þei gone inne, in þe beholdyng of þe loue & þe goodnes of 20  
his Godheed, or oute, in beholdyng of þe peyne of his manheed, þei scholen fynde goostly fode of deuocion inowz, soffisaunt & aboundyng to þe helpe<sup>40</sup> & sauynge of here soules, þof al þei comen neuer ferþer inwards in þis liif.

& whoso entreþ not by þis dore, bot clymbeþ oþerwise to perfeccion 25  
by þe sotil seching & þe corious fantastic worchyng in his wilde wantoun wittis, leuyng þis comoun pleyn entre touchid before & þe trewe counseil of goostly faders: he, þat whatsoever he be, is not only a nigt þeef bot a day skulker. A nigt þeef he is, for he goþ in þe derknes of synne, more lenyng in his presumption to þe syngulerte of his 30  
owne witte & his wille þen to any trewe counseil or to þis comon pleyn wey touchid before. A day skulker he is, for, vnder colour of clere goostly leuyng, priuely he pikiþ þe outward signes & wordes of contemplacion & haþ not þe frute. & þus for he felip in him sumtyme a [liking]<sup>41</sup> longing, so lityl<sup>42</sup> as it is, to|come nere God, þerfore, 35 f. 105a  
bleendid vnder colour of þis, he wenip al be good inowz þat he doþ, whan it is þe perilousest purpose þat may be, a zong man to folow þe feersnes of his desire vnrewlid bi counseil; & namely whan it is singularly set to climben in hiȝe pinges, not only abouen himself bot abouen þe comoun plein wev of Cristen men touchid before, þe 40

<sup>39</sup> vouched-] voucheþ- Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> helpe] hele Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>41</sup> liking] litil Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> lityl] sotyl Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

whiche I clepe, by þe teching of Criste, þe dore of deuocion & þe trewest entre of contemplacion þat may be in þis liif.

Bot now forþe of oure mater þat specialy in þis writyng perteyneth vnto þee, & to alle oþer liche vnto þee in þat disposicion only. What  
 5 þerof gif þis be þe dore, schal a man þan whan he haþ þe dore euer stonde þerate or þerinne & com none innermore? I answeere for þee, & I sey þat it is good þat he so do euer, til þe grete rust of his boistous bodelynes be in grete party rubbid awei, his counseil & his concience to witnes; & namely, euer to he be clepid innermore bi þe priue  
 10 teching of þe spirit of God, þe whiche techyng is þe rediest & þe sekerist witnes þat may be had in þis liif of þe clepyng & þe drawyng of a soule innermore to more special worching of grace.

Euydence of þis touching a man may haue þus: gif he fele in his contynoweel excersise as it were a soft growyng desire to come nere  
 15 God in þis liif, as it may be by a specyal goostly felyng, as he heriþ men speke of, or elles fyndeþ wretyn in bokes. For he þat felip hym not sterid in heryng & redyng of goostly worching, & namely in his iche dayes excersise, by a growing desire to come nere God, lat hym stonde zit styлле at þe dore, as a man clepid to saluacion bot not zit to  
 20 perfeccion.

& of o þing I warne þee. Whatsoeuer þou be þat þis writyng schalt ouper rede or here, & namely in þis place where I make a difference bitwix hem þat ben clepid to saluacion & hem þat ben clepid to  
 f. 1056 perfeccion, þat of wheþer partie þat þou fele is þi clepyng, loke neiþer  
 25 þat þou deme ne discusse in þe dedes of God ne of man, ferþer þen only þiself—as whom he steriþ & clepiþ to perfeccion & whom he clepiþ not; or of þe schortnes of tyme, whi he clepiþ hym rapen þen hym. Ȝif þou wilt not erre, loke not þat þou deme; bot onys here & vnderstonde. Ȝif þou be clepid, zeue preisying to God, & prey þat þou  
 30 falle not. & gif þou be not zit clepid, prey meekly to God þat he clepe þee whan his wille is. Bot teche him not what he schal do. Late hym alone. He is migty, witty & willy inow3 to do þe best for þee & alle þat hym louep.

Haue pees wiþ þi parte. Wheþer þat þou haue, þee nedep not to  
 35 pleyne þee; for þei ben boþe precious. Þe first is good & algates nedep to be had. Þe secound is betir, gete whoso gete may; or (Ȝif I soþelier schal sey) whoso bi grace is getyn & clepid þerto of oure Lorde.

Proudly mowe we prees & snapir at þe eende; bot certes wiþoutyn him it is nouȝt þat we do, hymself seiing: *Sine me nichil potestis facere.*  
 40 þat is to þin vnderstandyng: ‘Wiþoutyn me first steryng & principally mouyng, & ȝe only bot consentyng & suffryng, ȝe mowen nowȝt do þing þat is parfiteli plesyng to me’, as schuld be in maner þe werk of þis writyng.

& alle þis I sey in confusion of here erryng presumpcion þat, in þe



coryouste of here clergie or here kyndely witte, wolen algates be principal worchers himself, God bot suffryng or only consentyng, whan verrelly þe contrary is soþ in þinges contemplatyue. For only in hem ben alle corious skyles of clergie or of kyndely kunnyng fer put bak, þat God be þe principal. Neuerþeles, in þinges leueful & actyue, | 5  
mans clergie & his kyndely kunnyng schal worche wiþ God by & f. 106a  
by, only by his consent in spirit prouid by þees þre witnes: Scripture, counseil & comoun custum of kynde & degre, eelde & compleccyon; insomochē þat man schal not folow þe steryng of þe spirit, seme it neuir so liking ne so holy—I mene in þinges actyue—bot gif it falle | 10  
vnder his clergial or his kyndely kunnyng, þof al it be neuir so strongly stuffid by alle or by eny of þees þre witnes touchid before. & verrelly it is grete skile þat man be more þen his werkes. & for þis it is þat by þe statute & þe ordinaunce of Holy Chirche, þer schal no man be admittyd to prelacye, þe whiche is þe heiest degre in actyue | 15  
leuyng, bot gif þe office of þat cure wol falle vnder his kunnyng by testimony of trewe examynacion. So þat, in þinges actyue, mans clergie & his kyndely kunnyng schal principaly abounde as in worching, God graciously consentyng, wiþ þees þre witnes aprouid. & skilfully, for alle þinges actyue ben beneþe & vnder þe wisdam of | 20  
man. Bot in þinges contemplatyue þe heigest wisdom þat may be in man [as man]<sup>43</sup> is fer put vnder, þat God be þe principal in worching, & man bot only consenter & sufferer.

& þus I vnderstonde þis worde of þe gospel: *Sine me nichil potestis facere*—þat is: ‘Wipoutyn me ge mowe do noþing’—on o maner in 25  
actyues & on anoþer in contemplatyues. In actyues behoueþ hym be, ouþer wiþ suffring or wiþ consent or elles wiþ boþe, gif ouzt schal be done, wheþer it be leueful & plesaunt to hym or not: in contemplatyues, by principal worching, askyng of hem nouzt elles bot only suffraunce & here consent. So þat generaly to vnderstonde: | 30  
in alle oure doynges, leueful & vnleueful, actyue or contemplatyue, | wipoutyn hym we mowe do noþing. He is wiþ us in synne only bi f. 106b  
suffraunce & not by consent, to oure fynal damnacion bot gif we meekly amende us. In dedes þat ben actyue & leueful, he is wiþ us boþe by suffring & consent, to oure reproef gif we go bak & oure grete | 35  
mede gif we do forþ. In dedes þat ben contemplatyue he is wiþ us, principaly steryng & worching, & we only bot suffring & consenting, to oure grete perfeccion & goostly onyng of oure soule vnto hym in parfite charite. & þus siþ alle þe men of þis liif mowen be deuided in þre, in synners, in actyues & in contemplatyues, þerfore generaly, | 40  
acordyng to alle þis worlde, þis worde of oure Lorde may be seide vnto alle: ‘Wipoutyn me’ only suffryng & not consentyng as in

<sup>43</sup> as man] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.



synners, or elles boþe suffryng & consentyng as in actyues, or, þat more þan alle þis is, principally steryng & worching as in contemplatyues, 'ȝe mowen do noþing'.

Lo! here many wordes & lityl sentence. Neuerþeles, alle þis haue I  
 5 seide to late þee wite in whiche þinges þou schalt vse þe werk of þi wittes, & in whiche nouȝt; & how þat God is wiþ þee in o werk & how in anoþer. & ȝit, parauenture, in þis knowing þow maist eschewe disceytes, in þe whiche þou migtest haue fallen ne had þis be schewid. & þerfore, siþ it is seide, late it be, þof al it be bot lityl perteynyng to  
 10 oure mater. Bot now forþe of oure mater.

þou mayst aske me þis questyon: By what o tokyn or mo, ȝif þee liste telle me, may I raþest wite wiþoutyn errour wheþer þis growyng desire þat I fele in myn iche dayes worching & þis likyng steryng þat I  
 f. 107a haue in redyng & heryng of þis mater|be verrelly a clepyng of God to  
 15 a more specyall worching of grace, as is þe mater of þis writyng; or it is a norisching<sup>44</sup> & a fedying of my spirit to abide styлле & to worche forþ in my comoun grace, þis þat þou clepest þe dore & þe comoun entre of alle Cristen men?

To þis I answeere so febely as I kan. þou seest wel here þat I sette  
 20 þee here in þis writyng two kyndes of evidences, bi þe whiche þou schalt proue þi goostly clepyng of God as to þis werk, one wipinne, anoþer wipowten. Of þe whiche two, neiþer may suffise in þis caas fully, as me þenkeþ, wiþoutyn þat oþer. Bot where þei boþe ben togeders one & acordyng, þan is þin euidence ful inowȝ wiþoutyn eny  
 25 failing.

þe first of þees two euydence, þe whiche is wipinne, is þis growyng desire þat þou felist in þin iche dayes worching. & of þis desire þou schalt wite þus moche: þat þof al þat þe desire be a werk of þe soule blynde in itself—for riȝt is þe desire of þe soule as gropyng &  
 30 steppying is of þe body; & boþe ben groping & steppying blynde werkes of þe body, þou wost wel þiself—but þof þat þe werke of þis desire be neuer so blynde, ȝit neuerþeles þer comouneþ & folowip wiþ it a maner of goostly siȝt, þe whiche is in partye cause & a mene forþering þis desire. Beholde þan besily to þin iche dayes excersise,  
 35 what it is in itself. & þan ȝif it be þe mynde of þi wrechidnes, þe Passyon of Criste, or eny soche þat longeþ to þe comoun entre of Cristen men touchid before, þan ȝif it so be þat þis goostly siȝt, þat þus comouneþ & foloweþ wiþ þi blynde desire, rise fro þees comoun beholdynges, sekirly þan it is a tokyn to me þat þe growing of þis  
 40 desire is bot a norisching & a fedying of þi spirit to abide stille & to  
 f. 107b worche|forþ in þi comoun grace, & no cleping ne stering of God to any more special grace.

<sup>44</sup> norisching] wyrchyng Kk 1. 1. 4 Pa.

Now, forþermore, þe toþer secounde evidence wiþoutyn is a likyng stering þat þou felest in redyng or hering of þis mater. I clepe þis evidence wiþouten, for it comiþ<sup>45</sup> froo wiþoutyn by þe windowes of þi bodily wittys, as by heryng & seing in þe tyme of þi redyng. Now touching þe secounde evidence, gif it so be þat þis likyng stering, þat 5 þou felist in hering & redyng of þis mater, laste ne contynew no lenger wiþ þee bot only þe tyme of þi reding or hering, bot it cesiþ þanne, or elles sone after, so þat þou neiþer wakenest ne slepist þerin ne þerwiþ, & namely it foloweth þee not in þi cotidiane excersise, as it were going & presing bitwix þee & it, stering & ledyng þi desire; þan 10 it is a token, verrey in my conseit, þat þis likyng stering þat þou felist in hering & redyng of þis mater, is bot [a]<sup>46</sup> kyndely gladnes þat iche Cristen soule haþ in hering or redyng of þe trewþe (& nameli of þat þe whiche touchiþ sotely & declareþ verely þe propirtees of perfeccion þat most ben acording to þe soule of man, & namely of God) & no 15 goostly touching of grace, ne cleping of God to any oþer more special worching of grace þen is þat þe whiche is þe dore & þe comoun entre to Cristen men.

Bot gif it so be þat þis likyng stering, þat þou felest in redyng & hering of þis mater, be so abounding in itself þat it go wiþ þee to 20 bedde, it riseth wiþ þee at morow, it foloweth þee forþ al þe day in al þat þou doste, it reuiþ þee fro þi cotidiane wonte excersise & goþ bitwix it & þee, it comouneth & foloweth þi desire, insomoche þat þee þenk it al bot o desire or þou wost neuer what, it chaungeth þi gesture & makeþ þi chere semely. Lastyng it, alle þing eseth þee & noþing may greue 25 þee. A þousand mile woldest þou renne to comoun mouþly wiþ one f. 108a þat þou wist þat verrely felt it; & git, whan þou comest þere, kanst þou nougt sey, speke whoso speke wil, for þee list not speke bot of it. Fewe ben þi wordes, bot ful of frute & of fiir. A schorte worde of þi mouþ conteneþ a woreld ful of wisdom, git semeþ it bot foly to hem þat 30 wonen in here wittis. Þi silence is softe, þi speche ful speedful, þi preier is preue, þi pride ful pure, þi maners ben meek, þi mirþe ful mylde, þi list is likyng to pleye wiþ a childe. Þou louest to be only & sit by þiself; men wolden let þee, þee þenkiþ, bot gif þei wrougt wiþ þee. Þee list not rede book ne here book, bot only of it, so þat þin inwarde 35 evidence & also þin vtter weren boþe acording & knittyng in one.

Ȝe! & gif boþe þese evidence wiþ alle here fautours wretyn now here—fro þou haue ones had hem alle or eny of hem—sese for a tyme, & þou be lefte as þou were bareyn, þee þenkiþ, as wel fro þe felyng of þis newe feruour as from þin olde wont werk, so þat þee 40 þenkeþ þee fallen doun bitwix two, hauyng neuer<sup>47</sup> neiþer bot lacking

<sup>45</sup> comiþ] souneþ (semyth Pa) in Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>46</sup> a] & Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> neuer] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

hem bope: ȝit be not ouer-heuy for þis; bot suffre meekly & abide patiently þe wille of oure Lorde. For now arte þou in þe goostly see, to my licnes, schipping ouer fro bodelines into goostlines.

Many grete stormes & temptacions, paraurenture, scholen rise in  
 5 þis tyme, & þou wost neuer wheþer to renne for socour. Alle is away  
 fro þi feling, comoun grace & specyal. Be not ouer-feerde,<sup>48</sup> alþof þou  
 haue mater as þee þenkeþ; bot haue a loue-trist in oure Lorde, so litil  
 as þou maist gete for þe tyme, for he is not fer. He schal loke up,  
 paraurenture riȝt sone, & eft touche þee wiþ a more feruent stering of  
 f. 108b 10 þat same grace þan euer þou feltest|any before. Þen arte þou al hole &  
 alle good inowȝ, as þee þenkeþ, last while it laste may. For sodenly,  
 er euer þou wite, alle is away, & þou leuyst bareyn in þe bote,  
 blowyn<sup>49</sup> wiþ blundryng, now heder now þeder, þou wost neur  
 where ne wheder. Ȝit be not abascht, for he schal come, I behote  
 15 þee, ful sone, whan hym likiþ [to leþe þee]<sup>50</sup> & dougtely delyuer þee of  
 alle þi dole, fer more worþely þen he euer did before. Ȝe! & ȝif he  
 [eft]<sup>51</sup> go, eft wol he come aȝeyn; & iche tyme, ȝif þou wel<sup>52</sup> bere þee  
 by meek suffryng, wil he come more worþelyer & merilier þen oþer.  
 & alle þis he doþ for he wil haue þee maad as pleying<sup>53</sup> to his wille  
 20 goostly as a roon gloue to þin honde bodely.

& siþ he sumtyme goþ & somtyme comeþ, þerfore doubli in þis  
 double werk wol he priuely proue þee & worche þee to his owne  
 werk. By þe wiþdrawyng of þi feruour, þe whiche þee þenkeþ his  
 goyng, þof al it be not so, wole he propirly proue þi pacyence. For  
 25 wite þou riȝt wel þat, þof God sumtyme wiþdrawe þees sensible  
 swetnes, þees feruent felynges & þees flaumyng desires, neuerþeles  
 he wiþdraweþ neuer þe raper his grace in his chosen. For sekirly I  
 may not trowe þat his special grace may euer be wiþdrawen fro his  
 chosen þat onys haue ben<sup>54</sup> touchid þerwiþ, bot ȝif synne deedly were  
 30 in þe cause. Bot alle þees sensible swetnes, þees feruent felynges &  
 þees flawmyng desires, þe whiche in hemself ben not grace bot  
 tokenes of grace, þees ben ofttymes wiþdrawyn in prouyng of oure  
 pacience, & ofttymes for oure oþer many goostly profites, moo þan  
 we wene. For grace in itself is so heiȝ, so pure & so goostly, þat it may  
 35 not be felt in oure sensible partye. Þe tokenes þerof mowen, bot not  
 it. & þus sumtyme oure Lorde wol wiþdrawe þi sensible feruours boþe  
 f. 109a in bygyng<sup>55</sup> & prouyng of þi pacyence; & not only for þis skyle,|bot

<sup>48</sup> feerde] þan *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>49</sup> blowyn] blowyng Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>50</sup> to leþe þee] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> eft] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>52</sup> wel] wyll Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>53</sup> pleying] plying Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; playne *can.*, plying *ins.* Pa.

<sup>54</sup> haue ben] haþ he Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> bygyng] bygynnyng, -nny- *can.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

for many oþer, þe whiche I set not here at þis tyme. Bot forþ of oure mater.

By þe worþines, þe oftnes & þe growyng<sup>56</sup> of þees sensible felynges touchid before (þe whiche þee þenkiþ his comyng, þof al it be not so) he wol norische & fede þi spirit to last & to lyue in loue & 5 worscheping of hym. So þat þus, bi paciens in absens of þees sensible felynges, þe tokenes of grace, & by þat liuely norischung & þat louely fedyng of þi spirit in here presence, he wol make þee in boþe togedir so bliþely bowyng & so plesauntly pling to þe perfeccion & þe goostly onheed to his owne wille (þe whiche onyng is parfite charite) þat þou 10 schalt be as glad & as [fayne] to forgo soche sensible felynges at his wille, as for to haue hem & fele hem in contynowaunce alle þi liiftyme.

& in þis tyme is þi loue boþe chaste & parfite. In þis tyme it is þat þou boþe seest þi God & þi loue, & nakidly felist hym also bi goostly 15 onyng to his loue in þe souereyn poynte of þi spirit, as he is in hymself, bot blyndely, as it may be here, vtterly spoylid of þiself & nakidly cloþed in hymself as he is, vncloþed & not lappid in any of þees sensible felynges (þe þei neuer so sweet ne so holy) þat mowen falle in þis liif. Bot in purete of spirit propirly & parfiteþly he is 20 parceyuid & felt in himself as he is, fer lengþid fro any fantasye or fals opinion þat may falle in þis liif.

Þis sxit & þis felyng of God, þus in hymself as he is, may no more be departyd fro God in hymself (to þin vnderstondyng þat þus felist or þus seest) þen may be departyd God himself fro his owne beyng, 25 þe whiche ben bot one boþe in substaunce & also in kynde. So þat as God may not be fro his beyng for onheed in kynde, so may not þat soule, þat þus seep & felip, be<sup>58</sup> fro þat þing þat he þus seep & felep for f. 109b onheed in grace.

Lo! þus & by þees tokenes maist þou sumwhat fele, & in partye 30 proue, þe maner & þe worþines of þi cleping & þi steryng in grace in þi goostly worching wiþinne, in þi redyng or hering of þis mater wiþouten. & þan, fro þe tyme be þat þou, or eny oþer liche vnto þee as in spirit, haue had verrey experience of alle þees tokenes, or of eny of hem—for at þe first tyme þer ben bot ful fewe þat ben so specialy 35 touchid & merkyd wiþ þis grace þat þei mowen haue sone or sodenly, in verrey felyng, þe proef of hem alle; neuerþeles, it suffiseþ to haue sum one or two, þof a man haue not alle at þe first tyme—& þerfore, gif þou felest þat þou hast trewe experience of one or of two, prouid by trewe examynacion of Scripture & of counseil & of 40

<sup>56</sup> growyng] comyng *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>57</sup> fayne] bliþe Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> be] fer *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



concyence: þan it is speedful to þee sumtyme for to cees of þees queinte meditacions & þees sotyle ymaginacions of þe qualitees of þi beyng & of Goddes, & of þe werkes of þiself & of God (in þe whiche þi wittes han ben fed & wiþ þe whiche þou hast ben led from wordlines & bodelines to þat abilnes of grace þat þou arte inne) & for to lerne how þou schalt be ocupied goostly in felyng of þiself & of God, whom þou hast lernid so wel before by þenkyng & ymagenyng of ȝoure doynge.

Ensaumple of þis schewid Criste in þis liif. For whi, ȝif it so had ben þat þer had ben none hier perfeccion in þis liif bot in beholdyng & in louyng of his manheed, I trowe þat he wolde not þan haue assendid vnto heuen whiles þis wored had lastid, ne wiþdrawen his bodely presence from his specyal louers in erþe. Bot for þer was an hier perfeccion, þe whiche man may haue in þis liif (þat is to sey, a pure goostli felyng in<sup>59</sup> þe loue of his Godheed) þefore he seide|to his disciples, þe whiche grocheden to forgo his bodely presence (as þou doost in partie & in maner to forgo þi corious meditacions & þi queinte sotyl wittes) þat it was speedful to hem þat he went bodely fro hem: *Expedit vobis ut ego vadam*; þat is: 'It is speedful to ȝow þat I go bodely fro ȝow.' Vppon þis worde seiþ þe doctour þus: 'Þat bot ȝif þe schap of his manheed be wiþdrawen from oure bodely ȝen, þe loue of his Godheed may not fasten in oure goostly ȝen.' & þus sey I vnto þee, þat it is speedful sumtyme to leue of þi corious worching in þi wittes & leere þee to taast sumwhat, in þi felyng goostly, of þe loue of þi God.

& to þis felyng schalt þou come bi þat wey þat I telle þee, by helpe of grace goyng before. & þat is, þat þou euermore wiþouten cesyng lene to þe nakid felyng of þiself, euermore offryng þi being vnto God as for þe most precious offring þat þou maist make. Bot loke, as I ofte seide, þat it be nakid for drede of disceite. Ȝif it be nakid, þan wol it be ful peynful to þee in þe biginnyng to abide þerin any while. & þat is, as I before seyde, for þi wittys fynden no mete þerin vnto hem. Bot no force þerof, for I wol loue it þe betyr. Late hem faste awhile, I preie þee, from here kyndely delite in here kunnyng; for, as it is wel seide, a man kyndely desireþ to kunne; bot certes he may not taast of goostly felyng in God bot only by grace, haue he neuer so moche kunnyng of clergie ne of kynde. & þefore, I preie þee, seche more after felyng þen after kunnyng; for kunnyng ofttymes disceyuiþ wiþ pride, bot meek louely felyng may not begile. *Sciencia inflat, karitas edificat*. In knowyng is trauaile, in felyng is rest.

Bot now mayst þou seye: What rest is þis þat þou spekist of? For me þenkiþ þat it is trauaile, pynyng, & no rest. For whan I set me to do as|þou seyst, I fynde þer pyne & batayle on alle sides. For on þat o

<sup>59</sup> in] of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



partye my wittys wolden haue me away, & I wil not; & on þat oper partye I wolde fele God & lake<sup>60</sup> þe felyng of myself, & I may not. So þat batayle is on alle sides & peyne; & þis þenk me a queynte rest þat þou spekist of.

To þis I answeere and sey: þat þou arte not used in þis werk, & 5 þerfore it is more peynful to þee. Bot gif þou were wonte þerto, & knewest by experience what profite were þerin, þou woldest not wilfully come oute þerof to haue alle þe bodely ioie & rest of þis world. & git it is grete peyne & a trauayle also. Bot in þat I clepe it a rest, for þe soule is not in dwere<sup>61</sup> what it schal do, and also for a 10 soule is maad sekir<sup>62</sup> (I mene in þe tyme of þis doyng) þat it schal not moche erre.

<sup>60</sup> lake] want Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

<sup>61</sup> dwere] were Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> maad sekir] sykered Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.



A PISTLE OF PREIER<sup>1</sup>

Goostly frende in God, as touching þin askyng of me how þou schalt f. 126  
 reule þin hert in tyme of þi preier, I answere vnto þee<sup>2</sup> febely as I kan,  
 and I sey þat me þink þat it schuld be ful speedful to þee at þe first  
 biginnyng of þi preier, what preier soeuer it be, longe preier or  
 schort, for to make it ful knowen to þin hert wipouten any feinyng þat 5  
 þou schalt dize in þe ende of þi preier, and, bot þou spede þee þe raþer,  
 er þou come to þe ende of þi preier. And wite þou þat þis is no feinid  
 þougt þat I telle þee, & se whi. For trewly þer is no man leuyng in þis  
 liif þat dar take apon him to sey þe contrary: þat is to sey, þat þou  
 schalt liue lenger þen þi preier. And þerfore þou maist þink it 10  
 saueliche.

And I counsel þee to do it, for, if þou do it, þou schalt see þat, what  
 for þe general sikt þat þou hast of þi wrechidnes and þis specyal sikt of  
 þe schortnes of tyme of amendement, it schal bring into þin hert a 15  
 verrey worching of drede. And þis worching schalt þou fele verreyly  
 folden in þin herte, bot ȝif it so be (þe whiche God forbede!) þat þou  
 flater & fage þi fals, fleshly, blinde herte wip lesinges and fals, feined  
 behetynges of lenger leuyng. For þof it may be soþ in þee in dede þat  
 þou schalt liue lenger, ȝit it is euer in þee a fals lesing for to þink it 20  
 before and for to behote it to þin hert. For whi þe sofastnes of þis  
 þing is only in God; and in þee is bot a blinde abiding of his wille  
 wipouten certeinte of moment, þe whiche is as litel or lesse as a  
 twinkeling of an ȝe. And þerfore, ȝif þou wilt preie wiseliche, as þe f. 13a  
 prophete biddeþ whan he seiþ in þe psalme: *Psallite sapienter*, loke  
 þou gete þee in þi beginnyng þis verrey worching of drede; for, as þe 25  
 same prophete seiþ in anoper psalme: *Inicium sapientie est timor Domini*; þat is: 'þe biginnyng of wisdom is [þe]<sup>3</sup> drede of oure Lorde  
 God.'

Bot forþi þat þer is no sekir standing upon drede onliche for drede<sup>4</sup>  
 of sinking into ouermoeche heuines, þerfore schalt þou knit to þi first 30  
 þougt þis oþer þougt þat foloweþ. Þou schalt þink stedfastliche þat ȝif  
 þou maist þorou þe grace of God distincteliche pronounce þe wordes  
 of þat preier and winne to þe ende, or ȝif þou dize bifore þou come to  
 þe ende, so þat þou do þat in þee is, þat þan it schal be accept of þee  
 unto God as a ful seep of alle þi rechelesnes fro þe beginning of þi liif 35

<sup>1</sup> So Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; A devowte treatyse callyd the pystle (Epystle Pw) of prayer Bo Pw; þis  
 matere suyng techiþ how þou schalt dispose þee to preie CP.

<sup>2</sup> þee] as add. CP; so add. Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; thus add. Pw.

<sup>3</sup> þe] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> drede] can., ferde add. Kk; ferde Har<sup>2</sup>; feare Bo Pw.

into þat moment—I mene þus, stonding þat þou hast beforetyme, after þi connyng and þi concience, lawfulich amendid þee after þe comoun ordinaunce of Holy Chirche in confession. Þis schort preier, so litil as it is, schal þan be accept of þee vnto God, to þi ful  
 5 saluacioun gif þou þan diedest, and to þe grete encrease of þi perfeccioun if þou leuedist lenger. Þis is þe goodnes of God, þe whiche, as þe prophete seiþ, forsakeþ none þat trewly tristen in him wiþ wille of amendement.

And siþ alle amendement stonden in two, in leuyng of iuel and  
 10 doing of good, menes to gete þees two ben none redier þan ben þe goostly worching of þees two þouztes touchid before. For what reuiþ fro a liif more rediliche þe affecciou of sinning þan doþ a trewe worching of drede of deep? And what moueþ a liif more feruentliche to worching of good þan doþ a certein hope in þe mercy & þe goodnes  
 15 of God, þe whiche is brougt in bi þis secound þouzt? For whi þe goostly|felung of þis secound þouzt, whan it is þus trewlich ioined to þe  
 f. 13b first, schal be to þee a sekir staf of hope to holde þee bi in alle þi good doinges.

And bi þis staf þou maist sekirliche climbe into þe hige<sup>5</sup> mount of  
 20 perfeccioun, þat is to sey, þe parfite loue of God, þof al þis beginnyng be inparfite, as þou schalt here after. For, what for þe general sixt þat þou hast of þe mercy and þe goodnes of God, and þis special experience þat þou felist of his mercy and his goodnes in þis acceptacioun of þis litil, schort seruise for so longe rechelesnes, as it  
 25 were in a ful seep of so moche rechelesnes (as it is seide before), it may not be bot þat þou schalt fele a grete stering of loue vnto him þat is so good and so merciful vnto þee, as þe steppes of þi staf hope plainly schewiþ unto þee in þe time of þi preier, if þou do it deweliche as I haue tolde þee bifore. Þe goostliche experience of þe profe of þis  
 30 worching, it stondeþ al in a reuerent affecciou þat a man haþ to God in þe tyme of [þ]is<sup>6</sup> preier, causid of þis drede in þe grounde of þis werk and of þis stering of loue, þe whiche is brougt in bi þe goostly steppis of þis staf hope touchid before. For whi reuerence is not elles bot drede and loue medelid togeders wiþ a staf of certein hope. Me  
 35 þink þat þe profe of þis worching is deuocioun; for deuocioun is not ellis, as Seinte Thomas þe Doctour seiþ, bot a redines of mans wile to do þoo þinges þat longen to þe seruise of God. Iche man proue in himself; for he þat doþ Goddes seruise in þis maner, he feleþ hou redy þat his wille is þerto. Me þink þat Seinte Bernard acordeþ to þis  
 40 worching where he seiþ þat alle þinges schuld<sup>7</sup> be done swiftlich &

<sup>5</sup> hige] so CP; *om.* other MSS.

<sup>6</sup> þis] his Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> schuld] schulen other MSS.

gladliche. And se whi: swiftliche for drede, and gladliche for hope and loueliche trist in his mercy.

And what more: sekirliche I had leuer haue his mede þat lasteþ in soche doyng, þof al he neuer did bodiliche penance|in þis liif bot f. 14a  
onlich þat þat is enioined to him of Holi Chirche, þan of alle þe 5  
penaunce doers þat haue ben in þis liif, fro þe beginning of þe worlde into þis day, wiþouten þis maner of doing. I sey not þat þe nakid pinking of þees two þouȝtes is so medeful; bot þat reuerent affeccioun, to þe whiche bringing in þese two þouȝtes ben souerein menes on mans partie, þat is it þat is so meedful as I sey. And þis is onliche it bi 10  
itself, wiþouten ani oþer maner of doing, as is fasting, waking, scharp weryng, & alle þese oþer, þe which onliche bi itself pleseþ to Almyȝty God and deseruiþ to haue mede of him. And it were impossible any soule to haue mede of God wiþouten þis. And alle after þe quantite of þis schal stonde þe quantite of mede; for whoso 15  
haþ moche of þis, moche mede schal he haue, and whoso haþ lesse of þis, lesse mede schal he haue. And alle þese oþer þinges, as is fasting, waking, scharp wering, and alle þese oþer, þei ben meedful<sup>8</sup> inasmoche as þei ben helpliche to gete þis; so þat wiþouten þis þei ben nouȝtes, and þis wiþouten hem is somtyme sufficient at þe fulle by 20  
himself, and it is oftentimes ful worþelich had & comen to of ful many, wiþouten any of þe oþer. Alle þis I sey, for I wolde bi þis knowing þat þou chargedest & comendist iche þing after þat it is, þe more þe more and þe lesse þe lesse. For oftymes vnknowing is cause of moche errour. And oftymes vnknowing makeþ men charge more & 25  
comende more bodeliche excersise, as is fastyng, wakyng, scharp wering, & alle þese oþer, þan þei do goostliche excersise in vërtewes or in þis reuerent affeccioun touched before. And þerfore, in more declaracioun of þe mede and þe worþines of þis reuerent affeccioun, I schal seie a litil more þerof þen I ȝit haue seide, so þat bi soche 30  
declaring þou maist be betir lernid [in]<sup>9</sup> þis worching þen|þou ȝit arte. f. 14b

Alle þis maner of worching beforeseide of þis reuerent affeccioun, when it is brouȝt in by þese two þouȝtes of drede and of hope comyng before, may wel be ligned to a tre þat were ful of frute. Of þe whiche tre drede is þat party þat is wipinne in þe erþe, þat is þe rote, and hope 35  
is þat partye þat is aboue þe erþe, þat is þe body with þe bowes. In þat þat hope is certein & stable, it is þe body; in þat<sup>10</sup> [þat] it steriþ men to werkes of loue, it is þe bowes. Bot þis reuerent affeccioun is euermore þe frute. And þan euermore as longe as þe frute is fastned to þe tre, it

<sup>8</sup> meedful] so CP; nedefulle other MSS.

<sup>9</sup> in] bi Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> þat] om. Har<sup>1</sup>.



hap in party a grene smel of þe tre. Bot whan it hap a certein tyme  
 ben departed fro þe tre and is ful ripe, þan it hap lost al þe taste of þe  
 tre and is kinges mete, þat was bifore bot knaues mete. In þis tyme it  
 is þat þis reuerent affeccioun is so meedful as I seide. And þerfore  
 5 schape þee for to departe þis frute fro þe tre and for to offre it up bi  
 itself<sup>11</sup> to þe hiȝe<sup>12</sup> kyng of heuen. And þan schalt þou be clepid  
 Goddes owne childe, louing him wiþ a chast loue for himself and not  
 for his goodes.

I mene þus: þof al þat þe vnnoummerable good dedes, þe whiche  
 10 Almiȝti God of his gracious goodnes hap schewid to iche soule in þis  
 liif, ben sufficient causes at þe fulle and more to iche soule to loue  
 him fore wiþ alle his mynde, wiþ alle his witte, and wiþ alle his wile,  
 ȝit<sup>13</sup> if it miȝt be, þat may nowise be, þat a soule were as miȝti, as  
 worþi, and as witty as alle þe seintes and aungelles þat ben in heuen  
 15 gadered on one & had neuer taken þis worþines of God, or to whom  
 þat God had neuer schewid kindenes in þis liif, ȝit þis soule, seing þe  
 louelines of God in himself and þe habundaunce þerof, schuld be  
 raueschid ouer his miȝt for to loue God til þe hert brast, so louely and  
 f. 15a so liking, so good & so glorious he is in himself. | O [what]<sup>14</sup> wondirful  
 20 a þing, & hou hiȝe a þing is þe loue of God for to speke  
 of, of þe whiche no man may speke parfiteley to þe vnderstanding of  
 þe lest partie þerof, bot bi impossible ensaumples & passing þe  
 vnderstanding of man! And þus it is þat I mene whan I sey 'louyng  
 him wiþ chast loue for himself and not for his goodes'. Not as ȝif I  
 25 seide, þof al I wel seide, mochel for his goodes, bot wiþoute  
 comparison more for himself; for ȝif I schal more heilich spekin in  
 declaring of my mening of þe perfeccioun & of þe mede of þis  
 reuerent affeccioun, I say þat a soule, touched in affeccioun bi þe  
 sensible presence of God as he is in hymself & in a parfite soule, &  
 30 illumind in þe reson by þe clere beme of euerlastyng light, þe whiche is  
 God, for to se and for to fele þe louelines of God in himself, hap for  
 þat tyme and for þat moment lost alle þe mynde of any good deed or  
 of any kindnes þat euer God did to him in þis liif; so þat cause for to  
 loue God fore feleþ he or seep he none in þat tyme oþer þan his God.  
 35 So þat þof al it may be seide, in speking of þe comoun perfeccioun,  
 þat þe grete goodnes & þe grete kindnes þat God hap schewed to us in  
 þis liif ben hie and worþi causes<sup>15</sup> to loue God fore; ȝit, hauyng  
 beholding to þe pointe & þe prik<sup>16</sup> of perfeccioun, to þe whiche I

<sup>11</sup> -self] one Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; ripe *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> hiȝe] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Bo Pw (*henceforth* Kk †).

<sup>13</sup> ȝit] *om.* other MSS.

<sup>14</sup> what] hou Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> causes] *for add.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> pointe . . . prik] *trs.* other MSS. *See Commentary.*

porpose to drawe þee in my menyng and in þe maner of þis writyng, a parfite loue of God, for drede of lettyng of his perfeccioun, sekþ now, þat is to sey in þe pointe of perfeccioun, none oþer cause to loue God fore bot God himself. So þat by þis menyng I sei þat chaste loue is to loue God for himself and not for his goodes. 5

And þerfore, folowing þe reule of myn ensauple, schape þee to departe þe frute fro þe tre and for to offre it up bi itself vnto þe king of heuen, þat þi loue be chaste. For euermore as longe as þou offrest him þis frute grene and hanging on þe tre, þou|mayst wel be ligned f. 15b to a womman þat is not chast, for sche loueþ a man more for his 10 goodes þan for himself. And se whi þat I licne þee þus: for it semeþ þat drede of þi deep and schortnes of tyme, wiþ hope of forzeuene of al þi rechelesnes, makeþ þee to be in Goddes seruise so reuerent<sup>17</sup> as þou arte. And gif it so be,<sup>18</sup> þen haþ þi frute a grene smel of þe tre. And þof al it plesþ God in partie, neuerþeles git it plesþ him not parfityly; 15 and þat is for þi loue is not<sup>19</sup> chaste. Chaste loue is þat when þou askest of God neiþer relesing of peyne, ne encresing of mede, ne git swetnes in his loue in þis liif, bot gif it be any certeine tyme þat þou coueitest swetnes as for a refresching of þi goostly migtes þat þei faile not in þe wey; bot þou askest of God noȝt bot himself. And neiþer þou 20 rechest ne lokest after wheþer þou schalt be in pine or [in]<sup>20</sup> blis, elles þat þou haue him þat þou louest. Þis is chaste loue. Þis is parfite loue. And þerfore schap þee to departe þe frute fro þe tre, þat is to sey þi reuerent affeccioun fro þe þougtes of drede & of hope coming before, so þat þou maist offre it ripe & chast to God bi itself, not causid of 25 any þing bineþe him, medelid wiþ him, ȝe, þof al it be þe cheef, bot onliche of him bi himself.

& þan it is so meedful as I sey þat it is. For it is plainly knowen wiþouten any doute vnto alle þoo þat ben experte in þe sience of deuenite and of Goddes loue, þat as often as a mans affeccioun is 30 sterid vnto God wiþouten mene, þat is wiþouten messenger of any þouȝt in special causing þat stering, as ofte it deserueþ euerlastyng liif. And forþi þat a soule þat is þus disposid, þat is to sey, þat offreþ þe frute ripe and departeþ it<sup>21</sup> fro þe tre, may vnnoumerable tymes in one oure be reisd into God sodenly wiþouten mene; þerfore, more 35 þen I kan sey, it deserueþ þorow þe grace of God, þe whiche is þe cheef worcher, for to be reisd into ioye. And þerfore|schape þee to f. 16a offre þe frute ripe and departid fro þe tre.

Neuerþeles þe frute apon þe tre continuely offrid as mans freelte

<sup>17</sup> in Goddes seruise . . . so reuerent] *trs.* Kk †.

<sup>18</sup> be] sot(h)ly *add.* Kk †.

<sup>19</sup> not] ȝit *add.* Kk †.

<sup>20</sup> in] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> departeþ it] departyd Kk †.

wil [s]uffre, deserueþ saluacioun. Bot þe frute ripe and departid fro þe tre, sodenly offrid vnto God wipowten ani<sup>22</sup> mene, þat is perfeccioun. And here maist þou se þat þe tre is good, þof al I bid þee departe þe frute þerfro for more perfeccioun. And þerfore I sette it in  
 5 þi gardine, for I wolde þat þou gaderist þe frute þerof and keptest it to þi Lorde, and forþi þat I wolde þat þou knewest what maner of worching þat it is þat knitteþ mans soule to God and þat makip it one wip him in loue and acordaunce of wile.

After þe worde of Seint Poule seiing þus: *Qui adheret Deo, vnus*  
 10 *spiritus est cum illo*. þat is to sey: 'Whoso draweþ nere to God', as it is bi soche a reuerent affeccioun touchid before, 'he is o sperit wip God'; þat is, þof al þat God & he ben two and sere in kynde, neuerþeles git in grace þei aren so knitte togeders þat þei ben [bot]<sup>23</sup> o<sup>24</sup> sperit. And alle þis is for onheed of loue and acordaunce of wile. And  
 15 in þis oonheed is þe mariage maad bitwix God and þe soule, þe whiche schal neuer be broken, þof al þe hete & þe feruour of þis werk ceese for a tyme, bot by a deedly sinne. In þe goostly feling of þis onheed may a louyng soule boþe sey and singe; gif it list, þis holy worde þat is wretyn in þe Book of Songes in þe Bible: *Dilectus meus*  
 20 *mihi et ego illi*. þat is: 'My loued vnto me and I to him' vnderstond<sup>25</sup> 'schal be knittyd wip þe goostly glewe of grace on his partye, and þe louely consent in gladnes of sperite on þi partye.'

And þerfore climbe up bi þis tre, as I seide in þe biginnyng, and when þou comest at þe frute, þat is to þe reuerent affeccioun, þe  
 25 whiche alweis wil be in þee and þou þink hertly þe oþer two þouztes bifore and glose<sup>26</sup> not þiself with no lize, as I seide: þan schalt þou  
 f. 16b take good kepe of þat worching þat is maad in þi soule þat tyme, and schape þee, inasmoche as þou maist þorou grace, for to meek þee vnder þe heigt of þi God, so þat þou maist use þee in þat worching oþer  
 30 tymes bi itself, wipouten any<sup>27</sup> climbing þerto by any þougt. And sekirli þis is it þe whiche is so meedful as I seide. And euer þe lenger þat it is kept fro þe tre, þat is to sey fro ani þougt, and euer þe ofter þat it is done sodenly, listely, & likingly, wipouten mene: þe swetter it smelleþ, & þe betir it plesip þe hize king of heuen; and euer whan þou  
 35 felist swetnes and coumforte in þi doing, þan he brekip þis frute and geueþ þee parte of þin owne present.

And þat þat þou felest it so harde & so streitliche stressing þin herte wipouten coumforte in þe first biginnyng, þat [bemeneþ]<sup>28</sup> þat þe

<sup>22</sup> ani] *ins.* Har<sup>1</sup>; *om.* Kk †.

<sup>23</sup> bot] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> o] *in add.* Kk †.

<sup>25</sup> vnderstond] -ing (*can.* Har<sup>1</sup>) *add.* Har<sup>1</sup> CP; that (*add.* Bo Pw) God *add.* Kk †.

<sup>26</sup> glose] fage Kk †.

<sup>27</sup> any] *om.* other MSS.

<sup>28</sup> bemeneþ] ben menes (*n<sup>1</sup> can.* CP) Har<sup>1</sup> CP.

greenes of þe frute hanging on þe tre, or elles newly pullid, eggen þi teep. Neuerþeles ȝit it is speedful to þee; for it is no reson þat þou ete þe swete kirkel bot ȝif þou crakke first þe harde schelle & bite of þe bitter bark. Neuerþeles, ȝif it so be þat þi teep be weike, þat is to sey þi goostly migtes, þan it is my counsel þat þou seke sleigtes, for 'Betir 5 is list þan lepir strengþe'.

Anoper skile þer is whi þat I sette þis tre in þi gardyn for to climbe up þerby. For þof al it be so þat God may do what he wyle, ȝit, to myn vnderstanding, it is impossible any man to atteyne to þe perfeccioun of þis worching wiþouten þees two menes, or elles oper two þat ben 10 acording to hem, comyng before. And ȝit is þe perfeccioun of þis werk sodeyn wiþouten any menes.<sup>29</sup> And þerfore I rede þeese be þine; not þine in propirte, for þat is nogt bot sinne, bot þine ȝeuen graciously of God and sent bi me as messenger, þof I be vnworþi. For wite þou riȝt wel þat iche a þouȝt þat stereþ þee to þe good, wheþer 15 it come fro wiþinne bi þin aungel messenger or fro wiþouten by any man messenger, it is bot an instrument of grace, ȝeuen, sent, & chosen of God himself for|to worche wiþinne in þi soule. f.17a

And þis is þe skile whi þat I counsel þee to take þees two before alle oper. For as a man is a mengid þing of two substaunces, a bodily and 20 a goostly, so it nedip for to haue two sere menes to come by to perfeccioun (siþ<sup>30</sup> so is þat boþe þees substaunces scholen be onid in vndeedlines at þe uprising in<sup>31</sup> þe last day), so þat eiþer substaunces be reisid to perfeccioun in þis liif by a mene acordaunte þerto. And þat is drede to bodily substaunce and hope to þe goostly. And þus it is 25 ful semely and acording to be, as me þink. For as þer is noþing þat so sone wol rause þe body fro al affeccioun of erþely þing as wile a sensible drede of þe deep: so þer is noþing þat so sone ne so feruentliche wol reise þe affeccioun of a sinner soule vnto þe loue of God as wole a certain hope of forȝeuenes of alle his rechelesnes. And 30 þerfore I haue ordeined þi climbing by þees two þouȝtes.

Bot ȝif it so be þat þi good aungel teche þee wiþinne þi goostly conseite, or any oper man ouþer, oper two þat ben more acording to þi disposicioun þan þee þink þees two ben, þou maist take hem and leue þees saulich, wiþoutyn any blame. Neuerþeles to my conseite, 35 til I wite more, me þink þat þees schuld be ful helply unto þee, and not moche unacording to þin disposicioun, after þat I fele in þee. And þerfore, ȝif þee þink þei do þee good, þan þank God hertlich. And for Goddes loue prey for me. Do þan so, for I am a wreche, and þou wost not how it stondeþ wiþ me. No more at þis tyme, bot Goddes blessing 40 haue þou & myne. Reed ofte; forȝete it not; sett þee scharply to þe profe; and fle alle letting and occasion of lettyng, in þe name of Iesu. Amen.

<sup>29</sup> menes] meene Kk †.

<sup>30</sup> siþ] it add. Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> in] at other MSS.





## A PISTLE OF DISCRECIOUN OF STIRINGS<sup>1</sup>

Goostly freend in God, þat same grace & ioie þat I wil to myself I wil<sup>2</sup> f. 5b  
to þee at Goddes wile. þou askist me counsel of silence and of  
speking, of comoun dietyng & of singulere fastyng, of dwelling in  
companye & of only-wonyng by þiself. And þou seist þou arte in grete  
were what þou schalt do; for, as þou seist, on þe to partye þou arte<sup>3</sup> 5  
greetly taried wiþ speking, wiþ comoun etyng as oþer folk done, and  
wiþ comoun wonyng in companye; and, on þe toþer party, þou  
dredist to be streitly stille, singulere in fasting, and only in wonyng,  
for demyng of more holines þen þou arte worþi, and for many oþer  
periles. For oftymes now þees dayes, þei ben demid for most holy 10  
and fallen into many periles, þat most aren in silence, in singulere  
fastyng, & in only-dwellyng.

And soþ it is þat þei ben most holy gif grace|only be þe cause of þat f. 6a  
silence, of þat singulere fastyng, & of þat only-dwelling, þe kinde bot  
suffring and only consentyng. And gif it be oþerwise, þen þer is<sup>4</sup> bot 15  
perile on alle sides. For it is ful perilous to streine þe kynde to any  
soche werk of deuocioun, as is silence or spekyng, comoun dietyng  
or singuleer fastyng, dwelling in companye or in onlines (I mene,  
passing þe comoun custom & þe cours<sup>5</sup> of kynde and degre), bot it be  
ledde perto bi grace; and namely to soche werkis, þe whiche in 20  
hemsself ben indiferent, þat is to sey, now good and now iuel, now  
wiþ þee and now aȝens þee, now helping & now lettyng. For it miȝt  
befalle þat<sup>6</sup> gif þou foloudist þi singuler stering streitly streining þee to  
silence, to singuler fastyng, or to only-dwellyng, þat þou schuldest be  
oftymes<sup>7</sup> stille whan tyme were to speke, oftyme fast whan tyme 25  
were to ete, oftyme to be only whan tyme<sup>8</sup> were to be in companye;  
or if þou zeue þee to spekyng alweis whan þee list, to comoun etyng,  
or to companous wonyng, þan parauenture þou schuldest somtyme  
speke when tyme were to be styлле, somtyme ete whan tyme were to  
fast, somtyme be in companye whan tyme were to be only. And þus 30  
miȝt þou listly falle into errour, in grete confusion not only of þin

<sup>1</sup> *Om.* CP; a veray necessary Epystle of dyscrecyon in styrynges of the soule Pw; of<sup>2</sup>] in Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pw (*henceforth* Kk †).

<sup>2</sup> I wil] *trs. other MSS.*

<sup>3</sup> arte] *summe tyme add. Kk †.*

<sup>4</sup> þer is] is ther nothing *other MSS.*

<sup>5</sup> comoun custom . . . cours] *trs. Kk †.*

<sup>6</sup> þat] *om. other MSS.*

<sup>7</sup> be oftymes] *trs. other MSS.*

<sup>8</sup> tyme] bettyr Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

owne soule bot also of oþers. And þerfore, in eschewing of soche errour, þou askest of me, as I haue parceyued bi þi lettre, two þinges: þe first is my conseite of þee and þi steringes, and þe toþer is my counsel in þis caas, and in alle soche oþer whan þei comen.

5 As to þe first, I answeere and I sey þat I drede ful moche in þis mater & in soche oþer to put forþ my rude conseite, soche as it is, for two skyles. And on is þis: I dar not lene to my conseite, affermyng it  
f. 6b for fast trewe. Þe toþer is: þin|inward disposicioun and þin abelnes þat þou hast vnto alle þees þinges, þat þou spekist of in þi lettre, ben  
10 not ȝit so fully knowen vnto me as it were speedful þat þei weren, ȝif I schuld ȝeue fulle counsel in þis caas. For it is seide of þe apostle: *Nemo nouit que sunt hominis nisi spiritus hominis, qui in ipso est*; 'No man knowiþ whiche ben þe priue disposiciouns of man bot þe spirite of þe same man, þe whiche is in hymself.'

15 And paraenture þou knowest not ȝit þin owne inward disposicioun þiself so fully as þou schalt do hereafter, when God wole late þee fele it bi þe profe amonge many fallynges and risinges. For I knewe neuer ȝit no synner þat myȝt come to þe parfite knowing of himself and of his inward disposicioun, bot if he were lernid of it  
20 before in þe scole of God, by experience of many temptaciouns [and by many fallynges and risinges].<sup>9</sup> For riȝt as amonge þe wawes and þe flodes and þe stormes of þe see on þe to partye, þe pesible winde and þe calmes and þe<sup>10</sup> softe weders of þe ayre on þe toþer partye, þe sely schip at þe last atteineþ to þe londe and þe hauen: riȝt so amonge þe  
25 diuersite of temptaciouns and tribulaciouns þat fallen to a soule in þis ebbing and flowing liif (þe which ben ensaumpled bi þe stormes and þe flodes of þe see on þe to partye) and amanges þe grace and þe goodnes of þe Holy Goost, þe manyfold visitacioun, swetnes and coumforte of spirite (þe whiche ben ensaumplid bi þe pesible winde  
30 and þe softe weders of þe eire on þe toþer partye) þe sely soule, at þe licnes of a schip, atteineþ at þe last to þe londe of stabelnes and þe hauen of helpe, þe whiche is þe clere and þe soþfast knowing of himself and of alle his inward disposiciouns; þorow þe whiche knowing he sitteþ quietly in hymself, as a king crouned in his rewme,  
35 miȝtly, wisely, and goodly gouernyng himself and alle his þouȝtes &  
f. 7a steringes,|bope in body & in soule.

Of soche a man it is þat þe wise man seiþ þus: *Beatus vir qui suffert temptationem, quoniam cum probatus fuerit accipiet coronam vite, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se*; 'He is a blisful man þat suffringly beriþ  
40 temptacioun, for, fro he haue ben prouid, he schal take þe coroun of liif, þe whiche God haþ hiȝt vnto alle þoo þat louen him.' Þe coroun of

<sup>9</sup> and . . . risinges] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup> CP.

<sup>10</sup> and þe] of CP.

liif may be seide on two maners: on for goostly wisdom, for ful discrecioun, and for perfeccioun of verteue; þees þre knittid togedir may be clepid a coroun of liif, þe whiche bi grace may be comyn to here in þis liif. On anoþer maner þe coroun of liif may be seide: þat it is þe eendles ioie þat iche trewe soule schal haue after þis liif in þe blis 5 of heuen. And sekerly neiþer of þees corouns may a man take, bot he before haue ben wel prouid in suffring of noye and of temptacioun, as þis text seiþ: *Quoniam cum [p]robatus fuerit, accipiet coronam vite*; þat is, 'Fro þat he haue ben prouid, þan schal he take þe coroun of liif.' As who seiþ acording to myn vnderstanding touchid before: bot if a 10 sinner man haue ben prouid before in diuerse temptacions, now rising, now fallyng, fallyng by freelte, rising by grace, he schal neuer elles take of God in þis liif goostly wisdom in clere knowyng of hymself and of his inward disposiciouns, ne ful discrecioun in teching and counselyng of oþer, ne ȝit þe þrid, þe whiche is þe 15 perfeccioun of vertewe in louyng of his God and his broþer.

Alle þees þre—wisdom, discrecioun, and perfeccioun of vertewe—ben bot one, and þei mowe be clepid þe coroun of liif. In a coroun ben þre þinges. Gold is þe first, precious stones ben þe secound, and þe toretes of þe floure-de-lices reisid up abouen þe 20 heed, þoo ben þe þrid. By golde wisdom, bi precious stones discrecioun, and bi þe toretes of þe floure-de-lices I vnderstonde þe perfeccioun of verteue. Gold enuirouneþ þe heed; and bi wisdom we gouerne oure goostly werk in euery side. | Precious stones ȝeuin list in f. 7b beholding of men; and bi discrecioun we teche and counseilen oure 25 breþren. Þe toretes of þe floure-de-lices ȝeuyñ two side braunches spreding, on to þe riȝt side, anoþer to þe left, and on euen [up]<sup>11</sup> aboue þe heed; and by perfeccioun of vertewe, þe whiche is charite, we ȝeue two side braunches of loue, þe whiche ben spreding oute, to þe riȝt side to oure freendes, and on þe left side to oure enemyes, and 30 one euen up unto God, abouen mans vnderstondyng, þe whiche is þe heed of þe soule. Þis is þe coroun of liif, þe whiche by grace may be getyn here in þis liif.

And þerfore bere þee lowe in þi bataile, & suffre meekly þi temptaciouns tyl þou haue ben proued. For, [fro þou haue ben 35 proued],<sup>12</sup> þan schalt þou take ouþer þis coroun here<sup>13</sup> or elles þe toþer þere,<sup>13</sup> or boþe þis here and þe toþer þere. For whoso hap þis here, he may be ful sekir of þe toþer þere. And ful many þer ben þat ben ful graciously prouid here and ȝit comen neuer to þis þat may be had

<sup>11</sup> up] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup> CP.

<sup>12</sup> fro . . . proued] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> here, þere] *om.* other MSS.

here in þis liif; þe whiche, gif þei meekly contynow and patiently abyde þe wille of oure Lorde, schal ful aboundingly resceiue þe toþer, þere in þe blis of heuen. Þee þink þis coroun feire þat may be had here. 3e, bere þee as meekly as þou maist bi grace, for, in  
 5 comparison of þe toþer þere, it is bot as a noble to a worlde ful of gold. Alle þis I sey to 3eue þee coumfort and euidence of strengþe in þi goostly batayle, þe whiche þou hast taken on hande in þe trist of oure Lorde.

And alle þis I sey to late þee se hou fer þou arte zit fro þe trewe  
 10 knowyng of þin inward disposicioun, and þerafter to 3eue þee warnes not ouer-sone to 3eue stede ne to folow þe singulere sterynges of þi 3ong hert for drede of disseite. Alle þis I sey for to schewe vnto þee my conseite þat I haue of þee & of þi sterings, as þou hast askid of me.  
 f. 8a For I conseiue of þee þat þou arte ful able & ful gredely disposid to  
 15 soche sodein sterings of singulere doynge, and ful fast to cleue vnto hem when þei ben resceyued; and þat is ful perilous.

I say not þat þis abilnes and þis gredy disposicioun in þee, or in any oþer þat is [so]<sup>14</sup> disposid as þou arte, þof al it be perilous, þat it is þerfore iuel in itself; nay, so say I not. God forbede þat þou take it so!  
 20 Bot I say þat it is ful good in itself, and a ful grete abelnes to ful grete perfeccioun, 3e, and to þe grettest perfeccioun þat may be in þis liif; I mene, gif þat a<sup>15</sup> soule þat is so disposid wil besily, nigȝt and day, meke it to God and to good counsel, & strongly rise and martir itself, wiþ castyng doun of þe owne witte and þe owne wile in alle soche sodein  
 25 & singulere sterings, and sey scharply þat it wil not folow soche sterings, seme þei neuer so liking, so heiȝ, ne so holy, bot if it haue þerto þe witnes<sup>16</sup> and þe consentes of som goostly techers (I mene soche as haue ben of longe tyme experte in singuler leuyng). Soche a soule for goostly continouaunce þus in þis meeknes, may deserue,  
 30 þorow grace & þe experience of þis goostly bataile þus wiþ itself, for to take þe coroun of liif touchid before.

And as grete an abilnes to good, as it is þis maner of disposicioun in a soule þat is þus mekid as I sey, as perilous it is in an oþer soule, soche one þat wil sodenly, wiþouten auysement of counsel, folow þe  
 35 sterings of þe gredy hert by þe owne witte & þe owne wyle. And þerfore for Goddes loue bewar wiþ þis abilnes and wiþ þis maner of disposicioun þat I speke of, gif it be in þee as I sey, and meek þee continowly to preyer and to counsel. Breke doun þin owne witte & þi wil in alle soche sodein & singulere sterings, and folow hem not  
 40 ouer-ligtly, til þou wite whens þei comen and wheper þei be acording for þee or not.

<sup>14</sup> so] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> a] *om.* *other MSS.*

<sup>16</sup> witnes] wittes *other MSS.*



And touching þees steringes, of þe whiche þou askist my conseit & my counsel: I say to þee þat I conseyue of hem suspiciously; þat is, f. 86  
 þat þei schold be conceyuid on ape maner. Men sein comonly þat ape doþ as he oþer seeþ. Forȝeue me zif I erre in my suspeciou, I prey þee. Neuerþeles, þe loue þat I haue to þi soule stereþ me by euydence 5  
 þat I haue of a goostly broþer of þine and of myne, þat was now late in zoure contrey, touchid wiþ þoo same steringes of ful [streite]<sup>17</sup> silence, of ful singulere fastynges, and of ful only-dwellyng, on ape maner, as he graunted vnto me after longe comounyng wiþ me and when he had proued hymself and his steringes. For, as he seyde, he had seen 10  
 a man in zoure cuntre, þe whiche man, as it is wel knownen, is euermore in grete silence, in singulere fastyng, and in only-dwellyng. And certes, as I suppose fully, þei ben ful trewe steringes, þoo þat þat man haþ, causid al only of grace þat he felip bi experience wiþinne, and not of any sigt or herdesay þat he haþ of any oþer mans 15  
 silence wiþoutyn, þe whiche cause zif it were, schuld be clepid apely, as I sei in my simple meenyng.

And þerfore beware, and proue wel þi sterynges & whens þei come. For houso þou arte steryd, wheþer fro wiþinne by grace or fro wiþouten on ape maner, God wote and I not. Neuerþeles, þis may I 20  
 sey þee,<sup>18</sup> in eschewing of perile<sup>19</sup> liche vnto þis: loke þat þou be none ape; þat is to sey, loke þat þi steringes to silence or to spekyng, to fastyng or to etyng, to onlines or to companye, wheþer þei ben comyn fro wiþinne of habundaunce of loue & of deuocoun in spirite and not fro wiþouten bi windowes of þi bodily wittes, þin eren and þin 25  
 ize; for, as Ieremie seiþ plainly, 'Bi soche windowes cometh in deef'; *Mors intrat per fenestras*. And þis suffiseþ, as<sup>20</sup> litel as it is, for<sup>21</sup> answeere to þe first, where þou askist of me what is my conseite of þee and of þees steringes|þat þou spekist of to me in þi lettre. f. 9a

And touching þe secound þing, where þou askist of me my 30  
 counseile in þis caas and soche oþer when þei falle: I beseche Almyti Iesu, as he is clepid þe 'Aungel of Grete Counseile', þat he of his mercy be þi counselour and þi coumfortour in alle þi noye and þi nede, and wisse me wiþ his wisdom to fulfille in party by my teching, so simple as it is, þe trist of þin herte, þe whiche þou hast to me bifore 35  
 many oþer, a simple lewid wreche as I am, vnworþi to teche þee or any oþer for litelnes of grace & for lackyng of kunnyng. Neuerþeles, þof I be neuer so lewid, zit schal I sumwhat seie, answering to þi desire at my simple kunnyng, wiþ a trist in God þat his grace schal be lerner & leder, whan kunnyng of kinde and of clergie defaileþ. 40

<sup>17</sup> streite] grete Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> þee] om. other MSS.

<sup>19</sup> perile] -s other MSS.

<sup>20</sup> as] so other MSS.

<sup>21</sup> for] an add. other MSS.



pou wost wel þiself þat silence in itself ne spekyng, also singulere fastyng ne comoun dietyng, onlines ne companie, alle þees, ne ȝit any of hem, þei ben not þe trewe eendes of oure desire. Bot to som men, and not to alle, þei ben meenes helping to þe eende, ȝif þei ben  
 5 done lawfully & wiþ discrecioun; and elles ben þei more lettyng þan forþering. And þerfore plainly to speke ne plainly to be styлле, plainly to ete ne plainly to fast, plainly to be in companye or plainly to be only, þink I not to counsel þee at þis tyme; for whi perfeccioun stondeþ not in hem. Bot þis counsel may I ȝeue þee generaly to holde  
 10 þee by in þees sterynges and in alle oþer liche vnto þeese, euermore where þou fyndest two contraries as ben þeese, silence & spekyng, fastyng & etyng, onlines & companye, comoun cloþing of Cristen mens religion & singulere abites of diuerse & deuysid broþerhedes,<sup>22</sup> wiþ alle soche oþer whatso þei be, þe whiche in hemself ben bot  
 15 werkes of kynde & of men.

For þou hast it bi kynd and bi statute of þin vtter man now for to  
 f. 96 speke & now for to be styлле, now for|to ete and now for to fast, now for to be in company & now to be only, now to be comoun in cloþing & now to be in singulere abite, euer when þee list and whan þou seest  
 20 þat any of hem schuld be speedful and helply to þee in noresching of þe heuenly grace worching wipinne in þi soule, bot ȝif it be so (þat God forbede!) þat þou or any oþer be so lewid & so bleendid in þe sorouful temptaciouns of þe midday deuel, þat ȝe binde ȝow by any crokid auowe to any soche singulertees, as it were vnder colour of  
 25 holines feined vnder soche an holyliche þraldom, in ful and fynal distrouing of þe fredom of Criste, þe whiche is þe goostly abite of þe souereyn holines þat may be in þis liif or in þe toþer, by þe witnes of Poule seiing þus: *Vbi spiritus Domini, ibi libertas*; 'þere where þe spirite of God is, þer is fredom.'

30 And þerto when þou seest þat alle soche werkes in þeire use mow be boþe good & iuel, I preie þee leue hem boþe, for þat is þe most ese for þee for to doo if þou wilt be meek. And leue þe corious beholdyng & seching in þi wittes to loke wheþer is betir. Bot do þou þus: sette þe tone on þe to honde and þe toþer on þe toþer, and chese þee a þing þe  
 35 whiche<sup>23</sup> is hid bitwix hem, þe whiche þing when it is had, ȝeueþ þee leue, in fredom of spirite, to beginne and to seese in holding any of þe oþer at þin owne ful list, wipouten any blame.

Bot now þou askest me what is þat þing. I schal telle þee what I mene þat it is. It is God for whom þou schuldest be stille, ȝif þou  
 40 schuldest be styлле; and for whom þou schuldest speke, ȝif þou schuldest speke; and for whom þou schuldest fast, ȝif þou schuldest

<sup>22</sup> broþer-] breþer- CP Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> þe whiche] that other MSS.

fast; and for whom þou schuldest ete, gif þou schuldest ete; and for whom þou schuldest be only, gif þou schuldest be only; and for whom þou schuldest be in companie, if þou schuldest be in|companie; and so forþ of alle þe remenant, whatso þei be. For silence is not God, ne speking is not God; fastyng is not God, ne etyng is not God; onlines is not God ne companye is not God; ne zit any of alle þe opir soche two contraries. He is hid betwix hem, and may not be founden by any werk of þi soule, bot al only bi loue of þin herte. He may not be knowen by reson. He may not be þouȝt,<sup>24</sup> getyn,<sup>25</sup> ne trasid,<sup>26</sup> by vnderstanding. Bot he may be loued and chosen wiþ þe trewe, louely wille of þin herte. Chese þee<sup>27</sup> him; and þou arte silently spekyng & spekingly silent, fastyngly etyng and etyngly fasting; and so forþ of alle þe remenant.

Soche a louely chesing of God, þus wisely lesing and seking him oute wiþ þe clene wille of a trewe<sup>28</sup> herte bitwix alle soche to, leuyng hem boþe whan þei come and profren hem to be þe poynt and þe pricke of oure goostly beholding, is þe worpiest trasing and sekyng of God þat may be getyn or lerned<sup>29</sup> in þis liif (I meene, for a soule þat wil be contemplatife); ȝe, þof al þat a soule, þat þus sekiþ, see noþing þat may be conseiued wiþ hir goostly ize of reson. For gif God be þi loue and þi menyng, þe cheef<sup>30</sup> and þe pointe of þin herte, it suffiseþ to þee in þis liif, þof al þou se neuer more of him wiþ þe ize of þi reson alle þi liiftyme. Soche a blinde schote wiþ þe scharp darte of longing loue may neuer faile of þe prik, þe whiche is God; as himself seiþ in þe Book of Loue, where he spekiþ to a langwisching soule and a louyng, seiing þus: *Vulnerasti cor meum, soror mea, amica mea, sponsa mea, vulnerasti cor meum in uno oculorum tuorum*; 'þou hast wounded myn hert, my sistre, my lemman, & my spouse, þou hast woundid myn herte in one of þin izen.' Izen of þe soule þei<sup>31</sup> ben two, reson & loue. By reson we mowe trace<sup>32</sup> how|mizty, how wise, & how good he is in his creatures, bot not in himself. Bot euer whan reson defaileþ, þan list loue liue and lerne for to plei; for bi loue we may [fynde] him, [fele]<sup>33</sup> him, and hit him euen in<sup>34</sup> himself. It is a wonderful ize loue, for of a louing soule it is seide of oure Lorde: 'þou hast woundid myn herte in one of þin izen'; þat is to sey, in loue þat is blinde to many þinges and seep bot

<sup>24</sup> þouȝt] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>25</sup> getyn] þouȝte *add.* Kk; by þouȝte *add.* Har<sup>2</sup> Pw.

<sup>26</sup> ne trasid] *trs.*, but corrected Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> þee] þou Kk †.

<sup>28</sup> clene . . . trewe] *trs.* Kk †.

<sup>29</sup> getyn or lerned] had Kk †.

<sup>30</sup> cheef] cho(y)se Kk †.

<sup>31</sup> þei] þere CP; *om.* Kk †.

<sup>32</sup> trace] and fynde *add.* Kk †.

<sup>33</sup> fynde . . . fele] *trs.* Har<sup>1</sup> CP.

<sup>34</sup> in] *om.* other MSS.

pat o þing þat it sekþ, and þerfore it findeþ and felþ, hitteþ and  
woundeþ þe point and þe pricke þat it scheteþ at wel sonner þan it  
schuld, gif þe sigt were sondrid in beholding of many þinges, as it is  
whan þe reson ransakiþ & sekþ amonges alle soche sere þinges as ben  
5 þees — silence and [speking], singulere fastyng and comoun etyng,  
onlines or companie, and alle soche oþer — to loke wheþer is beter.

Lat be þis maner of doing, I preie þee, and late as þou wist not þat  
þere were any soche menes, I mene [ordeyned]<sup>35</sup> for to gete God bi;  
for trewly no more þer is, gif þou wilt be verrey contemplatyfe & sone  
10 sped of þi purpos. And þerfore I preie þee and oþer liche vnto þee wiþ  
þe apostle seiing þus: *Videte vocacionem vestram, et in ea vocacione qua  
vocati estis, state*; ‘Seþ zoure cleping, and in þat cleping þat ze ben  
clepid, stondeþ’ stifly and abideþ in þe name of Iesu. þi cleping is to  
be verrey contemplatyfe, ensaumplid by Mary, Martha sister. Do  
15 þan as Mary did. Set þe poynte of þin herte upon o þing. *Porro unum  
est nesessarium*; ‘For o þing is nesessarie’, þe whiche is God. Him  
woldest þou haue; him sekist þou; him list þee loue; him list þee fele;<sup>36</sup>  
him list þee holde þee bi; and neiþer by sylence ne bi spekyng, by  
singulere fasting ne by comoun etyng, by onlines ne by companous  
20 wonyng. For sumtyme silence is good, bot þat same tyme speking  
were betir; and aȝensward, somtyme speking is good, bot þat same  
f. 11a time silence were|beter; and so forþ of alle þe remenaunt, as is  
fastyng, etyng, onlines, and companie, & alle soche oþer. For  
somtyme þe tone is good, bot þe toþer is betir; bot neiþer of hem is  
25 any time þe best. And þerfore lat be good al þat is good, and betir al  
þat is betir, for boþe þei wil fayle and haue an<sup>37</sup> ende; and chese þee þe  
best, wiþ Mary þi mirour, þat neuir wil defaile. *Maria, inqui[t]  
optimus, optimam partem elegit, que non auferetur ab ea*. þe best is Almyȝty  
Iesu, and he seide þat Mary, in ensauple of alle contemplatiues,  
30 had chosen þe best, þe whiche schuld neuir be take fro hir. And  
þerfore, I preie þee, wiþ Mary leue þe good and þe betir, and chese  
þee þe best.

Lat hem be, alle soche þinges as ben þeese — silence & speking,  
fastyng & etyng, onlines & companie, & alle soche oþer — and take  
35 no kepe to hem. þou wost not what þei bemenen, and, I preie þee,  
coueite not to wite. And gif þou schalt any tyme þenk on hem<sup>38</sup> or  
speke,<sup>39</sup> þink þan and sey þat þei ben so heiz & so worþi þinges of  
perfeccioun—for to kun speke or for to kun be stille, for to kun

<sup>35</sup> ordeyned] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>; for thee *add.* CP Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> fele] hym lyst þe see and *add.* Kk †.

<sup>37</sup> an] *om.* CP Kk Har<sup>2</sup>

<sup>38</sup> on hem] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>39</sup> speke] of þeim *add.* Kk †.

fast & for to kun ete, for to kun be only & for to kun be in companie — þat it were bot a foly and a foule presumcioun to soche a freel wrecche as þou arte for to medel þee of so grete perfeccioun. For whi for to speke & for to be stille, for to ete & for to fast, & for to be only and for to be in companie euer whan we wile, mow we haue 5 bi kinde; bot for to kun do alle þees, we may not bot bi grace.

And wiþouten doute soche grace is neuer getin bi any mene of soche streite silence, of soche singulere fastyng, or of soche only-dwellyng þat þou spekest of, þe whiche is causid fro wiþouten by occasion of hering & of seing of any oþer mans soche singulere 10 doinges. Bot ȝif euer schal þis grace be getin, it behoueþ to be lerned of God fro wiþinne, vnto whom þou hast listeli lenid many day before wiþ alle þe loue of þin herte, | vtterly voiding fro þi goostly beholding f. 11b alle maner of sigt of any þing bineþe him, þof al þat som of þoo þinges, þat I bid þee þus voide, schuld seme in þe sigt of som man a ful worþi 15 mene to gete God bi. Ȝe, say what men say wile, bot do þou as I say þee, and lat þe proue witnes. For to him þat<sup>40</sup> wil<sup>41</sup> be<sup>42</sup> sped of his purpos goostly, it suffiseþ to him for a mene, and him nedīþ no mo bot þe actuele minde of good God only, wiþ a reuerent stering of lastyng loue; so þat mene vnto God gete þee none bot God, ȝif þou 20 kepe hole þi stering of loue, þat þou maist fele bi grace in þin hert, and scaterst not þi goostly beholding þerfro.

þen þat same þat þou felest schal wel kun telle þee when þou schalt speke and when þou schalt be stille. And it schal gouerne þee discretly in al þi leuyng wiþouten any errour, and teche þee mistely 25 how þou schalt beginne and seese in alle soche doinges of kinde wiþ a grete & souerein discrecioun. For if þou maist by grace kepe [it]<sup>43</sup> in custom and in contynuel worching, þan ȝif it be needful to þee for to speke, for to comounly ete, or for to bide in cumpanye, or for to do any soche oþer þing þat longeþ to þe comoun trewe custom of Cristen 30 men and of kynde, it schal first stire þee softly to speke or to do þat oþer comoun þing of kynde, whatso it be; and þan, ȝif þou do it not, it schal smite<sup>44</sup> as sore as a prik on þin hert & pine þee ful sore, and late þee haue no pees bot ȝif þou do it. And on þe same maner, ȝif þou be in spekyng or in any soche oþer werk þat is comoun to þe cours of 35 kynde, ȝif it be needful and speedful to þee to be stille and to sette þee to þe contrary, as is fastyng to etyng, onlines to companie, and alle soche oþer, þe whiche ben werkes of singulere holines, it wil stire þee to hem.

<sup>40</sup> þat] sone *add.* Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> wil] sone *add.* Kk.

<sup>42</sup> be] soone *add.* CP Pw.

<sup>43</sup> it] þee Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>44</sup> smite] stryke Kk †.



So þat þus by experience of soche a blinde stering of loue unto  
 f. 12a God, a contemplatyfe soule|comeþ sonner<sup>45</sup> to þat grace of dis-  
 crecioun for to kun speke and for to kun be stille, for to kun ete  
 and for to kun fast, for to kun be in companye and for to kun be  
 5 only, and alle soche oþer, þan by any soche singulertees as þou  
 spekist of, taken by þe steringes of<sup>46</sup> mans owne witte and his wile  
 wiþinne in<sup>47</sup> himself or ȝit bi þe ensauple of any oþer mans doing  
 wiþouten, whatso it be. For whi soche streynid doinges vnder þe  
 steringes of kynde, wiþouten steringes<sup>48</sup> of grace, is a passing pine  
 10 wiþouten any profite, bot ȝif it be to hem þat ben religious or þat han  
 hem bi-enioinyng in penance, where profite riseþ only bicause of  
 obedience & not bi soche streitnes of doying; wiþouten, þe whiche is  
 pinful to alle þat it proueþ. Bot louely and listely to wilne haue God is  
 grete & passing ese, trewe goostly pees, and erles of þe eendles rest.  
 15 And þerfore speke whan þee list & leue whan þee list; ete whan þee  
 list and fast whan þee list; be<sup>49</sup> in companie whan þee list & be by  
 þiself whan þee list; so þat<sup>50</sup> God and grace be þi leder. Late fast who  
 fast<sup>51</sup> wil, and be only who wil, and lat holde silence who<sup>52</sup> hold<sup>53</sup> wil;  
 bot holde þee bi God, þat no man begileþ. For silence & speking,  
 20 fastyng & etyng, onlines & companye, alle may begile. And ȝif þou  
 here of any man þat spekiþ or of any þat is stille, of any þat eteþ or of  
 any þat fasteþ, or of any þat is in companye or elles by himself, þink  
 þou & sey, if þou schalt, þat þei kun do as þei schuld do, bot ȝif þe  
 contrary schewe in aperte. Bot loke þou do not as þei do; I mene, for  
 25 þei do so, on ape maner. For neiþer þou kanst, ne parauenture þou  
 arte not disposid as þei ben. And þerfore leue to worche after oþer  
 mens disposicions; and worche after þin owne, if þou maist knowe  
 what it is. And vnto þe tyme be þat þou maist wite<sup>54</sup> what it is, worche  
 f. 12b after þo mens|counseile, þat knowen here owne disposicioun, bot not  
 30 after þeire disposicioun. For soche men schuld ȝeue counsel in soche  
 cases, and elles none. And pis suffiseþ for an answeere for alle þi lettre.  
 þe grace of God be euermore wiþ þee, in þe name of Iesu. Amen.

<sup>45</sup> sonner] more sone Kk †.

<sup>46</sup> of] a *add.* other MSS.

<sup>47</sup> in] *om.* other MSS.

<sup>48</sup> steringes] tochyng Kk †.

<sup>49</sup> be] wone CP Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> so þat] els Kk †.

<sup>51</sup> fast] *so* CP; *om.* Kk †.

<sup>52</sup> who] -*so add.* other MSS.

<sup>53</sup> hold] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>54</sup> wite] knowe other MSS.



## DEONISE HID DIUINITE<sup>1</sup>

þe Prolog upon þe Translacioun of *Deonise Hid Diuinite*

f. 121a

Þis writyng þat next folowep is þe Inglische of a book þat Seynte Denys wrote vnto Thimothe, þe whiche<sup>2</sup> is clepid in Latyn tonge *Mistica Theologia*. Of þe whiche book, forþi þat it is mad minde in þe 70 chapter of a book wretin before (þe whiche is clepid *þe Cloude of Vnknowing*) how þat Denis sentence wol cleerli afferme al þat is wretyn in þat same book: þerfore, in translacioun of it, I haue not onliche folowed þe nakid lettre of þe text, bot for to declare þe hardnes of it, I haue moche folowed þe sentence of þe Abbot of Sainte Victore, a noble & a worþi expositour of þis same book.

10

Þis is Sainte Deonise Preier.

f. 121b

Þou vnbigonne & euerlastyng Wysdome, þe whiche in þiself arte þe souereyn-substancial Firstheed, þe souereyn Goddesse, & þe souereyn Good,<sup>3</sup> þe inliche beholder of þe godliche-maad wisdome of Cristen men: I beseche þee for to drawe us up in an acordyng abilnes to þe souereyn-vnknownen and þe souereyn-schinyng heizt of þi derke inspirid spekynges, where alle þe pryue þinges of deuinytee ben kouerid and hid vnder þe souereyn-schinyng derknes of wisest silence, makyng þe souereyn-clerest souereynly for to schine priuely in þe derkyst; and þe whiche is—in a maner þat is always inuisible & vngropable—souereynli fulfillyng wiþ ful fayre cleertees alle þoo soules þat ben not hauyng igen of mynde.

15  
20

The Latin Version of John Sarracenus

(*D. Dionysii Cartusiani Opera Omnia*, t. xvi, pp. 471ff.)

Compresbytero Timotheo, Dionysius presbyter salutem.

Trinitas supersubstantialis et superdea et superbona, inspectrix divinae sapientiae Christianorum, dirige nos ad mysticorum Eloquiorum superignotum et supersplendentem et summum verticem, ubi simplicia et absoluta et inconvertibilia Theologiae mysteria cooperta sunt secundum supersplendentem occulte docti silentii caliginem, in obscurissimo superclarissimo supersplendere facientem, et in omnino impalpabili et invisibili superpulchris claritatibus superimplentem non habentes oculos mentis.

<sup>1</sup> No title in Har<sup>1</sup> Kk.

<sup>2</sup> whiche] boke *add.* Kk.

<sup>3</sup> Good] god Kk.

And for alle þees þinges ben abouen mynde, þerfore wiþ affeccyon abouen mynde as I may, I desire to purchase hem vnto me wiþ þis preier.

### I Capitulum.

- 5 HOW A MAN SCHAL RISE IN ÞIS HID DEUINITE BI DOING AWAY OF ALLE ÞINGES ON ÞIS SIDE GOD

þou freend Tymothe, what tyme þat þou purposist þee by þe steryng of grace to þe actueel excersise of þi blynde beholdynges, loke þou forsake wiþ a stronge & a sleiz & a listi contricyon boþe þi bodely  
 10 wittes (as heryng, seyng, smelling, taastyng, & touching), and also þi goostly wittes, þe whiche ben clepid þin vnderstandable worchinges; and alle þoo þinges, þe whiche mowe be knowen wiþ any of þi fyue bodely wittes wiþoutforþe; and alle þoo þinges, þe whiche mow be  
 15 knowen by þi goostly wittes wiþinneforþ; and alle þoo þinges þat ben now, or zit haue ben, þof þei be not now; and alle þoo þinges þat ben not now, or zit mow be in tyme for to come, þof þei be not now. And, as it is possible to<sup>4</sup> me for to speke & to þee to vnderstonde, loke þat  
 f. 122a þou rise wiþ me in þis grace, | in a maner þat is þou woste<sup>5</sup> neuer how, to be onid wiþ hym þat is abouen alle substaunce<sup>6</sup> and al maner  
 20 knowyng. For whi, þorou þe ouerpassyng of þiself and alle oper binges, and þus makyng þiself clene fro al wordly, fleschly, & kyndely likyng in þin affeccioun, and fro al þing þat may be knowen by þe prope fourme in þi knowyng, þou schalt be drawn up abouen mynde in affeccioun to þe souereyn-substancial beme of þe godliche  
 25 derknes, alle þinges þus done away.

Igitur ista mihi quidem sint oratione postulata.

Tu autem, O amice Timothee, circa mysticas visiones forti contritione et sensus derelinque et intellectuales operationes, et omnia sensibilia et intelligibilia, et omnia non existentia et existentia; et sicut est possibile, ignote consurge ad ejus unionem qui est super omnem substantiam et cognitionem. Etenim excessu tui ipsius et omnium irretentibili et absoluto, munde ad supersubstantialem divinarum tenebrarum radium, cuncta auferens et a cunctis absolutus, sursumageris.

<sup>4</sup> to] for Kk.

<sup>5</sup> woste] om. Kk.

<sup>6</sup> substaunce] -s Har<sup>1</sup>.

Beware þat none of þees vnwise men ȝit wonyng in here wittys here  
 þees þinges. Þees men I clepe alle þoo þat ben fastnyd in knowing &  
 in louyng of þees þinges þat ben knowable and han bigynnyng, þe  
 whiche han opinion þat noþing is souereyn-substancialy abouen þees  
 forseide beyng þinges. Bot þei wenen for to knowen hym þat haþ 5  
 'maad derknes his hidyng<sup>7</sup> place' bi þat knowyng whiche is after  
 himself. And siþen, bi witnes of [þe]<sup>8</sup> prophete, þe godliche  
 techynges<sup>9</sup> of þees priuetees ben abouen þees men, what schul we sey  
 þan of þoo þat ben more vnwise, wonyng ȝit not only in here goostly  
 wittes of natureel philosophy, bot lowe downe byneþe in here bodely 10  
 wittes, þe whiche þei hauen bot in comoun wiþ only beestes? For  
 þees men kun not come to þe knowing of þe first cause, þe whiche is  
 souereynliche set abouen alle þinges, bot bi making of figures of þe  
 last and þe leest worþi þinges of þees beyng visible þinges, as stockes  
 or stones, and seyen þat it haþ noþing abouen þoo wickyd & 15  
 manyfolde formaciouns, maad of himself in here fantastik ymagyna-  
 tyue wittes.

It is noþing þus. Bot þus most it be: it behouip us for to sette, for to  
 see, & tor to afferme alle þe settynges & þe beynges of alle þees beyng  
 þinges in him þat is abouen al knowyng & mynde, as hym being þe 20 f. 122b  
 cause of alle þees þynges; and more propirly & more mixtely for to  
 denye alle þees being þinges, as hym souereinly beyng abouen hem  
 alle, ful heiz in hymself, departid fro hem alle; and not for to haue it  
 in opinyon þat þees deniinges of þees being þinges ben contrary to þe  
 first affermynges of hem, bot fastliche for to holde in siȝt of byleue 25  
 him for to be abouen alle doying away of þees beyng or beable þinges,

Vide autem ut nullus indoctorum ista audiat. Istos autem dico qui  
 in existentibus sunt formati, nihil super existentia supersubstant-  
 ialiter esse opinantes, sed putantes scire ea quae secundum ipsos est  
 cognitione, eum qui *ponit tenebras latibulum suum*. Si autem super istos  
 sunt divinae doctrinae mysteriorum, quid dicat quidem aliquis de  
 magis indoctis, quicumque omnibus superpositam causam et ex  
 postremis in existentibus figurant, et nihil ipsam habere dicunt  
 super compositas ab ipsis implas et multiformes formationes?

Oportet enim in ipsa, et omnes existentium ponere et affirmare  
 positiones, sicut omnium causa, et omnes ipsas magis proprie  
 negare, sicut super omnia superexistente; et non negationes  
 oppositas opinari esse affirmationibus, sed multo prius ipsam super

<sup>7</sup> hidyng] bydyng Kk.

<sup>8</sup> þe] þis Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> techynges] techyng Kk.

þe whiche in himself is abouen alle, 3e! boþe doying away and affermyng of hem alle.

And for þis skyle it is þat þe godliche Bertelmewe, þe Apostle of Criste, seiþ in his writyng þat Cristes deuinitee, it<sup>10</sup> is boþe moche  
 5 and it is leest; and þe Gospel is brode and moche, & eftsones he seiþ it is streite & litil. As it semþ to me, in þis he was rauischid to beholde abouen kynde, where he seiþ þat þe good cause of alle is boþe of many wordes & of schorte seiinges, as neiþer hauyng resoun ne vnderstandyng wiþ þe whiche he migt be comen to, þat is souereyn-<sup>11</sup>  
 10 substancialy set abouen alle þees beyng þinges. And ȝit nabeles not coueryd; bot verely and cleerly he apperþ open, not to<sup>12</sup> alle bot to hem only, þe whiche passen abouen boþe alle vnclene & clene beyng þinges, and þe whiche comyn abouen alle assenciouns of alle holy eendes or teérmes set vnto man or to aungel, and þe whiche forsaken  
 15 alle deuine ligtes & alle heuenly sounes & wordes, and entren wiþ affeccoun into derknes, where verely he is, as þe Scripture schewep, þe whiche is abouen al.

Ensaumple of þis se by þe story how þe godlich Moyses, mildest of men, first he is bodyn to be clensid boþe in hymself & also in hys  
 20 puple, and after þat to be departyd fro occasyon of fying. And þan  
 f. 123a after alle clensyng of hym<sup>13</sup> &<sup>14</sup> his puple, he herd trumpes|of many voices, & saw many ligtes wiþ schinyng, sendyng oute fro hem ful

privationes esse, quae est super omnem et ablationem et positionem.

Ita igitur divinus Bartholomaeus dicit, et multam Theologiam esse et minimam, et Evangelium latum et magnum, et rursus concisum: ut mihi videtur, illud supernaturaliter intendens, quia et multorum sermonum est bona omnium causa, et brevium dictionum simul et irrationabilis, sicut neque rationem habens neque intellectum, propter hoc quod omnibus ipsa supersubstantialiter est superposita, et solis non velate et vere apparet his qui et immunda et munda transeunt, et omnem omnium sanctarum extremitatum ascensum superveniunt, et omnia divina lumina et sonos et sermones coelestes derelinquunt, et ad caliginem introeunt, ubi vere est, sicut Eloquia dicunt, qui est super omnia.

Etenim non simpliciter divinus Moyses mundari ipse primum praecipitur, et rursus a non talibus segregari, et post omnem mundationem audit multarum vocum buccinas, et videt lumina

<sup>10</sup> it] *om.* Kk.

<sup>11</sup> souereyn] souereynly Kk.

<sup>12</sup> to] vnto Kk.

<sup>13</sup> of hym] *om.* Kk

<sup>14</sup> &] of *add.* Kk.

brode and ful clene bemes. Afterwardes he was departyd fro þe multitude of þis puple, & wiþ preestes þat were chosen he atteynid to þe higenes of þe godliche assenciouns, þe whiche is þe teermes & þe boundes of mans vnderstondyng, be it neuer so holpen wiþ grace. And ȝit in al þis he was not wiþ God, so as it acordeþ to þe 5 perfeccioun of þis deuinitee; bot he had in contemplacioun an obiect not hymself, for he may not be seen by þat ȝe. Bot þe place where he was, þat was his obiecte. And þat place betokeniþ þe higest godliche beholdynges, passyng abouen & hauyng in subieccioun alle mans resons, as þe lady haþ hir maydens. By þe whiche godliche 10 beholdynges þe presence of him þat is abouen alle þinkyng is souereynly schewid to mans vnderstondynges, and setteþ hym abouen þe natureel teermes of hymself. And þan he is assoilid boþe fro þe vnderstondable worching mygtes of his soule, & fro þe obiectes of hem, þat is for to sey, alle þoo þinges in þe whiche þei worchen. 15

In þis tyme it was þat Moyses in syngulertee of affeccioun was departid from þees beforeseyde chosen preestes, & entrid by hymself þe derknes of vnknowyng, þe whiche derknes is vereliche hid; in þe whiche he schittip<sup>15</sup> al knowable knowing; and algates he is maad in a maner þat is inuisible & vngropable for to fele in experience þe 20 presence of hym þat is abouen alle þinges, not hauyng felyng ne þinkyng of no beyng þing, ne ȝit of hymself. Bot in auoidyng of al knowyng þat is algates vnknownen he is knittyd vnto hym on þe best maner; and in þat þat he knoweþ noþing, he is maad to be knowyng abouen mynde. 25

multa cum fulgore emittentia mundos et multum effusos radios; postea a multis segregatur, et cum electis sacerdotibus ad summitatem divinarum ascensionum pertingit: quamvis per haec quidem non sit cum Deo, sed contemplatur non ipsum (invisibilis est enim), sed locum ubi est. Hoc autem puto significare, divinissima visorum et intellectorum esse subjectas quasdam rationes subjectorum omnia excedenti, per quae praesentia ejus, quae est super omnem cogitationem, monstratur intelligibilibus summitatibus sanctissimorum locorum ejus superveniens. Tunc et ab ipsis absolvitur visis et videntibus, et ad caliginem ignorantiae intrat, quae caligo vere est mystica: in qua claudit omnes cognitivas susceptiones, et impalpabili omnino et invisibili fit omnis exsistens ejus qui est super omnia, et nullius, neque sui ipsius neque alterius; omnino autem ignoto vacatione omnis cognitionis secundum melius unitus, et eo quod nihil cognoscit, super mentem cognoscens.

<sup>15</sup> schittip] schyneþ Kk.



f. 123<sup>b</sup> II Capitulum.

HOW WE SCHUL BE ONID TO þE CAUSE OF AL, BEYNG ABOUEN  
AL

In þis souereyn-schining derknes we prey to be done up, &, bi  
5 nouȝt seeyng & vnknowyng, for to see & for to knowe hym þat is  
abouen al seing & al knowyng in þis same not se & not knowe; and  
souereyn-substancialy for to preise, bi doing awaye of alle þees beyng  
þinges, hym þat is souereyn-substancial in himself. þe maner of  
whiche doying awaye may be seen bi þis ensauple þat folowep.

10 Here is a man hauyng a sounde stok of þe grettest quantitee  
wipoutyn hym, liing before hym, and hauyng wipinne hym entent &  
craft to make an ymage of þe leest quantitee, of þat place of þe wode,  
þe whiche is, bi mesuryng of riȝt lynyng, in þe sentre & þe middes of  
þat same stok. First þou wost wel by natureel wit þat er he may com  
15 to for to see þat ymage bi cleer bodely siȝt of his outward iȝe, or for to  
schewe it to be seen vnto oper, þe whiche he haþ in hymself by cleer  
crafte of ymaginacioun, þe stok ȝit beyng hole on euery<sup>16</sup> side, he  
most algates by craft & by instrumentes voide awaye alle þe outward  
partyes of þat wode, being aboute & lettyng þe siȝt of þat<sup>17</sup> same  
20 ymage. Riȝt so we must haue us in þis hiȝe deuine werk, as it is  
possible to be comyn to in vnderstondyng by soche a boistous  
ensauple of so contrary<sup>18</sup> a kynde.

For we moten be in þis werk as it were men makyng an ymage of  
his nakyd, vnmaad, & vnbigonne kynde; þe whiche, þof it be in itself  
25 & to itself<sup>19</sup> euermore free—wipinne alle creatures, not includid;  
wipouten alle creatures, not schit oute; abouen alle creatures, not  
borne up; bineþe alle creatures, not put down; behynde alle  
creatures, not put bak; before alle creatures, not dreuen forþe—  
f. 124<sup>a</sup> neuerþeles ȝit, to mans vnderstondyng, þe whiles it is knittyd to  
30 þis corumpid bodi, he is neuermore cleerly schewid, bot as it  
were a þing þat were couerhid<sup>20</sup> & ouerlappid & ouerleide wip  
vnnoumerable sensible bodies & vnderstondable substaunces, wip  
many a merueilous fantastik ymage, conielid as it were in a kumbros  
clog abouten hym, as þe ymage of þe ensauple wretyn before is hid  
35 in þe þik, greet, sounde stok. þe whiche koumbrous clogge, þus  
conielyd of þees vnnoummerable diuersitees, we moten algates  
craftely<sup>21</sup> pare awaye<sup>22</sup> by sleiȝt of grace in þis deuine werk, as stronge  
letters contrariing vnto þis clene hid siȝt. And þus bi þis sleiȝt gracious

<sup>16</sup> euery] euerych a Kk.

<sup>17</sup> þat] þe Kk.

<sup>18</sup> contrary] contraryouse Kk.

<sup>19</sup> & to itself] om. Kk.

<sup>20</sup> couerhid] couered Kk.

<sup>21</sup> craftely] om. Kk.

<sup>22</sup> awaye] craftely add. Kk.

doying away of hem alle we moten cleerliche preisyn, & abouen mynde, þe self fairheed in þe self nakid,<sup>23</sup> vnmaad, & vnbigonne kynde; in a maner þat is vnknowen how vnto alle, bot only to þoo þat it proueþ; and ȝit euermore to þoo same, bot onliche in tyme of þe<sup>24</sup> proef.

5

It behouip us alle þat ben practisers of þis deuinite for to make oure deniinges on þe contrary maner to oure afferminges; for whi we setting oure affermynges begynnen at þe moost worþi þinges of þees beyng þinges, & so forþe by þe menes we descende to þe leest, bot in oure deniinges we begynnyn at þe leest, &<sup>25</sup> stien up to þe moste, and eftsones by þe menes, from þe hiest to þe last, & fro þe last to þe hiest aȝein, we foulden alle togeders & done hem away, þat we mowen cleerliche knowe þat vnknowyng, þe whiche is wallid aboute from al knowable miztes in alle þees being þinges; and þat we mowen see þat souereyn-substancial<sup>26</sup> derknes, priueliche hid fro al lizt in þees being þinges.

10

15

### [III Capitulum].<sup>27</sup>

WHICHE BOOKES BEN OF AFERMING<sup>28</sup> & WHICHE OF DENIING  
DIUINITEE

And for þis skyle in oure oþer bookes of deuinitee, | & moste in þe bookes þat ben affermyng deuinitee, þe whiche been þees: þe first *Of þe Ierarchies of Heuen*, & þe secound *Of þe Ierarchies of þis Fiztyng Chirche*—in boþe þees we hauen set wiþ preisynghow þat hiȝe, deuine, synguleer kynde, þe whiche is God, is one; how it is þre, þe whiche after itself is clepid Faderheed & Sonheed & þe<sup>29</sup> Holi Goostheed; how þe liztes of goodnes wonyng in þe herte borionid oute<sup>30</sup> of þat inmaterial, & þat only good in hymself & of hymself; & how þat in þis wonyng in hymself by onheed of substaunce, & in hymself by trinite of persones, & in hem togeders wiþ an euen euerlastyng borionyng, þei dwellyn stille vnpassyngliche; how þat þe souereyn-substancial Jesu is maad substaunce in þe trewþes of mankynde; and alle<sup>31</sup> oþer soche þinges þat ben expressid in þe Scripture, ben affermyngliche preisid in þoo two bookes.

20 f. 124b

25

30

And in þe [booke]<sup>32</sup> *Of Goddes Names* it is affermyngliche set & preisid how þat he is namyd Good, how Beyng, how Liif, how

35

<sup>23</sup> nakid] and *add.* Kk.

<sup>24</sup> þe] *om.* Kk.

<sup>25</sup> &] at Kk.

<sup>26</sup> substancial] substance alle Kk.

<sup>27</sup> III Capitulum] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> AFERMING] DIUINITE *add.* Kk.

<sup>29</sup> þe] *om.* Kk.

<sup>30</sup> oute] *om.* Kk.

<sup>31</sup> alle] *om.* Kk.

<sup>32</sup> booke] bookes, -s *can.* Har<sup>1</sup>, bokes Kk.

Wisdom, & how Vertewe, & what oper þat þei be of þe vnderstand-  
 able namynges of God. Bot in þe book *Of þe*<sup>33</sup> *Gadering of Deuine*  
*Sentence*, þere I haue affermyngliche set wiþ preising alle þe names  
 þat ben applied vnto God from þees sensible þinges—as whiche  
 5 ben þe godliche<sup>34</sup> fourmes, whiche ben þe godliche figures, whiche  
 ben his partiees & his instrumentes, whiche ben his places & his  
 enourmentes, whiche ben his frenesiees & his heuinesses,<sup>35</sup> whiche  
 ben his woodnesses<sup>36</sup> & his dronkenesses,<sup>37</sup> whiche ben his gloteniees  
 & his oþes & his cursynges, whiche ben his slepynges & whiche ben  
 f. 125a 10 his wakynges—and what oper sensible formes þat on any maner|in  
 Holy Scripture ben applied vnto God.

Alle þees I deme þou hast seen; & how þees last þinges ben of mo  
 wordes þan þe first þinges. For whi it behouip algates be þat þe first  
 two bookes of þe *Ierarchies* & þe openyng of þe *Godliche Names* in þe  
 15 þrid book were of fewer wordes þan þis *Gaderid Book of Deuine*  
*Sentence* touchid here laste. For inasmoche as we beholden to þinges  
 þat ben moost hize, insomoche þe wordes þat ben spokyn of hem to  
 oure beholdynges maken streite oure vnderstandyng. As it is now  
 here in þis book, whan we entren into þe derknes þat is abouen  
 20 mynde, we schul not onliche fynde þe schortyng of wordes, bot as it  
 were a madnes & a parfite vnresonabiltee of alle þat we seyn. And in  
 alle þe oper bookes oure enditing descendid fro þe heigest þinges to þe  
 lowest; and after þe quantitee of descendyng, it spred oute to a greet  
 multitude. Bot now it assendiþ in þis book fro þe lowest þinges to þe  
 25 higest; and after þe mesure of þe ascencioun—þe whiche is somtyme  
 sodeyner þen oper—it is maad streite. And after alle soche assen-  
 cioun, it schal al be wiþouten voice, & al it schal be knittid to a þing  
 þat is vnspekable.

Bot happiliche þou askist: What is þe skyle whi þat in affirmatyue  
 30 deuinitee we begynne at þe moost worþi þinges, & in þe negatyue  
 deuinitee at þe leest worþi þinges? Þis is þe skyle. For whan we wolen  
 merk God<sup>38</sup> bi settyng of alle vnderstandable þinges, þe whiche in  
 hymself is abouen alle settyng & alle vnderstandyng, it is moost  
 acordyng þat we set first þoo þinges þat ben moost worþi & moost nize  
 f. 125b 35 vnto hym. And gif we wolen merk hym by doing away|of alle  
 vnderstandable þinges, it acordeþ moost þat we first do away þoo  
 þinges, þe whiche be seen to be moost fer from hym. As þus: more niz  
 & more acordyng vnto hym is liif or goodnes þen is ayer or a stone;

<sup>33</sup> þe] om. Kk.

<sup>34</sup> godliche] goodliche Kk.

<sup>35</sup> heuinesses] -nes Kk.

<sup>36</sup> woodnesses] -nes Kk.

<sup>37</sup> dronkenesses] -nes Kk.

<sup>38</sup> God] by god add. Kk.

and wiþ more acordyng euydence we schuld do away from hym glotenye & woodnes, þan spekyng or vnderstandyng. And ȝit he in hymself is abouen boþe alle spekyng and alle vnderstandyng.

[IV Capitulum]

ÞAT HE IS NONE OF SENSIBLE ÞINGES, ÞE WHICHE IS CAUSE OF<sup>5</sup>  
HEM ALLE

We put away first from God þing þat is wiþoutyn substaunce, and al þing þat is not, begynnyng fro þe moost fer; for þat þing is more ferþer þen þoo þinges þat bot only ben, & leuen not. [And þen we put away þoo þinges þat bot only ben and leuen not,]<sup>39</sup> for þat is ferþer þen 10 þat þat is and leuiþ. And after þat we put away þoo þinges þat ben & leuyn & lackyn felyng; for þoo ben ferþer þen þoo þat hauen felyng. And after þat we put away þoo<sup>40</sup> þat hauen felyng & lacken<sup>41</sup> reson & vnderstandyng; for þoo ben ferþer þen þoo þat hauen reson & vnderstanding. And wiþ alle þees þinges we remowe fro hym al 15 bodely þing,<sup>42</sup> & alle þoo þinges þat fallyn to body, or to bodely þinges—as is schap, fourme, qualitee,<sup>43</sup> quantitee, wigt, steedlynnes, visibilittee, sensibilitee, & al doying, & suffryng; al inordynacioun of fleshly concupiscence, al troublid complexion of material passyon, al vnmytfulnes soget vnto sensible chaunes, al needfulnes of ligt; & 20 al generacyon, & al corrupcioun,<sup>44</sup> al deuision, & al passibilittee, & al temporeel flowyng bi proces of<sup>45</sup> tymes. For he ne is any of þees þinges, ne haþ any of þees, or any or alle þees oþer sensyble þinges.

[V Capitulum].

ÞAT HE IS NONE OF VNDERSTONDABLE ÞINGES, ÞE WHICHE IS<sup>25</sup>  
CAUSE OF HEM ALLE

Also we, ascendyng & begynnyng oure deniinges & oure doinges f. 126a away at þe hiȝest of vnderstandable þinges, seyen þat he is neiþer soule, ne aungel, ne he<sup>46</sup> haþ fantasie, ne opinion, ne resoun, ne vnderstandyng; ne he is reson, ne vnderstanding;<sup>47</sup> ne he is seyde, ne 30 vnderstonden. And—þat we renne fro þees hiȝe þinges by menes to þe last þinges—he is no noumbre, ne ordre, ne greetnes, ne litylnes, ne euenheed, ne licnes, ne vnlicnes; ne he stondeþ, ne he moueþ, ne he holdeþ no sylence, ne he spekiþ. And—þat we torne aȝein to þe hiȝest þinges bi som menes, & eend oure denyinges at þinges moost 35

<sup>39</sup> And . . . leuen not] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup> Kk. *See Commentary.*

<sup>40</sup> þinges þat ben & leuyn . . . away þoo] *om.* Kk.

<sup>41</sup> lacken] lacking Kk.

<sup>42</sup> þing] -es Kk.

<sup>43</sup> qualitee] or *add.* Kk.

<sup>44</sup> corrupcioun] and *add.* Kk.

<sup>45</sup> of] & Kk.

<sup>46</sup> he] *om.* Kk.

<sup>47</sup> ne he . . . vnderstanding] *om.* Kk.

hize—we sey þat he haþ no vertewe, ne he is vertewe, ne ligt, ne he  
 leuiþ, ne he is liif, ne he is substaunce, ne eelde, ne tyme, ne þer is  
 any vnderstandable touching of hym, ne he is kunnyng, ne trewþe,  
 ne kyngdom, ne wisdom, ne on, ne vnitee, ne Godheed, or goodnes;  
 5 ne he is spirit after þat we vnderstonde spirit; ne sonheed, ne  
 faderheed, ne any oþer þing knowen of us, or of any þat ben; ne he is  
 anyþing of not-beyng þinges, ne anyþing of beyng þinges;<sup>48</sup> ne any of  
 þoo þinges þat ben knowen knowen hym after þat he is; ne he knowiþ  
 þoo þinges þat ben after þei ben in himself, bot after þat þei ben in  
 10 hym; ne þer is any wey of reson or vnderstondyng<sup>49</sup> to com vnto  
 hym, ne name, ne knowyng of hym; ne he is derknes, ne he is ligt, ne  
 he is errour, ne he is trewþe; ne (knittyngly to sey) þer is of hym no  
 settyng, ne doying away; bot whan we affermingly set or deniingly do  
 away alle or any of þoo þinges þat ben not he, hym we mowe neiþer  
 15 set ne do away, ne on any vnderstandable maner afferme him, ne  
 f. 126b denie him. | For þe parfite & þe singuleer cause of al most nedelynges  
 be wiþoutyn comparison of þe moost hize heigt abouen alle, boþe  
 settyng & doying away. And his not-vnderstandable ouerpassyng is  
 vn-vnderstandably abouen alle affermyng and deniinge.

## EXPLICIT

<sup>48</sup> ne anyþing of beyng þinges] *om.* Kk.

<sup>49</sup> vnderstondyng] for *add.* Kk.



## A TRETYSSE OF þE STODYE OF WYSDOME þAT MEN CLEPEN BENIAMYN<sup>1</sup>

A greet clerk þat men clepyn Richard of Seinte Victore, in a book f. 111a  
þat he makip of þe studie of wisdom, witnessip & seiþ þat two miȝtes  
ben in a mans soule, ȝouen of þe Fader of heuen, of whome alle good  
comip, þe tone is reson, þe toþer is affecciou or wille.<sup>2</sup> Þorow reson  
we knowe, & þorow affecciou we fele or<sup>3</sup> loue. Of reson springeþ riȝt 5  
counselles & goostly wittes, and of affecciou springeþ [holy]<sup>4</sup> desires  
and ordeynd felynges. And riȝt as Rachel & Lya weren boþe wyues  
to Jacob, riȝt so mans soule, þorow liȝt [of]<sup>5</sup> knowyng in þe reson &  
swetnes of loue in þe affecciou, is spousid vnto God. By Jacob is  
vnderstonden God; by Rachel is vnderstonden reson; by Lya is 10  
vnderstonden affecciou.

Iche of þese wyues, Rachel & Lya, toke to hem a mayden. Rachel  
toke Bala, and Lya toke Zelfa. Bala was a greet jangler, and Zelfa  
was euer dronken & þristy. By Bala is vnderstonden ymaginacyon,  
þe whiche is seruauunt vnto reson as Bala was to Rachel. By Zelfa is 15  
vnderstonden sensualite, þe whiche is seruauunt vnto affecciou as  
Zelfa was to Lya. And insomochē ben þees maydens needful to þeire  
ladies þat wiþouten hem alle þis world myȝt serue hem of nouȝt. For  
whi of alle þees outward bodeli þinges,<sup>6</sup> wiþoutyn ymaginacioun  
reson may not knowe, and wiþoutyn sensualite affecciou may not fele. 20

And ȝit ymaginacioun criep so [vncouenably]<sup>7</sup> in þe eres of oure  
herte,<sup>8</sup> þat for ouȝt þat reson hir lady may do, ȝit sche may not stille  
hir. And þerfore it is þat oftymes whan we schuld<sup>9</sup> praye, so many  
diuerse fantasies of yuel þouȝtes crien in oure hertes þat on no wise  
we mowen by oure owne myȝtes driue hem away. And þus it is wel 25  
prouid þat Bala is a foule<sup>10</sup> jangler. & also sensualite is euermore so

<sup>1</sup> So Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; *om.* Har<sup>1</sup> Ar Har<sup>5</sup> C G W; The boke of the xii patriarkys F; A tretise þat men  
callip Richarde of Seynt Victor R; A veray deuoute treatyse (named Benyamyn) of the  
myghtes and vertues of mannes soule, & of the way to true contemplacyon/compyle by a  
noble & famous doctoure, a man of grete holynes & deuocyon/named Rycharde of Saynt  
Vyctor Pw; A book þt Ricard of Seynt Victore maad vp þe historie of Joseph & of his xii sones  
and is callid Beniamyn Ii.

<sup>2</sup> or wille] *om.* Ar Har<sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G W Ii (*henceforth* Ar †).

<sup>3</sup> fele or] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>4</sup> holy] goostly Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> of] or Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> of alle . . . þinges] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>7</sup> vncouenably] So R G; vnkunnyngly Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar Har<sup>5</sup> W; inportunably F;  
encouenyently Pw. *See Commentary.*

<sup>8</sup> herte] hertes Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> schuld] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>10</sup> foule] grete Kk Har<sup>2</sup> F G.

f. 111b pristy þat al þat affeccoun hir|lady may fele may not ȝit sleckyn hir  
 þirst. þe drinke þat sche desireþ is þe luste of fleschly, kyndly, &  
 wordly delices, of þe whiche,<sup>11</sup> þe more þat sche drinkeþ, þe sorer  
 sche þristeþ. For whi for to fyllen þe appetite of þe sensualite, al þis  
 5 world may not suffise. And þerfore it is þat oftymes when we praye  
 or þinkyn on God and goostly þinges, we wolde feyn fele swetnes of  
 loue in oure affeccoun, & ȝit we mowen not, for we ben so besy to  
 fede þe concupiscence of oure sensualite. For euirmore it is gredyly  
 askyng, & we haue a fleschly compassion þerof. And þus it is wel  
 10 prouid þat Zelfa is euermore dronken & pristy.

And rigt as Lya conceiuyd of Jacob & brouȝt forþe seuene childre,  
 and Zelfa conceiuyd of Jacob and brouȝt forþe two childre, and  
 Bala conceiuyd of Jacob & brouȝt forþe two childre, and Rachel  
 conceiuyd of Jacob & brouȝt forþe two chyl dren: rigt so affeccoun  
 15 conceiuiþ þorow grace of God and bryngeþ forþe seuene vertewes; and  
 þe sensualite conceiuiþ þorow grace of God & bringeþ forþe two  
 vertewes; also ymaginacioun conceiuiþ þorow grace of God, and  
 bryngeþ forþe two vertewes or two beholdynges; and also þe reson  
 conceiuyþ þorow grace of God, & bryngeþ forþe two vertewes. And  
 20 þe names of þees<sup>12</sup> children & of þeire vertewes scholen be knowen by  
 þis figure\* þat folowep:

f. 112a

*Husbond*  
 Jacob—God

*Wyfe*  
 Lya—affeccyon

*Wyfe*  
 Rachel—reson

*Mayden*  
 Zelfa—sensualite

*Mayden*  
 Bala—ymagynacioun

<i>þe sons of Jacob of Zelfa</i>	<i>þe sons of Jacob of Lya</i>	<i>þe sons of Jacob of Rachel</i>	<i>þe sons of Jacob of Bala</i>
Gad—abstynence	Ruben—drede of God	Joseph—discesion	Dan—sigt of peynes to come
Asser—pacyence	Symeon—sorow of synne Leuy—hope of forgeuenes Judas—loue of good God Isachar—joie of inward swetnes Zabulon—parfite hate of synne Dyna—ordeynde schame of synne	Beniamyn—con- templacyon	Neptalym—sigt of joyes to come

<sup>11</sup> whiche] ay (euere, euermore) *add.* Ar †.

<sup>12</sup> þees] þere Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pw G; þe W.

\*A full comparison of the figures in the different MSS. would be impracticable here. Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> contain the clearest diagram. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> differ from Har<sup>1</sup> only in spelling; Kk also adds numbers to the

In þis figure is schewyd a party<sup>13</sup> of Jacob, & of his wyues and þeire f. 112b  
 maydens, & alle þeire children. Here it is to schewe on what maner  
 þei were getyn, & in what ordire. First it is to seyn of þe children of  
 Lya, for whi it is red þat sche first conceyued. Þe sons of Jacob of Lya  
 ben nouȝt elles to bemene bot ordeynd affeccions or felynges in a 5  
 mans soule; for ȝif þei weren vnordeynd, þan weren þei not his sones.  
 Also þe seuē children of Lya ben seuē vertewes, for vertewe is not  
 elles bot an ordeynd and a mesurid felyng of a mans soule. Þan is  
 mans feling in soule ordeynd when it is of þat þing þat it schuld be.  
 Þan is it mesurid when it is as moche as it schuld be. Þees felynges in 10  
 a mans soule mowen be now ordeind & mesurid, & now vnordeind  
 & vnmesurid. Bot when þei ben ordeynd & mesurid, þan ben þei  
 acomptyd amonges þe sones of Jacob.

HOW ÞE VERTEWE OF DREDE RISEþ IN ÞE  
 AFCECCYOUN

15

Þe first childe þat Lya conceyuid of Jacob was<sup>14</sup> Ruben, þat is  
 drede. And forþi it is wretyn in þe psalme: 'Þe bygynnyng of  
 wysdom, drede of oure Lorde God.'<sup>15</sup> Þis is þe first-felt vertewe in a  
 mans affeccion, wiþoutyn whiche none oþer may be had. And  
 þerfore, whoso desireþ to haue soche a sone, hym behoueþ besily & 20  
 oft also beholde þe iuels þat he haþ done. He schal on o partye þink þe  
 greetnes of his trespas,<sup>16</sup> and on anoþer partye þe power of þe  
 domesman. Of soche a consideracioun springeþ drede, þat is to sey  
 he, þat Ruben, þat þorow riȝt is clepid þe sone of sȝt. For verrely<sup>17</sup> is  
 he blent<sup>18</sup> þat seeþ not þe peynes þat ben to come & dredeþ not to 25  
 synne. And wele is þis Ruben clepid þe sone of sȝt, for whan he was  
 borne his moder cied & seyde: 'God haþ seen my meeknes'. And

<sup>13</sup> a party] apertely F R Pw G.

<sup>14</sup> was] is Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>15</sup> God] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>16</sup> trespas] gylt Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>17</sup> verrely] vttyrly (can. Kk) F Pw G; wytterly Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar Har<sup>5</sup> C R W li.

<sup>18</sup> blent] blynde Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

\*cont.]

children according to the order of their birth. The readings of most of the other MSS. indicate a figure in their original, subsequently copied, translated, or summarized, with varying degrees of closeness. In the MSS. of Group B the order of the groups of children is unfixed. Agreement in the variants of interpretation further adds to the distinctions between Group A and Group B. Thus:

Ruben—drede of God] drede of peyne Ar Har<sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G

Symeon—sorow of synne] sorow of synnes Ar F C R Pw G

Judas—loue of good God] luf of riȝtwysnesse Ar Har<sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G

Isachar—joie of inward swetnes] joye in inwarde swetnesse Pw G

Zabulon—parfite hate of synne] hatraden of synes Ar; hatreden of syne Har<sup>5</sup> C; hatred of synne F R Pw; hate of synne G

Dyna—ordeynd schame of synne] ardaunt (ordaynde Har<sup>5</sup> R; ordred F; ordynat Pw G) schame Ar Har<sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G

Dan—sȝt of peynes to come] sȝt of peyne to (at Har<sup>5</sup>) come Ar Har<sup>5</sup> R Pw G

Neptalym—sȝt of joyes to come] sȝt of ioie to (at Har<sup>5</sup>) come Ar Har<sup>5</sup> F C R Pw G

- f. 113a mans soule in soche a consideracioun|of his olde synne<sup>19</sup> & þe power of þe domesman beginniþ þan trewly to se God by feling of drede, and also to be seen of God by rewardyng of pite.

#### HOW SOROW RISEþ IN þE AFFECCIOUN

- 5 Whiles Ruben waxeþ, Symeon is borne, for aftir drede it nedip greetly þat sorow come sone; for euer þe more þat man dredeþ þe pyne þat he haþ deserued, þe bittirlier he soroweþ þe synne þat he haþ done. Lya in þe birþe of Symeon cried and seyde: 'Oure Lorde haþ herd me be had in dispite.' And forþi is Symeon clepid *heryng*; for  
10 when a man bitterly soroweþ & dispiseþ his olde synnes, þan begynneþ he to be herde of God & also<sup>20</sup> to here þis blessid sentence of Goddes owne moup: 'Blessed be þey þat sorowen, for þei scholen be coumforted.' For in what oure þat a synner soreweþ & turneþ fro his synne, he schal be saaf. þus witnessiþ Holy Scripture.<sup>21</sup> And also  
15 by Ruben he is mekyd, and by Symeon he is contrite, & haþ conpunccioun of teres. Bot as witnessiþ Dauid in þe psalme: 'Hert contrite & mekyd, God schal not dispise.' And wiþouten doute soche sorow bringeþ in<sup>22</sup> trewe coumforte.

#### HOW HOPE RISEþ IN þE AFFECCYON

- 20 Bot I prey þee what coumforte may be to hem þat dreden trewly & bitterly sorowen here olde synnes, ouzt bot a trewe hope of forþeuenes, þe whiche is þe þrid sone of Jacob? þat is Leuy, þe whiche is clepid in þe story *doynge to*. For when þe oþer<sup>23</sup> two children, drede & sorow, ben zouen of God to a mans soule, wiþouten doute he, þis  
25 þrid þat is hope, schal not be delaied. Bot he schal be done to, as þe story witesseþ of Leuy þat when his two breþren, Ruben & Symeon, weren zouen to here moder Lya, he, þis Leuy, was done to.  
Take hede of þis worde þat he was done to & not zouen. And  
f. 113b þerfore it is seyde þat men<sup>24</sup> schul not presume of hope|of forþeuenes  
30 before þe tyme þat his herte be mekyd in drede & contryte in sorow. Wiþoutyn þees two, hope is presumpcioun; and where þees two ben, hope is done to. And þus after sorow comeþ sone coumforte, as Dauid telleþ in þe psalme þat 'after þe mochilnes of my sorowes in myn herte', he seiþ to oure Lorde þat his coumfortes han gladid his  
35 soule. And also þerfore it is þat þe Holy Goost is clepid Paraclitus, þat is coumfortour, for ofte he voucheþsaaf to coumforte a sorowful soule.

<sup>19</sup> synne] -s Ar †.

<sup>20</sup> also] for Ar †.

<sup>21</sup> Scripture] writte Ar †.

<sup>22</sup> bringeþ in] is Ar †.

<sup>23</sup> oþer] first Ar †.

<sup>24</sup> men] a man Ar †.

## HOW LUF RISIÞ IN AFFECCIOUN

Fro now forþ begynneþ a maner of homlynes for to growe bitwix God & mans soule, and also on a maner a kyndelyng of loue; insomochil þat ofttymes he felip hym not only be visityd of God, bot greetly coumfortyd in his comyng.<sup>25</sup> Þis homlynes & þis kyndelyng of 5 loue first felt Lya when, after þat Leuy was borne, sche cried wiþ a greet joie & seyde: 'Now schal myn housbonde be couplid to me.' Þe trewe spouse of oure soule is God. And þan ben we trewly couplid vnto hym when we drawe nere hym by hope & soþfast loue. And as after hope comeþ loue, so after Leuy was Judas borne, þe feerþe sone 10 of Lia.

Lya in his birþe cried and seyde: 'Now schal I schriue to oure Lorde.' And þerfore in þe story is Judas clepid *schrift*. Also mans soule in þis degre of loue offreþ it cleerly to God, and seiþ þus:<sup>26</sup> 'Now schal I schryue to oure Lorde.' For before þis felyng of loue in a 15 mans soule, alle þat he doþ is done more for drede<sup>27</sup> þen for loue. Bot in þis state a mans soule felip God so swete, so mercyful, so good, so curteis, so trewe, & so kynde, so feipful,<sup>28</sup> so louely, & so homly, þat þer leuiþ noþing in hym—migt,<sup>29</sup> kunnyng, ne wylle—þat he ne offreþ it cleerly, frely, & homly vnto hym. Þis schrift is not only of synne, 20 bot of þe goodnes of God. | Greet tokyn of loue it is whan a man tellip f. 114a to God þat he is good. Of þis schrift spekiþ Dauid ful ofttymes in þe psalme<sup>30</sup> whan he seiþ: 'Makiþ it knowe to God for he is good.'

Lo, now haue we seyde of foure sones of Lya. And after þis<sup>31</sup> tyl eftsones sche left beryng of children. And so mans soule wenip þat it 25 suffiseþ to it when it felip þat it loueþ þe trewe goodes. And it is inow to saluacion, bot not to perfeccioun; for it fallip to a parfite soule boþe to be enflaumyd wiþ þe fiir of loue in þe affeccioun, and also to be illumynynd wiþ list of knowyng in þe reson.

HOW ÞE DOUBLE SIȜT OF PEYNE & IOY RISEÞ IN ÞE  
YMGINACIOUN

30

Þus when Judas [was borne],<sup>32</sup> þat is to sey when loue & desire of vnseen trewe goodes is rysing & waxing in a mans affeccioun, þan coueiteþ Rachel for to bere some children. Þat is to sey, þan coueiteþ reson to knowe þees þinges þat affeccyon felyþ. For as it falleþ to<sup>33</sup> 35 Lya, þe affeccioun, for to loue, so it falleþ to Rachel, þe reson, for

<sup>25</sup> comyng] but oftetymes also he felip hym fyld wiþ an vnspokeable ioie *add.* Ar †. *See Commentary.*

<sup>26</sup> þus] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>27</sup> drede] awe Ar †.

<sup>28</sup> feipful] & *add.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> migt] witte *add.* Ar †.

<sup>30</sup> psalme] sauter Ar †.

<sup>31</sup> þis] þes Ar †.

<sup>32</sup> was borne] waxeþ Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>33</sup> to] *add.* Har<sup>1</sup>.



to knowe. Of Lya, affeccoun, springeþ mesurid and ordeynd<sup>34</sup>  
felynges; and of Rachel, reson, springeþ rȳt knowynges & cleer  
vnderstondyng. And euer þe more þat Judas waxeþ, þat is to sey  
loue, so mochel more desireþ Rachel beryng of children. þat is to  
5 sey, reson studieþ after knowyng.

Bot who is þat þat wote not how hard it is & nȳhond impossible to a  
flesc[h]ly soule, þe whiche is ȳt ruyde in goostly studies, for to rise in  
knowyng of vnseable þinges, & for to set þe ȳze of contemplacioun in  
goostly þinges? For whi a soule þat is ȳt ruyde & fleschly knowiþ  
10 nouȳt bot bodely þinges, and noping comeþ ȳt to þe mynde bot  
only seable þinges. And neuerþeles ȳt it lokyþ inward as it may, and  
þat it may not se ȳt clearly by goostly knowyng, it þinkiþ by  
ymagynacioun.

f. 114b And þis is|þe cause whi Rachel had first chyldren of hir mayden  
15 þan of hirself. And so it is þat þof al a mans soule may not ȳt gete þe  
lyȳt of goostly knowyng in þe reson, ȳt it þinkeþ it sweet to holde þe  
mynde on<sup>35</sup> God & goostly þinges in ymagynacioun. As by Rachel,  
reson, so by hir mayden Bala we vnderstonde ymagynacioun. And  
þerfore reson schewiþ þat it is more profitable for to þink on goostly  
20 þinges in what maner so it be—ȳe, ȳif it be in kyndelyng of oure  
desire wiþ som fayre ymagynacioun—þan it is for to þink[on]<sup>36</sup>  
vanitees & diseyuable þinges of þis worlde. And forþi of Bala weren  
borne þees two, Dan & Neptalym. Dan is to sey siȳt of peynes to  
come, and Neptalym siȳt of ioies to come.

25 Þees two children ben ful needful, & also speedful vnto a worching  
soule, þe tone for to put doun alle<sup>37</sup> sogestȳons of synnes,<sup>38</sup> & þe toþer  
to rere<sup>39</sup> up oure wille in worching of good, & in kyndelyng of oure  
desire. For as it falliþ to Dan to put doune yuel sogestȳons of synne  
by siȳt of peynes to come, so it falliþ to þe toþer broþer, Neptalym, to  
30 reyse up oure willes in worching of good, & in kyndelyng of holy  
desires by þe siȳt of ioies to come. And þerfore holy men whan þei ben  
sterid to any vnleueful þing, be it in rising of any foule þouȳt, als  
sone<sup>40</sup> þei set before here mynde þe peynes þat ben to come, & so þei  
sleckyn here temptacioun in þe begynnyng, er it rise in any foule  
35 delite in<sup>41</sup> þeire soule. And as ofte as þeire deuocioun and þeire likyng  
in God & goostly þinges cesen & waxen colde (as oftȳmes it befalliþ

<sup>34</sup> mesurid . . . ordeynd] *trs.* Ar †.

<sup>35</sup> on] of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>36</sup> on] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> alle] yuel (ille Har<sup>5</sup> F) Ar †.

<sup>38</sup> synnes] synne Ar †.

<sup>39</sup> rere] rayse Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>40</sup> sone] ofte Ar †.

<sup>41</sup> in] to Ar †.

in þis liif for corrupcioun of flesche & many oþer skyles): soo oft þei set before þeire mynde þe ioie þat is to come. And so þei kyndelen here wille wiþ holy desires, & distroyen|þeire temptacioun in þe f. 115a biggynnyng, er it come to any werynes<sup>42</sup> or heuynes of slewþe.

And forþi þat wiþ Dan we dampne alle<sup>43</sup> vnleueful þougtes, þerfore 5 he is wel clepid in þe story *dome*. And also his fader, Jacob, seide of hym þus: 'Dan schal deme his folk.' And also it is seyde in þe story þat when Bala brougt forþ Dan, Rachel seide þus: 'Oure Lorde haþ demed me.' þat is to sey: 'Oure Lorde haþ euenyd me vnto my sister, Lya.' And þus seiþ reson when þe ymagynacioun haþ geten þe 10 sigt of peyne to come, þat oure Lorde haþ euenyd hir wiþ hir sistre, affeccioun. And sche seide þus, for sche had þe sigt of peynes to come<sup>44</sup> in hir ymagynacioun, of þe whiche sche had drede & sorow in hir felyng. And þan<sup>45</sup> come Neptalym, þat is to sey: þe sigt of ioies to come. And in his birþe spak Rachel and seyde: 'I am maad liche to 15 myn sistre, Lya'. And forþi is Neptalym clepid in þe story *lyknes*. And þus seiþ reson þat sche is liche to hir sistre, affeccioun, for þere sche had hope & loue of ioie to come in hir felyng, scho haþ getyn sigt of ioie to come in hir ymagynacioun. Jacob seide of Neptalym þat he was an hert, sent oute, zeuyng speches of fairheed. 20 So it is<sup>46</sup> when we ymagyn of þe joies of heuen. We seyen þat it<sup>47</sup> is feyre in heuen. For wonderfully kyndelyþ Neptalym oure soules<sup>48</sup> wiþ holy desires, as oft as we ymagyn of þe worþines & þe faireheed of þe joyes of heuen.

#### HOW ÞE [DOBLE]<sup>49</sup> VERTEWES OF ABSTYNENCE & PACYENCE RISEN IN ÞE SENSUALITE

25

When Lya sawe þat Rachel, hir sistre, maad greet joie of þees two bastardes born of Bala, hir mayden, sche clepid forþ hir mayden, Zelfa, to put to hir housbonde,<sup>50</sup> þat sche miȝt make joie wiþ hir sistre, hauyng oþer two bastardes getyn of hir mayden, Zelfa. And 30 þus it is semely in a mans soule for to be, þat fro þe tyme|þat reson f. 115b haue refreinid þe greet jangelyng of þe ymagynacioun, & haþ put hir to be vnderloute to God, &<sup>51</sup> makip hir to bere sum frute in helpyng of hir knowyng, þat riȝt so þe affeccioun refreyne þe lust & þe þrist of

<sup>42</sup> werynes] So Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar; hirkyng *other MSS.*

<sup>43</sup> alle] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>44</sup> to come] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>45</sup> þan] after *add.* Ar †.

<sup>46</sup> is] þat *add.* Ar †.

<sup>47</sup> it] þare Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Har<sup>5</sup> and *other MSS.*

<sup>48</sup> soules] soule Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>49</sup> DOBLE] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> housbonde] Jacob *add.* Ar †.

<sup>51</sup> &] also *add.* Har<sup>2</sup>; so *add.* Ar †.

sensualyte, and make hir to be vnderloute to God, & so to bere sum frute in helpyng of hir felyng.

Bot what frute may sche bere, ouȝt bot<sup>52</sup> lerne to lyue atempereely in esy þinges, and pacyently in vnesy þinges? Þees ben þei, þe  
 5 children of Zelfa, Gad & Asser. Gad is abstynence, & Asser is pacyence. Gad is þe sonner-borne childe, and Asser þe latter; for first it nedip þat we be attemperid in oure self wiþ discrete abstynence, and after þat to<sup>53</sup> bere outward disece in streng[þe]<sup>54</sup> of pacyence. Þees  
 10 ben þe children þat Zelfa brouȝt forþe in sorow, for in abstynence & pacyence þe sensualite is greetly<sup>55</sup> ponyschid in þe flesche.

Bot þat þat is sorow to þe sensualyte turneþ to moche joie<sup>56</sup> and blis to þe affeccioun. Perfore it is<sup>57</sup> þat when Gad was borne Lya cried and seyde: 'Happely.' And forþi Gad is clepid in þe story *happynes* or *selynes*, wheþer þou wilt. And so it is wel seyde þat abstynence in  
 15 þe sensualite is selynes in þe affeccioun. For whi euer þe les þat þe sensualite is delityd in hir lust, þe more swetnes felip<sup>58</sup> affeccioun in hir loue. Also after whan Asser was borne, Lya seide: 'Þis schal be for my blis.' And forþi was Asser clepid in þe story *blissidheed*.<sup>59</sup> And so it is wel seyde þat pacyence in þe sensualite is blis in þe affeccioun.  
 20 For whi euer þe more disece þat sensualyte suffrep, þe more blessid is þe soule in þe affeccioun.

And<sup>60</sup> by abstynence & pacyence we schul not onliche vnderstonde attemperaunce in mete and drynke, & suffring in<sup>61</sup> outward tribulacioun, bot also al maner of fleschly, & kyndely, & wordly  
 25 delices, & al maner of disece, bodely & goostly, wipinne or wiþouten, resonable|or vnresonable, þat by any maner<sup>62</sup> of oure fyue wittys turmenten or delyten þe sensualyte. On þis wise bereþ þe sensualite frute in helpe of affeccioun, hir lady. Moche pees & rest is in þe soule þat nowþer is drounyd<sup>63</sup> in þe lust of sensualyte, ne gruchid in þe pyne  
 30 perof. Þe first of þees is getyn by Gad, and þe latter by Asser.

Here it is to wetyn þat first was Rachelle mayden put to þe housbond or þe mayden of Lya. And þis is þe skyle whi. For trewly bot gif þe jangelyng of þe ymagynacioun, þat is to sey þe inrennyng<sup>64</sup>

<sup>52</sup> bot] to *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; þat scho *add.* Ar.

<sup>53</sup> to] we Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>54</sup> strengþe] streng Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> greetly] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>56</sup> joie] comforth Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>57</sup> is] was Ar †.

<sup>58</sup> felip] þe *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>59</sup> -heed] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>60</sup> And] þus *add.* Ar †.

<sup>61</sup> in] of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>62</sup> maner] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>63</sup> drounyd] drounkned Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; drounken Ar †.

<sup>64</sup> inrennyng] murmuryng Har<sup>2</sup> li; chyrmyng F.

of veyne þouȝtes, be first refreynyd, wiþoute doute þe lust of þe sensuylte may not be attemperid. And þerfore whoso wil absteyne hym from fleshly and wordly lustes,<sup>65</sup> hym behouip seeldom or neuir þink any veyne þouȝtes. And also<sup>66</sup> neuir in þis liif may a man parfytely dispise þe ese of þe flesche & not drede þe disese, bot he haue 5 before besyli beholden þe medes & þe tourmentes þat ben to come.

Bot here it is to witen how þat wiþ þees foure sones of þees two maydens, þe cite of oure concyence is kepte wonderfully from alle temptaciouns. For alle temptacyon ouþer it riseþ wiþinne by þouȝt, or elles wiþouten by somme of oure fyue wittys. Bot wiþinne schal Dan 10 deme and dampne yuel þouȝtes by sigt of pyne, & wiþouten schal Gad put ageyn fals delices by vse of abstynence. Dan wakiþ wiþinne, and Gad wiþouten. And also þe[ire]<sup>67</sup> oþer two breþren helpen hem ful mochel. Neptalym makip pees wiþinne wiþ Dan, and Asser biddeþ Gad haue no drede of his enmyes. Dan ferip þe hert with horribilite 15 of helle, and Neptalym cherischip<sup>68</sup> it wiþ hetying of heuenly blis. Also Asser helpip his broþer wiþouten, so þat þorow hem boþe þe cytee walles ben<sup>69</sup> not brokyn. Gad holdeþ oute ese, and Asser pursueþ]disese. Asser sone deceyuiþ his enemye when he bringip to f. 116b mynde þe pacyence of his [parte],<sup>70</sup> & þe behetyng of Neptalym. And 20 þus ofttymes euer þe moo enmyes he haþ, þe more mater he haþ of ouercomyng. And þerfore it is þat when he haþ ouercomen his enemyes, þat is to sey þe aduersitees of þis woreld, sone he turneþ hym to his broþer Gad to helpe to distroye his enemyes. And wiþoutyn faile, fro þat he be comen, sone þei torne þe bak & fleen. þe 25 enemyes of Gad ben fleshly delites. Bot trewly fro þe tyme þat a man haue pacyence in þe pyne of his abstynence, fals delites fynden no wonyng-stede in hym.

#### HOW IOY OF INWARD SUETNES RISIP IN ÞE AFFECCIOUN

þus, when þe enemyes fleen & þe cyte is pesid, þan proueþ<sup>71</sup> a man 30 what þe hiȝe pees of God is, þat passeþ alle mans wit. And forþi it is þat Lya left beryng of children tyl þe tyme þat Gad & Asser weren borne of Zelfa, hir mayden. For trewly, bot gif it be so þat man haue refreynyd þe lust & þe pyne of his fyue wittys in his sensualite by abstynence & pacyence, he schal neuir fele inward swetnes & trewe 35 joie in God & goostly þinges in þe affeccioun. Þis is þat Isachar, þe [fiþþe]<sup>72</sup> sone of Lya, þe whiche in þe story is clepid *mede*.

<sup>65</sup> lustes] lust Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>66</sup> also] þerfore Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> þeire] þees Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> cherischip] chereþ Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; comfordeþ Ar; cheris, ses *ins.* Har<sup>5</sup>; cleryth F C R Pw G W Ii.

<sup>69</sup> walles ben] walle is Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †

<sup>70</sup> parte] fader Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †. *See Commentary.*

<sup>71</sup> proueþ] bygynneþ . . . to proue Ar †.

<sup>72</sup> fiþþe] first Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> F C Ii.



And wele is þis ioie of inward swetnes clepid mede; for þis joie is þe taast of heuenly blis, þe whiche is þe eendeles mede of a deuoute soule begynnyng here. Lya in þe birþe of þis childe seyde: 'God haþ zouen me mede, for þat I haue zouen my mayden to myn housbonde  
 5 in beryng of children.' And so it is good<sup>73</sup> forþi þat we make oure sensualite bere frute in abstynence<sup>74</sup> of it fro alle maner fleschly<sup>75</sup> and wordly [ese,<sup>76</sup> and in fruteful suffryng of alle fleschly and wordly]<sup>77</sup> diþese, forþi oure Lorde of his greet mercy zeueþ us joie vnspekable & inward swetnes in oure affeccioun, in erles of þe souereyn ioie and  
 f. 117a 10 mede of þe hiȝe<sup>78</sup> kyngdome|of heuen.

Jacob seide of Isachar þat he was a stronge asse, dwellyng bitwix þe teermes. And so it is þat a man dwellyng<sup>79</sup> in þis state, & þat felip þe erles of þat lastyng joie in his affeccioun, is as an asse, stronge & dwellyng bytwix þe teermes, forþi þat be he neuer so fylled in soule of  
 15 goostly gladnes and joie in God, ȝit for corrupcioun of flesche in þis deedly liif hym behoueþ bere þe charge of þe deedly body, as hungre, brist, & colde, and oþer many diseses.<sup>80</sup> For þe whiche<sup>81</sup> he is licnyd to an asse as in body. Bot as in soule he is stronge for to distroie alle passyons & lustes of þe flesche by pacyence and abstynence in hys<sup>82</sup>  
 20 sensuylte, and by aboundaunce of goostly joie & swetnes in þe affeccyon. And also a soule in þis state is dwellyng bitwix þe teermes of deedly liif and vndeedly liif. He þat dweliþ bitwix þe teermes haþ nighonde forsaken deedlynes, bot not fully; & haþ nighond getyn vndeedlynes, bot not fully. For whiles þat him nedeþ þe goodes of þis  
 25 wored, as mete & drynk, cloping, as it<sup>83</sup> fallþ to iche a man þat leuiþ, ȝit his oo fote is in þis deedly liif; and for greet habundaunce of goostly joie & swetnes<sup>84</sup> þat he felip in God<sup>85</sup>—not seeldom, bot ofte—he haþ his oþer foot in þe vndeedly liif. þus I trowe þat Seinte Poule felt whan he seyde þis worde of greet desyre: 'Who schal  
 30 delyuer me fro þis deedly body?'; and when he seide þus: 'I coueyte to be lesid, & to be wiþ Criste.' And þus doþ þe soule þat felip Isachar in his affeccioun; þat is to sey, þe joye of inward swetnes, þe whiche is vnderstonen by Isachar. It enforceþ it to forsake þis wrechid liif, bot

<sup>73</sup> good] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>74</sup> abstynence] -ynge Ar †.

<sup>75</sup> fleschly] kyndely *add.* Ar †.

<sup>76</sup> ese] delyte Ar †.

<sup>77</sup> ese . . . wordly] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>; ease and Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> hiȝe] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>79</sup> dwellyng] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>80</sup> diseses] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>81</sup> whiche] skyl *add.* Ar †.

<sup>82</sup> hys] þe Ar †.

<sup>83</sup> it] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>84</sup> swetnes] in god *add.* Ar †.

<sup>85</sup> in God] *om.* Ar †.



it may not. It coueitip to entre þe blessid liif, bot it may not. It doþ þat it may, & ȝit it dwellip bitwix þe teermes.

# HOW PARFITE HATE<sup>86</sup> OF SYNNE RISEþ IN ÞE AFFECCYOUN

And þerfore it is þat after Ysachar Zabulon is borne; þat<sup>87</sup> is to sey, <sup>5 f. 117b</sup> hateredyn of synne. And here it is to wetyn whi þat hateredyn of synne is neuir parfitely<sup>88</sup> felt in mans affeccoun er þe tyme þat goostly joie of inward swetnes be felt in þe affeccoun. And þis is þe skyle. For er þis tyme was neuer þe trewe cause of hatereden felt in þe affeccoun. For þe felyng of goostly ioie techip a man what synne <sup>10</sup> harmip þe soule; and<sup>89</sup> after þe harme in a soule is felt, moche or lytyl, þerafter is þe hatereden mesurid vnto þe harmyng. Bot when a soule by þe grace of God & longe trauayle is comyn to þe felyng of goostly joie in God, þan it felip þat synne haþ be þe cause of þe delaying þerof. And also whan he felip þat he may not<sup>90</sup> last in felyng <sup>15</sup> of þat goostly joye for þe corrupcioun of flesche, of þe whiche corrupcioun synne is þe cause, þan he riseþ wiþ a stronge felynge of hateredyn agens alle synne & alle kynde of synne. Þis felyng tauzt Dauid us for to haue where he seiþ in þe psalme: 'Wrapþes, & willeþ not synne.' Or þus: 'Beþ wroþe, & synnip not.' Þat is þus to mene: <sup>20</sup> beþ wroþe wiþ þe synne, bot not wiþ þe kynde; for kynde sterip to<sup>91</sup> dede, bot not to<sup>92</sup> synne.

And here it is to wyten þat þis wrapþe & þis hatereden is not co[n]trary to charite. Bot charite techip how it schal be had boþe in a man<sup>93</sup> self, & in his euen-Cristen. For a man schuld hate synne in <sup>25</sup> his<sup>94</sup> kynde;<sup>95</sup> and as anemste oure euyn-Cristen, us auzt to hate synne in hem, & to loue hem. And of þis hatereden spekip Dauid in þe psalme where he seiþ þus: 'Wiþ parfite hateredyn I hatid hem.' And in anoþer psalme he seiþ þat he had in hateredyn alle wickyð wey. 30

þus is wel prouid þat er Zabulon were<sup>96</sup> borne, Judas & Ysachar weren boþe borne. For bot ȝif a man haue had charite and goostly joie in his felyng first, he may<sup>97</sup> on nowise fele þis|parfite hateredyn f. 118a

<sup>86</sup> hate] hattred(en) Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>87</sup> þat] þe whyche Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>88</sup> parfitely] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>89</sup> and] *al add.* Ar †.

<sup>90</sup> not] *alwey add.* Ar †.

<sup>91</sup> to] *þe add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>92</sup> to] *þe add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>93</sup> man] *hym add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>94</sup> in his] so þat he dystroye (destroyd C Pw G W; *nat add.* CR) his (his *om.* Ar) Ar †.

<sup>95</sup> kynde] but so þat he dystroye þe synne & þe appetyte of synne in his kynde *add.* Ar †.

<sup>96</sup> were] was Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>97</sup> may] not (*can.* Har<sup>1</sup>) *add.* Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>.

of synne<sup>98</sup> in his affeccoun. For Judas, þat is to sey charite, techiþ us how we schul hate synne in oureself, & in oure breþren. And Isachar, þat is to sey goostly felyng of joie in God, techet<sup>99</sup> whi we schul hate synne.<sup>100</sup> Judas biddeþ<sup>101</sup> hate synne, & loue þe kynde; and Isachar  
 5 biddeþ us distroie þe synne, & saue þe kynde. And þus it falleþ for to be þat þe kynde be maad stronge in God and in goostly pinges by parfite hateredyn & distroying of synne.

And herfore is Zabulon clepid<sup>102</sup> *a dwellyng stede of strengþe* in þe story.<sup>103</sup> And Lya seide in his birþe: 'My housbonde schal dwelle wiþ  
 10 me.' And so it is þat God, þat is þe trewe housbonde of oure soule, is dwellyng in þat soule, strengþing it in þe affeccoun wiþ goostly joie & swetnes in his loue, þat trauayliþ besily to distroie synne in hymself and in oþer by parfite hateredyn of þe synne, & alle þe kynde of synne. & þus it is seide how Zabulon is borne.

15 HOW ORDEINDE SCHAME RISEþ & GROWEþ IN ÞE  
 AFFECCYOUN

Bot þof al þat a soule<sup>104</sup> fele in it parfite hateredyn of synne, wheþer it may ȝit lyue wiþoutyn synne? Nay, sekirly. And forþi no man presume on hymself, when þe Apostle seiþ þus: 'Ȝif we seye we haue  
 20 no synne, we disceyue oureself, & soþfastnes is not in us.' And also Seinte Austyne seiþ þat he dar sey þat þer is no man leuyng wiþoutyn synne. And I preye þee who is he þat synnyþ not in ignoraunce? Ȝe, and oftyme it falliþ þat God suffriþ þees men falle ful greuously, by þe whiche he haþ ordeynde oþer mens errour to be riȝtyd, þat þei  
 25 mowen lere<sup>105</sup> by þeire owne fallyng how mercyful þei scholen be in amendement of oþer. And forþi þat men oftymes fallen greuously in þoo<sup>106</sup> same synnes þat þei moste hate, þerfore after hateredyn of synne springiþ ordeynde schame in a mans soule.

f. 118b And so it is þat after|Zabulon was Dyna borne. As by Zabulon  
 30 hateredyn of synne, so by Dina is<sup>107</sup> vnderstonden ordeynde schame of synne. Bot wite þou wel he þat felt neuer Zabulon, felt neuer ȝit Dyna. An yuel man haþ a maner of schame, bot it is not þis ordeynd schame. For whi and þei had parfite schame of synne, þei schuld not so costomably do it wiþ wyl & auisement. Bot þei schame more wiþ a  
 35 foule cloþe on here body þan wiþ a foule þouȝt in here soule. Bot

<sup>98</sup> of synne] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>99</sup> techet] *vs add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>100</sup> synne] in oure self & in oure breþer *add.* Ar †.

<sup>101</sup> biddeþ] *vs add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>102</sup> clepid] in þe story *add.* Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>103</sup> in þe story] *om.* Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>104</sup> soule] þurȝe grace *add.* Ar †.

<sup>105</sup> lere] lerne Ar †.

<sup>106</sup> þoo] þe Ar †.

<sup>107</sup> is] we Ar †.

whatso þou be þat wenyst þat þou haste getyn Dyna, þink wheþer þee wolde schame as moche & a foule þougt were in þin herte, as þee<sup>108</sup> wold and þou were mad stonde nakid bfore þe kyng & alle þe rewme. And sekirly ellys wite þou rigt wel þat þou hast not getyn zit ordeinde schame in þi felyng, ȝif it so be þat þou haue lesse schame wiþ þi foule herte þan wiþ þi foule body; and ȝif þou more schame wiþ þi foule body in þe sigt of men þan wiþ þi foule herte in þe sigte of þe kyng of heuen & of alle his aungelles & holy seyntes in heuen.

Loo, it is now seyde of þe seuen children of Lya, by þe whiche ben vnderstonden seuen maners of affeccions in a mans soule, þe whiche mowen be now ordeynde & now vnordeynde, now mesurid and now vnmesurid. Bot whan þei ben ordeinde & mesurid, þan ben þei vertewes. And whan þei ben vnordeynde & vnmeasured, þan ben þei vices. Þus behoueþ a man haue warnes þat þei be not only ordeynde bot also mesurid. Þan ben þei ordeynde, when þei ben of þat þing þat þei schuld be. And þen be þei vnordeynde, when þei ben of þat þing þat þei schuld not be. And þan ben þei mesured, when þei ben as mochel as þei schuld be. And þan ben þei vnmeasured, when þei ben more þen þei schuld be. For whi ouermuche drede bryngiþ in dispeyre. And ouermuche sorow castiþ a man into bitternes & heuines of kynde, for þe whiche he is vnable to receyue gostly coumforte. And ouermuche hope is presumpcioun. And outrageous loue is flatteryng & [fagyng].<sup>109</sup> And outrageous gladnes is dissolucioun and wantonnes. And vntemprid hatredyn of synne is woodnes. And on þis maner þei ben vnordeynd & vnmeasured, & þus ben þei tornyd vnto vices. & þan lese þei þe name of vertewes, & mowen not be acomptyd amonges<sup>110</sup> þe sonnes of Jacob, þat is to sey God. For by Jacob is vnderstonden God, as it is schewid in þe figure before.

#### HOW DISCRECIOUN & CONTEMPLACIOUN RISEN IN ÞE RESOUN

30

Þus it semip þat þe vertewe of discrecioun nedip to be had, wiþ þe whiche alle oþer mowen be gouernyd. For wiþouten it, alle vertewes ben tornid to vices. Þis is he, þat Joseph, þat is þe late-borne childe. Bot ȝit his fader loueþ hym more þen hem alle, for whi trewly wiþouten discrecioun may nouþer goodnes be getyn ne kepte. And forþi no wonder þof þat vertewe be syngulerly loued, wiþoutyn whiche no vertewe may be had, ne gouerned.

Bot what wonder þof þis vertewe be late getyn, when we mowe not wyne to þe perfeccioun of discrecioun wiþouten moche custume<sup>111</sup>

40

<sup>108</sup> þee] þu Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>109</sup> fagyng] glosyng Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>110</sup> amonges] wiþ Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>111</sup> custume] vse Ar †.

and many trauayles of þees oþer affeccions comyng before? For first behouþ us be custumed<sup>112</sup> in iche a vertewe by hymself, and gete þe profite<sup>113</sup> of hem alle seerly, er we mowen haue ful knowing of hem alle, or elles kun deme sufficiencytly of hem alle. And when we vsen us  
 5 besily in þees felynges & beholdynges beforeseyde, oftymes we fallen, oftymes we risen. þan, be oure ofte fallyng, mowe we lere how moche warnes us behouþ haue in þe getyng & keping of þees vertewes. And þus sumtyme, by longe vse, a soule is led to ful discrecioun. & þan it may ioie in þe birþe of Joseph.

f. 119b 10 And before þis vertewe be conceyuid in a mans|soule, alle þat þees oþer vertewes done is wiþouten discrecioun. And forþi inasmoche as a man presumiþ and enforceþ hym in any of þees felynges beforeseyde ouer his miȝte & oute of mesure, insomoch þe fouler he falleþ, and failiþ of his purpos. And þerfore it is þat after hem alle, & last, is  
 15 Dyna borne, for<sup>114</sup> after a foule fal and a faylyng comeþ sone schame. And þus after many fallynges and faylynges, & schame folowyng, a man lerneþ by þe proef þat þer is noþing betyr þan to be rewlyd after counsel, þe whiche is þe rediest getyng of discrecioun. For whi he þat doþ alle þing by counsel, he schal neuir forþink it. For betir is a sley  
 20 man þan a strong man, 3e, and betyr is list þen liþer strengþe. And a sley man spekiþ of victories.

And here is þe open skyle whi þat neiþer Lya, ne Zelfa, ne Bala miȝt bere soche a childe, bot only Rachel. For, as it is seide before, þat of reson spryngþ riȝt counselles, þe whiche is verrey discrecioun,  
 25 vnderstonden by Joseph, þe first sone of Rachel. And þan at þe first bryng we forþe Joseph in oure reson, when al þat we ben sterid to do, we do it wiþ counseyl. þis Joseph schal not only knowe what synne<sup>115</sup> we ben moste sterid to, bot also he schal knowe þe weyknes of oure kynde. And after þat eiþer askeþ, so schal we<sup>116</sup> do remedye and seek  
 30 counsel at wyser þen we,<sup>117</sup> and do after hem. Elles be we not Joseph, Jacob sone, borne of Rachel.

And also by þis ilke Joseph he is not only lernyd to eschewe þe deceyte<sup>118</sup> of his<sup>119</sup> enemyes, bot also oft a man is led by hym to þe parfite knowyng of hymself. And al after þat a man knoweþ hymself,  
 35 þerafter he profiteþ in þe knowyng of God, of whom he is þe ymage & þe liknes. And þerfore it is þat after Joseph is Beniamyn borne; for as  
 f. 120a by Joseph discrecyon,|so by Beniamyn we vnderstonde contempla-

<sup>112</sup> custumed] vsed Ar †.

<sup>113</sup> profite] profe Ar †.

<sup>114</sup> for] ofte add. Ar †.

<sup>115</sup> synne] -s Ar †.

<sup>116</sup> we] he Ar †.

<sup>117</sup> we] he Ar †.

<sup>118</sup> deceyte] -s Ar †.

<sup>119</sup> his] oure Ar †.



cioun. And boþe ben þei borne of oo moder, & getyn of oo fader. For þorow þe grace of God lyztenyng oure reson, come we to þe parfite knowyng of ouselþ and of God, þat is to sey, after þat it may be in þis liif.

Bot longe aftyr Joseph is Beniamyn borne; for whi trewly bot gif it 5 so be þat we vse us besyly & longe in goostly trauayles, wiþ þe whiche we ben lernid to knowe ouselþ, we mowen not be reisyd to þe knowyng & contemplacioun of God. He doþ for nouȝt þat lifyþ up his iȝe to þe sigt of God, þat is not ȝit able to see hymself. For first I wolde a man lered<sup>120</sup> hym to knowe þe vnseable þinges of his owne spirit, er he presume<sup>121</sup> to knowe þe vnseable þinges of þe spirit of God. And he þat knoweþ not ȝit hymself, and wenþ þat he haue<sup>122</sup> getyn somdele knowing of þe vnseable þinges of God, I doute it not þat he ne is disceyuid. And forþi I rede þat a man seke first besily for to knowe hymself, þe whiche is maad to þe ymage and þe licnes of 15 God, as in soule.

And wite it wel þat he þat desireþ to se God, hym behoueþ to clense his soule, þe whiche is as a mirour in þe whiche alle þing is cleerly seen when it is clene. And when þe mirour is foule, þen maist þou see noþing cleerly þerin. And riȝt so it is of þi soule. When it is foule, 20 neiþer þou knowest þiselþ, ne God. As<sup>123</sup> when þe kandil brenniþ,<sup>124</sup> þou maist see þe self kandel by þe liȝt þerof, & oþer þinges also: riȝt so when þi soule brenniþ in þe loue of God, þat is when þou felist contynowely þin herte desire after þe loue of God, þan by þe liȝt of his grace þat he seendeþ in þi reson, þou maist boþe see þin<sup>125</sup> vnworþines, 25 & his greet goodnes. And forþi clense þi myrour, and profre þi candyl to þe fiir. And þanne, when it is clensid &<sup>126</sup> brennyng, and it so be þat þou wittirly|beholde þerto: þan byginniþ þer a maner of cleerte of þe liȝt of God for to schyne in þi soule, and a maner of sonneþeme þat is goostly to apere before<sup>127</sup> þi goostly sigt, þe whiche is<sup>128</sup> þe iȝe of þi 30 soule and<sup>129</sup> is openid to beholde God & godly<sup>130</sup> þinges, heuen & heuenly þinges, and alle maner of goostly þinges. Bot þis sigt is bot be tymes, whiles<sup>131</sup> God wil vouchesaaf to ȝeue it to a worchyng soule, þe whiles it is in þe batayle of þis deedly liif. Bot after þis liif it schal be

<sup>120</sup> lered] lerned Ar †.

<sup>121</sup> presume] -ed Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>122</sup> haue] haþe Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>123</sup> As] And Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>124</sup> brenniþ] þan add Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>125</sup> þin] owne add. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>126</sup> &] þi candel add. Ar †.

<sup>127</sup> before] to Ar †.

<sup>128</sup> þe whiche is] þurȝ þe whoche Ar †.

<sup>129</sup> and] om. Ar †.

<sup>130</sup> godly] goostli (*written first but can.* Har<sup>1</sup>) Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.

<sup>131</sup> whiles] whan Ar †.



euerlastyng. þis liȝt schone in Dauid soule when he seyde þus in þe psalme: 'Lorde, þe liȝt of þi face is merkyd vpon vs. þou hast ȝouen gladnes<sup>132</sup> wiþinne myn herte.' þe liȝt of Godes face is þe schinyng of his grace, þat reformeþ in us his ymage þat haþ ben disfygurid wiþ þe  
 5 derknes of synne. And þerfore a soule þat brenniþ in desyre of his<sup>133</sup> liȝt,<sup>134</sup> ȝif it hope for to haue þat þat it desireþ, wite it wel þat it haþ conceyuid Beniamyn. And þerfore what is more heleful þan þe swetnes of þis siȝt, or what softer þing may be felt? Sikyrly none. And þat wote Rachel ful wel; for whi reson seiþ þat in comparyson of þis  
 10 swetnes alle oþer swetnes is soure, & bittyr as galle forby<sup>135</sup> hony.

Neuerþeles ȝit may a man neuer come to soche a grace by his owne sleiȝt, for whi it is þe ȝift of God wiþoutyn deseert of man.<sup>136</sup> And<sup>137</sup> ȝit no man may take soche grace wyþoutyn greet study [and]<sup>138</sup> brennyng desires comyng before. And þat wote Rac[h]el ful wel.  
 15 And forþi sche multiplyeþ hir study, & whetteþ hir desires, [echeþ]<sup>139</sup> desire on desire, so þat at þe laste, in greet habundaunce of brennyng desires and sorow of þe delaiing of hir desire, Beniamyn is borne, and his moder Rachel diȝeþ. For whi in what tyme þat a soule is rauschid abouen hymself by habundaunce of desires & a greet  
 f. 121a 20 multytude of loue, so þat [it is enflawmyd wiþ þe liȝt of þe Godheed, sekirly þan dyȝeþ al mans reson.

And þerfore whatso þou be þat coueytest to come to contemplacioun of God, þat is to sey, to bryng forþe soche a childe þat men clepyn in þe story Beniamyn, þat is to sey, siȝt of God:<sup>140</sup> þan  
 25 schalt þou use þee in þis maner. þou schalt clepe togeders þi þouȝtes & þi desires, and make þee<sup>141</sup> of hem a chirche, & lerne þee þerin for to loue only þis good worde Jesu, [so þat alle þi desyre and þi þouȝt be onely sette for to loue Jesu,]<sup>142</sup> and þat vnseyingly, as it may be here, so þat þou fulfille þat is seyde in þe psalme: 'Lorde, I schal bles  
 30 þee in chirches', þat is in þouȝtes and desires of þe loue of Jesu. And þan, in þis chirche of þouȝtes and desires, & in þis oneheed of studies & of willes, loke þat alle þi þouȝtes & þi desires & þi studyes & alle þi

<sup>132</sup> gladnes] fayrnes Kk; faynes Har<sup>2</sup> Har<sup>5</sup>, veines C R.

<sup>133</sup> his] þis Ar †.

<sup>134</sup> liȝt] siȝt Ar †.

<sup>135</sup> forby] byfore Ar †.

<sup>136</sup> man] but wiþoute doute þouȝ it be noȝt þe deserte of man *add.* Ar †.

<sup>137</sup> And] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>138</sup> and] of Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>139</sup> echeþ] iche Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; sechyng Ar Pw G W Ii; hekand Har<sup>5</sup>; encresyng F; ekend C; & knyttiþ R.

<sup>140</sup> þat is to sey to bryng . . . siȝt of God] lete hym lere for to gedire samen (& examyn F; togyder R; to gedere *add.* C) þe myghtes of his sawle, & lete hym study for to refreyne þe outpassyng of is mynde, & schape (ordeyne F) hym for to wone (dwelle F) with hymself os a kyng in is reme to wome þat non of his suȝetes wore contrari Har<sup>5</sup> F C R.

<sup>141</sup> þee] *om.* Ar †.

<sup>142</sup> so . . . Jesu] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

willes be only set in þe loue & þe preisyng<sup>143</sup> of þis Lorde Jesu, wipouten forþetyng, as fer forþ as þou maist by grace & as þi freelte wil suffre, euer more mekyng þee to preier & to counsel, pacyently abidyng þe wille of oure Lorde, vnto þe tyme þat þi mynde be rauischid abouen itself to be fed wip þe feire foode of aungelles in þe<sup>144</sup> 5 beholdyng of God & godly þinges. So þat it be fulfillid in þee þat is wretyn in þe psalme: *Ibi Beniamyn adol[es]centulus in mentis excessu*. þat is: 'þere is Beniamyn, þe zonge childe, in rauesching of mynde.'

<sup>143</sup> preisyng] loouynge Ar †.

<sup>144</sup> þe] om. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar †.



A TRETIS OF DISCRESCYON OF SPIRITES<sup>1</sup>

f. 1a

Forþi þat þer ben diuerse kindes of spirites, þerfore it is needful to us discrete knowing of hem, siþ it so is þat we ben lernid of þe apostle Seinte Iohun not to bileue to alle spirites. For it miȝte seme to somme, þat ben bot litil in kunnyng and namely of goostly þinges, þat iche þouȝt þat souniþ in mans herte schuld be þe speche of none 5 oþer spirite, bot only of mans owne spirite. And þat it is not so, boþe beleue and witnes of Holy Scripture prouen apeertly. 'For I schal here,' seiþ þe prophete Dauid, 'not what I speke myself, bot what þat my Lorde God spekiþ in me.' And anoþer prophete seiþ þat an aungel spak in him. And also we ben leernid in þe psalme þat wickid 10 spirites senden iuel þouȝtis into men. And ouer þis, þat þer is a spirite of þe flessche not good, þe apostle Poule schewiþ apeertly, where he seiþ þat som men ben fulle blowyn wiþ þe spirite of here flessche. And also þat þer is þe spirite of þe worlde he declariþ plainly, where he mak ioye in God, not only for himself bot also for his disciples, þat 15 þei had not takin þat spirite of þe worlde bot þat þat is sent of God, þe whiche is þe Holy Goost.

And þees two spirites of þe flessche and also of þe worlde ben, as it were, seruauantes or seriauntes of þat cursid spirite,<sup>2</sup> þe foule feend of helle; so þat þe spirite of wickidnes be lorde of þe spirite of þe flessche 20 and also of þe spirite of þe worlde. And whiche of þees þre spirites þat spekiþ to oure spirite, we schul not beleue hem, for whi þei speke neuer bot þat þei lede to þe losse boþe of body and of soule.

And whiche [spirite]<sup>3</sup> it is þat spekiþ to oure spirite, þe speche of þat same spirite þat spekiþ schal fully declare. For euermore þe spirite of 25 þe flessche spekiþ softe þinges and esy to þe body, þe spirite of þe worlde veine þinges and couetyse of worschip, and þe spirite<sup>4</sup> of þe feende<sup>5</sup> felle þinges and bitter. As oftetymes as any þouȝt smiteþ on oure hertes of mete, of drinke, and of slepe, of softe cloping, of lecherie, & of alle oþer soche þinges, þe whiche longin to besines of 30 flessche, and mak ioye oure herte for to brenne, as it were, in a longing desire after alle soche þinges, be we ful sekir þat it is þe spirite of þe

<sup>1</sup> A tretis (pystylle Har<sup>2</sup>) of discrecyon (in knowynge *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>) of spirites Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; A tretys of iij dyuers þouȝtes þt come ofte to men & ask to know to wiþstond hem CP; A profytable ynformacyon techyng a man to knowe the kynd of spyrytys whych ben good and whych not Br; A deuoute treatyse of dyscerninge of spyrites very necessarie for gostly lyuers Bo Pw; *om.* Har<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> spirite] of *add.* Kk Har<sup>4</sup> CP Br.

<sup>3</sup> spirite] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> spirite] of malece *add.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Bo Pw (*henceforth* Kk †).

<sup>5</sup> of þe feende] *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; of hell (*om.* Pw) spekythe *add.* Bo Pw.

flesche þat spekiþ.<sup>6</sup> And þerfore put we him away inasmoche as we goodly may be grace, for he is oure aduersary. As oftymes as any þougt smitiþ on oure herte<sup>7</sup> of veyne ioye of þis woreld, kindelyng in us a desire to be holden feire & to be fauourid, to be holden of grete  
 5 kynne & of grete kunnyng, to be holden wise & worþi, or elles to haue grete degre & hize office in þis liif (soche þougtes & alle oþer, þe whiche wolde make a man to seme heiz & worschipful, not only in þe sizte of oþer bot also in þe sizte of hymself) no doute bot it<sup>8</sup> is þe spirite of þe woreld þat spekiþ alle þees, a fer more perilous enmye þan is þe  
 10 spirite of þe flessche, and wiþ moche more besines he<sup>9</sup> schuld be put of. And oftetyms it befallē þat þees two seruauentes & seriauntes of þe foule feend, þe spirite and prince of wrappe and of wickidnes, ben ouþer by grace and goostly sleight of a soule stifly put doune and troden doune vnder fote, or elles by queintise of here malicious  
 15 maister, þe foule feend of helle, þei ben queintly wiþdrawen, for he þenkiþ himself for to rise wiþ grete malice and wrappe,<sup>10</sup> as a lyon rennyng felly, for to asaile þe seeknes of oure sely soules. And þis befallē as ofte as þe þougt of oure herte steriþ us, not to þe lust of oure flessche, ne zit to þe veine ioye of þis woreld, bot it steriþ us to  
 f. 2a 20 murmuring, to grucching, and to greuance, to bitternes of soule, to pine, & to impacience, to wrappe,<sup>11</sup> to malencoly, and to iuel wille, to hate, and to enuye, and to alle soche sorow. It makip us to bere [us] heuily, gif ougt be done or seyde vnto us not so louely ne so wisely as we wolde it were. It reiseþ in us alle iuel suspicioun; gif ougte be  
 25 schewid in signe, in contenaunce, in worde or in werk, þat miȝt bi any maner be turnid to malice or to heuines of hert, it makip us as fast to take it to us.

To þees þougtes and alle soche, þat wolde put us oute of pees & restfulnes of herte, we schulde none oþerwise ageinstonde bot as we  
 30 wolde þe self feend of helle; and as moche we schuld fle þerfroo as fro þe losse of oure soule. No doute bot boþe þe oþer þougtes of þe spirite of þe flessche and also of þe spirite of þe woreld, þei worchen and trauailen in alle þat þei kan to þe losse of oure soule; bot moste perilou[s]ly he þis. For whi he þis bi himself, and þei not wiþoutyn  
 35 him þis. For gif a<sup>12</sup> soule be neuer so clene of flesschly lust and of veine ioye of þis woreld, and gif it be defoulid wiþ þis spirite of malice, of wrappe, & of wickidnes,<sup>13</sup> not agenstonding al þe oþer clennes

<sup>6</sup> spekiþ] it *add.* Kk †.

<sup>7</sup> herte] -s Kk †.

<sup>8</sup> it] þis Kk †.

<sup>9</sup> he] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>10</sup> wrappe] ire Har<sup>4</sup> CP Br (*henceforth* Har<sup>4</sup> †).

<sup>11</sup> wrappe] ire Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>12</sup> a] mans *add.* Kk †.

<sup>13</sup> of wrappe . . . wickidnes] *om.* Har<sup>4</sup> †.



bifore, ȝit it is losable. And ȝif a soule be neuer so moche defoulid bi luste of flessche & veine ioye of þis wored and it may bi grace kepe it in pees & in restfulnes<sup>14</sup> of herte vnto þe euen-Cristen, þof al it be ful harde for to do lastyng þe costume of þe oþer two, ȝit it is [lesse]<sup>15</sup> losable, not ageinstonding al þe toper filþe of þe flessche & of þe 5 wored touchid before. And þerfore, þof al þat oure lusty þouȝtes of oure foule flessche be iuel, for þei reuyn fro þe soule þe list<sup>16</sup> of deuocioun; and þof al þat þe veine ioye of þe wored be worse, for it reuiþ us þe trewe ioye þat we schuld haue in contemplacioun of heuenly þinges, ministred and tauȝt to us bi þe aungles of heuen (for 10 whoso lustly|desireþ to be worschepid, fauored, and seruid of men f. 26 here in eerþe, þei deserue to forgoo þe worschip, þe fauour, and þe seruise of aungelles in goostly contemplacioun of heuen & of heuenly þinges al þeire liiftyme, þe whiche contemplacioun is betir & more worþi in itself þan is þe list and þe likyng of deuocioun); and for þis 15 betirnes<sup>17</sup> I clepe þe spirite of malice, of wrapþe, & of wickidnes þe worst spirite of hem alle. And whi? Ce[r]tes, for it reuiþ us þe best þing of alle; þat is charite, þe whiche is God.

For whoso lackiþ pees and restfulnes of herte, him lackiþ þe liuely<sup>18</sup> presence of þe louely siȝt of þe heize pees of heuen, good gracious 20 God, him owne dere self. þus<sup>19</sup> witnessiþ Dauid in þe psalme, where he seiþ þat þe steed of God is maad in pees and his wonyng-place in Syon. Syon is as moche to sei as þe siȝt of pees. þe siȝt of þe soule is þe þouȝt of þe same soule. And certes in þat soule þat moste is ocupied in þouȝtes of pees haþ God maad his wonyng-place. And þus seiþ himself 25 bi þe prophete whan he seiþ: 'Upon whom schal my spirite rest, bot upon þe meek & þe restful?'

And þerfore whoso wol haue God contynouly wonyng in him, and liue in loue and in siȝt of þe hize pees of þe Godheed, þe whiche is þe 30 higest & þe best partye of contemplacion þat may be had in þis liif, be he besi niȝt & day to put down, whan þei come, þe spirite of þe flessche and þe spirite of þe wored, bot most besily þe spirite of malice, of wrapþe, and of wickidnes, for he is þe foulist & þe worst filþe<sup>20</sup> of alle.

And it is ful needful & speedful to knowe his queintyse and not for 35 to vnknowe his doelful deseites. For somtyme he wol, þat wickid cursid wiȝt, chaunge his licnes into an aungel of liȝt, þat he may, vnder colour of vertewe, do more dere. Bot ȝit þanne, and we loke

<sup>14</sup> rest-] ryst- Kk; riȝt- Har<sup>4</sup> Br.

<sup>15</sup> lesse] lesser Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> list] luf Kk; lust Har<sup>4</sup> CP; lyfe Bo Pw Br.

<sup>17</sup> betir-] bittir- Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>18</sup> liuely] loueli Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>19</sup> þus] thys Kk †.

<sup>20</sup> filþe] om. Har<sup>4</sup> †.

f. 3a rediliche, it is bot seed of] bittirnes and of discorde þat þat he s[ow]iþ,<sup>21</sup>  
 seem it neur so holi ne neuer so feire at þe first schewing. Ful many  
 he steriþ vnto singuleer holines, passing þe comoun statute and  
 costume of here degree, as is fastyng,<sup>22</sup> wering, and many oþer  
 5 deuoute obseruaunces and outward doinges, in open reproving of  
 oþer mens defautes, þe whiche þei haue not of office for to doo. Alle  
 soche, and many oþer, he steriþ hem to do, & alle vnder colour of  
 deuocioun & of charite; not for he is delited in any dede of deuocioun  
 & of charite, bot for he louiþ discencioun and sclaudre, þe whiche is  
 10 euermore causid of soche vnseemly singulerteetes. For wheresoeuer  
 þat any one or two ben in any deuoute congregacioun, þe whiche any  
 one or two vseþ any soche outward singuleerteetes, þan in þe sigt of alle  
 foles al þe remenaunt ben ensclaundred by hem; bot in sigt of þe wise  
 man þei ensclaundre himself. Bot forþi þat foles ben moo þen wise  
 15 men, þerfore, for fauour of foles, soche singulere doers wenen þei be  
 wise, when, & it were wisely determinid, þei and alle here fautours  
 schuld be seen aperte foles & dartes schotte of þe deuil to slee trewe  
 simple soules vnder colour of hele & of charite. And þus many  
 disceites kan þe feende bring in on þis maner.<sup>23</sup> Whoso wil not  
 20 consente, bot mekiþ him trewly<sup>24</sup> to preier and to counseil, schal  
 graciously be deliuerid of alle þees doles.

Bot it is sorow for to sey, & more for to fele, þat somtyme oure  
 owne spirite is so ouercomen, parauenture, wiþ iche of þees þre  
 spiritres of þe flessche, of þe worlde, & of þe fende, & so brougt in  
 25 daunger, boundin in bondage, in þraldom, and in seruage of hem  
 alle, þat sorow it is to wite, in grete confusion and losse of itself, it  
 doþ now þe office of iche one of hem [only]<sup>25</sup> itself in itself. And þis  
 befalliþ when, after longe vse & customable consentyng vnto hem  
 f. 3b when þei come,<sup>26</sup> at þe last it is] maad so fleschly, so wordly, and so  
 30 malicious, so wickid, and so froward, þat now plainly of itself,  
 wiþoutyn sogestion of any oþer spirite, it gendriþ and bringiþ forþ  
 in itself not only lusty þoȝtes of þe flesche and veine þoȝtes of þe worlde,  
 bot, þat worst of alle þees ben, bitter þoȝtes & wickid, in bacbiting  
 and deming and iuel suspicioun of oþer.

35 And when it is þus wiþ oure spirite, þan I trowe it may not<sup>27</sup> ligitly  
 be knowen when it is oure owne spirite þat spekiþ, or when it hereþ  
 any of þe oþer þre spiritres spekyng in it, as it is touchid before. Bot  
 what þar reche who spekiþ, when it is alle one & o þing þat is spokyn?

<sup>21</sup> sowiþ] schewiþ *all MSS. See Commentary.*

<sup>22</sup> fastyng] sharpe *add.* Kk †.

<sup>23</sup> maner] wise Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>24</sup> trewly] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>25</sup> only] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> come] and (*can.* Har<sup>1</sup>) *add.* Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Har<sup>4</sup> CP

<sup>27</sup> not] ful *add.* Har<sup>4</sup> †.

What helpeþ it to knowe þe persone of him þat spekiþ, when it is sekir and certene þat alle is iuel and perilous þat is spokyn? Ȝif it be þin enemye, concent not to him, bot meek þee to preier & to counsel; and so may þou migtly wiþstonde þin enemye. Ȝif it be þin owne spirite, reprove him bitterly, & sizingly sorow þat euer þou fel in so grete wrechidnes, bondage, and þraldom of þe deuil. Schriue þee of þi costum consentes<sup>28</sup> and of þin olde sinnes; and so maist þou come to bi grace to recouer þi fredom agein.

And by þe gracious fredam may þou sone come to wisely for to knowe and soþfastly for to fele by þe proue when it is þin owe spirite þat spekiþ þees iueles, or it ben þees oþer iuel spirites þat speken hem in þee. And so may þis knowyng be a souerein mene & help of azenstanding; for oftymes vnknowyng is cause of moche errour, and, azenward,<sup>29</sup> knowing is cause of moche trewþ. And to þis maner knowing maist þou winne þus as I sey þee. Ȝif þou be in doute or in were of þees iuel þouȝtes whan þei come, wheþer þat þei be þe speche of þin owne spirite or any of þe toþer of þin enemyes, loke þan besily by þe witnes of þi counsel and þi concience, ȝif þou haue be schreuyn and lawfully amendid, after þe dome of þi confessour, of alle þe consentes þat euer þou consentid to þat kynde of synne þat þi þouȝt is aworde of. And ȝif þou haue not be schreuen, schriue þee þan as trewly as þou maist by grace and by counsel. And þan wite þou riȝt wel þat alle þe þouȝtes þat comen to þee aftir þi schrift, stering þee eft to þe same sinnes, þei ben þe wordes of oþer spirites þan þin owne, I mene som of þe þre touchid before. And þou for none soche þouȝtes, be þei neuer so þicke, so foule, ne so many, I mene for here first comyng in, bot ȝif it be for rechelesnes of azenstanding, arte no blameworþi. And not only relesing of purgatory þat þou hast deseruid for þe same synnes don before, whatso þei be,<sup>30</sup> þou maist deserue ȝif þou stifly azenstonde hem, bot also moche grace in þis liif & moche mede in þe blis of heuen.

Bot al þoo iuel þouȝtes comyng into þee, stering þee to any sinne, after þat þou hast consentid to þat same synne and bifore þat þou hast sorow for þat consent and arte in wil to be schreuen: it is no perile to þee to take hem to þiself, and for to schriue þee of hem as of þouȝtes of þin owne spirite. Bot for to take to þiself alle oþer þouȝtes, þe which þou hast by verrey profe, as it is schewid bifore, þat þei ben þe speches of oþer spirites þan þiself, þerin liþ grete peril. For so miȝst þou liztly<sup>31</sup> misreule þi consience, charging a þing for sinne, þe whiche is none. And þis were grete errour and mene to þe grettest

<sup>28</sup> consentes] conseites *altered to* consentes Har<sup>1</sup>; conceites Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>29</sup> aȝens-] aȝcyn- *other MSS, and elsewhere.*

<sup>30</sup> whatso þei be] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>31</sup> liztly] *om.* Har<sup>4</sup> †.

perile. For, & it were so þat iche iuel þougt and stering to sinne were þe werk & þe speche of none oþer spirite bot only of mans owe spirite, þan it wolde folow bi þat þat mans owne<sup>32</sup> spirite were a feend, þe  
 f. 4b whiche is apertly fals|and dampnable woodnes. For þof al it be so þat  
 5 a soule may, bi freelte and custom of sinnyng, falle into so<sup>33</sup> moche wrechidnes þat it takip on itself bi bondage of sinne þe office of þe deuil, stering itself to sinne euer more & more wipoutyn any sogestion of any oþer spirite, as it is seide before, ȝit it is not þerfore a deuil in kynde. Bot it is a deuil in office and may be clepid deuely,  
 10 for it is in þe doing liche to þe deuil, [þat is to sey a stirer of itself vnto sinne, þe whiche is þe office of þe deuil.]<sup>34</sup> Neuerþeles ȝit, for al þis þraldome to sinne and deuernes in office, it may bi grace of<sup>35</sup> contricioun of schrift and of amending, recouer þe fredom aȝein and be mad sauable, ȝe, and a ful special Goddes seint in þis liif, þat  
 15 before was ful dampnable and ful cursid in þe leuyng.

And þerfore as grete a peril as it is, a soule þat is fallen in sinne not for to charge his consience þerwip ne for to amende hym þerof, as grete a peril it is, and, ȝif it may be seide, a gretter, a man for to charge his concience wip iche þogt and stering of sinne þat wil come in  
 20 him. For by soche nice charging of concience migt he lightly renne into errour of concience, and so be ledde into dispeire alle his liiftyme. And þe cause of alle þis is lackyng<sup>36</sup> [of]<sup>37</sup> knowing of discrecioun of spirites, þe whiche knowing may be getyn in verrey experience, whoso rediliche wil loke sone after þat a soule haue ben trewly  
 25 clensid by confession, as it is seide before.

For fast after confession a soule is, as it were, a clene paper leef for abilnes þat it hap to receiue what þat men wil write þerupon. Boþe þei prese for to write on þe soule, whan it is clene in itself maad bi confession, God and his aungelles on þe to partye, and þe feend and  
 30 his aungelles on þe toþer partye. Bot it is in þe free choise of þe soule  
 f. 5o to receiue whiche þat it wole. Þe resceyte of þe soule is|þe concent of þe same soule. A newe þougt and a stering to any sinne, þe whiche þou hast forsaken bifore in þi schrift, what is it elles bot<sup>38</sup> one of þe þre spirites, þe whiche ben þin enemyes touchid before, profring to write  
 35 on þi soule þe same sinne aȝen. Þe speche of þiself is it not, for whi þer is none soche þing wretin in þi soule. For al it is wasschin away bifore in þi schrift, and þi soule lefte nakyd and bare, noþing þerupon bot a freel and a free consent, more enclining to þe iuel forcostoumid þerin

<sup>32</sup> owne] *om.* Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>33</sup> so] *ins.* Har<sup>1</sup>; *om.* Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pw CP Br.

<sup>34</sup> þat . . . deucl] *om.* Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> (grace) of] and Bo Pw Har<sup>4</sup> Br.

<sup>36</sup> lackyng] wantyng Har<sup>4</sup> † Pw.

<sup>37</sup> of] and (*can.* Har<sup>1</sup>) Har<sup>1</sup> CP.

<sup>38</sup> bot] þe speche of *add.* Kk †.



þan it is to þe good, bot more abil to þe good þan to þe iuel for clennes of þe soule & vertewe of þe sacrament of schrift. Bot of itself it haþ nouȝt þan whereþorou it may þink or stire itself to good or to iuel; and þerfore it foloweþ þat, what þouȝt þat comeþ þan in it, wheþer þat it be good or iuel, it is not of itself. Bot þe consent to þe good or<sup>39</sup> to þe iuel, 5 wheþer þat it be, þat is euirmore þe werk of þe same soule.

And al after þe worþines & þe wrechidnes of þis consent, þerafter it deseruiþ pine or blisse. Ȝif þis consent be to iuel, þan as fast it haþ bi combrance of sinne þe office of þat same spirite þat first maad him sogestion of þat same sinne. And ȝif it be to [þe]<sup>40</sup> good, þan as fast it 10 haþ bi grace þe office of þat same spirite þat first maad him stering to þat same good. For as ofte as any heelful þouȝt comeþ in oure minde, as of chastite, of sobirnes, of dispising of þe woreld, of wilful pouert, of pacience, of meeknes, & of charite, wiþoute doute it is þe spirite of God þat spekiþ, ouþer by himself or elles by som of his aungelles: þat 15 is to sey, ouþer his aungelles of þis liif, þe whiche ben trewe techers, or elles his aungelles in blis, þe whic[h]e ben trewe stirers and inspirers of good.

And as it is seide of þe oper þre iuel spirites þat a soule for longe vse and costomable consentyng vnto hem may be | maad so fleschly, so 20 f. 5b wordly, & so malicious þat it takiþ upon it þe office of hem alle, riȝt so it is aȝensward þat a soule, for longe use and custume in goodnes, may be mad so goostly by clennes of leuing and deuocioun of spirite aȝens þe spirite of þe flesche, and so heuenly aȝens þe spirite of þe woreld, and so godly<sup>41</sup> by pees and bi charite & by restfulnes of herte 25 aȝens þe spirite of malice, of wrapþe, & of wickidnes, þat it haþ hem<sup>42</sup> now of office alle soche good þouȝtes to þink whan him list wiþoutyn forȝeting, in as greet perfeccion as þe freelte of þis liif wil suffre.

And þus it may be seen how þat iche þouȝt þat smiteþ on oure hertes,<sup>43</sup> wheþer þat it be good or iuel, it is not euermore<sup>44</sup> þe speche 30 of oure owne spirite; bot þe consent to þe þouȝt, whatsoever it be, þat is euermore oure. Iesu graunt us his grace to consent to þe good and aȝeinstonde þe iuel. Amen.

<sup>39</sup> or]ellis *add.* Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>40</sup> þe] þee Har<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> godly] goodely Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pw Har<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> hem] *om.* Kk †.

<sup>43</sup> hertes] herte Har<sup>4</sup> †.

<sup>44</sup> -more] *om.* Har<sup>4</sup> †.





## COMMENTARY

## þE CLOWDE OF VNKNOWYNG

The opening Prayer, Prologue and Table of Chapters suggest that a letter of direction, originally private, has been developed into a treatise for wider circulation. The prayer itself is a translation of an ancient opening collect of the Mass, to be found in Alcuin's *Liber sacramentorum*, *Die Dominica*, *Missa de gratia S. Spiritus postulanda*. (P.L. t. 101, col. 446).

1/16, 21. **actyue leuyng**: There are two distinct but traditionally related connotations: (a) a godly life, but still one chiefly involved in worldly matters; (b) a level of prayer. Both lead towards salvation, and are typified by Martha. *See Com.* 17/9-21 below. (a) refers to the outward form of life, 17/24-25, 28/41-29/5; (b) to the level of spiritual activity, 29/35-39. Active life, therefore, provides the moral discipline by which the virtues are acquired and the foundations laid for the contemplative life.

1/16-17. **souereinnest pointe of contemplatife leuing**: Cf. 'souereynest pointe of þe spirit'. *See Introd.*, pp. xxii-xxiii, xxxvi, lv for an interpretation of this fundamental concept.

1/25-29. The comment on presentation is apposite. The reader who follows the author's advice will discover that the range of the treatise is outlined in ch. 3, after preliminaries in the Prologue and ch. 1 have indicated for whom the teaching was intended, and in ch. 2 declared God's initiative in the work. The leading themes once introduced are taken up again and again with ever new detail and fresh insight. When the author thought further elucidation was necessary for any point, he tended to introduce it in what might appear to be a loop in the direct line of the argument. *The Cloud*, therefore, unlike the shorter independent pieces, does not show an obvious strict control, but is superficially shapeless. A closer analysis, however, will reveal that a central unity is achieved by the recurrent theme of 'the work' and the simplest way of attaining to it.

The main ideas communicated by the dominant imagery (*see Introd.*, pp. xxii-xxiii, xxxvi, xlix, lv) are to be grasped simultaneously, though in the nature of verbal expression they have to be set out one at a time. Their presentation, in fact, follows a plan, for much of the material could be gathered under one of these headings: The Practice Enjoined; Man's Perfectability; The Psychological Dangers and Obstructions To Be Overcome.

2/3-5. Contempt for the subtleties of learning was a common attitude. *The Cloud's* repeated warning that the teaching should not be offered to anyone not already disposed for it has Scriptural authority, e.g. Matt. vii, 6. The first category of deriders—detractors, scandal-mongers, captious critics, whispering gossips—is shown to be held in particular distaste by the vehement accumulation of terms. The second category of 'curious' men will often be censured in the following chapters (e.g. 16/31-35). 'Curiosity' must be understood as St. Bernard interpreted it, i.e. as love of abstract speculation for its own sake and without bearing on the quest for salvation. Just as self-knowledge leads to humility, the foundation for the ascent Godwards, so 'curiosity' engenders pride. The comparable warning in *H.D.* 121/1-17, excluding all those still wholly involved in the world of creatures or relying for their concepts mainly on their sense impressions, is equally applicable to *The Cloud's* teaching throughout.

2/7-13. *The Cloud* might serve as a guide and encouragement to others besides professed religious and solitaires, viz. the potential contemplatives, who yet must chiefly lead a secular life. These are included here, though they are not mentioned in ch. 27. St. Gregory had extolled the 'mixed life', finding the perfect exemplar in Jesus Christ (*Moralium Libri* [Mor], XXVIII, xiii, 33, P.L. t. 76, col. 467). Walter Hilton developed this wider application in *Mixed Life*.

2/15. **chapitres**: Chs. 74, 75.

2/18. **table**: It seems safe to assume that there were no chapter headings in the early stage of the text. Har<sup>1</sup> li Kk Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>2</sup> U have none, neither had the old copy at Mount Grace Priory from which the Latin version (Pem) was translated, and which was closely related to Har<sup>2</sup>. See *Cloud* (E.E.T.S., pp. xiv, xxv).

5/11. **listines**: 'rest, eager longing', the very antithesis of the modern 'listlessness'. *listines* is a favourite word in *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling*.

5/12. No emendation has been made because the text of Har<sup>1</sup> has the balance of words and sharp antithesis of thought characteristic of the author's style. However, in support of the reading of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa, neither *boistous* nor any compound of it occurs in ch. 46, whereas five examples of *rude* and its compounds are to be found. *boistous* is a favourite word in Middle English devotional writings to express a lack of culture, a crudeness, in spiritual matters.

6/41. **goostly wittes**: A common term, but meaning and associations vary according to the context. Here it seems to correspond to *H.D.* 120/11 and *B.M.* 129/6: respectively 'þe whiche ben clepid þin vnderstandable worchinges'; 'of reson . . . goostly wittes', cf. *Benj. Min.* iii (col. 3) 'ex ratione' . . . 'spirituales sensus'. This is more limited than in Hilton's definition, *Scale* II, 31. (f. 106v): 'goostly wittes, þe which arne properly þe migtes of þe soule, mynde, resoun, and wille.' Though 'reson & wille . . . worchen in pure spirit wipouten any maner of bodelines', 64/35, the outstanding doctrine in *The Cloud* teaches that God is attainable as He is in Himself only through love, and that any direct experience is by a divinely infused intuition.

ME. *wittes*, however, can signify either the 'faculty of thinking and reasoning' or 'senses'.

A long and widespread tradition of the five spiritual senses existed certainly from the time of Origen. An extended treatment of the topic is incorporated in *De Septem Itineribus Aeternitatis* (*De VII Itin.*) VI, 1-6, in which Rudolph of Biberach refers to St. Augustine, St. Gregory, Alcher, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor. St. Bonaventura, William of St. Thierry, and many others might be added. To quote from *De VII Itin.*, this tradition relates to 'experientia spiritualium fit in mente spiritualibus sensibus' (VI, 2). 'Sicut corpus habet suos quinque sensus . . . sic anima habet suos quinque sensus, quibus Deo, sive aeternis, conjungitur' (VI, 6). The evidence for the spiritual senses was drawn from the many Scriptural expressions of some experience of God's presence in metaphor or implicit analogy (e.g. *Sight* Deut. xxxii, 39; *Hearing* Rev. ii, 29; *Smell* II Cor. ii, 15; *Taste* Ps. xxxiii, 9, A.V. xxxiv, 8; *Touch* I John, i, 1).

An the highest spiritual union with God as He is in Himself, described in ch. 70, all duality is superseded, all consciousness of self.

7/24-25. **state . . . purposed**: Here, and also in 20/4, Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>2</sup> have references to a special state of living not in the other MSS. These passages have subsequently been cancelled in Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup>. It is uncertain whether they were in the original text. However, they have been quoted, partly in the footnote to 20/4, since it seems more probable that these were readings from an early stage of the text, later cancelled or omitted by opponents to the religious life (perhaps by Lollards), than that they were interpolated at a later stage and afterwards cancelled. Slight support might be drawn from the fact that in 20/7 only Kk Har<sup>2</sup> omit the reference to a special state of life. See *Com.* 20/4.

**liif:** The reading of Har<sup>1</sup> has been retained since the context is reminiscent of Jas. i, 12, a quotation expounded in *Stirings* 110/37 et seq.

7/34-8/17. It is possible that the twenty-four-year-old disciple, (11/32) is fictive, and that the stages of his spiritual progress are introduced to indicate at which point the teaching of *The Cloud* is applicable (see 8/15-17). For such a literary convention there are parallels. Nevertheless, the strong impression of a personal relationship elsewhere gives credence to this outlined biography. See *Introd.*, pp. l-li.

The account covers both the outer form of life (*forme, maner*) and the inner stage of development (*degre, state*). From service in a religious community, either as lay brother or fully professed, he had been called to the life of a solitary. An annotation at the end of the first chapter of the late fifteenth-century Latin version of *The Cloud* (Pem, f. 4<sup>b</sup>) reads: 'specialis clericorum vel religiosorum, singularis solitariorum, scilicet heremitarum, anachoritarum, vel precipue cartusiensium'.

The coincidence of *Synguleer* and *solitari* (8/15) suggests the state of withdrawn physical solitude which best frees the soul striving for contemplative prayer. *Synguleer*, however, bears the overtones of a state of spirit as well as of body. Richard Rolle described the third and highest degree of love as 'singular' (*De Emendatione Vitae*). The author of *The Cloud*, like Richard of St. Victor employed the epithet to describe the penultimate degree. Cf. *De Quatuor Gradibus Violentae Charitatis* P.L. t. 196 (col. 1213); Kirch, pp. 217-33. Cf. *Benj. Maj.* IV, 15: 'singularis amor consortem non recipit' (col. 152); 'singularis amor solitudinem amat, solitarium locum requirit, totam huiusmodi turbam nec solummodo cogitationum, verum etiam affectionum, oportet ejicere' (col. 153); Kirch., pp. 167-8.

In *Serm. in Cant.* XL, St. Bernard enjoined 'solitude . . . not of the body, but of the mind and of the spirit, . . . solitude in intention and in devotion'.

8/16. **pe fote of þi loue:** The image of love as the 'foot' of the soul was traditional, possibly derived from St. Augustine. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps.* ix, 15 (P.L. t. 36, col. 124): 'Pes animae recte intelligitur amor . . . Amore enim movetur tanquam ad locum quo tendit.' See *Com.* 62/31-32. After God's initiative in 'leading' and 'pulling', the contemplative has now an active part to play. He must learn to 'step towards'. The exercise is far removed from Quietism.

8/23. **þin enemye:** i.e. the devil, tempting the soul to pride.

8/25. **werid:** The emendation keeps the alliterative phrase.

8/28. **goostly spouse:** The soul, *anima*, is thought of as feminine. St. Bernard fully developed the image of spiritual marriage for contemplation in his *Sermones in Cantica*; Richard of St. Victor used it in an accentuated form in *De Quatuor Gradibus Violentae Charitatis*.

8/28-29. **Kyng . . . lordes:** 1 Tim. vi, 15.

8/32. **erles:** The unique reading has not been emended, since *erles* is used elsewhere in some of the best MSS. in a similar context. Cf. 50/18, *Stirings* 118/14, B.M. 138/9, 13. It translates Latin *arrha*; cf. Hugh of St. Victor's *De Arrha Animae*, expressing the sweetness of joy granted as a foretaste to contemplatives whilst still on earth.

8/34-35. Cf. Phil. iii, 13-15.

9/3. **a gelous loue:** Cf. *A Ladder of Foure Ronges* (*Deonise Hid Diuinite*, p. 115/32-36): 'Gelows ys thy spouse of the. If þoue eny other love take . . . soon he wyl forsake the . . . and wythholde hym tyl that þou trewly love hym, for he wyll no lemman haue in meene. He will alle haue, or alle leve.'

9/6-7. **þe windowes & þe dore:** Cf. P.C. 84/2-9, 95/3-4, *Stirings* 113/25-27. The 'window' image, commonly associated with the five bodily senses, was based on the traditional exegesis of Jeremiah ix, 21 (Vulg.). 'Quia ascendit mors per fenestras nostras.' St. Augustine *Ennar. in Ps.* cxlvii. 10 (P.L. t. 37, col. 1920) introduced a 'door' image, through which sin enters, e.g.: 'Per quinque enim januas intrat



aliquid per corpus ad animam'; *Enarr. in Ps. ix* (*P.L.* t. 36, col. 123): 'An forte portae mortis sunt corporales sensus et oculi'.

9/7. **flies:** St. Gregory, *Mor.* XVIII, xliii (col. 78), expounds the *muscae* 'flies' of Eccles. x, 1 as vain thoughts, innate enemies such as worldly and carnal desires, and temptations of unclean spirits.

9/19-20. **Alle . . . aungelles . . . hasten hem to helpe it:** *The Cloud* makes many passing allusions to angels (e.g. 10/31, 12/11, 14/6, 18/37, 22/27, 24/22, 30/39, 31/2-3, 39/16), and to their ministrations (50/29-30); also *P.C.* 81/25-28; *Spirites* 152/28-29 153/12-18, passages not in St. Bernard's *Sermo* xxiii consulted. These must be understood according to the medieval concept, illustrated, e.g. by Dante's *Paradiso*. The fourteenth-century writer drew his angelology ultimately from the Bible, but through the system given authority by the *De Caelesti Hierarchia* of the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. Dionysius combined Scriptural information with the Neoplatonic theory of Emanations. See *Introd.*, p. xlii. Three hierarchies of spiritual forces, celestial Intelligences, each with three orders, were formed by the pouring forth from the One, the Godhead. Like mirrors, the highest hierarchy received Divine Light, and reflected it to the hierarchy below, which in turn reflected it to the third. The third, turned towards the world, reflected it thereon, thus uniting the world to its Divine Source (op. cit., iii, 2). St. Thomas Aquinas summarizes the orthodox belief, *Summa Theologica* (henceforth *S.T.*) Prima Secundae (Ia IIae) q. 9, a. 6, ad 2 'Intellectus hominis reducitur in suum actum non solum a Deo, sed etiam ab angelo per illuminationes'. Dionysius also fused this concept with the Neoplatonic doctrine of the Threefold Way of man's mystical return to God. The threefold function of every angelic hierarchy was to transmit help through the light which it received and communicated in the stages of Purgation, Illumination, and so towards Perfection. Dionysian writings conveyed this concept of the Threefold Mystic Way to the West where it was to become a commonplace. Heb. i, 14, refers to the ministration of angels to the elect. Statements of the nature of angelic help abound in devotional writings. Angels announce God's messages, mediate between man and God, offer his prayers, make up for his deficiencies in worship, etc.

*The Cloud* (50/27-30) acknowledges that the 'counfortes, sounes & gladnes, & swetnes, þat comyn fro wiþoute sodenly' may be wrought by a good angel, but stresses that such are accidental, not essential. *Spirites* tells how angels inspire good thoughts (153/12-18), and of their service in 'goostly contemplacioun of heuen & of heuenly þinges' (149/13-14). *Priue Counseling* alone associates angels with the highest point of contemplation, the sudden and immediate infusion of Divine Wisdom (81/26-28). Walter Hilton analyses their participation much more fully. See *Scale* II, 46. In the informative appendix to his edition (*Scale of Perfection*, London, 1953), 'Souls and Angels', pp. 309-16, Fr. G. Sitwell traces Hilton's indebtedness to St. Bernard. *The Cloud's* treatment has its own particular emphases. It likens angels to men as creatures with intelligence and affection (10/28-33), without man's frailty (12/10-11, 24/22-23), yet with limited knowledge, 'blynde' (22/25-27) in the light of God's superabundant glory and love. 'The angel is present to the soul not as working good in her, but merely as suggesting good thoughts; not as making her virtuous, but only as inciting her to virtue' (translated from St. Bernard, *De Consideratione* V, v (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 795). God alone directly stirs the will (39/16-17). It is the very essence of the 'work' that the 'naked intent' should stretch to God alone, and the rejection of angels, the highest form of creation, in the time of contemplative prayer is repeated (14/4-6, 31/2-3) to emphasize this.

9/21-22. Cf. *P.C.* 83/25-28.

9/24-25. **clensid . . . vertewos:** Cf. 21/31-36.

9/25. **liztest werk:** Cf. 10/5, 12/22-25, *Priuer* 105/33-35. See *Introd.*, p. xlvii.



For the Prayer of Aspirations (i.e. elevations, inward stirrings of the spirit), see Fr. Augustine Baker *Holy Wisdom* (London, 1876), Third Treatise on Prayer, sect. iv, ch. II, pp. 509-19. Such a prayer 'askeþ no longe tyme' (10/4). The practice enjoined by the Carthusian Guigo I was to interrupt work by the ejaculation of brief prayers and elevations of the spirit: 'Opera brevibus volumus orationibus interrumpi . . . semper in operando ad breves et quasi jaculatas licet orationes recurrere'. *Consuetudines* XXIX (*P.L.* t. 153, col. 699).

9/31. **nakid entent**: In *De VII Itin.* I, ii, *intentio* is defined as an act of the will moved by the desire of love and directed by reason. *nakid* corresponds to *L. nudus*, a favourite epithet in apophatic mystical texts, often signifying 'stripped of all images'. Cf. *De Adhaerendo Deo*, see *Intro.*, pp. xxv-xxvi, xlix.

9/36-37. **see him . . . derknes**: The Dionysian doctrine is associated here with 1 Cor. xiii, 12. Cf. Richard of St. Victor *De IV Gradibus Violentae Charitatis* (col. 1218): 'Et si videt, quidem videt quasi in nocte, videt velut sub nube, vidit denique per speculum in aenigmate. . . .'

10/6. **athomus**: *L. atomus* in 1 Cor. xv, 52 = A.V. 'the twinkling of an eye'. In medieval Latin its time-value was equivalent to 15/94 of a second, the smallest measure of time.

10/10-11. **wretyn . . .**: A commonplace follows. Cf. St. Anselm *Meditatio II* (*P.L.* t. 158, col. 723): 'Quid respondebis in illa die cum exigitur a te . . . omne tempus vivendi tibi . . . qualiter fuerit a te expensum?'

10/17-18. **reformid bi grace . . . sinne**: Cf. St. Paul's doctrine of regeneration, 1 Cor. xv, 47, 49; Col. iii, 9. Hilton used the re-forming of the divine image in man as the framework for *The Scale*. References in *The Cloud* are infrequent, yet the concept is implicitly fundamental. The 'work' re-forms; see chs. 64-66, *P.C.* 83/34-35.

10/22. **by mesuring . . .**: Cf. 22/27-29; *Divine Names I* (C. E. Rolt *Dionysius the Areopagite* [London, 1920], p. 52. Henceforth Rolt): 'Divine things are revealed unto each created spirit in proportion to its powers, and in this measure is perception granted through the workings of the Divine goodness, the which in just care for our preservation divinely tempereth unto finite measure the infinitude of things which pass man's understanding.'

10/28. **knowable**: 'that may know'. Cf. 'vnderstandable'. See *Com.* 6/41.

10/31. **Bot seþ . . .**: *Har*<sup>1</sup> begins *Bot sþ*, i.e. with a conjunction, 'But since . . .'. However, the long sentence which follows, dense in its syntax and trailing, does not logically follow on. Cf. the readings of the other MSS., *seþ*, see (*imp.* 2 pl.), 'see'. Cf. 11/3. This passage reiterates the key idea of the whole treatise, explaining 10/26-28 more fully. The reading of *Har*<sup>1</sup> has been emended to signify 'Only see'. This collocation is not paralleled elsewhere in *The Cloud*, but it is in keeping with the author's habit of retrospective emphasis.

10/33-34. **knowable . . . louyng . . . principal worching . . . miztes**: See 64/7, *Intro.*, pp. xxxvii-xl, where the two principal working faculties are called 'reason' and 'will'. The close kinship between love and the will goes back at least to St. Augustine's two different triads to describe the powers of the soul: Memory, Understanding, Will; Memory, Understanding, Love. See *Intro.*, p. xxxvi. Cf. Ailred of Rievaulx *Speculum Charitatis* I, iii (*P.L.* t. 195, col. 507-08): 'Tria haec memoriam dico, scientiam, amorem, sive voluntatem. In his tribus ad imaginem Trinitatis conditus homo.'

11/10. **here after**: See ch. 64.

11/16. **wipouten mo**: Cf. ch. 42.

11/19. **noþing is more precious þan tyme**: Cf. 10/10-11. Also St. Bernard *Sermo ad Solitarios*: 'Nihil pretiosius tempore, quia sicut capillus non peribit de capite, sic nec momentum peribit de tempore, quin oporteat reddere rationem'. (Quoted from *De VII Itin.* VII, 2.)

11/23 et seq. **For tyme . . .**: Cf. St. Augustine *De Civitate Dei*, XI, vi (*P.L.* t. 41, col. 321): 'Quis non videat quod tempora non fuissent, nisi creatura fieret, quae aliquid aliqua motione mutaret: cujus motionis et mutationis cum aliud atque aliud, quae simul esse non possunt, cedit atque succedit . . . Cum igitur Deus . . . creator sit temporum et ordinator . . .'

11/26. **is euen . . . only**: 'exactly corresponds to one at a time'.

11/31. **tyme seerly**: In *ping diuersly*, the unique reading of Har<sup>1</sup>, *ping* is obviously inferior. In *P.C.* 87/38, however, all MSS. have *diuersly* in a comparable passage.

11/32. **foure & twenty zere age**: Twenty was the normal age to take up a vocation in the Carthusian Order. The disciple's progress described in ch. 1, 8/7-15 had possibly taken about four years.

12/24. **as sparcle . . .**: The suggestion for this seemingly spontaneous and natural simile could well have come from passages on Aspirations in Latin treatises which the author almost certainly knew. See *Introd.*, p. xlix.

12/27-29. **for corrupcion . . . riseþ aȝen**: The recoil of the spirit was a commonplace. It had been vividly described by St. Augustine and St. Gregory. Cf. Hugh of Balma *Viae Sion lugent* (henceforth *Viae Sion*), III, i: 'statim post consurrectionem mens infra seipsam inferius prolabatur, iterum et iterum consurgit, et iterum infra seipsam cadit.'

12/34. **coryous**: See *Com.* 2/3-6.

12/36. **troden doun**: This is a common metaphor of Biblical origin. Its Latin form (from *calcare* v.) is frequently used by St. Gregory. In mystical treatises it is often associated with the 'foot of love'.

12/38-13/8. These dangers are developed in the later part of *The Cloud*; e.g. chs. 51, 52. The need for spiritual direction is everywhere stressed.

13/26. **cloude of forȝetyng**: See *Introd.*, pp. xxvii, xlv.<sup>62</sup>

14/4. **ȝif it be cortesy**: The author is careful elsewhere to stress the value of such common devotional exercises as meditation in the initial and preparatory stages (e.g. 15/16-20, *P.C.* 90/27-35). Indeed meditation is essential, and to be abandoned only in the highest spiritual practice of contemplative prayer. See *Com.* 17/26.

14/29-30. **smyte . . . darte of longynȝ loue**: See *Introd.*, pp. xlix, liv.

14/30. **go not þens**: See *Com.* 21/17.

14/34-35. **Him I coueite . . . noȝt bot him**: Cf. *De IV Gradibus Violentiae Charitatis* (col. 1211): 'unum amat, unum diligit, unum concupiscit'; *Scale* II, 21.

14/36-38. **sey þou . . . skile**: i.e. with the simple concept of the Trinity as apprehended by faith without any development or image.

14/37. **loue**: The other good MSS. have *degre*. The emphasis in ch. 1 falls equally upon the disciple's growth in love and his progressive change of state. Har<sup>1</sup> conveys in its reading, **loue**, the operation of the Trinity in the soul's spiritual progress. Cf. 8/2 et seq., *Com.* 15/26.

15/6. **jangle**: Cf. *B.M.* 136/33-137/1.

15/26. **mene God**: Though the text has been emended, the reading of Har<sup>1</sup> deserves further consideration, especially as partial agreement with Ro<sup>1</sup> suggests that the word **loue** appeared at an early stage in transmission. Har<sup>1</sup> touches upon the profound theological truth which Hilton developed in *Scale* II, 34. The grace of contemplation is the gift of God's love. Cf. *Divine Names* iv, 14 (Rolt, p. 107): 'they call Him Yearning and Love as being a Motive-Power leading all things to Himself'. Cf. also *Scale* II, 34: 'He is boþ þe gifer & þe gifte, & makþ us þan bi þat gifte for to knowen & lufen Him. Loo, þis is þe luf þat I spake of, þat þu schudest only coueiten & desiren þis vnformede luf þat is þe Holi Gost.' MS. Harleian 6579, f. III<sup>r</sup>. Cf. *P.C. Com.* 97/15.

15/31-32. **a litil worde of o silable:** The director aims at focusing the attention by giving the mind an imageless suggestion to fasten on. The contrast between the slightness of the mental effort and the force of the spiritual is brought out by the following accumulation of vigorous martial imagery of violent action.

16/27. **a beme . . . God:** Because man was created in the image and likeness of the Trinity (see *Introd.*, pp. xxxv-xxxvii), his reason participates in the intelligence of God, whose light illumines the true working of the mind. In Neoplatonism (see *Introd.*, pp. xli-xlii), 'Light' is a symbol of reason as well as its source. Cf. *Preier* 104/30-31.

16/32-17/4. Cf. this digressive attack on the perversion of an intellect not directed towards salvation with *Com.* 2/3-5.

17/9-21. **two maner of liues:** Though it is introduced incidentally to justify the abandonment of meditations in favour of the special exercise, this passage also provides a clear frame of reference for the whole treatise. Comparable schemes conclude Rolle's *Form of Living* (ch. xii) and introduce Hilton's Scale I, 2-9. Each author's statement is recognisably individual, but all stem ultimately from the definitions established by St. Augustine and copiously developed by St. Gregory (see Cuthbert Butler *Western Mysticism*).

St. Augustine expounded the story of Martha and Mary (Luke x) in terms of the active and contemplative lives. *The Cloud* follows St. Augustine's exegesis closely in chs. 17-23 where he defends the contemplative life. He returns to the theme of the two lives again in *P.C.* 93/17-94/3, but from a different viewpoint.

17/22-23. Cf. St. Augustine *De Consensu Evangelistarum* I, 5 (*P.L.* t. 34, col. 1046): 'illa (Martha) operatur, ista (Maria) requiescit'. *Sermo* CIII, cap. ii (*P.L.* t. 38, col. 614): 'illa multa disponebat, ista unum aspiciebat'.

17/26 et seq. **meditations:** The many medieval treatises entitled *Meditations* . . . indicate both the widespread practice of this devotional exercise and its character. In typical *Meditations on the Passion*, for example, the scenes are described in minute visual detail, and the reader led to imagine himself present and participating immediately and emotionally in the event. Reflection will follow, and loving devotion grow. This stimulus on the natural level of human feeling was valued by St. Bernard and William of St. Thierry, founders of Cistercian spirituality, as the initial step and the foundation of the contemplation of Christ's Divinity. Such discursiveness on Christ's Humanity was obviously not consistent with the negative Dionysian 'work' of *The Cloud*. Meditation is considered essential until the final stage of the mystical ascent (see *Com.* 14/4), but is to be abandoned in the practice of 'unknowing' in the higher degree of contemplation. R. Woolf *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1968), pp. 26, 160-1, contrasts the attitude of the author of *The Cloud*, Richard Rolle and Walter Hilton towards meditations on the Passion.

17/33. **nakid beyng:** i.e. not clothed in any image or concept that would restrict and falsify.

17/34-41. See *Introd.*, p. xxxii.

18/18-21. **þe whiles . . . fantasie:** *fantasie* is a term from scholastic psychology signifying a mental image, or the faculty by which this is formed. L. *phantasia* = 'a making visible'. Cf. *S.T.* IIa IIae, q. 180, a. 5: 'Contemplatio humana secundum statum praesentis vitae, non potest esse absque phantasmatibus, quia connaturale est homini ut species intelligibiles in phantasmatibus videat'. The word tends to be used in a disparaging context in *The Cloud* since the operation is contrary to the 'work'

18/35 et seq. **more profitable . . . :** Cf. ch. 3.

19/8. **cleer sigt:** Cf. *Com.* 9/36-37.

19/13-14. **agens þi wille & þi wetyng:** The theme is developed in 19/32-36, 35/21-31.

19/34. **pyne**: 'the painful effect'. The secondary effects of original sin on man's faculties are explained in chs. 64-66. The primary effect is the loss of sanctifying grace.

19/35. **agens þi power**: either 'not within your control', or 'against your faculty'. The former seems more likely in this context; the latter would be in accordance with the vivid concrete imagery of 16/23, 19/13-14.

20/4. **woreld**: The cancelled addition of Har<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>2</sup> is given in the footnotes in the light of the argument in *Com.* 7/24-25. Its style is not comparable either with 7/24-25 or 20/7. This trailing long addition is over-compressed in its prolix development of a lateral idea, and is also suspect through its lack of grammatical concord (*þei* after *arte*).

20/5, 11. **venial**: 'pardonable'; **deedly**, 'leading to damnation'. A clearer treatment of the distinction between the sins of the secular man and of the dedicated contemplative is to be found in Hilton's *Scale* I, 60. For an exposition of sins considered *venial* or *deedly*, see *S. T. Ia IIae*, q. 88, 89; **bot venial synne**, see *Ila IIae*, q. 186, a. 10. It was a commonplace that there is no sin if the will does not assent to temptation, and so the impulses are not wilfully indulged. Cf. St. Augustine *De Vera Religione* I, xiv, 27 (*P. L.* t. 34; col. 133-4).

20/15-36. The tendencies to sin are treated under the familiar traditional seven subdivisions, but in a manner unusual and perfunctory. That such an analysis occurs at all is unexpected in teaching which exhorts the disciple to think of sin collectively as 'a lump'. See 25/23-35, 40/22-33. *The Cloud* has its own order and grouping, not the more common series which, proceeding logically from Pride, classifies as sins of the spirit and sins of the flesh. See 43/23-24. Envy, Covetousness, Lechery are barely recognizable, Envy is characterized only by ill-will, Lechery by pleasurable indulgence without specific detail. However, as always, the author is focusing on the contemplative life, and not with the manifestation of these sins in social life. He is concerned chiefly to point out the dangers when worldly thoughts are entertained and to warn against slackness in avoiding venial sin.

21/17. **go not þens**: The exhortation to unremitting persistence in the 'work' is often repeated, e.g. 9/28, 14/30, 43/14-16, 44/22-24. The author concedes that through human frailty the contemplative will be unable to sustain the experience (44/25 et seq.), but at this stage he never gives the customary direction to fall back on earlier devotional practice. The intention must remain unchanged in the will, even if not continuously in action (21/14-17, 44/29-30).

21/18-24. The variety of verbal forms, unique in Har<sup>1</sup>, has been retained, since it is easier to explain the levelling in the other MSS. than the imposition of the differing inflexional endings in Har<sup>1</sup>. *Fast þou-*, *wake þou-*, *ligge þou* are imperative forms used with concessive force. (See Mustanoja *Middle English Syntax*, pt. 1 [Helsinki, 1951], p. 477.) The repetition of the subject pronoun emphasizes the contrast between the effectiveness of the 'work' and what the contemplative might attempt to achieve by the most drastic physical mortification; *puttest-*, *cuttest-*, *stoppest-* are past indicative forms because the condition is realizable. See Mustanoja, p. 469. *schere* past subjunctive and *dedest* past indicative are used side by side without any marked difference in modality. See Mustanoja, p. 470.

22/2. **crokid**: Cf. Latin *curva*, a familiar term used technically by St. Bernard and St. Bonaventura among others in antithesis to *recta*, to signify curvature away from God.

22/3. **vertewe . . . an ordeinde & a mesurid affeccion**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* vii (col. 6): 'nihil aliud est virtus quam animi affectus ordinatus et moderatus'; *B. M.* 131/7-8, 141/12-26. *The Cloud* adds 'plainly directe vnto God for himself', thereby adapting the quotation to his characteristic teaching.

22/4-5. **clene cause of alle vertewes**: Cf. St. Augustine *Liber Contra Collatorem* c.



xiii (*P.L.* t. 45, col. 1818): 'Virtus namque principaliter Deus est: cui non aliud est habere virtutem, quam esse virtutem'.

22/9. **meeknes & charite:** Cf. St. Augustine *Sermo XXI*, 2 (*P.L.* t. 38, col. 142): 'Deo nunc propinquamus humilitate et charitate'. Meekness is the antithesis of Pride, the root of all vices. St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Bonaventura among others extol it as the foundation of Christian perfection. Charity is the theological virtue through which a man loves God above all else and all else for God (see ch. 24). These interdependent twin virtues, which are the epitome of the character of Christ, must operate together in the contemplative approach.

22/13-14. **it be þe cheef:** The more difficult reading of Har<sup>1</sup> has been retained. Cf. 22/6, 40 where *it, þis* = this cause (God).

22/18-19. **Meeknes . . . as he is:** Cf. St. Bernard *De Gradibus Humilitatis* I, 2 (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 942): 'Humilitas est virtus, qua homo verissima sui agnitione sibi ipsi vilescit'.

22/20. **Two þinges:** Cf. St. Bernard *Epistolae* cccxciii, 3 (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 602): 'Humilitas enim duos habet pedes: considerationem divinae potentiae, et propriae infirmitatis'.

22/27-29. See *Com.* 10/22.

22/37-38. **a ful schort while:** The brief duration of the experience is a frequent theme in the works of St. Augustine and St. Gregory. See C. Butler *Western Mysticism*, pp. 115-16.

23/5, 14. **felyng of myself:** Though the unique addition of Har<sup>1</sup> (*a wrech* twice inserted in the margin) has not been adopted, it is relevant to the following claim in each passage. It is not to be dismissed merely as a pious scribal addition suggested by 22/21-24. It connotes a whole frame of reference which in chs. 13 and 14 is condensed and somewhat sketchy. The author is propounding two main themes: the 'work' he advocates is an act of perfect meekness; the way to perfection lies through self-knowledge. Cf. *B.M.* 142/34-36: 'al after þat a man knoweþ hymself, þerafter he profiteþ in þe knowyng of God, of whom he is þe ymage & þe liknes'. Also 143/5-9. *a wrech* conveys man's recognition that he has lost his likeness to God and defaced the image. He begins to see himself as God sees him and knows that he is lost unless grace comes to his aid. He accepts his punishment as deserved and mortifies himself, wholly rejects selfhood, to declare his submission to God's will. This accordance of will, in the knowledge that he is nothing and God is all, grows into an act of love and response to God's goodness to him and the true way to perfection. See E. Gilson *Mystical Theology of Saint Bernard*, trans. A. H. C. Downes (London, 1940), pp. 69-72, 232, note 90.

The marginal *a wrech*, included in the text of the earlier edition, is, nevertheless, rather obtrusive. Though in ch. 13 the balance has been kept between imperfect and perfect meekness, the emphasis in chs. 15 and 16 is on the degree of love beyond and above the consciousness of sin.

24/11, 15. **consience:** This signifies an activity of the mind which enables the intellect to decide upon principles by which action should be directed or judged.

24/15-17. The author reiterates the essential need for the practice of the Sacrament of Penance. Cf. 24/35-36, 35/11-13, 36/23-24, and elsewhere. There might be here a hint of controversy. Possibly he was anxious to establish that his doctrine had nothing in common with the contemporary extravagances of such heretical sects as the Brethren of the Free Spirit who held themselves above common morality.

24/31. Matt. v, 48.

24/39 et seq. Luke vii, 47-48. In medieval times Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha, was often identified with Mary Magdalene.

25/5. **put:** Cf. 32/16, 71/2, 73/33. An emendation is unnecessary.



25/29. **stynkyng fen & donghille**: Cf. St. Gregory *Mor.*, III, xix (*P.L.* t. 75, col. 617): 'An non quasi quoddam sterquilinum sunt corda poenitentium, qui dum mala sua flendo considerant, quasi ante se stercora, sese abjiciendo coacervant?'

26/8. Luke x.

26/8 et seq. Chs. 17-22 describe the two ways of knowing God through the exterior and interior life. Some of the Middle English statements are little more than a translation from St. Augustine. E.g. 28/36 et seq. See *Western Mysticism*, pp. 232 et seq.

26/10-21. Cf. *Benjamin Major* I, i: 'Maria sedens secus pedes Domini audiebat verbum illius. Summam itaque Dei sapientiam in carne latitantem quam oculis carnis videre non poterat audiendo intelligebat, et intelligendo videbat, et in hunc modum sedendo, et audiendo summae veritatis contemplationi vacabat.' 19-21 relate this to the 'work' of *The Cloud*.

26/13-17. Cf. The three phases of mystical love described by St. Bernard (*In Cant.* XX). The object of sensible love is the Humanity of Christ and the mysteries of His mortal life, of rational love the teaching of the faith, of spiritual love the very being of God.

26/16-17. **souereynest wisdom . . . derk wordes of his Manheed**: See *H.D.*, *Com.* 119/14.

28/37-38. **domesman . . . defendid hir**: Cf. St. Augustine (*Sermo* CIV, i, col. 616): 'Dominus autem pro Maria respondit Marthae; et ipse ejus factus est advocatus, qui iudex fuerat interpellatus'.

28/39-40. Cf. St. Augustine: 'Repetitio nominis . . . aut forte movendae intentionis: ut audiret attentius, bis vocata est'. (*Sermo* CIII, col. 614.) A discussion of the superlative *best* occurs in St. Gregory's *Homiliarum in Ezechielem*. II, Hom. ii (*P.L.* t. 76, col. 953-4).

29/17. **euen in noumbre**: Cf. 10/18-21. The stirrings have become continuous. See *Introd.*, p. xlviii.

29/32. **before**: See ch. 8.

30/2. **ful seeldom & by a specyal grace**: Cf. 2/7-12.

30/28. **rest . . . pley**: Cf. *P.C.* 86/17-23. Though the normal faculties of the senses and mind are dormant, the soul is operating with intense activity. *pley* is a loaded word in mystical writings. Cf. 48/36. To quote from *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton* (London, 1974), p. 350: 'To live with the true consciousness of life centred in Another is thus to lose one's self-important seriousness, and thus to live life as "play" in union with a Cosmic Player'. The 'game of love' which God plays with the contemplative, apparently withdrawing, yet each time returning 'more worpelyer & merilier þen oþer', is the proof of a true vocation described in *The Cloud* ch. 75, and again in *Priue Counseling* 96/17-97/13. *Ancrene Wisse* describes how He plays with us 'as þe moder wiþ hire gunge deorling'. See *Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS.* 402, ed. J. R. R. Tolkien, E.E.T.S. No. 249, pp. 118-19.

30/39. **aungele . . . þei**: *aungele* has been retained as a generic singular, though most of the MSS. have a plural form. The account of this story was taken chiefly from Matt. xxviii, 1-7, where only one angel is mentioned. The same story as retold in John xx, 11-13 has two angels.

31/14. **Symound Leprous**: 'Simon the leper'; Vulgate *Simon Leprosus*, Mark xiv, 3.

31/26-27. **gif it schal be wel**: i.e. 'if they follow their conscience and wish only to please God'.

31/33-35. **not leueful . . . nessessaryes**: This passage suggests that the author, like his disciple, was dependent on precarious charity for the bare necessities of life, and that, therefore, they were not enclosed as anchorites or coenobites. Cf. R. M. Clay *Hermits and Anchorites of England* (London, 1914), p. 103: 'The bishop was careful not to license anyone unless he was satisfied that sustentation was secure and

permanent'. The three young women for whom the *Ancrene Wisse* was written were assured of food and clothing, and had maid-servants to attend them. When Richard Rolle began his life as a hermit he was sheltered by his patron.

31/35. **God sendeþ þe kow . . .** The detractors say, in effect, that God helps those who help themselves. This same old proverb is alluded to in *A Ladder of Four Ronges*, p. 106/28-30, also with an exception to it in the case of a contemplative: 'He gevyth the oxe by the horne', that is, 'whan he not callid offeryth his grace'. *The Cloud* repeats the argument of Guigo II in the Latin source of *A Ladder*, that it is not for our limited judgment to impose limits on the generosity of God.

31/36-40. This address to a wider circle is reminiscent of I Cor. x, 13.

32/15-18. *See Com.* 23/5, 14. St. Bernard (*see* Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 72, 101) taught the profound connection between self-knowledge and judgment of self, and between judgment of self and charity, how humility grows into charity. God is Charity. Charity is His law and the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Charity ultimately is the will common to man and God, and the contemplative living in accordance with the will of God will embrace all creatures without particularization.

32/19-22. The 'naked intent' fulfills the two fundamental commandments from the Mosaic Law quoted by Jesus (Mark xii, 28-34; Luke x, 26-28). Cf. St. Augustine *De Doctrina Christiana* III, x, col. 72: 'Charitatem voco motum animi ad fruendum Deo propter ipsum, et se atque proximo propter Deum'.

32/22. **seide before:** *See* 15/28-29.

32/24-31. By this further definition the 'naked intent' is linked with 'chaste love'. *See* *Preier* 105/16-22. Cf. 15/31-34, 52/6-9, *P.C.* 97/10-20, *see* *Introd.*, p. xxv<sup>4</sup>.

33/34. **limes of Holy Chirche:** *See* I Cor. xii.

34/5. **rest siþen:** After the strenuous exercise of recollection there will come the state of quiet, when God takes over.

34/13. **longe tyme:** Cf. *bot awhile . . . sone* 34/22-23. Hugh of Balma's *Prologus* perhaps supplies an explanation of this apparent discrepancy. If *werk* 34/6 is understood as the whole way to Perfection (*see* *Introd.*, p. xxiv), i.e. Hugh's *triplex via*, then when the soul is rightly disposed through the experiences of Purgation and Illumination, the aspirations of love towards God will soon rise without effort. *The Cloud* is vague, Hugh of Balma more precise: 'Postea autem per spatium modici temporis, scilicet per mensem unum, vel per duos . . .'.

34/28. **no longe tyme togeders:** Cf. *Com.* 22/37-38.

34/31-32. **beme . . . peersyng þis cloude:** This naturalistic image conveys the same impression as St. Gregory's favourite symbol describing the action of divine Light through the 'chink of contemplation', or St. Bernard's description (*In Cant.* XLI, 3): 'Cum autem divini aliquid raptim et veluti in velocitate corusci luminis interluserit menti . . .'.

35/2. **who:** This is dealt with more fully in ch. 8.

35/8. **weþer . . . customable synners or none:** Cf. 35/40-42.

35/14-15. **rote & þe grounde of sinne:** Cf. 69/4-7.

35/22. **combros cloude:** Contrast 26/24-25 for different aspects of *The Cloud*. The emotive epithet here recalls *H.D.* 124/33-36.

36/8. **helle calues:** i.e. devils.

36/34. **sotiltees:** The general reading has been adopted here where *sleistes* refers to stratagems taught and *prue sotiltees* to 'personal refinements of such devices'. *sleixt* and *sotylle*, however, appear to be interchangeable in 36/37, 37/5, 24, 30.

37/20-22. Cf. 48/36-37. These tender images recall that of a mother and her crying child in *Ancrene Wisse*, p. 119. *The Cloud*, however, prefers a father image.

37/24-25. **fele þe profe of þeese:** i.e. try these practical exercises in charity and humility.

37/39-40. **scharpe double-eggid dreedful swerde of discrecion:** A figurative expres-

sion for a man's knowledge of what he is and what he might be. See *Introd.*, pp. xxxiv-xxxv; *Com.* 23/5, 14. This image has gathered some of the associations of Heb. iv, 12.

38/7. **curtesye**: Cf. St. Francis *Fioretti*, cap. 37: 'La cortesia è una delle proprietà di Dio'. This attribution of courtesy, a typical Franciscan concept, together with its romance associations became a favourite with fourteenth-century devotional writers, especially Julian of Norwich. See *B.M. Com.* 133/18.

38/9. **þe werk of only God**: 'Man needs the help of grace in order to be moved to act'. *S.T. Ia IIae*, q. 109, a. 9.

38/12-17. Cf. 35/40-36/5.

38/18-21. Cf. 34/11-13, 38/29 et seq.; also *Scale II*, ch. 20, and *A Ladder*, quoting from St. Augustine: 'God . . . fillith alle creatures aftir that they are able to receyve' (104/10-13).

38/22. **wipholden, & not wipdrawen**: The sinner might regain grace through repentance and amendment.

38/29-36. Cf. *De VII Itin.* IV, vi, VI, vi (from St. Gregory): 'Superiora amare, jam sursum est ire; dumque magno desiderio ad coelestia animus inhiat, miro modo hoc ipsum quod accipere quaerit, hoc jam degustat'. 'Qui Deum desiderat, jam habet quem amat.' St. Bernard, *De Diligendo Deo* vii, 22 (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 987), also succinctly expressed the underlying paradox: 'Sed enim in hoc est mirum, quod nemo te quaerere valet, nisi qui prius invenerit. Vis igitur inveniri ut quaeraris, quaeri ut inveniaris'.

39/2-3. Cf. *P.C.* 93/26-30. The contemplative is passing from the 'co-operant' to the 'operant' mode of grace. See *S.T. Ia IIae*, q. 111, a. 2: 'In illo . . . effectu in qua mens nostra est mota et non movens, solus autem Deus movens, operatio Deo attribuitur; et secundum hoc dicitur *gratia operans*. In illo . . . effectu in quo mens nostra et movet et movetur, operatio non solum attribuitur Deo, sed etiam animae, et secundum hoc dicitur *gratia co-operans*.'

39/5. **hous**: Cf. St. Augustine *Confessiones* I, 5, 6 (*P.L.* t. 32, col. 663): 'Angusta est domus animae meae . . .'. **hosbonde**; cf. *B.M.* 140/10: 'God, þat is þe trewe housbonde of oure soule'.

39/11-17. See *S.T. I*, q. 106, a. 2. Only God can move the will. God alone imparts grace, and by a direct illumination draws the will towards Himself. Angels and the Devil, being created, work indirectly through means of images and forms. The Devil has his power only from God. He works upon the sensuality and the reason, but dare not approach the 'sovereign point' of the spirit where God is latent.

39/12-13. **wipouten mene . . . þin**: Cf. *De VII Itin.* IV, vi: 'verus amor . . . nullum patitur medium inter se et objectum, quod est Deus, sed vehementer tendit in ipsum immediate'.

39/20-21. **menes-mene**: A word-play on homonyms which signify both 'methods' and 'intermediary'.

39/24-25. **Lesson, Meditacion, & Oryson**: These preparatory steps to perfection are succinctly described in *A Ladder of Foure Ronges* (*D.H.D.*, p. 101/16-23): 'Lesson is a besy loking vpon Holy Writte with intencion of the wille and in the witte. Meditacion is a studious inserchyng with the mynde to knowe that ere was hydde. . . . Prayer is a devoute desiring of the hert for to gete that that is good & to fordoo þat is eville. Contemplacion is a risyng of hert into God that tastith sumdele of heuently swettnesse & savourith. Lesson sekyth, meditacion fyndith, orison askith, contemplacion felith.'

39/25-26. This suggests that the recipient was ignorant of Latin. Cf. 70/13-14.

39/26. **pinkyng**: This fails to convey the full sense of 'meditacion'. See *Introd.*, p. xxxi<sup>11</sup> and *Com.* 17/26.

39/26-27. **anoþer book of anoþer mans werk**: Abbot Justin McCann suggested that this was the *Scala Claustralium* of Guigo II, the source of *A Ladder*. The exercises,

however, were a common topic in Latin works on contemplation; e.g. Hugh of St. Victor *Eruditionis Didascalicae* V, 9 (*P.L.* t. 176, cols. 797-8); Guigo de Ponte *De Contemplatione* (Grausem, p. 279); *De VII Itin.* De Secundo Itinere; Richard Rolle's *De Emendatione Vitae*. The translation into simple terms suggests that perhaps a book in the vernacular was intended. Both *A Ladder* and Hilton's *Scale* I, chs. 15, 34-36 are possibilities, but there are others.

In the following development treating the recognition of sin, *The Cloud* might have been following either Hugh of St. Victor or St. Thomas Aquinas.

39/30. **bigginers, profifers . . . parfite**: These are technical terms which translate the commonly accepted Latin division into *Incipientes*, *Proficientes*, *Perfecti*. See S. T. IIa IIae, q. 24, a. 9; q. 183, a. 4. Broadly speaking, in this context these three categories are related to the three stages of the Mystic Way, as described by the third-century Origen and familiarized through *The Celestial Hierarchy* of the pseudo-Dionysius. *viz.* Purgation, Illumination and Union. The phases naturally are inseparable within a continuous and indivisible process of sanctification; it is the balance between the occupations and experiences characterizing them which changes in accordance with spiritual advance. Beginners are chiefly concerned with the discipline of Purgation; those making progress increasingly acquire spiritual insight and consolations.

39/35-36. 'See by the actual testing of this same sequence.'

39/37. **Goddess worde . . . mirour**: The image (possibly inspired by Jas. i, 23-24) and its exposition are traditional. Cf. St. Gregory *Mor.* II, i (col. 553): 'Scriptura sacra mentis oculis quasi quoddam speculum opponitur, ut interna nostra facies in ipsa videatur. Ibi etenim foeda, ibi pulchra nostra cognoscimus.'

40/8, 10. **circumstaunces**: *Circumstantia* was the Latin technical term for the points which must be detailed in Confession; Chaucer's *Parson's Tale* (ed. Robinson [Massachusetts, 1957] X (I), 959-77, p. 260) gives guidance for the description of seven circumstances which aggravate sin, corresponding to the fifth topic of Confession in the *Summa* of Raymund of Pennaforte.

40/18-20. **wipoutyn any menes . . . God**: *The Cloud* stresses that the meditations of the contemplative are different in kind from those customary. See *Com.* 17/26. Like the aspirations, they are inspired directly by the Holy Ghost. See A. Baker *Holy Wisdom*, pp. 510-12.

40/25. **SYNNE . . . GOD**: This is the fundamental Christian dichotomy which lies at the core of the conception of Humility and Charity.

40/26. **brekyng**: Cf. *A Ladder*: 'Meditacion . . . brekith it' (101/29).

40/34-37. Cf. ch. 53 where the author demonstrates his profound aversion to extravagant outward exhibitions of inward feeling.

41/1-5. The author again stresses that the practices of Holy Church are to be assumed as framework for his 'special work'. See *Com.* 24/15-17.

41/8 et seq. Mystical prayer is not articulate, and is utterly different from discursive or reasoned petition. Cf. 43/32-36, 50/9-13, *P.C.* 75/13-16. Cf. Hugh of St. Victor *De Modo Orandi*, ii (*P.L.* t. 176, col. 980): 'Pura oratio est, quando ex abundantia devotionis mens ita accenditur, ut . . . prae amoris ejus magnitudine etiam petitionis suae obliviscatur'.

41/10. **lityl worde of o silable**: For the brevity of contemplative verbal prayer, cf. St. Augustine *Ep. ad Probam*, x, 20 (*P.L.* t. 33, col. 501-2): 'Dicuntur fratres in Aegypto crebras quidem habere orationes, sed eas tamen brevissimas, et raptim quodammodo jaculatas . . . Absit enim ab oratione multa locutio, sed non desit multa precatio, si fervens perseverat intentio'; *In Joannis Evangelium* I, i (*P.L.* t. 35, col. 1383): 'Quam breve est quod dixi, quatuor literas, et duas syllabas . . .'. *The Cloud* author characteristically reduced the vocal prayer to its absolute limit.

41/12-13. **higest & . . . souereynest pointe of þe spirit**: See *Introd.*, pp. xxii-



xxiii, xxxvi, lv. Cf. William Law: 'Though God is everywhere present, yet He is only present to thee in the deepest and most central part of thy soul'. (Quoted from A. Huxley *The Perennial Philosophy*, p. 8; *Viae Sion* (Prol.): '... intellectis illis pauculis verbis . . . in quibus spiritus edocetur, quomodo uniri Deo debeat, in suo summo apice constitutus'. This essence, or 'being', is called by the German mystics *grund*, 'ground', of the spirit.

41/28. **schort preier peersip heuen**: The quotation was possibly first inspired by Ecclus. xxxv, 21: 'Oratio humiliantis se nubes penetrabit'. It appears also in *The Tree* (ed. J. J. Vaissier [Gröningen, 1960], p. 29) in the part translated from the Latin *Tractatus inducens hominem ad deuotionem, De oracione mentali*: 'Breuis enim oracio penetrat celum'. This Latin text is taken from MS. 3603, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, dated c. 1400.

41/31-42/5. Ephes. iii, 17-19 is adapted to confirm the statement. Cf. St. Bernard *De Consideratione* V, xiii, 29 (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 805): 'Illa una res est longitudo propter aeternitatem, latitudo propter charitatem, sublimitas propter maiestatem, profunditas propter sapientiam'. Hilton *Scale* I, 13, introduced the same text to describe the contemplative's experimental knowledge of God. *The Cloud* explains why this prayer 'wiþ a fulle spirite' will reach its goal. Through the very intensity and totality of this one-pointed attention to God, the soul created in God's image has recovered its primordial 'likeness' to God. As St. Bernard taught, 'like always desires its like. . . . God covets the soul in whom He recognizes Himself' (Gilson, p. 118). 'So may you attain to fullness of being, the fullness of God himself' (Ephes. iii, 19).

41/38. **not fully . . . partye**: See *Com.* 9/36-37, 19/8-9.

42/22-23. As Abbot Justin McCann commented (*Cloud*, 1952, p. 55): 'Mercy belongs to God by his nature whereas man has it by grace. God's mercy may be called essential, and man's accidental'.

42/32-33. **Preyer . . . remowyng of yuelles**: The definition in Guigo II's *Scala Claustralium* (ed. E. Colledge and J. Walsh [Paris, 1970] p. 84) is closer than that in *A Ladder*: 'Oratio est devota cordis in Deum intentio pro malis removendis vel bonis adipiscendis'.

42/35. **ouper by cause or by beyng**: This is a favourite phrase, usually with reference to God (e.g. 42/40, 44/4-5, *P.C.* 75/32-76/2), but here used possibly to distinguish between special sins committed and their root and ground, original sin. See 35/12-15.

42/35-43/3. Cf. 15/30-33, *Com.* 41/10.

44/1-3. This list of virtues and the operations of virtue partly follows that of the Fruits or Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Gal. v, 22-23. The earliest Greek and Latin versions listed nine, later versions twelve. *wilful pouerte* and the theological virtue of *hope* are not in the original list.

44/3-5. **alle vertewes . . . beyng**: See *Com.* 22/4-5. Cf. *Divine Names* iv, 4.

44/22. **holde no mesure**: Cf. St. Bernard *De Diligendo Deo* I, i (col. 974): 'Causa diligendi Deum Deus est; modus, sine modo diligere'. *De VII Itin.* IV, v: 'Modus amandi Deum, est quod sit sine modo et mensura'.

44/30. **in earnest or in game**: A cliché, and not obviously applicable, but the author supplies his meaning: 'in actuality or in intention'.

44/31-32. This wise insistence on the maintenance of physical health as far as possible is characteristic of English devotional writers from *Ancrene Wisse* onwards.

45/2. **Gete . . . mayst**: i.e. 'Take what comes'.

45/15. **lat þe preof witnes**: Cf. *Viae Sion* (Prol.): '... practica hic praecedit theoricam'. This insistence on practice rather than theory is repeated 33/30, 37/24-25, 39/19, 46/2-3.

45/22-23. **treed-doun**: See *Com.* 12/36.



46/20. **sit ful styll**: Cf. 48/26-27, 55/12-13 and elsewhere. It is stressed repeatedly that the work lies in the spirit, and outward manifestations are always discouraged.

47/10. **compleccion**: Latin *complexion*-, 'combination'. In medieval physiology this term was used to refer to the combination of humours, or vital juices, which a man's body was thought to contain. The four humours, blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile, were assumed to be related to the elements, air, water, earth, fire, and to the primary qualities of those elements, hot and moist, moist and cold, cold and dry, hot and dry, respectively. These humours, which varied in proportion from individual to individual, determined a man's temperament. According to which humour preponderated, temperaments were classified as sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic, or choleric, epithets still current though retaining only a part of their original meaning. *compleccion* in 47/10 refers to 'temperament', in 47/36 to the 'physical organism'.

47/33-41. Possibly because they wished to counteract some of the specific misconceptions arising from Richard Rolle's teaching, both Walter Hilton and the author of *The Cloud* were vehement in their warnings against the misinterpretation of purely natural psychological phenomena as supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. Cf. *Scale* I, chs. 10, 11, *Of Angels' Song*.

47/33-37. **for fleschly chaufyng . . . bodies**: Through overforcing themselves beyond the course of nature, they will themselves manage to induce a sensation of heat.

47/40-41. **þe fiir of loue . . . Holy Goost**: Cf. 34/34-35. The image was a common metaphor, but it also described the experience, deeply spiritual, of a contemplative who was scaling the heights of the mount of perfection. Cf. *Theologia Germanica* (trans. S. Winkworth, rev. W. R. Trask [London, 1950]), ch. xli, pp. 190-1: 'He who is . . . inflamed and consumed with Eternal and divine love . . . is a godlike and deified man': *Of Angels' Song* (T. Takamiya, p. 11): 'in lyght and gastly brennyng of hym, in transfourmyng of þe saule in þe godhede'. St. Catherine of Siena, St. Dorothea, Marie d'Oignes, St. Bridget of Sweden and many others described their experience of it. There is little doubt from their descriptions that the experience seemed to them partly physical. See Rolle *Incendium Amoris* (Manchester, 1915), ch. 14: 'quando mens amore eterno veraciter incenditur, et cor eodem modo amore ardere non estimative sed realiter sentitur'. St. Philip Neri and St. Catherine are said to have experienced this fire continually. Physical heat certainly can result from intense concentration. The imitative Margery Kempe told how she felt the heat burning in her breast 'as verily as a man schuld felyn þe material fyr gyf he put hys hand or hys fynger þerin'. (*The Book of Margery Kempe*, E.E.T.S., O.S. 212, 1940, p. 88). Blaise Pascal's terse account of his incommunicable ecstatic experience is unforgettable: 'Depuis environ dix heures et demie du soir jusque environ minuit et demie FEU'.

47/43. **moche heresy**: Cf. 58/7-8: 'blasphemyn alle þe seyntes, sacramentes, statutes & ordonaunces of Holy Chirche'. This could well be a general reference to the Wycliffite challenge to the sacramental practices of the Church.

48/17-18. **wirche more wip a list . . . liþer strengþe**: This proverb, also in *Preier* 107/5-6, *B.M.* 142/20 (not in the Latin source) seems to be a favourite one in Middle English (See O.E.D. List<sup>2</sup> 'craft'). *Benj. Min.* associates it with Proverbs xvi, see *B.M. Com.* 142/20. Its basic meaning is that craft is better than crude force. In *B.M.* it characterizes the action of Joseph, Discretion, and is linked with the wisdom of seeking counsel from experienced men. In *Preier* it is used authoritatively to confirm the author's counsel. In *The Cloud*, however, homonymic word-play is possible. *list* and its compound and derivatives, *listines*, *listy*, *listely* are favourite words, with the central meaning of 'zest', or 'fervent longing'.

48/20-22. **what beestly herte . . . stones:** This text is quoted in Heb. xii, 20 from Exod. xix, 13. St. Gregory (*Mor.* VI, vi, col. 763) uses the same text in a similar context.

48/35-36. **God gamesumli pley:** The adoption of *God* from Har<sup>2</sup> makes precise sense and completes the comparison. The variant readings which follow indicate that the early scribes found difficulty here: *gamesumli*, *gamesum*, *li* ins. Har<sup>1</sup>; *gamen soneli* II; *gamen somly* Kk; *gamsum* Ro<sup>1</sup> Ro<sup>2</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup>; *game and sum* Pa; *game and ryst mery* Har<sup>3</sup>. Pem, usually close to Har<sup>2</sup>, has a paraphrase which supports the reading of Har<sup>1</sup> and the majority of MSS.: . . . 'sentiret bonum ludum . . . exhibitum cum eo sicut pater cum filio facit . . . '.

49/14-15. John iv, 24. The exegesis has many parallels. e.g. *De VII Itin. Prol.* iii.

50/12-13. **Good . . . Iesu:** Unlike most of the fourteenth-century English mystical writers, the author of *The Cloud* shows only rare traces of the widespread Devotion to the Holy Name.

50/14-17. Cf. 51/27-29. *Preier* 107/20-24. The individual personality is not lost, but fulfilled. The 'work', in effect, integrates body and soul.

50/15-16. **body—soule—spirit:** See *Introd.*, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

50/41. **in anoþer place of anoþer mans werk:** The early fifteenth-century MS. U has the marginal note *hylltons*, probably in an early sixteenth-century hand. The topic was common, but see *Scale* I, x-xi; II, xxix-xxx, *Of Angels' Song*.

51/7. **wyndowes . . . wittes:** See *Com.* 9/6-7.

51/23-24. **substance, . . . accyidentes:** These terms from scholastic philosophy signify respectively 'essential nature' and 'properties or qualities which are non-essential'.

52/6. **loue . . . chaste:** The central theme in *Preier*. Cf. also *P.C.* 97/10-14; St. Bernard *De Diligendo Deo* x (col. 991): 'O amor sanctus et castus! O dulcis et suavis affectio! O pura et defaecata intentio voluntatis!' 'Hic vere diligit Deum propter Deum, et non propter seipsum' (col. 990). By *castus* St. Bernard implied 'disinterested'.

54/9 et seq. The author explains the reason (55/21-23) for the long digression in ch. 53 on the foolish gestures and antics of those who pretend to a spirituality they have not reached: it will serve as a negative test of vocation. The descriptions accord with caustic comment elsewhere, though the author appears to be writing from personal observation; at least half a dozen examples can be paralleled. See Hugh of St. Victor *De Institutione Novitiorum*, c. xii (*P.L.* t. 176): 'Alii quasi ambae aures ad audiendum factae non sint, alteram tantum collo detorto voci venienti opponunt . . . Sunt enim quidam qui nisi buccis patentibus auscultare nesciunt, et quasi per os sensus ad cor influere debeat, palatum ad verba loquentis aperiunt . . . Alii loquentes digitum extendunt' (col. 941, cf. 55/2-4); 'Alii navigant brachiis incedentes' (col. 942, cf. 55/8-9); 'Alii majori ridiculo dimidiato ore loquuntur' (col. 942, cf. 54/19-20); c. xvii: 'Modestiam debet habere gestus loquentis, ut nec inordinate, nec impudice nec turbulenter inter loquendum membra moveat, neque oculorum nutibus, aut indecenti conformatione sive transmutatione vultus, placorem sui sermonis imminuat' (col. 948, cf. 55/12-13).

54/15. **leightlyly:** The colourless *perto* of Har<sup>1</sup> has been emended to the more vivid and alliterative reading of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa, suggestive of maniacal behaviour. It is possible, however, that the original reading was a more uncommon word, traces of which might be retained in U Ro<sup>3</sup>, *yleightlyly*. Cf. O.E. *ælenge*, M.E. *elengely*, 'ailingly, miserably, drearily'.

54/17. **sturdy scheep:** i.e. sheep suffering from the brain disease known as 'sturdy', which makes them stagger round in circles. They appeared to be either 'struck' or 'bitten' in the head. *betyn* is a possible past participle form of two M.E. verbs, from O.E. *bēatan* and *bītan* respectively.

54/20. **ypocrite**: See St. Bernard's definition (*In Cant. XL*): 'Tendere quasi in Deum, sed non propter Deum'.

55/12-13. **sobre . . . & mirpe in maner**: Cf. *De VII Itin.* I, iv: 'Signum . . . est sobria tristitia et exultatio mentis'.

55/25-30. A common topic. See *De VII Itin.* III, v: 'Spiritus humanus ambulans per itinera vitae contemplativae facie pulchrificetur'; Rachel's beauty (See *Benj. Min.*, c. i) and Moses's radiant countenance (*Exod.* xxxiv, 30 [A.V.]) were examples.

55/34-56/7. Cf. the inward and outward activities of Joseph (Discretion) in *Benj. Min.* c. lxix, lxx. See *Introd.*, p. xxxv<sup>28</sup>.

56/15. **voided**: Har<sup>1</sup> has the more vivid meaning. The verb usually signified 'to spit forth poison' or 'to vomit'.

56/17. **wher**: The unique reading of Har<sup>1</sup> has not been emended, since this was a contracted form of 'whether' common in Middle English.

57/6. **no body . . . aungele**: Angels are purely spiritual. When they assume the sensible appearance of a body for a time to fulfil some special mission, they direct and control the body without being integrated with it.

57/21. **o nose-perel**: Though the parallel is incomplete, two pieces of traditional exposition may throw some light on this unexpected excursion into Black Magic. From St. Gregory's *Morals on Job* onwards, *Leviathan*, 'whale' (*Job*, Vulg. xli, 10-12) had been expounded as a figure of Satan. From this developed the whale image as it appears in manuscript illuminations and other iconographical representations of The Last Judgment. Through a whale's gaping jaws the damned are thrust into a hell belching forth flames. The one nostril has some affinity with the whale's spout-hole, or spiracle.

*The Golden Legend* provides an example of the interpretation of Latin *naris* 'nostril', 'nose' as 'discretion'. The name of St. Apollinaris (July 23) is derived from *apollo* 'admirable' and *naris* 'discretion', signifying a man of amazing discrimination and prudence. The same idea occurs in St. Bridget's *Revelations* (I, 23, MS. Cotton Claudius B I, f. 25v<sup>a</sup>): 'His nose is cutt awai for all discrecion is taken fro him, bi þe whilke he suld deme bitwene sin and vertue . . .'

58/1. **curiouste**: See *Com.* 2/3-5.

58/21. **foule lechors**: Cf. 20/34-36. In both contexts the treatment of Lechery is vague and blurred. Here it is used figuratively of a spiritual condition.

58/26-31. See *Com.* 47/33-41. Again *The Cloud* implicitly warns novices against too literal an interpretation of teaching like Rolle's. Cf. H. E. Allen *English Writings, Ego Dormio*, p. 63: 'he hase myrth & joy & melody in aungels sang'; p. 69: 'þi thought sal al be on Jhesu, and so be receyved aboven all erthly thyng aboven þe firmament & þe sternes, so þat þe egh of þi hert mai loke intil heven'.

59/9. **Seynte Martyn**: To judge from churches dedicated to him, medieval representations of scenes from his life in stained glass, MSS. illuminations, sculpture and wall-paintings, he was one of the universally acclaimed saints of Christendom. The story alluded to here was well known. Martin divided his military cloak to clothe a naked beggar at Amiens, and that same night he saw Christ in a vision wearing the half-cloak. Shortly afterwards he was baptized, and in A.D. 372 became Bishop of Tours. He founded monasteries and was an active missionary in Touraine and beyond, converting the pagan peoples around him. He became the patron saint of the Frankish empire and the subject of a widespread cult. When he died in 397, his friend, Sulpicius Severus, was already writing his *Life*, full of miracles and legendary matter. Other accounts followed from Paulinus of Nola, Gregory of Tours, Alcuin, Odo de Clugny.

59/26. **onyd . . . goostly**: Cf. Ephes. IV, 4-5.

59/30. Matt. xxv, 40.

59/37-38. **pike of þe rouȝ bark . . . kyrnel:** Cf. *Preier* 107/2-4. A common image, e.g. *Ladder* 101/30-31; *Scale* I, 14; II, 43, possibly derived from Guigo II's *Scala Claustralium*.

60/17-18. **se . . . Seinte Steuen:** Acts vii, 55 (56 A.V.).

60/23. **anhized:** 'raised'. The reading of Har<sup>1</sup> is partly supported by that of Kk Ro<sup>1</sup>. The form *honedē* Har<sup>2</sup> perhaps shows a transition stage to the other major reading *oonyd* U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa. *Preier* 107/22-24 has a comparable passage in which both *onid* and *reisid* occur.

61/37. **a sodeyn chaunging:** i.e. the spirit is transformed from its earth-bound, egocentric self.

62/7-9. John iii, 13.

62/18. **seyng:** The argument requires the emendation to the reading of U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa. The agreement of Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ro<sup>1</sup> shows that *unseyng* was the reading at an early stage in transmission.

62/31-32. **þe nexte wey . . . not by pases of feet:** Cf. St. Augustine *In Joan.* xlviii, 3 (*P.L.* t. 35, col. 1741): 'Non movetur anima pedibus, sed affectibus'; *De VII Itin.* I, ii: 'Pes animae est amor, et eo movetur anima ad locum, quasi ad terminum ad quem tendit'.

62/33-34. Phil. iii, 20.

62/35-36. **as verrelly is a soule þere . . . liif:** The idea of the spirit's gravitation to what it loves was a commonplace. Cf. Matt. vi, 21; see *Introd.*, p. xl<sup>57</sup>. *De VII Itin.* IV, iv, a. ii quotes parallels to 1. 36 from St. Bernard and Hugh of St. Victor. The theme of God as the life of the soul as the soul is the life of the body was frequently introduced by St. Augustine, e.g. *Sermo* clxi, 6, *Sermo* clxxx, 7 (*P.L.* t. 38, col. 881, 976).

63/1. **elementes:** 'heavenly bodies'. Med. L. *elementa* signified the planets and signs of the zodiac. M.E. *elementes* usually refer to the celestial spheres of ancient astronomy, according to the Ptolemaic system lying above or outside each other in concentric circles around the earth.

63/11. **subieccion . . . spirit:** See *Com.* 55/25-30.

63/15-17. **body . . . vþriȝt:** Cf. *Viae Sion* III, iii: 'necesse est quod corpus totaliter sit erectum, et facies versa ad coelum superius; quia secundum dispositionem affectionum animae necesse est esse conformitatem corporis, et secundum dispositionem actionis spiritui respondentem'.

63/20-24. This passage echoes St. Augustine *De Trinitate* XII, i (*P.L.* t. 42, col. 998-9): 'non proni, sed erecti sumus . . . sed sicut corpus ad ea quae sunt excelsa corporum, id est, ad coelestia naturaliter erectum est; sic animus, qui substantia spiritualis est, ad ea quae sunt in spiritualibus excelsa erigendus est . . .'.

63/41-64/9. See *Introd.*, p. xxxii<sup>17</sup>.

64/3-5. **aungelles . . . ben bot euen wiþ þee in kynde:** They are equal in that they too were created to reflect the glory of God in everlasting beatitude.

64/6-66/28. **þe miȝtes of þi soule:** Basing his guidance upon personal observation, the author has been chiefly concerned from ch. 51 that his disciple 'conseyue not bodily þat þat is seyde goostly' (52/30-31). From chs. 62-66 most of the statements and the style are clearly derivative. It is likely that this section was not in the original letter of private direction, but added in the development of the treatise we know. Its contents exist separately in MSS. Kk. vi, 26 (ff. 28<sup>r</sup>-31<sup>r</sup>) and Bodleian 938 (ff. 243<sup>v</sup>-246<sup>r</sup>), *The Five Mygtes of Mans Saule*. In MS. Kk. vi, 26 (ff. 26<sup>v</sup>-28<sup>r</sup>) the explanation also occurs: 'How mans sawle is made to þe ymage and þe liknes of þe holy trinite'. The five chapters in *The Cloud* are, nevertheless, central to the theme of the contemplative's return Godwards in accordance with the purpose of his creation, and are not to be dismissed lightly. See *Introd.*, pp. xxxv-xxxix.

64/7-8. **þees þre principal . . . & secondary, ymaginacion & sensualite:** See



*Introd.*, pp. xxxvi-xxxix. Man was created to be contemplative (11/9-17). In his original state, man's mind, like the angelic, was wholly filled with an immediate awareness of the presence of God. By St. Augustine's definition, *Memoria* is the faculty of recognizing in itself the latent presence of God (cf. 67/4-5). Through the operations of reason and will the soul might regain its pristine experience. Mind holds the end to which the soul should tend, reason can recognize that end and direct the will to reach it. According to *The Cloud*, the will alone can attain it.

65/14. **sauour**: Latin *sapere* v. 'to taste'; *sapor* n. Cf. *P.C.* 81/23-24: 'heȝ sauour of þe Godheed'. Tauler similarly uses *smecken* 'to taste', in the sense of 'to discern'. In mystical writings these words often connote 'knowledge through immediate experience'. Cf. Ps. xxxiii, 9 (Vulg.); 'O taste and see that the Lord is good' (A.V. xxxiv, 8). Medieval etymology throws light on this significance. Cf. *De VII Itin.* III, ii, quoting from St. Bernard: 'Sapientia a sapore dicitur'. Adam had direct immediate knowledge of God, and not through creatures.

66/36-67/6. **bineþe . . . & wiþouten; wiþinne . . . & euen . . . abouen**: Cf. St. Gregory *Hom. in Ezech.* II, v (col. 989): 'Primus ergo gradus est ut se ad se colligat, secundus ut videat qualis est collecta, tertius ut super semetipsam surgat, ac se contemplationi auctoris invisibilis intentendo subjiciat'. The classification became traditional. *The Cloud* author's statement resembles that of Richard of St. Victor. See *Introd.*, p. xxxii<sup>17</sup>.

67/14. **bi witnes of Scripture, be clepid a God**: See Ps. lxxxi, 6 (Vulg.); Ps. lxxxi, 6 (A.V.). The concept of 'deification' occurs frequently in the writings of some of the Greek Fathers, e.g. Clement of Alexandria (see *Western Mysticism*, p. 158; *Divine Names* iv, 13). The circulation of the pseudo-Dionysian treatises (see *Introd.*, pp. xlv-xlv) fostered this term for describing the unitive experience wherein the soul is strengthened by grace to receive wisdom divinely infused. E.g. *Viae Sion* III, iv: 'Divina . . . oportet intelligere, non secundum nosipsos, sed totos nosipsos institutos, et totos, deificatos'. St. Bernard thus describes the effect of 'chaste love' which transforms the soul (*De Diligendo Deo*, c. x, col. 991): 'Sic affici, deificari est'. *The Cloud* author, anxious to avoid any pantheistic misinterpretation, insistently reiterates the traditional doctrine on the difference in essence between God and man. Cf. St. Augustine *Enarr. in Ps.* xlix, 2 (*P.L.* t. 36, col. 565): 'Manifestum est ergo, quia homines dixit deos, ex gratia sua deificatos, non de substantia sua natos . . .'.

67/30. **wher anoþer man**: Such teaching was traditional, and therefore common. Cf. *Benj. Maj.* iii, 6 (col. 117): 'Prius redi ad te quam rimari praesumas quae sunt supra te'; iv, 7 (col. 141): 'Necesse est itaque ad cor altum ascendere'; *Scale* I, 42. The actual discipline of *The Cloud* in effect followed the same course, but the characteristic emphasis is laid upon the technique for the attainment of 'a nakid þouȝt & a blynde feling of þin owne beyng' (*P.C.* 75/25); 'þus schalt þou . . . worschip God wiþ himself; for þat þou arte þou hast of him & he it is' (*P.C.* 81/7-8).

68/1-2. **þer art þou in spirit . . . bodely**: See *Com.* 62/35-36.

68/7-8. **nowhere . . . nouȝt**: The terminology is different, but the focus is still on the activity of the will in unknowing. These particular concepts belong to the Dionysian tradition. See *Divine Names* vii, 3 (Rolt, p. 152): '(God) is not anything in the world nor is He known in anything. He is All Things in all things and Nothing in any, and is known from all things unto all men, and is not known from any unto any man—and yet . . . the Divinest knowledge of God, the which is received through Unknowing, is obtained in that communion which transcends the mind, when the mind, turning away from all things and then leaving even itself behind, is united to the Dazzling Rays, being from them and in them, illumined by the unsearchable depth of Wisdom.' Cf. 70/1-6. 'Nothing' in Dionysius connotes the 'Darkness' of the infinite Godhead. Eckhart and Tauler (see *Introd.*, p. xlix<sup>78</sup>) adopted



'Nothing' as one of God's names. As in *The Cloud*, ch. 68, Tauler also speaks of 'nothingness' from the human angle. 'Everybody ought to be ever mindful of his nothingness by knowing nothing, grasping nothing, and thereby wanting nothing else but their self-denial. . . . Seek nothing for yourselves and receive everything by sinking into the Nothing. For God is none of the things you can name'; 'the Nothing and the nothingness becoming one' ('Sermon on the Feast of the Assumption', *Signposts to Perfection*, E. Strakosch [London, 1958]). Cf. A. Baker *Holy Wisdom*, p. 545: 'The Union of nothing with Nothing . . . the soul being nowhere corporally or sensibly, is everywhere spiritually and immediately united to God, this infinite Nothing'.

68/18. **liztte**: The unusual spelling of the unique reading of Har<sup>1</sup> might seem to support the theory that this reading is inferior. No emendation, however, has been made, because Har<sup>1</sup> makes good sense. The mind, passing beyond the confinement of the dark room of earthly knowledge, is dazzled by the bright light of supernatural wisdom without. Yet there is still the same light within the room, though the mind cannot now perceive it. There are two causes of man's blindness: Divine Transcendence, and the weakness of the soul unaccustomed to such spiritual heights.

68/19. **vttter man, & not oure inner**: 'the body . . . the spirit'; cf. 2 Cor. iv, 16. 69/37-70/4. See Com. 6/41.

70/4-5. **Seynte Denis**: See Com. 119/2-3.

70/5-6. **seyde**: *Divine Names* vii, 3. See Com. 68/7-8.

70/5. **goodly**: No emendation has been made. This reading is supported by the best MSS., for in M.E. the form *godly* might mean either 'godly' or 'goodly'. The Latin versions do not settle the problem of the original reading. Hugh of Balma, for instance, introducing this same quotation twice, has *dignissima* and *divinissima* (see *Introd.*, p. xlvii), Pem *divinissima*.

70/7-9. This is an oversimplification. For later modifications introduced by transmitters of Dionysian teaching, see *Introd.*, p. xlv.

70/13. **corioustee . . . kunnyng**: Cf. Com. 2/3-5, 16/32-17/4.

70/26. **rauisching**: A. Baker (*Holy Wisdom*, p. 521), thus defines ecstasy: 'an elevation of the soul caused by God, by which the person is bereaved of the use of the outward senses, by reason that the soul in her internal operations cleaves wholly to supernatural things'.

70/27. **homely**: See B.M. Com. 133/18.

70/32 et seq. **Ensaulmpe of þe first . . .**: See *Introd.*, p. xxxiii-xxxiv.

70/34. **figurid by þe Arke**: In *Benjamin Major*, Richard of St. Victor used the account in Exodus of the building of the Ark of the Covenant as a framework for his teaching on contemplation. It is just possibly more than a coincidence that the Latin word he used for the fashioning of the Ark was *opus*, cf. 'work'. The fashioning was to be perfected by grace alone, but in the process it demanded the co-operation of human effort. The Ark's adornment signified the treasures of Divine Wisdom and Love.

71/2. **alle þe vertewes**: See 21/34-22/40, 32/15-34/2.

71/3. **þe goostly temple of God**: I Cor. iii, 16.

71/33. **vaale**: Cf. *Benj. Maj.* V, i (col. 169): 'Moysi quidem arca Domini ex Dominica revelatione est in monte ostensa, postmodum autem in valle familiariter nota et frequenter visa'. Har<sup>1</sup> appears to have the correct reading. *veyle* in the other manuscripts was probably influenced by 71/14.

72/3. **on þre maners**: See *Benj. Maj.* V, i for the three ways of progress—by grace; by effort rewarded by grace; through the teaching of others.

72/31-73/8, 12-17. The treatise comes full circle by repeating the exhortations of the Prologue. The more personal rote of ch. 74 might suggest that this passage was

written first, when the author was more closely involved with the disciple. On the other hand, the more controlled, vigorous, succinct list of exclusions in 73/12-13, cf. 2/1-3, might indicate that this is a second draft. Contrariwise, the Prologue might have been repeated from memory, and the northern and Scottish alliterative phrase, *roukers & rouners*, replaced by one more familiar, the colloquial *tutilers of tales*.

73/22 et seq. **only for þis likyng steryng** . . . : Cf. *P.C.* 95/1 et seq.

73/39. **diuers skyles**: The 'withdrawal of grace' was a common topic. The reasons given here are similar to those in *A Ladder* 112/30-113/19.

74/19-20. **not what þou arte . . . woldest be**: In other words: 'God accepts the will for the deed'. This is a striking version of a common topic echoed twice in *The Book of Margery Kempe*. In the note (p. 339), Miss H. E. Allen gives details of its possible ancestry. Cf. St. Anselm's *Epistle to Robert and his (spiritual) daughters*: 'Judicatur tamen coram Deo unusquisque de propria voluntate'. 'Nolite igitur considerare tantum quid facitis, sed quid velitis.' (Epistola cxxxiii, *P.L.* t. 159, col. 167); Rolle *Incendium Amoris*, xxi, p. 205: 'Deus enim qui est inspector cordis magis remunerat voluntatem quam opus'.

74/20-22. St. Gregory *Homiliarum In Evangelia* II, xxv (*P.L.* t. 76, col. 1190): 'Sancta enim desideria . . . dilatione crescunt. Si autem dilatione deficiunt, desideria non fuerunt'.

74/26-27. St. Augustine *In Epist. Joannis ad Parthos* (*P.L.* t. 35, col. 2008): 'Tota vita Christiani boni, sanctum desiderium est'.

## þE BOOK OF PRIUE COUNSELING

The following comments indicate a close relationship with *The Cloud*. This treatise is likewise a monograph on the 'work'. As in *The Cloud*, ch. 3, after a preamble, it plunges straight into its central theme, the 'nakid entent', and the subsequent sections are diverse variations on this. Its basic structure is therefore like *The Cloud's* (see *Com.* 1/25-29), though *Priue Counseling* is more compact and conspicuously controlled. This is effected by its supporting framework of Latin quotations from the Bible, expounded anagogically, as in *Preier* and *Stirings*, to illustrate each section.

*Priue Counseling*, too, might have developed from a letter of private spiritual direction (see *Cloud Com.*), the original guidance later being expanded by the citation of authorities. It might indeed have started as the fulfilment of the promise in *The Cloud*, ch. 74 (73/9-11), and surely from the author's realization that a supplement was necessary. From his new way of approach to the same topics and his fresh emphases, it is easy to guess at the doubts, hesitations, and questioning of his spiritual charge(s). Exhortations now have their logical explanation by way of justification. Thus the practical difficulty of starting upon the 'work' is met by the recommended simple exercise of self-offering (76/13-16), prepared for by metaphysical argument (75/29-76/7). From the beginning, 'Mene God as he is in himself' (see *Introd.*, p. xxiv) has become less abstract. The 'nakid entent' is also now inseparably linked with 'þe souereynest pointe of þe spirit'. (See *Introd.*, pp. xxii-xxiii, xxxvi, lv). *Priue Counseling* is more explicit about common grace and special grace, the distinction between those called to salvation and those to perfection (90/38-92/2), and as a corollary, the importance of meditations and the proper time for them (90/27-35). It proffers further advice how to test one's true vocation (94/11 et seq.), how to assess the psychological effects of the final stages of Purgation (96/4-20), and it amplifies the theme of the infusion of Divine Wisdom (81/29-82/19).

Above all, it seeks to establish the perfect orthodoxy of the 'work' by interpreting it at the highest spiritual level of worship and total self-sacrifice, in accordance with Christ's own injunctions and Divine example (88/6 et seq.). Through its many quotations, *Prive Counseling* describes the 'work' in terms of the Old and New Testament.

75/7-9. **oper so disposid . . . apaied**: Cf. *Cloud* 2/7-13.

75/13-14. **prey not . . . list rigt wel**: Cf. *Cloud Com.* 41/8 et seq.; 50/9-13.

75/17. **general or specyal**: With a general or particular intention.

75/17. **mental**: Like vocal prayer, it is shaped by thought but not articulated. It includes the intimate and homely conversation with our Lord which Guigo de Ponte termed 'spiritualiter mentalis'. See Grausem, pp. 272-3; *Com.* 17/26 et seq.

75/23. **pat byleue be þi grounde**: The more difficult reading of Har<sup>1</sup> Kk has been retained as the culmination of the compact and balanced phrases which emphasize the instruction in 18-21. *pat byleue*, i.e. 'pat God is as he is'. The easier reading of the other MSS., 'Let . . .' diffuses rather than underlines. The existence of God must be the foundation. *by*, the unique reading of Har<sup>1</sup>, is probably a scribal error due to the proximity of *by* in *byleue*.

75/25. **nakid þougt . . . beyng**: See *Introd.*, p. xxvi.

75/29. **mirour**: The image is ultimately inspired by 1 Cor. xiii, 12. The mirror through which the soul might see God must be void of images and intellectual concepts, dark but held in faith.

75/31-76/6. Much of this simple summary is close to *Divine Names*, e.g. vii, 3 (Rolt, p. 152); cf. *Cloud* 67/15-21; see *Introd.*, pp. xxiii, xl. *Being* connotes both 'existence' and 'essence'; in God both are one.

75/37-76/6. Cf. *H.D.* 124/24-28.

76/2-3. The word-play in the repeated *be wiþoutyn* emphasizes that whereas man has his existence from God, God is Existence and there is nothing beyond and apart from Him.

76/18. **þe comounist wit of kynde**: 'the lowest level of natural human intelligence'.

76/24-35. This anti-intellectual passage recalls *The Cloud*. See *Com.* 2/3-5. St. Augustine, St. Gregory and St. Bernard taught that contemplation is an experience open to the lowly and illiterate. Hugh of Balma likewise confutes the subtle and worldly intellectual (*Viae Sion*, III, iv): 'cum simplex vetula, vel rusticus pascualis, ad istius sapientiae consurrectionem perfecte possit attingere. . . '.

The whole paragraph, however lively, reveals the author's personal resentment. His critics, he considers, have got hold of the wrong end of the stick, and he turns it on them with a vehemence which betrays a smart beyond that implied in 'softely, mornyngly & smyngly'. He reduces their antagonism to absurdity by violently exaggerated analogies, 32-34. 39-40.

77/4. **lowest**: It is shared by all sentient creatures, their basic factor.

77/5. **higest**: The antithetical paradox resembles that in *The Cloud* 41/24-25, which itself recalls *Benj. Maj.* IV, xxiii.

77/13-15. The same attitude towards sin occurs in *The Cloud* 25/27-35.

77/17-23. The advice to begin at once after the essential sacramental preparation repeats that given in *The Cloud*, ch. 31.

77/21. **counseil**: This word connotes more than the advice of an individual spiritual director. It was used of the advisory declarations of Christ and the Apostles, given as a means of attaining greater moral perfection; hence 'counsels of perfection', especially in reference to Matt. xix, 21.

77/24-25. **kombraunce of þiself**: Cf. *Cloud* 44/10-11, 40/31-32.

77/31. Matt. ix, 21.

77/35. **triacle**: 'sovereign remedy'. 'treacle' was originally a medicinal compound of many ingredients, reputed to counteract venomous bites, poisons generally, and malignant diseases. Cf. *Piers Plowman* B, Passus 1, 148: 'love is triacle of hevene'.

77/40. **listines of loue**: See *Com.* 5/11, 48/17-18.

78/8. **wittis . . . goostly**: See *Com.* 6/41.

78/16-22. Cf. *Cloud* chs. 5, 8 and *passim*.

78/20. **first poynt of þi spirit**: See *Com.* 41/12-13. See *Introd.*, pp. xxxvi, lv.

78/21. **go not bak**: Cf. *Com.* 21/17.

78/24-25. Prov. iii, 9, 10.

78/28. **rebounde**: 'redound'. The confusion between the two words was common in M.E. Cf. Wyclif, Prov. iii, 10 (1382): 'Thi berness shul ben fulfild with fulnesse, and with win thi presses shul rebounden' (L. *redundare*).

78/29. **to þin vnderstondyng**: This phrase frequently introduces a spiritual interpretation.

78/33. **substance**: 'essence'; cf. 'possessions', 26. Such word-play is characteristic.

78/33-37. Cf. *Cloud* 18/19-22.

79/5-6. **þei hangen alle upon it**: Cf. *S. T. Ia IIae*, q. 37, a. 1: 'Omnes potentiae animae in una essentia animae radicanter'.

79/8. **breide oute . . . beholdyng**: The meaning of this arresting alliterative and metaphorical phrase is not clear, though from the context a thorough investigation is implied. According to O.E.D., *breide* might be the preterite of either (1) *braid* (O.E. *bregdan*) signifying (a) to draw (a weapon), stretch; (b) to weave, twine. (2) *bray*<sup>1</sup> (O. Fr. *breier*), 'to beat small'.

J. Walsh *A Letter of Private Direction*, p. 27, paraphrases according to 1(a) 'if you draw out the mind's weapon of speculative contemplation to penetrate . . .'. 1(b) would suggest 'if you untwist the complex perception . . .'. (2) 'if you beat out (i.e. as fine as possible) . . .', i.e. if you were to analyse completely.

E. Colledge *Mediaeval Mystics of England*, p. 164, proffers 'if you extend your subtle regard to . . .'.

79/12. **nakid being**: 'simple existence'.

79/22. **þe first & þe poynte**: No manuscript adds *pricke*, cf. 79/11. Elsewhere *poynte* precedes *pricke* in this characteristic doublet. Emendation, however, is not necessary. A similar construction occurs in *Stirings* 115/21: 'þe cheef and þe pointe'. The lemma may be interpreted as: 'the beginning and the ultimate aim of thy contemplation is most intrinsically set . . .'.

79/40 et seq. A very close parallel to *The Cloud*, 33/26 et seq.

80/9-16. This over-condensed link-passage bridges the two themes of charity towards neighbour and individual spiritual progress towards perfection. Argument starts from an adaptation of a commonplace; see *Com.* 62/35-36, *erpli fode*, 'physical nourishment' (80/12), is best understood with its wider implications in 80/15. *þis* comprehends the customary nourishment of the earthbound mind and body. When this is withdrawn, the emptied faculties can then be receptive of the fullness of God.

80/35. **IS**: No terms are adequate to describe Him. The most basic is the best. Cf. God's name revealed to Moses: 'I AM THAT I AM'. (Exod. iii, 14). The main theme of *Divine Names* is that God's IS-ness comprehends the essence and principle of all such qualities as those listed in 80/35-38. Dionysius, following Plato, declared 'GOOD' as the first name. Cf. *De VII Itin.* V, iv: 'Vercellensis dicit sic (*Prol. sup. Cant.*): "Populo Israelitico mandatur nomen intellectuale, scilicet *Qui est*, sive *Ens*, quod est emanatio primae existentiae a causa causalissima". Et Damascenus dicit (*de Fid. Orth.*, lib. 1, c. xii) "*Qui est* principalius est nomen omnibus nominibus Dei,



quae de Deo dicuntur. Totum enim in seipso comprehendit, velut quoddam pelagus substantiae infinitum et interminatum'. Hic concordat Augustinus, libro quinto de *Trinitate*, cap. ii.'

80/35-38. **'Good' . . . 'Charite'**: The Middle English epithets only partly coincide with the Scriptural terminology selected in *Divine Names*.

81/9. **substancial creacion**: i.e. as a separate identity with human form and personality.

81/9-11. This repeats the safeguard against the charge of Pantheism, cf. *Cloud* 8/3. See *Com.* 67/14.

81/16. **leuyng**: 'living'. The reading *lykyng* in Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa superficially gives the better sense. The sentence then expresses the effect which the 'work' will have upon the feelings. Since M.E. *lykyng* frequently implies sensual enjoyment, the epithet *vertuous* is justifiable. Support of the reading of Har<sup>1</sup>, however, is too strong to encourage an emendation. Incidentally, Bo, definitely belonging to another MSS. group, here has *lyvyng*.

The whole passage is reminiscent of *Benj. Min.* VII. In the spiritual exercise advocated, which is the expression of perfect love, all virtues are contained: cf. 87/36-39, *Cloud* 21/34-36.

Moreover, in a description of the 'work' in *The Cloud*, there is a similar balance of ideas: 'meek blynde felyng & vertuous leuyng' (58/4-5).

If the reading of Har<sup>1</sup> is retained, then *fulheed* has the significance of 'perfection'.

If *lykyng* were a scribal error, its adoption is readily explicable, since here it is the easier reading, and a word frequently collated with *loue* in the fourteenth century. Cf. 80/19-20. A palaeographical explanation of such an error is more difficult. If the original reading were spelt *lyfing* (*lyfing*, etc.), a common variant of *leuyng*, the scribe may easily have confused *f* with *k*. The scribe of Har<sup>1</sup> makes the same error in 77/32, where he writes *saak*, obviously for *saaf*.

81/16. **grounde**: *Grund* = the apex of the soul, 'the sovereign (first) point of the spirit', was a favourite term of the contemporary German mystics, e.g. Eckhart, Tauler. It denoted that abode in the soul indiscernible by the understanding and senses in which God dwells and will make His presence felt when the contemplative is ready to receive him. See *Com.* 41/12-13.

81/22. **mistely**: 'mystically'. See *Com.* 82/6.

81/23-24. **heiz sauour of þe Godhead**: See *Com.* 65/14.

81/26. **mynistracion of aungelles**: See *Com.* 9/19-20.

81/28. **maiden**: There is no justification for an emendation to the plural. Cf. Ps. cxxii, 2 (Vulgate): 'Sicut oculi ancillae in manibus dominae suae'.

81/29. **sleiz**: *sleizt* in Har<sup>1</sup> is probably a scribal error caused by the proximity of *sleizt* 81/31.

81/33-39. Prov. iii, 13-14, 21-26 (Vulg.).

82/3. **of clergie . . . kynde**: i.e. acquired or natural.

82/6. **moraly**: cf. 81/22. Here are two of the four traditional levels of Scriptural exegesis: Literal, Allegorical (usually the interpretation of the Old Testament in terms of the New), Moral or Tropological, Mystical or Anagogical.

82/7-8. **beneþe . . . wipinne . . . euen**: Cf. 17/34-36, 66/35-67/3. See *Introd.*, p. xxxii.

82/12. **hiȝe goostly wisdom**: This wisdom, clearly distinguished from natural wisdom, is the grace of a supra-intellectual experience of the Uncreated Wisdom of God.

82/12. **riftid**: Har<sup>1</sup> has this unique reading, probably related to O.N. *rypta* 'to belch', a vivid and arresting metaphor which in this context suggests the Divine Force latent within. St. Bernard *In Cant.* LXVII (col. 1102) treats of Mystical Eructation. Cf. *Sermo viii* (col. 813) 'plenissime illi arcana suae divinitatis eructat'. For the suddenness (12), cf. 34/31-32.



82/13. **inly in itself**: The phrase is grammatically ambiguous. The punctuation in *Harl* implies that it is an adverbial phrase modifying 'spirit', describing where this heavenly wisdom is infused, viz. in the innermost part. & *vnformid* would then qualify 'wisdom', without definition because not acquired like human knowledge through the perception of images. But *inly* might also be an adjective qualifying 'wisdom'. The supernatural wisdom was already latent in the pure depth of the spirit and now is activated by the 'work' advocated here and in *The Cloud*.

82/17. **goostly sonne**: Cf. 'a beme of goostly lȳt, peersyng þis cloude . . .', 34/31-32.

82/18-19. The same antithesis of midsummer and midwinter occurs in 13/14-17.

82/28. Rom. xiii, 10.

82/30. **louely . . . liuely**: Characteristic word-play.

82/32-34. Cf. *Cloud* ch. 54.

82/35-36. Matt. xxii, 40.

82/40-41. **one in grace-diuerse in kynde**: See *Com.* 67/14, *Introd.*, pp. xxii-xxiii.

83/4. **fote of þi loue**: See *Com.* 8/16.

83/7-10. See *Com.* 18/18-21.

83/16. **sleȳt of goostly contynowaunce**: i.e. the wisdom which comes of persistence in this spiritual work.

83/16-23. This is the major theme of *Stirings*.

83/24-25. **þe noise . . . flessche**: See 84/1-5; *Rolle Form of Living (English Writings of Richard Rolle)*, ed. H. E. Allen, [Oxford, 1931], p. 115): 'it sekes within grete sylence fra þe noyes of covayties and of vanitees and of ertly thoghtes'. See *Spirites*, 147/25 et seq.

83/32-35. Cf. *Cloud* chs. 64-66.

84/4. **mizty lemys**: 'powerful agents', a reference to the Devil's partisans, the world and the flesh (84/16).

84/14. **þi fote . . . loue**: See *Com.* 8/16.

84/17-19, 28-31; 86/1-5. Cf. *Cloud* ch. 23 and ch. 32 (37/18-22).

84/20-32. This is a bridge passage, virtually a résumé of the epistle to this point, and the sentences are poured out without the customary control.

84/23. **almiztyheed, his vnwetyn wisdom & his glorious goodnes**: Cf. *H.D.* 119/12-14. The transcendental experience in contemplation is of the Trinity. Cf. *Scale* II, ch. 46: 'þan bigynniþ þe soule for to perseyuyn a litel of þe pryuetes of þe blissed Trinite . . . þe onhed in substance & distinccioun of persons' (f. 139r). As in the teaching of the German mystics Eckhart, Tauler, Suso, and the Flemish Ruysbroek, the Godhead perceived through unknowing is the God of Christian revelation, Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier.

84/23. **vnwetyn**: See *Divine Names*, ch. 7: 'God is the Fount of all wisdom and as Transcending all wisdom and understanding' (Rolt, p. 146) ' . . . The Mind of God embraces all things in an utterly transcendent knowledge, and, in Its causal relation to all things, anticipates within Itself the knowledge of them all . . . The Divine Wisdom in knowing Itself will know all things' (ibid., pp. 150-1).

84/26. **nouȳtning**: Cf. *Cloud* ch. 68.

84/33-37. Cf. *Cloud* ch. 18. The following paragraphs are addressed in general to denigrators in the active life.

85/11. **many**: Among the number, St. Augustine (*Contra Faustum* xxii, cc. 54-55, *P.L.* t. 42, cols. 434-5), St. Gregory (*Hom. in Ezech.* II, ii, 9, 10; *Mor.* VI, 61).

85/19-21. This passage is reminiscent of *Benj. Min.* c. lxxiii (col. 52), *B.M.* 144/18-21.

85/21-22. Ps. lxxvii, 28 (Vulg.). These are the opening words of Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin Minor*.

85/23. **excesse**: L. *excessus*. This word is used technically in mystical writings to indicate a liberation from the limits of the normal faculties, i.e. ecstasy. It came into Christian terminology in the late second or third century in Tertullian's commentary on St. Paul, 2 Cor. xii, 2-4.

85/23-25. **liche to þoo wrechid wommen . . . newe borne**: This is a bold simile for the repudiation of the grace extended through the contemplative's total obliteration of himself.

85/35-39. Cf. *Cloud* 35/40-36/1.

86/4-5. **as þe godly reson askep . . . hemself**: Cf. *Cloud* 28/34-36, 31/29-32.

86/10. **weelwilnes**: Cf. **weelwylling** *Cloud* 47/9. The unique reading of Harl has been retained because it is the harder reading and also retains the alliteration lost in the *goode wille* of the other MSS. Rolle *Psalter* xvii, 27 has *welwillynge*, Wyclif *Ecclus*. Prol. *wel willingnesse* (Vulg. *cum benevolentia*), Aelfric *Saints' Lives* xxxi, 44 *welwillendnyse*. (See O.E.D.).

86/17-23. **licnyd to a slepe . . . kynde**: The image occurs in *Benj. Maj.* IV, 22, where the entry of Moses into the cloud (of unknowing) is associated with the Psalmist's 'In pace in idipsum dormiam et requiescam' (Ps. iv, 9, col. 165). The image was traditional. St. Bernard (*In Cant*, LII) speaks of the life-giving wakeful sleep of the soul in contemplation. The concept is familiar today through the teaching and practice of Depth Psychology, Yoga, Transcendental Meditation and the like, though the premise and groundwork are different. It is now widely accepted that there is enlightenment and a revitalizing of the psychic energy with accompanying therapeutic effects when by recollection and introversion the mind operates below the level of normal consciousness, with the utmost concentration in the depths of personality through the elimination of images, sense perceptions and discursive thinking.

86/25-31. Cf. *Cloud* ch. 7.

87/4. Cf. *Liber de Praecepto et Dispensatione*, cap. vi (*P.L.* t. 182, col. 868): 'Nam perfecta obedientia legem nescit, terminis non arctatur'.

87/6-24, 88/29-31. A personal relationship between director and disciple seems unquestionable.

87/16-19. Cf. *Cloud* 34/36-38.

87/38. **alle vertewes**: Cf. *Cloud* 21/34-36, chs. 13, 24.

87/39. **crokyng . . . entent**: Cf. *De VII Itin.* I, iii: 'intentio . . . recta, simplex et magis immediata'.

87/41. **myn owne writyng**: See *Introd.*, pp. xii-xiv.

88/1. **þe Arke of þe Testament**: See *Com.* 70/34. No M.E. translation is known of *Benjamin Major*. The reference might be to *The Cloud* chs. 71-73.

88/2. **drewry**: Cf. Col. ii, 2-3; *Viae Sion* III, iv (with reference to Dionysian teaching): 'in ipsa sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae absconditi'.

88/2-3. **ligty derknes . . . vnknowyn kunnynge**s: Cf. *H.D.* 119/16-22.

88/4. **preier ful schorte**: Cf. *Cloud* chs. 37-39.

88/7-8. Matt. xvi, 24.

88/12. **mounte of perfeccion**: Cf. 46/41-42, *Preier* 102/19-20.

88/13. **Criste . . . bi kynde, & we . . . bi grace**: Cf. *Cloud* 42/22-23.

88/17. **only sterid . . . grace**: See *Introd.*, p. xxii.

88/24-25. **þis consent & þis suffring . . . actuely disposid**: Cf. *Cloud* 39/1-10. See *Introd.*, p. xxii. The author can never be accused of Quietism. Even at the point where God takes over, the contemplative must strive to preserve his state of concentration in passive receptiveness, his will solely directed towards his goal.

88/41-89/1. Cf. 75/29-33; Jan v. Ruysbroek *The Spiritual Espousals* trans. E. Colledge (London, 1952), Book II, Part iv, pp. 144-5: ' . . . the spirit in its most inward and its highest part, ceaselessly receives in its pure nature the impress of

God's eternal image . . . and is an everlasting dwelling-place of God, which He possesses and eternally inhabits. . . . This essential unity of our spirit with God does not consist in our spirit, but it remains in God, and it flows out from God, and it depends on God, and it returns back again to God as to its everlasting cause. . . . For this unity is within us according to our pure nature.'

89/14. **condicion of a parfite louer:** Cf. *Cloud* 25/20-21, 45/27-29.

89/23 et seq. Cf. *Cloud* ch. 44.

89/29-39. Cf. *Cloud* 46/36-47/4.

89/34-36. The experience is rare and brief. See *Com.* 22/37-38.

90/12 et seq. Cf. *Cloud* 13/38-14/12, 14/38-15/23.

91/2. **gospel:** John x, 9-10.

91/13-24. This is the higher state of active life and the lower of contemplative. See *Cloud*, ch. 8.

91/25-92/2. The warning is comparable to that in *The Cloud* ch. 45. The author's insistence that the contemplative's progress is possible only through meditation first on the Humanity of Christ reiterates *Cloud* 15/16-20, a passage which sets the 'work' 15/29-33 in true perspective.

91/35. **a liking longing, so lityl:** Har<sup>1</sup> has a *lityl longing*, Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa *so sotyl*. Har<sup>1</sup> preserves the alliteration but has the weaker sense. Nevertheless *sotyl* connects the 'pleasant longing' with the inquisitive working of the intelligence, which is hardly relevant here. Contrast l. 26. The emended reading is plausible: 'a pleasant longing, however little'. The first *lityl* in Har<sup>1</sup> may easily be accounted for as a scribal error due to the memorizing of the whole phrase and here anticipating the second *lityl*. Either the influence of preceding *so* or a resemblance in appearance of *lityl* and *sotyl* in a fourteenth-century hand, together with the frequency of *sotyl* elsewhere, could explain an error which occurred in the common ancestor of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa.

92/24-26. Cf. *Cloud* chs. 29, 30.

92/39. John xv, 5.

93/5-21. This expands the teaching of *The Cloud* ch. 8 on the important rôle of the reason in all activities less spiritual than the act of contemplation, and is in keeping with the intellectual tone of all the present treatises.

93/26-30. See *Com.* 39/2-3.

94/4-10. This has a personal note. See *Introd.*, pp. l-li.

95/3. **windowes:** See *Com.* 9/6-7.

95/24-25. **chaungeþ . . . chere semely:** See *Com.* 55/25-30.

95/33. **þi list is likyng to pleye wiþ a childe:** This is the reading of three good MSS. (Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup>). Bo omits 'to pleye wiþ a childe'; Do substitutes 'No heartly joy is to thee beside this liking that thou feelest in God'; A 'Thy list . . . to play with Jesu a child'. Modern editors have to guess at the meaning. No emendation is made because a straightforward literal meaning is possible, though not probable. This would add 'innocence' to 'meekness' and 'mildness' in the spirit of Isa. xi, 6, Mark x, 14-15. 'pleye' usually has more subtle overtones. See *Com.* 30/28. To emend *wiþ* to *as* would link this passage with *Cloud* 48/35-36. (See *Com.* 48/35-36), and with God's love-game of coming and going, in fact the theme of the following 95/37-96/18.

96/3. **shipping ouer:** Cf. *Stirings* 110/21-24. The 'ship', a common image associated in Christian allegory with the 'sea' of the trials of life, was probably inspired by the exegesis of the N.T. story of the storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mark iv, 37; Luke viii, 23). St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, described the Purgation of the soul 'quasi navigationem ad patriam' (I, x, col. 231).

96/13. **blundryng:** In M.E. this often signified the uncertain movement of a blind person.

96/30-31. **sensible swetnes . . . flawmyng desires:** See *Cloud* chs. 48-50.

96/34-35. **grace . . . sensible partye**: In this dereliction, grace is not lost, only the feelings of sensible devotion. Cf. *S. T. Ia IIae*, q. 112, a. 5.

97/3. **growyng**: The reading of Har<sup>1</sup> has been retained. Each time they come, the feelings are greater in strength. See 96/9, 16, 18. *growyng comyng* in Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pa implies 'often, and ever more often'.

97/14. **chaste**: Cf. *Com.* 52/6, *Preier* 104/7-8, 105/16-22.

97/15. **seest þi God & þi loue**: See *Introd.*, p. xlviii. This description of union carries a profound mystical meaning. Cf. *B.M.* 143/21-22: 'when þe kandil brenniþ, þou maist see þe self kandel by þe lȳt þerof'. The vision of God is experienced in the medium of the love of Him. Through love, the contemplative is one with God who is Uncreated Love, the Holy Spirit. See *Com.* 15/26.

97/17-20. Cf. 89/14-22.

98/18. John xvi, 7.

98/19. **þe doctour**: The title was applied to (a) certain of the early Fathers of the Church distinguished by their learning; in the Western Church especially the four: Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory; (b) the leading Schoolmen of medieval philosophy. (See *O.E.D.*) Cf. *Preier* 102/36, where the title is given to St. Thomas Aquinas.

98/19-21. The argument was common. See e.g. St. Augustine, *Sermo cxlili* (*P.L.* t. 38, col. 786), Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas *In Joann.* 7, 32: 'we ought not to rest in it as an end in itself, but through it we should reach out to God; Christ took away His physical presence lest hearts of disciples be captivated by His Purely Human qualities': also *S. T. IIa IIae*, q. 82, a. 3, ad, 2.

98/29-30. Cf. *Cloud* 9/28-34, 34/14-27.

98/34. **a man . . . kunne**: The opening statement of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.

98/38-39. 1 Cor. viii, 1.

## A PISTLE OF PREIER

See *Introd.*, p. xiii for the relationship of this treatise to *The Cloud*.

The achievement of the 'work' is described in comparable terms, but its preliminary discipline is outlined as affirmation rather than negation. The chief authority is ultimately St. Bernard, not the pseudo-Dionysius. The key-words are now *reuerent affeccioun* and *chaste loue*. The development of the theme is controlled through the allegory of a Tree. As in *The Cloud*, the central subject of contemplative prayer is introduced by a brief account of preparation. *The Cloud* begins with successive degrees in the form and manner of life (7/30-8/17); *Preier* summarizes the way to attain and practise the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. The following *Commentary* notes familiar medieval topics introduced to clothe the brief résumé of the recommended course. The course itself is described in abstract terms, but it follows the progressive attainment typified by Lya's five sons and the soul's reactions. See Reuben to Isachar, *B.M.* 131/14-138/3. It also recalls Hugh of St. Victor's *De Modo Orandi* c. I (*P.L.* t. 176, cols. 977-8).

101/6. **diȝe . . . preier**: Fear was traditionally the beginning of the soul's return to God, and the foundation of the knowledge of Divine mysteries. According to St. Thomas Aquinas (*The Gift of Fear*, *S. T. IIa IIae*, q. 19, a. 7), fear is 'as the root to the tree'. The efficacy of the fear of death was a commonplace in medieval homilies,



and reflections on its certainty and unexpectedness a constant theme in meditations. (see R. Woolf *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages*, pp. 72-74). The humility and contrition arising from what is at first a 'servile' fear of punishment can develop into a 'filial' fear nourished by faith and hope. St. Benedict had urged the importance of meditation on the Last Judgment to induce a fear of God, essential for the spiritual novice; St. Bernard taught that such fear led to humility, which after long apprenticeship turned to love through the working of the Holy Spirit. Cf. *Com.* 23/5, 14.

101/20-21. **sopfastnes . . . God:** Cf. *S.T.* I, q. 16, a. 6.

101/22-23. **moment . . . twinkeling of an iȝe:** Cf. I Cor. xv, 52.

101/24. Ps. xlvii, 8 (Vulg.).

101/26-27. Ps. cx, 10 (Vulg.) Cf. *B.M.* 131/17-18.

101/29-30. **drede . . . heuines:** As *Ancrene Wisse* quotes from St. Gregory (p. 170): 'Timor sine spe degenerat in desperationem', the devil's ambush. The escape lies through the sacrament of Penance. As in *The Cloud* (see *Com.* 24/15-17), *Preier* declares the initial necessity for this, 'after þe comoun ordinaunce of Holy Chirche', 102/2-3. Church dogma promises that the soul repentant at the hour of death will be saved.

101/29. **for drede:** The reading of Har<sup>1</sup> CP, supported by the original reading of Kk, has been retained. The repetition of the same word in a different construction reinforces the pointed antithesis of the beginning of the sentence, *sekir standing . . . drede of sinking*.

102/2. **conciencie:** See *Com.* 24/11, 15.

102/7-8. Har<sup>1</sup> refers to Ps. xxxvi. See 3-6 (Vulg.).

102/17. **sekir staf:** A common image, with associations from Ps. xxii (Vulg.) and in this context from Moses's ascent of Sinai. Cf. St. Gregory of Nyssa *De Vita Moysis* (*P.G.* t. 44, col. 356). The same image occurs in a similar context in Hilton's *Scale I*, ch. 27.

102/19-20. **hiȝe mount of perfeccioun:** Cf. 46/41-42, *P.C.* 88/12.

102/30, 35. **reuerent affeccioun, deuocioun:** These mark the threshold of unitive prayer. They translate *pia affectio* and *devotio*, terms frequent in Latin treatises of Mystical Theology. Cf. Hugh of St. Victor *De Modo Orandi*: 'Devotio est pius et humilis affectus in Deum, qui ex compunctione generatur. . . . Devotio igitur est conversio in Deum pio et humili affectu. . . . Nihil ergo aliud est oratio quam mentis devotio, id est conversio in Deum per pium et humilem affectum, fide, spe, charitate subnixa.' (col. 979). Guigo de Ponte *De Contemplatione* (f. 227v) describes the *via negativa* as purely affective, consisting of holy devotion and reverent affection; his sole purpose is 'ad alliciendam et fovendam piarum affectionum devotionem' (f. 226v, quoted from Grausem, p. 274).

102/36. **Seinte Thomas . . . :** Cf. *S.T.* IIa IIae, q. 82, a. 1: 'Devotio nihil aliud esse videtur quam voluntas quaedam prompte tradendi se ad ea, quae pertinent ad Dei famulatum'; i.e. Devotion is a special act of the will.

102/39-40. **Seinte Bernard . . . swiftlylich . . . :** Cf. 'ad currendam viam . . .'. *Vitis Mystica*, inter op. *S. Bernardi*, c. xix (*P.L.* t. 184, cols. 674-5).

103/3 et seq. Cf. I Tim. iv, 8. The gist of this text provides the main theme of *Stirings* and is implicit throughout *The Cloud*.

103/34 et seq. **licned to a tre:** The tree image is common both in patristic writings and in religious treatises of the later Middle Ages. Cf. Hugh of St. Victor *De Arca Noe Morali*, III, c. i, ix, x (*P.L.* t. 176, cols. 647, 655). J. J. Vaissier *The Tree and XII frutes of the holy goost* (Gröningen, 1960), *Introd.*, pp. lvi-lxxxii, indicates possible sources of the image, its lasting popularity, and the many variations of interpretation in patristic writings and later. The branches (*bowes* 103/36) were commonly expounded as bearing the Fruits of the Spirit in 'charity'. A comparison



with Langland's Tree of Charity (*Piers Plowman* B xvi, C xix), a symbol of man in active life working towards salvation, will demonstrate how neatly and expressively the figure is adapted and simplified in *Preier* to reveal the perfecting of contemplative prayer. The 'ripe fruit' provides another image to be associated with 'chaste love', 'the naked blind intent'. See *Introd.*, p. xxv.

104/7, 105/16-20. **chast loue**: See *Com.* 52/6.

104/19. **what**: The emendation of the unique reading in Har<sup>1</sup> preserves the alliterative balance and lends variety.

104/28-30. **touched . . . list**: Cf. *Cloud* 34/31-35; *B.M.* 129/8-9.

104/29. **sensible presence . . . in a parfite soule**: See *Introd.*, p. xxv.

104/30. **clere beme of euerlastyng list**: Cf. *Wisd. of Sol.* vii, 26, 'Candor est enim lucis aeternae'.

104/38. **pointe . . . prik**: This favourite alliterative phrase (cf. *P.C.* 75/10, 79/11, *Stirings* 115/16-17, 21, 24, 116/2) introduces the section most characteristic of the author of *The Cloud*.

105/18-20. **bot gif . . . wey**: Cf. *Cloud* 52/13-20.

105/34-35. **vnnoumerable . . . oure**: Cf. the description of Aspirations in *The Cloud* 12/24-27. See *Introd.*, pp. xxiv-xxv.

106/9-10. 1 Cor. vi, 17. This is one of the most frequently quoted texts in mystical treatises.

106/11-12. **o sperit . . . sere in kynde**: Cf. *Com.* 67/14. See *Introd.*, pp. xxiii, xl. St. Bernard develops the theme in *In Cant.* LXXI, 8 (col. 1125).

106/13. **bot**: The emendation to the reading of the rest of the MSS. not only helps to point the antithesis, but also completes the rhythmical balance of the sentence.

106/15. **mariage**: The marriage imagery, expounding the love of the Bride of the Canticles (Song of Sol.) in terms of the mystical union of the devout soul and God, had a long ancestry. Origen used it at the turn of the second century. St. Bernard developed it closely and fully in the aforesaid *In. Cant.* It is found in a heightened form in Richard of St. Victor's *De Quatuor Gradibus Violentiae Charitatis*. *The Cloud* treatises are remarkable for their infrequent use of such imagery.

106/16-17. **hete & þe feruour . . . ceese**: Cf. *Cloud* 44/25-29.

106/16. **þis werk**: See *Introd.*, p. xxiv.

106/19-20. **Book of Songes**: Song of Sol. ii, 16.

106/21. **glewe of grace**: Cf. St. Bernard (loc. cit.): 'unus tamen spiritus certa et absoluta veritate . . . si sibi glutino amoris inhaereant'. 'Glue' is one of Hugh of Balma's favourite metaphors.

106/33. **sodenly, listely, & likingly**: Cf. *P.C.* 81/25.

106/32-33. **fro ani pouzt . . . wipouten mene**: i.e. without intermediary of what can be seen or heard or understood. Cf. *Cloud* 39/8-12, *Stirings* 117/18-20. See *Introd.*, p. xxiv.

107/2-4. Cf. *Com.* 59/37-38.

107/5. **seke sleightes**: Cf. *Cloud* 36/33-35, chs. 32, 47.

107/5-6. **Betir . . . strengþe**: See *Com.* 48/17-18.

107/12. **sodeyn . . . menes**: Cf. *P.C.* 85/32.

107/16. **aungel messenger**: See *Com.* 9/19-20.

107/20-23. **man is a mengid þing . . . last day**: Cf. *Cloud* 23/17, 50/14-17, 51/27-29.

107/34-35. **. . . take hem and leue þees**: Cf. *Cloud* 72/27-28, where the director similarly gives freedom of choice, acknowledging that there might be a better way than his.

107/39-40. **prey for me . . . stondeþ wip me**: Cf. *Cloud* 72/19-24.

107/40-41. **Goddess blessing . . . & myne**: Cf. *Cloud* 74/28.

## A PISTLE OF DISCRECIOUN OF STIRINGS

See *Introd.*, pp. xii-xiii for the relationship of this treatise to *The Cloud*.

This letter is apparently addressed to a different and less advanced disciple, one who is troubled by an urge to undertake a stricter physical discipline. While repeating traditional teaching on the value of bodily discipline compared with spiritual, the first half concentrates on the prime need for self-knowledge; the second half, closer to *The Cloud*, outlines a discipline to foster the spiritual sensitivity, whereby the would-be contemplative will do the right thing instinctively.

109/*Title*. **Discrecioun**: A favourite word in *The Cloud* treatises. It connotes a spiritual discernment of what is right conduct in all states. See *Introd.*, p. xxxv<sup>28</sup>.

109/14-15. **kinde bot suffring . . . consentyng**: Cf. *P.C.*, where the degrees of participation by God and man are described.

109/19. Cf. the criteria in *P.C.* 93/7-8: 'Scripture, counseil & comoun custum of kynde & degre, eelde & compleccyon.'

110/11-12. I Cor. ii, 11.

110/15-36. The way to self-knowledge and its nature resemble the birth and significance of Joseph in *B.M.* 142/16-36.

As in *Preier* the thought is developed in a homiletic style by means of imagery set out simply and broadly analysed. Again the similitudes are commonplace. The 'shipping ouer fro bodelines into goostlines' occurs also in *P.C.* See *Com.* 96/3.

110/31-34. **pe londe of stabelnes . . . quietly in hymself**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* xxxviii, col. 27 (Not in the M.E. version): 'Haec est illa vere beata terra, mentis videlicet stabilitas tranquilla, quando mens in seipsa tota colligitur, et in uno aeternitatis desiderio immobiliter figitur'.

110/35. **miztly, wisely, and goodly**: Cf. 115/30, *P.C.* 84/17, 30. The triad bears the overtones of the concept of the Trinity, and of man made in God's image. Cf. *P.C. Com.* 84/23.

110/37-39. Jas. i, 12.

111/18 et seq. **In a coroun . . .**: Crown symbolism was not uncommon, especially of the Virgin's crown with its lilies and precious stones. Cf. St. Mechthild (Cotton Claudius MS. B f. 33r: 'a crowne of a wonderfule gretenes, in whiche crowne wer shewyd woundryfully all her vertues & merites'. The crown here described is more realistic, and might have been the description of an actual crown which he had heard about, or seen. Richard II appears to wear a similar crown in the Westminster Abbey portrait, dated c. 1395. A crown closely corresponding in its details is now exhibited in the Residenz, Munich (Cat. no. 16), fashioned c. 1370-80, and either of French make, or of English with French influence. It is made of gold, and gold enamel, with sapphires, rubies, emeralds and pearls, and has 'turrets' of heraldic fleurs-de-lis. In 1402, this crown came into the possession of the Electors Palatine with the dowry of Princess Blanche, a daughter of Henry IV of England, who usurped Richard's throne. It was probably from Richard's Royal Treasury.

111/25-26. **teche . . . brepren**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxix, lxx (cols. 49-50).

111/26-31. **torettes . . .**: The symbolism is based on the heraldic fleur-de-lis, a central upright petal with a petal on each side.

112/14-16. Cf. *Cloud* 48/28-30.

112/28. **singuler leuyng**: See *Com.* 7/34-8/17.

112/33-35. **as perilous . . . hert**: Cf. *P.C.* 91/37-38.

113/7. **streite**: Cf. 109/8, 23-24, 117/8. Har<sup>1</sup> *grete* is the weaker reading, and has been emended to that of the rest of the MSS.

113/23-27. Cf. *Cloud* 50/21-24.

113/25. **windowes . . .**: See *Com.* 9/6-7.

113/32. **Aungel of Grete Counseile:** This title occurs in Isa. ix, 6, in the versions of the Septuagint and the Vetus Itala.

113/32-35. The prayer stands out through the more pronounced rhythm of its prose, heightened by balanced phrases and multiple alliteration.

113/36-40. **a simple lewid wreche . . . defaileþ:** Cf. *Cloud* 72/19-24, *P.* 107/39-40. Such acknowledgement of unworthiness is not uncommon, but this author's variations in expressing it leave an impression of genuine humility.

113/40. **kunnyng . . . clergie:** Cf. the phraseology of *P.C.* 93/4, 6, 11, 18.

114/16-29. The counsel offered in l. 9 virtually begins at l. 30. The intervening passage is a parenthetical development from 'werkes of kynde . . . men' (l. 15). The vehement sentiments of the bridge passage do not sound like those of a professed religious of a strict order. The disciple, cf. 118/10, presumably is not one either. But see below, *Com.* 114/24.

114/23. **midday deuel:** Cf. Ps. xc, 6 (Vulg.) *daemonium meridianum*; Ps. xci, 6 (A.V.): 'the destruction that wasteth at noonday'. The theme is developed in *Spirites*; see *Com.* 149/37-38.

114/24. **crokid auowe . . . singulerteës:** The perversion might lie rather in the adoption of exceptional and unessential devotions than in the normal practice of a religious order.

114/28. 2 Cor. iii, 17.

115/7-11. See *Introd.*, p. xxiv.

115/9. The MSS. variants and corrections indicate some corruption in their parent text. The original reading might have been 'getyn by þougȝt, ne trasid by vnderstanding'.

115/11. **wille . . . herte:** 'intention of the will'. Cf. *Cloud* 52/28-30: 'I mene not in þi bodily herte, bot in þi goostly herte, þe whiche is þi wil'.

115/11. **þee:** Har<sup>1</sup> CP preserve here a dative of interest, a more archaic construction than *þou* in the other MSS.

115/15. **clene wille . . . trewe herte:** Cf. ll. 10-11. Har<sup>1</sup> CP retain a characteristic permutation of epithets. The 'clene wille', purified and single, is another expression for *The Cloud's* 'naked intent'.

115/16-17. **poynt and þe pricke:** see *Preier Com.* 104/38.

115/21. **cheef:** i.e. 'supreme'. This is more in accord with the following metaphor than *choyse* 'choice', the easier reading of Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Pw. In the context of *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling*, *pointe* bears overtones. In this passage it gathers its meaning from 'poynte . . . pricke' (ll. 16-17), from 'darte of longing loue' (l. 23) and also from 'poynte of þin herte' (116/15). Cf. *P.C.* 78/20, 80/23. 'þe first poynt of þi spirit', where the soul encounters God. The whole passage epitomizes the central theme of *The Cloud*, 'love without knowing'. See *Introd.*, p. lv.

115/23. **scharp darte of longing loue:** Cf. *Cloud* 14/29-30. See *Introd.*, pp. xlix, lv.

115/24-27. **Book of Loue:** Song of Sol. iv, 9.

115/29. **Iȝen . . . two, reson & loue:** Cf. Ivo *De Gradibus Charitatis* (*P.L.* t. 196, col. 1203): 'Duos . . . oculos habet anima . . . unum quo intelligit, et alium quo requirit . . . dexter oculus est amor qui requirendo vulnerat'.

115/30. **mizty . . . good:** See *Com.* 110/35.

115/34-35. **one of þin iȝen:** Cf. *De VII Itin.* III, vii: 'Sicut exponit Vercellensis . . . in uno oculorum tuorum, id est, intelligentia tua attracta et simplicata'; op. cit. III, ii: 'Iste est oculus contemplationis de quo dicit Sponsus *Vulnerasti* . . . id est, tua intelligentia simplicata penetrasti omnia pertingendo ad cor meum, et propter te vulneratum fuit ex amore intimo quo dilexi te': *Viae Sion* III, iv: 'nihil aliud est nisi immediate moveri per ardorem amoris sine omnis creaturae speculo, absque praeuia cogitatione, sine etiam motu intelligentiae concomitante . . . ille est oculus quo sponsus in *Canticis* a sponsa dicitur vulnerari'.

- 116/11-12. Cf. 1 Cor. vii, 20, Eph. iv, I.  
 116/14. Cf. *Cloud* chs. 8, 17-21.  
 116/15-16. Luke x, 42. Cf. *Cloud* 29/6-10.  
 116/16-18. Cf. *Com.* 14/34-35.  
 116/27-30. **best**: Cf. *Cloud* ch. 21.  
 117/17-20. **For to him . . . bot God**: Cf. *Cloud* 44/7-8.  
 117/25. **mistely**: 'mystically', i.e. intuitively, because divinely infused in the spirit by grace.  
 118/1. **blinde stering of loue**: Cf. *Cloud* 12/34.  
 118/18-19. **hold . . . holde**: Characteristic word-play.

### DEONISE HID DIUINITE

119/*Title*. **DEONISE HID DIUINITE**: This is adopted from the heading to its *Prolog* in both M.E. MSS. It ingeniously suggests the profundities of *De Mystica Theologia*. Latin *mystica* is glossed as 'clausa, vel occulta' (*P.L.* t. 122, col. 269). The work treats of God's nature in Itself and of man in his relation to God; whatever is stated of God must be left 'inexplicable' and 'secret', any experience of man's union with God will be 'ineffable'. Christian wisdom, divinely infused, is set against human knowledge and natural philosophy, and different ways are outlined for the intellect and affection to attain 'deification', i.e. a participation in the Divine Life.

The Latin version of cap. 1 with its initial prayer is given below the Middle English text, since this is the most essential part and most influenced *The Cloud* and *Priue Counseling* and also the Latin commentaries with which the Middle English writer appears to have been acquainted.

*De Prolog upon þe Translacioun.*

119/2-3. **Seynte Denys . . . Thimothe**: The author of *Mystica Theologia* is now known as the pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. Here and elsewhere he wrote as if he were St. Paul's Athenian convert of A.D. 54 (*see* Acts xvii, 22-34) who later became the first Bishop of Athens. There were many parallels for such an adoption of a fictitious name. It was a widespread literary convention. This particular imposture had momentous results. The pseudonym was hardly questioned before the fifteenth century. Dionysius's teaching, believed to have apostolic authority, in consequence became one of the great influences in shaping the mystical theology of Christendom. Four treatises and some letters still extant are generally accepted as his: in English, *Divine Names*, *Mystical Theology*, *Celestial Hierarchy*, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. The two other works referred to in *Mystical Theology* are not known.

The identity of this Dionysius is conjectural. It is likely that he was a Syrian monk writing c. A.D. 500. Passages in his extant works are reminiscent of the teaching of St. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzus, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria. He was, in fact, partly drawing upon St. Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*, and throughout was strongly influenced by the Alexandrian Platonists, adopting in particular Neoplatonist ideas from Proclus (d. 485) *see Introd.*, pp. xli-xliii. He shows knowledge of such comparatively late developments in church discipline as the introduction of the Creed into the Mass (A.D. 476).



Dionysius's writings first gained publicity at the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 533. Once Dionysius had appeared in recorded history, there is ample testimony to the remarkable and swift spread of his fame. His works were soon translated from Greek into Syrian and Arabic. Commentaries on them were produced in the sixth century by John of Scythopolis, in the seventh century by Maximus (d. 662). Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604) referred to him as 'antiquus et venerabilis pater'. At the Lateran Council of 649, Pope Martin I pronounced his works most orthodox.

Dionysius became known in the West after 827, when the Byzantine emperor sent a copy of his treatises to King Louis the Pious of France. From an early date St. Paul's authentic convert had been identified with St. Denis of France. The treatises were handed to Hilduin, Abbot of St. Denys, who authorized the first translation from the Greek into Latin. The first important Latin translation, however, with some commentary was made by John Scotus Erigena, an Irishman at the court of King Charles the Bald (c. 858). It is harder to keep track of Dionysius's influence in the subsequent three hundred years. By the twelfth century the main stream of western spirituality was strongly blended with mystical thought from the East; the spiritual climate was right, and Dionysian teaching was widely disseminated through a spate of translations and commentaries, which continued to appear up to and after the fourteenth century, elaborating and modifying earlier commentary in accordance with the mystical temper of the time. Among outstanding Dionysian scholars were Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1141), John Sarracenus who dedicated a translation of the *Mystica Theologia* to the Abbot of St. Denys (1162-69), Albertus Magnus (d. c. 1200), Thomas Gallus, Abbot of St. Andrew's, Vercelli (d. 1246), Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (d. 1255), Hugh of Balma, Prior of Chartreuse de Meijorat en Bresse (1289-1304). Richard of St. Victor and St. Bonaventura were greatly influenced; it has been calculated that St. Thomas Aquinas referred to Dionysius at least 1,702 times. Through such pre-eminent authorities and countless of their followers, Dionysius's teaching on the *Via Negativa* towards union with God reached the English, Flemish, French, German and Spanish mystics up to and beyond the Renaissance. See *Introd.*, p. xliii-xlv.

119/8-9. **nakid lettre . . . sentence:** The first three chapters closely follow the Latin translation of John Sarracenus, the last two are based primarily on three different works of Thomas Gallus (henceforth referred to as 'Vercellensis'): *Paraphrase* or *Extractio*, *Commentary* or *Explanatio*, *Gloss*. The Latin sources of the five chapters of *Hid Divinite* in Sarracenus and Vercellensis's *Paraphrase* are given in Appendix A of the E.E.T.S. edition (*D.H.D.*), taken from *Dionysii Cartusiani Opera Omnia*, t. xvi (Tournai, 1902), pp. 471-4, 465, 468-9. Key passages from the *Commentary* and *Gloss* are added in the footnotes if they contain central ideas and symbolism, or illustrate the all-pervasive paradox. Quotations from the *Commentary* were taken from MS. Royal 8, G, iv, from the *Gloss* from P.L. t. 122, cols. 267-84. Often the Latin elucidates the Middle English translation, for Latin had a long-used and familiar vocabulary to express abstruse and abstract ideas. Always it illustrates the formidable difficulties of paraphrase, and *The Cloud* author's often ingenious attempts to overcome these in a close and intelligible translation. Generally speaking, *Hid Divinite* expands the expression, but not the matter.

119/9-10. **Abbot of Sainte Victore:** This is Thomas Gallus, a Canon Regular of the Congregation of St. Victor established in Paris, who became Abbot of Vercelli. From the mid-thirteenth century his works were known in England, and MSS. of them to be found in English libraries. There were connections between Vercelli and England, for the Church of Chesterton, Cambridge, was a benefice of the Abbey. Thomas was a friend of the Franciscan Adam Marsh and of Robert Grosseteste.

119/12-14. **pou vnbigonne . . . souereyn Good:** Erigena, Sarracenus and



Vercellensis follow Dionysius in invoking the Trinity which comprehends and exceeds all Being, Deity, and Good. L. *superdea* and *superbona* qualify *Trinitas* (f.)—One in Three and Three in One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The M.E. translation invokes Eternal Wisdom. Cf. Wisdom of Sol. viii, 1: 'Wisdom . . . reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things'. 'þe souereyn Goddesse' (= Wisdom) is possibly the M.E. translator's misunderstanding of *superdea*. The undivided, but differentiated Trinity is appealed to as 'Wisdom' because it comprehends the Fount of Wisdom and the Word (John i, 1-4, 9), the Second Person of the Trinity. There is no doctrinal discrepancy between the Latin and the translation, for the invocation is virtually the same.

119/14. **þe inliche beholder . . . godliche-maad wisdom**: In this phrase which links the invocation and the following prayer *superbona* is shown to represent the Third Person, the Holy Spirit.

The 'godliche-maad wisdom' is Divine wisdom, divinely infused, i.e. Christian contemplation. The *Gloss* adds 'qui est optima positio Mariae' (col. 270). The Prayer entreats for worthiness to receive the 'derke inspirid spekynges' of God. Cf. *Cloud* 26/16-17, where Mary contemplated 'þe souereynest wisdom of his Godheed lappid in þe derk wordes of his Manheed'.

The whole phrase qualifies the Trinity, in its differentiation as the Holy Spirit. In isolation 'þe inliche beholder' is equivocal. Compared with the Latin (*inspectrix* [f.] Sarracenus, Vercellensis; *inspector* [m.] Erigena) it cleverly suggests the loaded content of its source. Commentators on the Latin had found it necessary to amplify. Thus Vercellensis's 'quae inspiciendo approbas, et approbando inspicies sapientiam fidelium, qua Deus cognoscitur' (*Gloss*, col. 270); Dionysius Carthusianus, op. cit., p. 447, explains *inspectrix* as 'approbator et cognitor, dator et confirmator . . .'. (L. *approbare* 'establish'). M.E. *beholde* retained two of its O.E. meanings: 'keep', and the extension 'keep in view, consider'.

1 Cor. ii, 9-13, provides a simple parallel to the whole M.E. phrase: ' . . . the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. . . . God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God' (A.V.) 10. 'Nobis autem revelavit Deus per Spiritum suum; Spiritus enim omnia scrutatur, etiam profunda Dei'. (Vulg.)

119/15-16. **in an acordyng abilnes**: Not in the Latin. The Prayer seeks to be worthy of contemplation. The contemplative prays for the proper will, which is that in accordance with God's will. Cf. *Cloud Com.* 74/19-20.

119/18-20. **souereyn-schinyng derknes . . . derkyst**: This expresses the paradox of the 'darkness through excess of light'.

119/18-21. **wisest silence—inuisible—vngropable**: i.e. 'Wholly ineffable, not to be heard, be seen by eyes or mind, or investigated by reason'.

120/1-2. **affeccyon abouen mynde**: Cf. *Gloss* (col. 271): 'intelligentia deficit per excedentem affectionis unionem'. The references to affection here, also 120/24, 123/16, are not in the Latin text, but are probably due to the influence of Vercellensis. See *Intro.*, p. xliv.

## Cap. I

After the Prayer beseeching the Trinity for the Divine guidance of the Holy Spirit, the chapter develops in four main sections:

- (i) outlines the course of the negative way of mystical prayer;
- (ii) gives warning that the treasures of true Christian wisdom are not to be exposed to the unworthy;
- (iii) asserts that there is no essential contradiction between the Affirmative and the Negative Ways. As far as they go, both are true. Yet God transcends them both;

(iv) declares that the contemplative may attain to God only by an experience beyond the reach of intellect, and illustrates this by the progress of Moses in the ascent of Mount Sinai.

120/7. **Tymothe**: Probably intended to refer to Timotheus, St. Paul's disciple and companion; see Acts xvi, i; Rom xvi, 21; 1 Cor. xvi, 10; 2 Cor. i, 1.

120/7-8. **what tyme . . . blynde beholdynges**: This succinct business-like opening is not in the Latin, but has a triple link with *The Cloud*: insistence on the prime need for the call by grace; purposeful activity; the technique of a 'blind' approach, 'not hauyng igen of mynde'. The oxymoron, 'blynde beholdynges', occurs often in *P.C.*, e.g. 77/39, 80/34-35, 83/16-17, 24, 86/13.

120/9. **sleiz & a listi contricyon**: This appears to be a Middle English addition. The epithets are introduced with the same specialized meaning as in *The Cloud* group, cf. *Cloud* 26/19-20, *P.C.* 81/29. These treatises emphasize that Confession and Absolution must precede the beginning of the practice of mystical prayer; see *Com.* 24/15-17. The contrition these epithets qualify here must be like Mary's in *The Cloud*, see 25/7-35.

In this context Erigena has *corroborato itinere*, Sarracenus—*forti contentione*, *Gloss*—*forti mentis conanime*, all generally signifying 'effort'. Cf. **stronge** 9.

120/12-16. The amplification is clumsy compared with the Latin, but nevertheless leaves essential ideas wholly intelligible.

120/17. **possible to me . . . to pee**: A personal involvement not in the Latin, but characteristic of the author of *The Cloud*.

120/18. **rise**: The *Gloss* adds 'per principalem affectionem' (col. 272).

120/18. **in his grace**: Not in Sarracenus, or Vercellensis.

120/19. **substance**: Kk here agrees with the Latin versions of Erigena, Sarracenus, and Vercellensis.

120/21-23. **clene . . . knowyng**: This is an independent expansion of the thought of the Latin, only slightly influenced by the *Paraphrase* and *Gloss* of Vercellensis.

120/22-23. **by þe propre fourme**: A reduction to a simple explanation, 'by its own form'. Cf. *Gloss* (col. 272) 'ab ultimis animae phantasiis'. The highest to be known are 'aeternae architypiae'. *De VII Itin.* V, v.

120/24-25. **souereyn-substancial beme . . . derknes**: i.e. the radiance of the divine darkness transcending all existing light. Cf. 119/18-22, *Preier* 104/30-31. *The Cloud* explains this strong paradox in 68/16-18.

121/1-2. **Beware . . .**: Cf. *Cloud Com.* 2/3-5.

121/2-17. **pees men . . . wittes**: Partly following the *Paraphrase* (see *D.H.D.*, E.E.T.S., p. 95). The M.E. version is here considerably expanded. The 'vnwise men' are the natural philosophers, the 'more vnwise', those with anthropomorphic beliefs or worshippers of idols. These are only aware of what their senses and, at the best, their intellectual faculties can apprehend.

121/6. Ps. xvii, 12 (Vulg.), xviii, 11 (A.V.).

121/7. **prophete**: The *Paraphrase* refers to Job xxviii, 20-21; cf. also Isa. lxiv, 4. There are many such statements in the Books of the Prophets.

121/14. **last and þe leest worpi**: = those solely of inanimate matter. Ultimately based on Genesis and Plato, the Dionysian scale of being between nothingness and transcendent Godhead rises from existence, through life, feeling, reason, to spirit.

121/15. **it**: i.e. the First Cause.

121/16-17. **maad . . . fantastik ymagynatyue wittes**: This phrase, not in the Latin, resembles *Cloud* 12/32-35, 52/32. (See *Com.* 18/18-21 and *Introd.*, p. xxxviii).

121/18-19. **for to see**: Not in the Latin. Cf. 'in sigt of byleue' 1. 25.

121/18-21. The affirmative is a true way, for God is the source of all.

121/21-122/2. The negative way is closer to the truth. Cf. *S.T.* I, iii, *Introd.*, 'We cannot know what God is, but rather what He is not'. . . . 'Yet ultimately God rests incomprehensible, outside and beyond all statement.'

122/3. **Bertelmewe, þe Apostle of Criste**: The reference has not been traced. Nothing is known of any genuine writing of St. Bartholomew.

122/4. **Cristes deuinitee**: *L. thelogiam*, signifying 'Christian Theology'.

122/4-5. **moche and it is leest**: Cf. *Gloss* (col. 273): 'theologiam prolixam esse in verbis, et coartam ("compressed") in sensibus'.

122/5-6. **Gospel . . . litil**: 'Evangelium latum in parabolis, et magnum in historiis et rursum artum et parvum in mysteriis' (*Gloss*).

122/7. **good cause of alle**: so Rolt, p. 193, Sarracenus. Cf. *Gloss* (col. 273) 'bonorum omnium causa'. The M.E. is closer to the Platonic concept of 'Good' as the name of the First Cause, the One.

122/8-9. **as neiper . . . vnderstondyng**: St. Bartholomew had 'neiper resoun, etc.' He was in ecstasy when this was revealed, for God 'nec ratione capitur, nec intellectu comprehenditur' (*Gloss*, col. 274).

122/12-13. **þoþe . . . þinges**: i.e. pass beyond all distinctions to a simple unity.

122/14. **or to aungel**: Not in the Latin. Cf. *Cloud* 22/25-27. Angels, being creatures of God, cannot comprehend the Uncreated in His essential nature.

122/15. **liztes . . . wordes**: i.e. divine enlightenment through supernatural gifts of grace such as visions and locutions. The contemplative must not cling to these, but strive to rise from the state of Illumination to that of Union. Cf. *Cloud* chs. 49-50. The three traditional stages of the Mystic Way are clearly indicated in 122/18-123/25.

122/15-16. **wip affeccoun**: Not in the Latin.

122/16. **where verely he is**: Cf. 'as he is in himself'. See *Introd.*, p. xxiv. Cf. *Gloss* (col. 274): ' . . . in propria forma secundum Scripturae testimonium est Deus super unum et unitatem, et super ens et entitatem'. This experience is only possible to those who have passed beyond all distinctions, the bounds of human knowledge, and the attachment to diverse spiritual gifts. Cf. Ps. cxliv, 3 (Vulg.), cxlv, 3 (A.V.).

122/16. **Scripture schewþ**: e.g. Ps. xvii, 12, xcvi, 2 (Vulg.); xviii, 11, xcvi, 2 (A.V.).

122/18. **Ensampler . . . Moyses**: St. Clement of Alexandria (d. 217) introduced the parallel in *Stromatum*, II, ii; V, xi (*P.G.* t. 8, 936-7; 9, 109): 'The nearer we get to Him, the more do we perceive that He is above all our thoughts. Hence, in order to contemplate Him and see Him we must, like Moses, enter into the darkness of the cloud; that is to say, we must get rid of all the thoughts we have of Him as unworthy of Him, and regard with the eyes of faith the supreme Being who infinitely surpasses all our conceptions of Him.' (Quoted from P. Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality* [London, 1922], vol. i, p. 69).

122/18-19. **mildest of men**: Not in the Latin. Cf. *P.C.* 95/32-33.

122/19-20. **& also in hys puple**: In Exod. xix, 10-14, but not in the Latin.

123/2. **multitude of his puple**: Cf. *Gloss* (col. 274): 'multifaria opinione materiali'.

123/2. **wip preestes**: Cf. *Gloss* (col. 274); 'cum principalibus affectionibus'.

123/3. **higenes . . . assenciouns**: The M.E. version adds its own simple and intelligible gloss.

123/4. **be . . . grace**: Not in the Latin.

123/5-6. **as . . . deuinitee**: Not in the Latin. 'Ejus tamen substantiam non videt' (*Gloss*, col. 274).

123/7. **not be seen by þat ize**: i.e. by the natural understanding. The contemplative is conscious of an experience which he is unable to communicate. He is moving towards a state of absolute simplicity when God takes over. Then in a

single-pointedness of love he relinquishes everything that is not God. In this total forgetting of his own being his spirit is one with God.

123/10. **as þe lady . . . maydens**: The simile is not in the Latin. Cf. *P.C.* 81/28.

123/16. **syngulertee of affecciou**: Not in the Latin. Cf. Synguleur 8/15, *Com.* 7/34-8/17.

123/18. **derknes of vnknowyng**: See *Cloud* ch. 3 and *Introd.*, pp. xxvi-xxvii. Vercellensis in his *Commentary* on this passage (f. 45<sup>b</sup>) has a 'cloud' image: 'intrans in nubem condensam qua oculi eius tenebrantur . . . medium nebule'.

123/19. **schittip**: Kk *schynep*: Cf. Sarracenus and Vercellensis *claudit*; Erigena *reluet*. Cf. *De VII Itin.* V, vi, quoting from Vercellensis: ' . . . intrat in caliginem ignorantiae, et unitur incomprehensibilitati divinae, quam non penetrat intelligentia, quae omnium clarissima est, et in se claudit et celat secretissime omnes cognitiones comprehensivas. Exemplum hujus plane videtur in luce stellari, quomodo absconditur in luce solari in meridie'.

## Cap. II et seq.

The second chapter restates the nature of the recommended method of contemplative prayer through an analogy with sculpture (M.E. carving), which likewise removes everything superfluous. The last paragraph and the remaining three chapters contrast the techniques of the affirmative and negative approach, with some explanation of their contrary directions though working towards the same goal. The conclusion, which reaffirms that God is infinitely above and beyond both, resoundingly declares God's ultimate incomprehensibility.

124/10-125/5. Cf. Rolt, p. 195: ' . . . like as men who, carving a statue out of marble, remove all the impediments that hinder the clear perception of the latent image and by this mere removal display the hidden statue itself in its hidden beauty'. This illustration was not new. Cf. Plotinus *Ennead* i, 6. 9: 'Withdraw into yourself, and if you do not find yourself beautiful as yet, do as does the sculptor of a statue . . . cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is shadowed . . . do not cease until there shall shine out on you the Godlike Splendour, until you see the Final Goodness surely established in the stainless Shrine'. (Quoted from *The Mystical Theology of Dionysius the Areopagite*, published by the Shrine of Wisdom [London, 1923], p. 8). Erigena and Sarracenus shorten the similitude; Vercellensis develops it somewhat in his *Gloss* and *Paraphrase*, and his image is made 'de qualibet materia inanimata, sculpendo vel incidendo'. The M.E. writer expands the similitude further, with specific reference to wood-carving and technical details which seem to indicate a personal interest in the craft.

124/24. **nakyd, vnmaad, & vnbigonne kynde**: Cf. 'nakid beyng' of God, *Cloud* 14/11; 'as He is in Himself'. See *Com.* 122/16. Cf. this statement of God's Immanence and Transcendence with *P.C.* 75/38-76/6.

124/33-34. **conielid . . . kumbros clog**: These vivid epithets describing impediment recall *Cloud* 35/22-23, 40/32.

125/4-5. **in tyme of þe proef**: The experience is transient. Memory is unable to retain this incommunicable rapture.

125/12. **foulden . . . togeders**: The image is not in the Latin. Cf. *Cloud* 15/30.

125/13. **wallid aboute**: The Latin has *circumvelatum* 'veiled about'; cf. *Paraphrase*, p. 45: 'latentem sub mysticis velis omnium exsistentium'; Rolt, p. 196: 'enwrapped'. Possibly the M.E. translator used a Latin version which read *circumvallatam* 'surrounded with a rampart'. The more solid image is attractive since it is closer to 124/31, 'couerhid & ouerlappid & ouerleide'. The summit of unknowing is impregnable to the intellectual faculties concerned with creatures; the Divine Darkness is concealed from eyes filled with the light from created things.



## Cap. III

125/20. **oper bookes**: See *Com.* 119/2-3.

125/21-22. **Of þe Ierarchies of Heuen**: i.e. *Celestial Hierarchy*.

125/22-23. **Of þe Ierarchies of þis Fiztyng Chirche**: i.e. *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*.

125/24-30. **synguleer kynde, þe whiche is God . . . vnpassyngliche**: A comparison with Rolt's translation from the Greek (p. 196) and with the Latin version of Sarracenus (*D.H.D.*, p. 97) throws some light on this difficult passage which, starting at the highest, makes affirmative statements about God. Articles of the Christian faith are fused here with Neoplatonic concepts and expressed partly in Neoplatonic terms. See *Introd.*, pp. xli-xliii.

This affirmation is fourfold. It comprehends:

- (i) the unique (*synguleer*) nature of the Undifferentiated Godhead, the One, the Good;
- (ii) the manifestation of the Godhead as Three Persons—the Father from whom proceed eternally God the Son and God the Holy Ghost;
- (iii) the 'lightes of goodness' dwelling in 'þe herte' of the One, Who is pure spirit and the only source of the good pouring forth and eternally pervading the Son and Holy Ghost;
- (iv) the unchangingness and indepartability of the Three Persons, though goodness eternally pours out; 'ex immateriali et simplici bono, in corde manentia bonitatis pullulaverunt lumina, et . . . a mansione in ipso et in se ipsis et in se invicem coaeterna pullulatione permanserunt inegressibilia.' (*D.H.D.*, 97/4-7).

*Divine Names*, iv, 1 (Rolt, p. 87) amplifies the pouring forth of the 'lightes of goodnes': 'as our sun . . . by the very fact of its existence, gives light to all those things which have any inherent power of sharing its illumination, even so the Good . . . sends forth upon all things according to their receptive powers, the rays of Its undivided Goodness. Through these all Spiritual Beings and faculties and activities . . . began.'

125/30. **vnpassyngliche**: This is probably the M.E. translator's neologism for Latin *inegressibilia*.

The Godhead is undiminished in its manifestations; like the sun, which, though light radiates from it, was thought to lose none of itself by the overflow.

125/31-32. **souereyn-substancyal Jesu . . . mankynde**: Jesus, Super-Essential in the Godhead, in his Manhood possessed a true human nature. The M.E. translation follows the Latin closely: cf. 'supersubstantialis Jesus humanae naturae veritatibus substantia factus est' (*D.H.D.*, 97/7-9).

125/34-126/2. See *Divine Names*, chs. iv et seq. (Rolt, pp. 86 et seq.).

126/1. **Vertewe**: 'Power'. See Rolt, pp. 154 et seq.

126/2-3. **Gadering of Deuine Sentence**: Latin *Symbolica Theologia*. *Sentence* = 'Meaning'. From the context it seems that this lost work was a compilation and exposition of Scriptural symbols relating to God drawn from the world of sense, intended to raise anthropomorphic conceptions of God to a higher spiritual level.

126/3-10. **þe names . . . wakynges**: The Middle English list follows the Latin of Sarracenus closely. The *Commentary* (f. 46<sup>b</sup>) provides most of the following references, but these are not equally apposite: *formae*, Phil. ii, 6; *figurae*, Song of Sol. i, 14-15, v, 10 ff.; *partes*, Hos. xiii, 7; *instrumenta*, Amos vii, 8; *loca*, Ezek. iii, 12, Pss. xcvi, 2, ciii, 3; *ornatus*, Rev. i, 13; *furores*, Ps. vi, 1; *tristitiae*, Gen. vi, 6; *insaniae*, Hos. ix, 7, Mark iii, 21, 1 Cor. i, 25; *ebrietales et crapulae*, Jer. xiii, 13; *juramenta*, Ps. cix, 4; *maledictiones*, Gen. iii, 14; *somni*, Ps. lxxvii, 65; *vigilationes*, Ps. cxix, 4, Jer. vii, 13 (Vulg.).

126/14. **openyng**: Sarracenus *reserationem*, 'exposition'.

126/17-21. **þe wordes . . . madnes & a parfite vnresonabiltee**: The Greek and



Latin versions of this key passage indicate the difficulties for the Middle English translator.

126/17-18. **wordes . . . vnderstondyng**: i.e. 'the words that are spoken about them are few for our understanding'. Cf. Sarracenus (*D.H.D.*, 97/24-25): 'sermones conspectibus intelligibilium contrahuntur'; Rolt, p. 198: 'our language becomes restricted to the compass of purely intellectual conceptions'. The *Gloss* further explains that the subject is remote from our senses and imagination.

1. 19. In the Divine darkness of God's ultimate incomprehensibility, Sarracenus (97/26-27): 'non sermonum brevitatem, sed irrationabilitatem perfectam et imprudentiam inueniemus'. The *Gloss* adds: 'excedit omnem mentem tam angelicum, quam humanum'.

Since the experience is wholly incommunicable, the mystics have always tended to refer to it in terms beyond reason as in the Dionysian paradoxes.

126/25-26. **pe whiche . . . oþer**: Not in the Latin. Cf. *P.C.* 85/35-38, 'sodeynte of grace' (85/32).

126/29-127/2. This passage leaves Sarracenus, and is closer to Vercellensis, *Paraphrase* (p. 464), *Gloss* (col. 280-1). See *D.H.D.* pp. 97-98. The last two chapters chiefly follow Vercellensis.

126/29-31. **affirmatyue deuinitee . . . negatyue deuinitee**: i.e. the theologies that state that God is thus, or that He is not thus.

127/2-3. **And ȝit . . . vnderstondyng**: Not in the Latin.

#### Cap. IV

127/9-10. **And . . . leuen not**: This emendation is needed to complete the sense of the passage. Its omission in both Har<sup>1</sup> and Kk can easily be explained as a scribal error of haplography in their common source.

127/18. **doýng, & suffryng**: 'activity, & passivity'.

127/21-22. **generacyon . . . tymes**: i.e. all variation.

#### Cap. V

127/29. **soule, ne aungel**: i.e. neither rational soul, nor intuitive. The angels are believed to have intuitive knowledge, whereas men know by discursive reasoning. The Latin has 'anima neque mens'.

127/29. **hap fantasie**: The *Gloss* (col. 282) adds: 'divina vel spiritualia imaginando'.

127/31. **by menes**: L. *per media* 'through intermediate stages'.

127/33. **ne euenheed**: Because God is beyond all comparison.

127/34. **ne he spekȝ**: Not in the *Paraphrase*, or in Sarracenus, but cf. *Gloss* (col. 282) 'non est volubilis'.

128/3. **ne . . . vnderstondable touching**: *Paraphrase* (*D.H.D.*, p. 99): 'neque . . . intelligibiliter tangibilis secundum essentiam suam'.

128/4. **ne Godheed**: The transcendent God is above all human conception of Godhead.

128/8-10. **ne he knowȝ . . . ben in hym**: i.e. God knows them by knowing Himself, the eternal Cause of all things.

128/17-18. **abouen alle, boþe setting & doýng away**: The conclusion is thus positive, and the end of the negative theology is paradoxically one of affirmation. The denyings do not, in fact, reduce God to nothing, but are the only possible guide to reach a conception of Him worthy of His unique existence and infinite majesty.

## A TRETYSSE OF þE STODYE OF WYSDOME þAT MEN CLEPEN BENIAMYN

129/1. Richard of St. Victor was one of the major decisive influences in shaping the thought of European writers on mystical theology in the later Middle Ages. Dante, acknowledging his power, described him (*Par.* x, 131) as 'Richard who in contemplation was more than a man'. The *Cloud* author's particular indebtedness is frequently referred to in the *Introduction*, pp. xxxii-xxxix. Richard is believed to have been a Scot (? Irish), but the exact place and date of birth are unknown. He was professed at the famous Abbey of St. Victor, the House of the Augustinian Canons near Paris, and there was profoundly influenced by the work of Hugh of St. Victor, whose principles and methods of allegorization and systematization he developed. Richard was elected as subprior of the Abbey in 1159, rose to be prior in 1162, and died in 1173. His written work, which fills more than 1,365 columns in Migne *Patrologia Latina* t. 196, falls into three categories—dogmatic, mystical, and exegetical. His classic treatises on mysticism, *Benjamin Minor* and the later and longer *Benjamin Major*, were probably composed between 1153 and 1162, and soon became and remained authoritative text-books in monastic libraries. Since the first printed edition in Venice in the early sixteenth century, at least nine editions have appeared or are in progress. The texts published by Migne in Paris, 1855, have provided the quotations used here for comparison of the Middle English version with the Latin. *B.M.* denotes the M.E. translation of *Benjamin Minor*, *Benj. Min.* the Latin text. A modern translation from the Latin is also drawn upon, Clare Kirchberger *Richard of Saint-Victor, Selected Writings on Contemplation* (London, 1957). This is referred to as (Kirch). The subtitle of *Benj. Min.* in Migne is *De Praeparatione Animi ad Contemplationem*. *Benj. Maj.* elaborately analyses the whole mystical experience; *Benj. Min.* leads up to it by detailing the earlier stages of affective and intellectual training. Among the varied M.E. titles (see p. 129<sup>1</sup>), that of Pepwell's early printed edition is the most informative: '... a veray deuoute treatyse (named Benyamyn) of the myghtes and vertues of mannes soule, & of the way to true contemplacyon'. Following the current method of exegesis, Richard used the story of Jacob, his two wives with their handmaids, and their twelve children (Gen. xxix-xxxv), as a framework to show the interrelationship of the human faculties in their labour towards contemplative prayer.

The Middle English version is little more than a coherent synopsis of *Benj. Min.*, following the shape of the story and the main interpretations, but omitting the greater part of the amplification. It adds the explicit identification of Jacob with God. Many of the eighty-seven chapters (cols. 1-63) are passed over completely. Only the early short chapters on Dread, Sorrow, Hope, follow the Latin closely. The subsequent sections each tend to draw from several chapters. The *Introduction*, 129/1-130/19, is only a brief digest, but composed almost entirely of selected key phrases in the source, faithfully translated. Elsewhere close translations of selected sentences are in juxtaposition with free and greatly abridged adaptations, with an occasional personal comment or explanation not in the Latin. These, and also the chosen excerpts, often parallel important passages in *The Cloud* group.

129/4. **affeccioun or wille:** Cf. *Benj. Min.* iii (col. 3): 'affectio, qua diligamus ... ex affectione, desideria sancta'; 'affectio, ad virtutem'. The *Cloud* identifies 'love' and 'will'. See *Com.* 10/33-34.

129/6. **goostly wittes:** See *Cloud Com.* 6/41.

129/7-11. The bald exposition omits two concepts in *Benj. Min.* (i-iii) of indispensable significance: the vital and complementary relationship of Lya (Leah) and Rachel, and the dimension of their rôles. Lya, laboriously striving after righteousness, ultimately achieves the necessary moral virtues; Rachel, the source of

human spiritual discernment, attains to the exalted wisdom of divine illumination, but only when Lya has fulfilled her purpose. It is essential that Lya is first espoused to Jacob.

129/8-9. In emphasizing the balance of love and intelligence as the means by which God is known and enjoyed, Richard is in agreement with St. Augustine, St. Bernard and William of Saint-Thierry, but differs from the Dionysian school. *The Cloud* keeps the balance in the rewards of unitive love. See *Introd.*, p. xxxiii.

129/19-20. The translation omits Richard's theory of knowledge which explains this statement. *Benj. Min.* v (col. 4): 'ad invisibilium cognitionem nunquam ratio assurgeret, nisi ei ancilla sua, imaginatio videlicet, rerum visibilium formam repraesentaret. Per rerum enim visibilium speciem surgit ad rerum invisibilium cognitionem'.

129/21. **uncouenably**: 'importunately'. Cf. *Benj. Min.* vi (col. 5): *cum tanta importunitate*. 'uncouenable' translates *L. importuna* in Chaucer's *Boethius*. Kk Har<sup>2</sup> Ar Har<sup>5</sup> W agree with Har<sup>1</sup> in the inferior reading *unkunynngly*, 'ignorantly'; but *importunably* F, *uncouenabeli* RG, *enconuenyently* Pw. There is a close similarity among minim-stroke-letter words in early manuscripts. It is possible that some form of *uncouenably* in a parent manuscript gave rise to the inferior reading at an early stage of transmission.

130/8. **concupiscence**: Not in the Latin. The term has Scholastic overtones. See *S. T. Ia IIae*, q. 82, a. 3. To St. Augustine the disorder following the pride of will was the result of original sin. Original sin was a turning away from God's will to the will of self; and the consequent inordinateness in all the powers of the soul was generally termed 'concupiscence'. Concupiscence expressed itself chiefly in an inordinate desire for mutable created things, which impeded the way Godwards. From concupiscence sprang the deadly sins and all inclination to sin. See *Cloud*, ch. 66.

130/21. **figure**: Most of the manuscripts here attempt a figure. See *D.H.D.* frontispiece from Har<sup>1</sup> (f. 112a). The details of the figures in Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> have been given here as a useful index to the biblical sequence and interpretations of the present text.

131/5. **felynges**: The seven chief feelings, three with their opposites, which arise from the one affective principle of the soul are: hope and fear, joy and sorrow, love and hate, shame. See *Introd.*, p. xxxix<sup>48</sup>.

131/4 et seq. **sons of . . . Lya . . .**: See Gen. xxix-xxx, xxxv.

131/16-17. Gen. xxix, 32.

131/17-18. Ps. cx, 10 (Vulg.), cxi, 10 (A.V.). Cf. *Preier* 101/26-27.

131/24. **verrely**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* viii (col. 6): *Quodammodo*, 'in a certain way'.

132/8-9. Gen. xxix, 33. Lya's cry, which is parallel to that in the preceding chapter, is not in *Benj. Min.*

132/12-13. Matt. v, 5 (Vulg.); v, 4 (A.V.).

132/14. **Holy Scripture**: The reference, possibly to Ezech. xviii, 27, is not in *Benj. Min.*

132/15-16. **hap conpunccioun of teres**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* ix (col. 7): *in fletu compungitur*, lit. 'is pricked into weeping'.

132/16-17. Ps. l, 19 (Vulg.), li, 17 (A.V.).

132/23. **clepid . . . doying to**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* x (col. 7); '*additus*, vel *additio* vocatur'.

132/33-35. Ps. xciii, 19 (Vulg.), xciv, 19 (A.V.).

133/4-5. **not only . . . comyng**: The reading of Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> has the characteristic balance of this author's style; that of the other MSS. has the syntax of an afterthought. Nevertheless, the addition completes the threefold climactic thought of the Latin. See *Benj. Min.* xi (col. 8): '*haec se sentiat ab illo saepius visitari, et ex ejus adventu non tantum jam consolari, imo aliquoties quodam ineffabili gaudio repleti*'.

133/6-7. Gen. xxix, 34.

133/12-13. Gen. xxix, 35: *Benj. Min.* xii (col. 8): *Modo confitebor Domino*. In fourteenth-century versions of the Psalms and in the *Prymer* (see O.E.D. SHRIVE), *schrive* is used to translate *confiteri* of the Vulgate, 'to ascribe praise and glory to God'. *Benj. Min.* acknowledges equally personal sin and the goodness of God. *B.M.*, like *The Cloud*, ch. 16, lays the greater emphasis on the outpouring of love.

133/18. **curteis, homly**: The Middle English translator adds these two epithets to the list in his Latin source. They are later to be especially associated with the *Book of Revelations* of Julian of Norwich. Their contrasting connotations, elaborated by Julian, are discussed by Sr. Anna Maria Reynolds in 'Courtesy and Homeliness in the *Revelations* of Julian of Norwich', *FCEMN*, V, 2 (June 1949), pp. 12-19.

Together they express comprehensively the nature of the relationship between the contemplative and God. 'Curteis' belongs to the language of the aristocratic world of chivalry and courtly love, expressing its ideals of 'lordship, prowess, fidelity, gentleness, and service'. *Homly* (cf. *Cloud* 70/27), *homlynes* 133/2, suggest the warmth and intimacy associated with the home. 'Homlynes' translates *Familiaritas* in *Benjamin Minor* (col. 8) = 'belonging to the household'. A collocation of these two epithets conveys God's gracious condescension in drawing the soul closer to Himself in a warm spiritual bond of love.

133/22. **ofttymes**: e.g. Ps. cv, 1, cvii, 4-5, cviii, 30-31, xxxiii, 1 (Vulg.); cvi, 1, cviii, 3-4, cix, 30-31, xxxiv, 1 (A.V.).

133/27. **saluacion . . . perfeccioun**: *B.M.* adds this distinction. See *Introd.*, p. xxi.

133/28-29. **enflaumyd . . . reson**: This definition, with its Augustinian insistence on the illumination of the intellect, is transferred from *Benj. Min.* iv (col. 4). See *Introd.*, p. xxxiii<sup>20</sup>.

133/32-134/35. **pus . . . soule**: Most of this section is a close translation of sentences taken from different chapters of *Benj. Min.*, but with no attempt to draw from consecutive passages: 133/31-134/5 from cap. xiii (col. 10), 134/6-22, cap. xiv (col. 10), 134/22-24, cap. xviii (col. 12), 134/28-31, cap. xix (col. 13). The rest of this chapter is largely independent of the Latin, and where the same Biblical quotations or interpretations of proper names are introduced, they occur in a different context.

133/32. **was borne**: *Benj. Min.* xiii (col. 10): *Nato itaque Juda*. The unique reading of Har<sup>1</sup> has been emended to the reading of the rest.

134/21. **fayre ymagynacioun**: *Benj. Min.* xiv (col. 10): *imaginaria . . . pulchritudine*.

135/6. **dome**: *Benj. Min.* xix (col. 13): *Judicium*.

135/7. **Dan . . . folk**: Gen. xlix, 16.

135/15-16. **I . . . Lya**: Cf. Gen. xxx, 8.

135/16. **clepid . . . lyknes**: *Benj. Min.* xxii (col. 16): '*Comparatio vel conversio interpretatur*.'

135/20. **an hert . . . fairheed**: Gen. xlix, 21. *Benj. Min.* xxiii (Kirch, p. 99): 'Nephtali is a [hart] let loose: he giveth goodly words . . . he is able to speed through many places and because of the sweetness of contemplation it pleases him to run a great deal. . . . We should notice that he is compared to a [hart] running and not to a bird flying. . . . Nephtali, when he is seeking the nature of unseen things through the forms of visible things, leaps up at times, but he does not commit himself to full flight because he carries with him, and does not entirely abandon the shadow of the bodily things from which he springs upward.'

135/21-22. **We seyen . . . heuen**: Not in *Benj. Min.*

135/27 et seq. This chapter greatly abridges the thought of *Benj. Min.* xxv, xxvi, xxvii, xxxiii; xxviii-xxx are not represented at all; xxxi-xxxii are reduced to 137/10-12. Where the Latin is followed, the M.E. text keeps closely to it.

135/30-136/2. **And pus . . . felyng**: Not in *Benj. Min.*

136/13. **Happely**: *Benj. Min.* xxv (col. 17): *Felicitet*; so Vulg.



- 136/15-17. **For whi . . . loue**: Not in *Benj. Min.*
- 136/17-18. Gen. xxx, 13.
- 136/20-21. **For whi . . . affeccoun**: Not in *Benj. Min.*
- 136/28-30. **Moche pees . . . pyne perof**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* xxvi (col. 18): 'Quanta enim putas pax cordis est, vel tranquillitas, nulla huius mundi oblectamenta concupiscere, nulla ejus adversa formidare?' The Middle English is far more vivid.
- 136/33-137/1. **þe jangelyng . . . þouȝtes**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* xxvii (col. 19): 'imaginationis evagatio quae fit per inutiles cogitationes'. The free rendering is again more vivid.
- 137/8. **concyence**: See *Cloud Com.* 24/11, 15.
- 137/13. **þeire**: *Benj. Min.* xxxiii (col. 23): *sui*.
- 137/16. **cherischip**: *Benj. Min.* xxxiii (col. 23): *demulcet*. Also with reference to *Nephtalim*, *blanditur*, *fovet*.
- 137/20. **parte**: *Benj. Min.* xxxiii (col. 23): *partem*. The inferior reading of *fader* probably arose from a misreading of *partem* as *patrem* in the source, or from a metathesized form.
- 137/29 et seq. **How Ioy . . .**: This chapter is a very free and greatly abridged adaptation. *Benj. Min.* xxxvi, xxxvii and xxxviii are omitted; xxxix is barely drawn upon.
- 137/31. Phil. iv, 7.
- 137/33-36. **For trewly . . . affeccoun**: The translator characteristically describes the state of the contemplative, whereas the source amplifies the theme of 'deliciae spirituales'.
- 137/37. **clepid 'mede'**: *Benj. Min.* xxxvi (col. 26): *merces*. Gen. xxx, 18.
- 138/1-3. Cf. *Cloud* 50/16-21.
- 138/3-5. **God . . . children**: Lya's cry, parallel to those when her other children were born, is not in *Benj. Min.*, but does occur in Gen. xxx, 18.
- 138/5-10. **And so . . . heuen**: This personal passage is not in the Latin.
- 138/7. **ese . . . wordly**: The inferior reading of Har<sup>1</sup> Kk Har<sup>2</sup> is probably a common error of haplography in their particular parent text. The beginning of the emendation, *ese and*, follows Kk Har<sup>2</sup>; the rest is in accordance with the remaining manuscripts.
- 138/9. **erles**: A favourite word in *The Cloud* treatises; see *Com.* 8/32.
- 138/11-12. **Jacob seide . . . teermes**: Gen. xlix, 14.
- 138/11-12. **bitwix þe teermes**: *Benj. Min.* xxxviii (col. 27): *inter terminos*, so *Vulg.* Gen. xlix, 14.
- 138/23, 24. **deedlynes, vndeedlynes**: *Benj. Min.* xxxix (col. 28): *morientium terram, viventium terram*. The Middle English abstract nouns were common in the native tradition of homiletic literature.
- 138/28-31. **Pus I trowe . . . Criste**: This development is not in this context in *Benj. Min.*
- 138/29-30. Rom. vii, 24.
- 138/30-31. Phil. i, 23.
- 139/3 et seq. **How Parfite Hate . . .**: This chapter greatly simplifies *Benj. Min.* xl-xliv, and has many long omissions. The Middle English version explains the allegory rather than reproduces it.
- 139/10-12. **For þe felyng . . . harmyng**: Not in the Latin.
- 139/19-20. Ps. iv, 5 (*Vulg.*); or possibly quoted from the reference to this verse in Ephes. iv, 26.
- 139/28. Ps. cxxxviii, 22 (*Vulg.*), cxxxix, 22 (*A.V.*).
- 139/29-30. Ps. cxviii, 104 (*Vulg.*).
- 140/8. **a dwellyng stede of strengþe**: *Benj. Min.* xl (col. 29): *habitaculum fortitudinis*.



- 140/9-10. Not in *Benj. Min.*, but in Gen. xxx, 20.
- 140/15 et seq. **How Ordeinde Schame . . .**: *Benj. Min.* xlv is followed closely and fully in this chapter.
- 140/19-20. I John i, 8.
- 140/21-22. This reference to St. Augustine, possibly to *Epistola* CLVII, *Ad Hilarium* (P.L. t. 33, col. 674), is not in the Latin.
- 141/1-8. **pink . . . heuen**: An independent development of a theme suggested by *Benj. Min.* xlv and xlvii (cols. 34-35). Cf. *Cloud* 56/12-16.
- 141/26-29. **& þan . . . before**: Not in *Benj. Min.*
- 142/3. **profite**: 'proficiency', Cf. *profiters Com.* 39/30.
- 142/19-20. **betir . . . strong man**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxvii (col. 48): '*Quia melior est vir prudens viro forti*' (Prov. xvi).
- 142/20. **betryr is list þen liþer strengþe**. See *Com.* 48/17-18. Cf. Prov. xvi, 32 (Vulg.): '*Melior est patiens viro forti, et qui dominatur animo suo, expugnatore urbium*'.
- 142/20-21. **a sley man . . . victories**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxvii, 48: '*Vir enim prudens loquitur victorias, et qui cum consilio cuncta agit, in aeternum non poenitebit*' (Prov. xxi). Cf. 142/16-18.
- 142/34-36. **And al . . . liknes**: Not in the Latin. This was a common precept with a long history, from the *Nosce teipsum* of the Delphic Oracle's reply to Socrates to the teaching of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. See *Com.* 23/5, 14. Also E. Gilson *L'Esprit de la Philosophie Médiévale* (Paris, 1944), ch. xi: 'La Connaissance de Soi-Même et Le Socratisme Chrétien', pp. 214-33.
- 142/35-36. **þe ymage & þe liknes**: Gen. i, 26-27.
- 143/5-8. Cf. *Com.* 23/5, 14.
- 143/18. **as a mirour . . .**: See *Benj. Min.* lxxii (col. 51). '*Praecipuum et principale speculum ad videndum Deum animus rationalis, absque dubio invenit seipsum*'.
- 143/21 et seq. **kandil . . .**: The image is not in the Latin text consulted.
- 143/27. **it**: i.e. the soul.
- 143/27-29. **clensid . . . schyne**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxxii (col. 52): '*Exterso autem speculo et diu diligenter inspecto, incipit ei quaedam divini luminis claritas interlucere*'.
- 143/29. **a maner of sonnebeme**: This is more like *The Cloud* 34/31-33 than *Benj. Min.* lxxii (col. 52): '*immensus quidam insolitae visionis radius*'.
- 144/2-3. Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxxii (col. 52): '*Signatum est super nos lumen vultus tui, Domine, dedisti laetitiam in corde meo*' (Ps. iv, 7 [Vulg.]).
- 144/3-7. **þe liȝt . . . conceyuid Beniamyn**: Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxxii (col. 52): '*. . . visione luminis. . . Mens itaque, quae jam visionis hujus desiderio flagrat, si jam sperat quod desiderat, jam se Benjamin concepissee cognoscit*'.
- 144/10. **bittyr as galle forby hony**: This vivid simile is not in the Latin.
- 144/15. **echep**: 'adds'. Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxxiii (col. 52): '*Novit haec Rachel, et ideo studium multiplicat, et desiderium suum quotidianis incrementis acrius inflamat*'.
- 144/17-18. Gen. xxxv, 18-19.
- 144/26-27. **lerne þee . . . worde Jesu**: The Christocentric conclusion is a Middle English modification. Cf. *Benj. Min.* lxxxiv (col. 60): '*Faciatis ecclesiam non solum desideriorum, verum etiam cognitionum, ut discat verum bonum solum amare, et ipsum solum indesinenter cogitare*'.
- The act of recollection through devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus was characteristic of Rolle and his followers. The devotion is often described in fourteenth-century literature, and its development is traceable from the writings of St. Anselm, St. Bernard, and especially from the hymn, *Jesu dulcis memoria*.
- 144/29-30. Ps. lxvii, 27 (Vulg.).
- 145/7-9. Ps. lxvii, 28 (Vulg.).

## A TRETIS OF DISCRESCYON OF SPIRITES

The theme had been treated countless times. This particular work develops from a close paraphrase of selections from two of St. Bernard's *Sermones de Diversis* (P.L. t. 183, cols. 600-05), neatly dovetailing a passage from *Sermo* xxiv (149/35-150/9: see col. 603) into sections from *Sermo* xxiii (147/1-148/31, see cols. 600-01; 150/22-151/7, see col. 602; 153/12-15, see col. 603). The rest, about half the treatise, is independent of this particular Latin source. Despite its heterogeneity, the total has the unity of an original work, supplementary in matter to *The Cloud* and comparable with *Preier* and *Stirings* in structure and style. Though this piece is not in the form of an epistle and not about the technique of unitive prayer, yet, like the other short treatises it falls into two parts, with a practical problem midway governing the latter part. Like them it points towards 'perfection', but here that theme is introduced twice: exposing at the end of the first part the real danger of yielding, the loss of 'þe lueli presence of þe loueli sirt of þe heige pees of heuen, good gracious God, him owne dere self' (149/19-21), and declaring at the culmination of the second part the gain in following the solution he offers, 'alle soche good þouȝtes to þink whan him list wiþoutyn forgetting, in as greet perfeccion as þe freelte of þis liif wil suffice'. (153/27-28).

The first part is based on a late medieval commonplace. (See S. Wenzel 'The Three Enemies of Man', *Mediaeval Studies*, vol. xxix [1967]). The triad of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil occurs in most kinds of religious literature-sermons, penitential manuals, biblical commentaries, poems (e.g. *Piers Plowman*), morality plays (e.g. *Castle of perseverance*, *Mankind*). The threefold patterns of temptations were frequently linked with those of the Seven Deadly Sins (see M. W. Bloomfield *The Seven Deadly Sins* [1952]), but the particular sins allocated to each Enemy were not always the same. Though the source of each of the Enemies was scriptural, the origin of the triad is to be sought rather in later monasticism. St. Bernard and Hugh of St. Victor were largely responsible for its widespread circulation. This Middle English treatise draws from one of the basic texts. The Latin equivalent which underlies 147/25-28, *caro suggerit mihi mollia, munda vana, diabolus amara*, was universally quoted.

The triad had often been related to stages of spiritual perfection, particularly in Cistercian writings; and *Spirites* is indeed more closely linked with the other *Cloud* treatises than a superficial reading might suggest. It is one more essay on self-knowledge. The promptings of the Three Enemies must be understood for what they are, destroyers of true joy in contemplation, and therefore to be resisted to the utmost. The peace towards which the contemplative must strive (see *Stirings* 110/31-36) is the theme of 149/19-25.

After this climax, *Sermo* xxiv provides the starting-point for a scrutiny of the wiles of the worst Enemy. The Middle English translator considerably amplifies St. Bernard's illustration of the Devil's incitement to singularity in fasting (*singularia jejunia quaedam*) by an interpolation (150/2-8), in the vein of *Stirings* 114/21-26.

The foundations thus laid, the problem is stated. If the one who has habitually fallen to temptation is, in time, himself liable to engender the sin, how then can the source of evil promptings be recognized? The second major Middle English addition (150/35-153/10) supplies the answer. It explains the function of the Sacrament of Penance in helping to identify and estimate the evil from without in subsequent stirrings of sin. Confession is repeatedly declared to be the essential beginning for contemplative prayer (see *Com.* 24/15-17). By this means a man may become a 'ful special Goddes seint in þis liif, þat before was ful dampnable' (152/14-15, cf. *Cloud* 36/3-5). After absolution, the soul is like 'a clene paper leef' (26), on which God and his angels, and likewise the Devil with his angels, will try to write. Any stirring then must come from without, and man is free to choose which he will receive. After a

brief return to *Sermon* xxiii, 5, the translator adds his own conclusion. He rounds off the treatise by recalling the climax of the first major addition, and in a spirit of hope once more opposes the Eternal Adversaries described in the beginning.

147/*Title*. Cf. Wycliffite Bible of 1382, I Cor. xii, 10: 'To another (is ȝounn) descrescioun, or verrey knowynge, of spiritis' (O.E.D.).

147/3. I John iv, 1-6.

147/5. **þat souniþ . . . herte**: Not in the Latin.

147/7-9. Ps. lxxxiv, 9 (Vulg.); lxxxv, 8 (A.V.).

147/9-10. Zech. i, 9-21.

147/10. Ps. lxxvii, 49 (Vulg.); lxxviii, 49 (A.V.).

147/12-13. **where he seiþ**: Col. ii, 18.

147/13. **blowyn**: Latin *inflatos*.

147/14-17. **spirite of þe world . . . Goost**: Cf. I Cor, ii, 12; I Thess. i, 2-9.

147/19-20. **seruauntes . . . helle**: More precise than the Latin: 'satellites maligni illius principis tenebrarum' (col. 601).

147/23. **lede . . . soule**: A more direct statement than the Latin: 'sanguinem sitiunt . . . animarum'.

147/28. **smiteþ**: Latin *pulsat*. Cf. 153/29; *Stirings* 117/33.

147/29-30. **softe cloping, of lecherie**: Not in the Latin.

148/1-2. **as we . . . grace**: Not in the Latin.

148/3-8. **of veyne ioye . . . sizte of hymself**: This is an independent and characteristically penetrating development. Cf. Latin: 'cum autem . . . de ambitione saeculi, de jactantia et arrogantia, caeterisque similibus cogitatio vana versatur in cordibus nostris' (col. 601).

148/13-15. **ouþer by grace . . . wiþdrawen**: An independent interpretation of the Latin: 'satellitibus istis terga vertentibus'. The diction is characteristic. The recommendation of a spiritual stratagem (*goostly sleight*) occurs in *The Cloud*, e.g. 36/33 et seq., 72/8-9. The violent metaphor in 'stifly put doune and troden doune vnder fote' is introduced in 12/36, 36/28-29.

148/16-17. **as a lyon rennyng felly**: Cf. 'tamquam leo rugiens' (col. 601); I Pet. v, 8: 'leo rugiens circuit' (Vulg.); 'as a roaring lion' (A.V.).

148/17. **to asaile . . . soules**: Latin 'adversus nos'.

148/20-22. **murmuryng . . . sorow**: The list is extended from the Latin: 'ad iram, ad impatientiam, ad invidiam, ad amaritudinem animi provocamur'.

148/21. **malencoly**: See *Com.* 47/10. In accordance with medieval physiology, melancholy, the condition of an excess of black bile, gives rise to sullenness and causeless violent anger.

148/26-27. **it makeþ . . . to us**: This perceptive comment amplifies 'materia suspicionis'.

148/31-149/34. **No doute . . . of alle**: Not in the Latin.

149/7. **list**: See *Com.* 48/17-18; *H.D.* 120/9. Word-play, such as *list- lustly, lustly* (11. 6, 11), is likewise characteristic of *The Cloud* group. Here it sharpens the distinction between self-indulgent appetite and eager spiritual longing.

149/10. **ministred . . . by angeles . . .**: See *Com.* 9/19-20, *P.C.* 81/26.

149/19, 20. **liuely . . . louely**: Cf. *P.C.* 82/30.

149/20-21. **good . . . self**: Cf. *P.C.* 77/29-30, 34.

149/21. Ps. cxxxi, 13-14, lxxv, 2 (Vulg.); cxxxii, 13, lxxvi, 2 (A.V.).

149/23. **Syon . . . sizt of pees**: This exegesis is traditional. Cf. St. Augustine *Enarr. in Ps.* lxiv (col. 774): 'Sicut Jerusalem interpretatur visio pacis, ita Sion . . . contemplatio'; *Scale* II, 21 (f. 85r): 'Ierusalem is as mikel for to seyen as sizt of pes, & bitokneþ contemplacioun in perfyt luf of God. For contemplacioun is not ellis bot a sizt of Iesu, whilk is verrey pes'.

149/26-27. Cf. Isa. lxvi, 2 (*Vetus Italia*): 'super quem respiciam, nisi humilem et quietum'.

149/29. **hize pees of þe Godheed**: Cf. *B.M.* 137/31.

149/35-36. **ful needful . . . descites**: Cf. Latin: 'Sed hujus specialiter astutias nosse necesse est, hujus cogitationes non expedit ignorare'. The Middle English follows the balance of the Latin sentence, but its diction is livelier. *doelful* has been glossed with its usual fourteenth-century meaning, 'fraught with sorrow', but it might perhaps carry overtones from Latin *dolus* 'deception', cf. *doles* 150/21.

149/37-38. **aungel of liȝt . . . dere**: Cf. *Stirings, Com.* 114/23; 2 Cor. xi, 14; *Ancrene Wisse*, pp. 115-16: 'Dauid cleopeþ him demonium meridianum. briht schininde deouel. Ant seinte pawel. angelum lucis, þat is, engel of liht. for swuch ofte he makeþ him & schaweþ him to monie.'

150/1. **sowip**: Latin *spargit*. It seems likely that the common ancestor of all the MSS. examined here read *schewip*, a scribal error anticipating *schewing* at the end of the sentence.

150/2. **seem . . . schewing**: Not in the Latin.

150/2-19. The temptations of the Devil as an 'angel of light' had long been a common topic. Cf. Rolle *Form of Living*, ch. 2 (pp. 90-92). This particular development, which differs from the Latin, bears the mark of the author of *The Cloud* in its choice of examples, its special awareness of the insidiousness of the temptations, its caustic observations and irony. Cf. 56/34-57/4.

150/10-21. **For . . . doles**: Not in the Latin.

150/22-151/6. **Bot . . . deuil**: A greatly expanded version of *Sermo* xxiii, 4 (col. 602).

150/24-26. **brouȝt . . . itself**: A rhetorical elaboration of the Latin: 'servus illi addictus, in suam ipsius perniciem'.

150/27-30. **And þis . . . froward**: Not in the Latin.

150/31-34. **bringip . . . oþer**: Cf. Latin: 'aut voluptuosas, aut vanas, aut amaras pariat cogitationes'.

151/3. **meek . . . counsel**: This advice, not in the Latin, runs like a refrain through *The Cloud* treatises.

151/3-4. **meek . . . miztly wiþstonde**: Cf. this paradox with *Cloud* 37/18-19.

151/6-153/12. **Shriue . . . same good**: Not in the Latin.

151/13. **for ofttymes . . . errour**: This repeats *Preier* 103/24-25.

152/14-15. Cf. *Cloud* 36/4-5.

152/20-21. A similar warning against scruples of conscience is implied in *Cloud* 25/27-35.

153/13-14. **chastite . . . charite**: This list, naming some of the Fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v, 22-23), is only partly suggested by the Latin; 'super castigando corpore, humiliando corde, servanda unitate [*alias* virtute patientiae], et charitate fratribus exhibenda, seu caeteris virtutibus acquirendis, conservandis, amplificandis'.

153/15-end. **þat is to sey . . . Amen**: This is independent of the Latin.

153/16. **aungelles . . . trewe techers**: Cf. Gal. iv, 14.

153/17-18. **aungelles in blis . . . good**: See *Com.* 9/19-20.



## GLOSSARY

- abashed**, *pp.* dismayed *P.C.* 86/12.
- abide**, *v.* remain 16/7; *pr.* 3 *s.* awaits 34/22; endure 46/33; submit to *D.* 112/2; **abeden**, *pp.* 68/37; **abide stytle** stay where I am *P.C.* 94/16.
- abidyng**, *adj.* persistent 24/13; *n.* staying 61/33; submissive awaiting *P.* 101/21.
- abil**, **abel**, **able**, *adj.* capable 38/19, 59/25 liable *D.* 112/14.
- abilnes**, **abel-**, *n.* capacity 22/28; aptitude 38/31; propensity *D.* 112/17; potentiality *D.* 112/32.
- able him to**, *v.* make himself capable of 1/20.
- aboundaunce**, *see* **habundaunce**.
- abounde**, *v.* predominate *P.C.* 93/18.
- aboundyng**, *adj.* plentiful *P.C.* 91/23; overflowing *P.C.* 95/20.
- aboundingly**, *adj.* in superabundance *D.* 112/2.
- aboute**, *prep.* round about 53/9.
- abouen**, *prep.* transcending *H.D.* 120/1; beyond *H.D.* 121/15.
- abstynence**, *n.* self-restraint *B.* 136/5.
- accept**, *adj.* acceptable *P.* 101/34.
- acceptacioun**, *n.* acceptance *P.* 102/24.
- accidentes**, *n.* non-essentials 5/23.
- acompte**, *n.* account 10/12.
- acomptyd**, *pp.* counted *B.* 131/13.
- acordaunce**, *n.* concurrence 17/40.
- acordaunte**, *adj.* appropriate *P.* 107/24.
- acorde**, *v.* agree 53/16; **acorde to** be suitable for 42/31; **acordeþ wiþ** corresponds to 15/33.
- acordyng**, *adj.* in agreement 27/12; fitting 63/10; proportionate *H.D.* 119/15; **according to (vnto)** corresponding to 10/13, *see* **euen**; pertinent to 41/39; in accord with 51/21; suitable for *P.C.* 75/4; with reference to *P.C.* 88/11.
- acordyng**, *n.* concurrence 49/13.
- actyues**, *n. pl.* people living the active life 3/23.
- actuel**, **actuele**, *adj.* active 73/38, *D.* 117/19; practical *H.D.* 120/8.
- actuely**, *adv.* actively *P.C.* 88/24.
- aduocacion**, **make a. of** summon 57/19.
- aduoket**, *n.* advocate 28/37.
- affection**, *n.* disposition 6/36; feeling (as opposed to reason) 9/34; inclination *P.* 102/12; love *P.* 102/30; *pl.* feelings *B.* 141/10.
- affecte**, *pp.* affected 26/1; disposed 33/29.
- affectuous**, *adj.* ardent 18/10.
- affermatyue**, *see* **deuinite**.
- af(f)erme**, *v.* confirm 70/8, *H.D.* 119/6; aver *H.D.* 121/19; *pr. p.* asserting *D.* 110/7.
- af(f)erming**, *adj.* affirmative, positive *H.D.* 125/18, 21.
- afferminges**, *n. pl.* positive statements *H.D.* 125/7.
- affermingly**, **-liche**, *adv.* positively *H.D.* 128/13, 125/33.
- after**, *adv.* afterwards 7/35; *prep.* dependent on 2/9; in accordance with 8/26; for 41/16; following the nature of *H.D.* 125/25; by *B.* 142/17.
- after (bat)**, *conj.* as *H.D.* 128/5.
- azen**, *adv.* again *S.* 152/35.
- azens**, *prep.* against 2/32; before 11/27; contrary to 56/22; against *S.* 153/24.
- aze(i)nstonde**, *v.* resist *S.* 148/29, 151/30; **not azenstonding** *prep.* use of *pr. p.* notwithstanding 42/17.
- azenstonding**, *n.* resistance *S.* 151/13.
- azensward(e)**, *adv.* conversely 6/15, 13/16.
- al**, **alle**, *adv.* completely 23/38; wholly 34/14; exactly *P.* 103/14; **al ouer** all through 1/25; **al only** entirely alone 43/7; **al is for** this is just because 58/11.
- alday**, *adv.* always 37/37.
- allegge**, *v.* cite 70/10.
- algates**, *adv.* always 8/36; wholly *H.D.* 123/19; in every possible way *P.C.* 78/2; in every way *H.D.* 126/13.
- Alle-witty**, *adj.* Omniscient 42/1.
- allyng**, *pr. p.* making all *P.C.* 86/1; *n. P.C.* 84/27, 85/15.
- almigtyheed**, *n.* omnipotence *P.C.* 84/23.
- als**, **as**; **whan . . . als some** *trans. Latin* quoties . . . toties *B.* 134/31-33.
- alþer**, *gen. pl.* of all 28/27.
- alþof**, *conj.* even if 34/37; although 43/8.
- amende þee**, *v.* atone 36/24; reform *P.C.* 93/34; **amendid of**, absolved from *P.C.* 77/20.
- amendement**, *n.* reform 24/16; reparation *P.* 101/14.
- and**, *conj.* if 23/7.
- anemste**, **as a.**, *prep.* as regards *B.* 139/26.
- anexte**, *pp.* proximate 65/31.
- angre**, *n.* affliction 43/19.
- anhized**, *pp.* raised 60/23.
- anowrnid**, *pp.* adorned 64/3.
- antime**, *n.* antiphon *P.C.* 75/16.
- apayed**, *adj.* pleased 52/9; satisfied *P.C.* 75/9.



- ape**, *n.* on **ape maner** apishly *D.* 113/3.  
**apely**, *adj.* apish *D.* 113/16.  
**apelyd**, *pp.* invoked as judge 28/37.  
**apere**, *v.* appear 68/28.  
**ape(e)рте**, *adj.* open 56/37, 58/18; *adv.* openly 49/18; in **aperte** publicly 36/14.  
**apertly**, *adv.* plainly *S.* 152/4.  
**arettid**, *pp.* attributed 19/34.  
**ascencioun**, **assencion**, *n.* ascent *H.D.* 126/25; ascension 61/14; *pl.* ways of ascending *H.D.* 122/13.  
**aseep**, **make aseep to**, **make amends** for 11/35; give satisfaction to *P.C.* 87/12; **aseep-makyng** satisfaction 24/16.  
**aske**, *v.* ask *P.C.* 94/11; **asche** 14/33, **ascke** 14/35, **axe** 33/41; 3 *pr. s.* requires 29/3; **askyng** *pr. p.* demanding *B.* 130/9.  
**asker**, *n.* demander 12/6.  
**assoilid**, *pp.* freed *H.D.* 123/13.  
**astonied**, *pp.* astounded 51/10; confounded *P.C.* 84/1.  
**astoniing**, *n.* cause for consternation *P.C.* 84/7.  
**at**, *prep.* from 24/26; according to 29/40; on *P.C.* 86/32.  
**at**, *see* **pat at**.  
**atempereely**, *adv.* temperately *B.* 136/3.  
**athomus**, *n.* = twinkling of an eye 10/6. *See Com.*  
**attemperauce**, *n.* moderation *B.* 136/23.  
**attemperid**, *pp.* controlled *B.* 136/7.  
**augt**, *pt.* 3 *s. impers.* **us augt** we ought *B.* 139/26.  
**aungele**, *n.* angels 30/39.  
**auisement**, *n.* deliberation 1/12; warning *P.C.* 84/5; consideration *P.C.* 84/32; advice *D.* 112/34.  
**auoidyng**, *pr. p.* emptying *H.D.* 123/22.  
**auowe**, *n.* vow *D.* 114/24.  
**away**, *adv.* off course *P.C.* 83/13.  
**awhile**, *adv.* for a short time 34/4.  
**aworde**, *adj.* aware *S.* 151/21.  
  
**bak**, *n.* **torne þe bak** turn round *B.* 137/25.  
**banneþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* curses 46/43.  
**bareyn**, *adj.* destitute *P.C.* 96/12.  
**bark**, *n.* shell 59/38; rind *P.* 107/4.  
**beable**, *adj.* capable of existing *H.D.* 121/26.  
**beestly**, *adj.* = in the sensuality we share with animals, carnal 47/34; like an animal 66/27; *adv.* = in a purely physical way 47/28.  
**before**, *adv.* *see* **holde**: **before-done** previously done 24/6; **beforeseide** aforesaid 38/1; **beforetyme** previously *P.* 102/1.  
**before er**, *conj.* before 65/4.  
**behetynges**, *n. pl.* promises *P.* 101/18.  
**beholde**, *v.* comprehend *H.D.* 122/7; **b. to** (**vnto**) consider 18/6; examine *P.C.* 87/36; in **beholdyng after** in looking for 40/27; *pt.* 3 *s.* **beheeld not** to paid no attention to 26/11.  
**beholder**, *n.* = *L. inspex* *H.D.* 119/14. *See Com.*  
**beholding**, *n.* regard 4/2; attention 4/38; view 7/30; sight 16/24; contemplation 22/25; sighting *P.C.* 75/10; perception *P.C.* 77/39; examination *D.* 114/32. *pl.* acts of contemplation *P.C.* 79/13; *H.D.* 120/8, *see Com.*; kinds of sight *B.* 130/18; perceptions *B.* 142/5; **to oure beholdynges** as far as our perception is concerned *H.D.* 126/18.  
**behote**, *pr.* 1 *s.* promise 34/19.  
**behouiþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* must 8/36; *impers.* is necessary for 13/25.  
**beyng**, *adj.* creaturely *H.D.* 121/5.  
**being**, *n.* existence 5/4, 14/11; nature 44/5; *pl.* entities 64/33; natures *P.C.* 88/38.  
**belappid**, *see* **lap**.  
**beleue**, **byleue**, *n.* faith 12/7, *P.C.* 75/23.  
**beme**, *n.* beam, flash 34/31; radiance *H.D.* 120/24.  
**bemene**, *v.* mean 32/19.  
**bemenyng**, *n.* meaning 43/21.  
**bere**, *v.* bear; *pr.* 2 *s. refl.* behave 34/21; **born down** thrust down 18/27; bring down *P.C.* 85/28; **b. þee lowe** conduct yourself humbly *D.* 111/34.  
**beryelles**, *n.* burial 30/17.  
**bering**, *n.* carrying 1/11; deportment 55/13; attitude 60/30.  
**besi**, *adj.* earnest 7/22; assiduous 17/26; busy 28/40; absorbed 45/8.  
**besily**, *adv.* diligently 9/38; attentively *P.C.* 94/34.  
**besines**, *n.* activity 26/11; preoccupation *P.C.* 86/5; exertion *S.* 148/10.  
**bete**, *v.* beat 15/38; **betyn** *pp.* (<*O.E. pp.* — *beten* or — *bætan*) ? bitten or ? beaten 54/17; **betip** *pr.* 3 *s.* ? bites into or ? strikes 74/6. *Har<sup>2</sup> U Ro<sup>3</sup> Pa read byt(t)ep.*  
**bi**, *prep.* with the help of 8/26; for 61/11; with respect to *P.C.* 75/32, on account of *P.C.* 91/9; **bi þi syde** aside 38/25; **by and by** side by side *P.C.* 93/6-7.  
**bycome**, *pt.* 3 *s.* became 62/8.  
**bid**, *v.* enjoin 49/29; beg *P.C.* 78/2; **boden** *pp.* 50/1.  
**bide**, *v.* stay 9/34.  
**bidingly**, *adv.* patiently 4/12, 35/34.  
**bygyng**, *pr. p.* establishing *P.C.* 96/37.  
**birpen**, *n.* burden 25/14.  
**bittirlier**, *adv.* more bitterly *B.* 132/7.  
**bitwix**, *prep.* between 13/26.  
**blabryng**, *adj.* babbling 34/37.  
**blamers**, *n. pl.* disparagers 3/22.

- blasfemip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* blasphemes against 38/27;  
**blasphemyn** *pr.* 3 *pl.* revile 58/7.
- ble(e)ndid**, **blent**, *pp.* blinded 40/2; *B.* 131/25; deluded *D.* 114/22.
- bles**, *v.* praise, adore *B.* 144/29
- blynde**, *adj.* secret, obscure 40/9; = without analysis 40/31; = without a view 68/8; unseen *P.C.* 76/8; without conscious design *P.C.* 94/30; **blinde beholdyng** = not seeing by the eye of imagination or reason 17/33.
- blisful**, *adj.* blessed *P.C.* 81/5.
- blisse**, *n.* joy, blessedness 11/3; **blis** *B.* 136/18.
- blissidheed**, *n.* blessedness *B.* 136/18.
- blipe**, *adj.* joyful *P.C.* 97/11<sup>57</sup>.
- blowyn**, *pp.* = *L.* *inflatos*, puffed up *S.* 147/13.
- blundryng**, *n.* blind motion, adrift *P.C.* 96/13.
- bodely**, *adv.* = in physical activities and working with the bodily senses 30/27.
- bodelines**, *n.* corporeity 63/26; earthiness *P.C.* 92/8.
- boden**, *see* **bid**.
- body**, *n.* trunk (of a tree), *P.* 103/36.
- boistous(e)**, *adj.* rudimentary, broad 7/30, *but it often implies* not subtle, undeveloped in matters of the spirit; loud 56/25; undeveloped *P.C.* 76/38; crude *P.C.* 92/77; *H.D.* 124/21; **boistouset**, least trained *P.C.* 76/30.
- boystously**, *adv.* bluntly 28/6; crudely, without elaboration or subtlety *P.C.* 76/15, 77/18.
- boistousnes**, *n.* brute force 5/12.
- boistouste**, *n.* crude uncultured natural state 49/10, *P.C.* 77/16.
- booldenip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* emboldens 38/27.
- borionid oute**, *pt.* 3 *pl.* burgeoned, burst forth *H.D.* 125/26.
- borionyng**, *n.* burgeoning *H.D.* 125/30.
- bot**, **but**, *adv.* only 28/2; yet *P.C.* 78/5; *conj.* unless 18/22; *prep.* except *H.D.* 125/3; **not bot** not otherwise than 31/21, 33/18; **bot ȝif** unless 2/7; only if 73/33.
- bope**, *adv.* as well *P.C.* 85/11.
- bowes**, *n.* *pl.* boughs *P.* 103/36.
- bowelles**, *n.* *pl.* bowels (considered as the seat of the tender and sympathetic emotions) 53/42.
- brede**, **breed**, *n.* breadth 41/26, 69/18.
- breek down**, *imp.* demolish 45/38; **breke down** crush *D.* 112/38; **brekyng** *pr.* *p.* analysing 40/26; **broken ne vndon** in bits and pieces 16/5; **brokyn** *pp.* breached *B.* 137/18.
- breide oute**, *pr.* 2 *s.* *subj.* were to stretch out, analyse, *P.C.* 79/8. *See* *Com.*
- brenne**, *v.* burn *S.* 147/31.
- brennyng**, *adj.* burning 49/12.
- breſt**, *v.* **b.** **oute** burst out 50/10; **breſtip up** bursts out 41/19; **braſt** *pt.* 3 *s.* *subj.* burst *P.* 104/18.
- bryng forþe**, *pr.* 1 *pl.* produce *B.* 142/26; **brouzt in** *pp.* produced 12/33.
- buffetes**, *n.* *pl.* blows 61/8.
- bussching**, *pr.* *p.* thrusting *P.C.* 84/2.
- caas**, *n.* instance 10/30.
- caſtyng down**, *n.* overthrowal *D.* 112/24.
- catel**, *n.* property 20/31.
- cause**, *n.* motive 3/14; origin 22/5; reason *P.C.* 82/10; First Cause *H.D.* 121/12; **in þe cause** of on account of 11/23; **were in þe cause** were to blame *P.C.* 96/29-30.
- cauteel**, *n.* stratagem 74/7.
- cees of**, *see* **sees**.
- certefied**, *pp.* assured 51/14.
- certefieng**, *n.* attesting 59/22.
- certein(e)**, *adj.* sure 2/15; particular *P.* 105/18; **a certein tyme** for some time *P.* 104/1.
- certes**, *adv.* assuredly *P.C.* 87/19.
- challenge**, *v.* claim 12/16.
- charge**, *n.* burden *B.* 138/16.
- charge**, *v.* attach importance to 3/3; *pr.* 1 *s.* exhort 1/8; *pr.* 3 *s.* **chargeþ** matters *P.C.* 77/38; **charge not pay** no heed to *P.C.* 75/15.
- charite**, *n.* charity 32/18. *See* *Introd.*, pp. xxxix-xl.
- chast(e)**, *adj.* pure, = disinterested *P.C.* 97/14, *P.* 104/7.
- chaufyng**, *n.* inflaming 47/33.
- chaunce**, *n.* occurrence 41/14; **chaunses** *pl.* happenings *H.D.* 127/20.
- chaungabely**, *adv.* alternately 44/12.
- chaunging**, *n.* transformation 61/37.
- cheef**, *adj.* principal 22/14; *n.* 73/33, *P.* 105/26; one in first place, = choice *D.* 115/21.
- cheitif**, *n.* caitiff 37/11.
- cher(e)**, *n.* face 30/38; demeanour 55/12; behaviour 56/5.
- cherischingly**, *adv.* lovingly 37/20.
- cherischip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* caresses *B.* 137/16. *See* *Com.*
- chereþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* gladdens, encourages *B.* 137/16<sup>68</sup>.
- chese**, *v.* choose 8/30; **chees** *pt.* 3 *s.* chose 29/23.
- chesyng**, *n.* choice 65/12.
- childly**, *adv.* in childish terms 48/34, 67/27, 72/16.
- childre(n)**, *n.* *pl.* children *P.C.* 85/34, *B.* 130/11, 14.

- chirche**, *n.* church *B.* 144/26.  
**circumstaunces**, *n. pl.* adjuncts 40/8. *See Com.*  
**cleer**, **clere**, *adj.* clear 18/31, 13/17; bright, pure *P.C.* 91/33, *P.* 104/30; plain *D.* 110/32.  
**cleerly**, *adv.* clearly 12/14; *comp.* **cleerlier** 42/30.  
**cleerte**, *n.* brightness *B.* 143/28; **cleerteas** *pl.* clarity *H.D.* 119/21.  
**clene**, *adj.* pure 19/18; entire 22/4; clean *H.D.* 120/21; bright *H.D.* 123/1.  
**clennes**, *n.* purity 23/26.  
**clense**, *v.* purify 35/16; *pr.* 3 *s.* clears 46/29.  
**cle(e)ping**, *n.* vocation 2/20, 7/22.  
**clepip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* calls 24/31.  
**clergial**, *adj.* scholarly *P.C.* 93/11.  
**clergie**, *n.* learning 5/40.  
**clerk**, *n.* scholar *P.C.* 76/34; *pl.* theologians 61/22.  
**cleue**, *v.* cling *D.* 112/15.  
**clippyng**, *pr. p.* embracing 48/37.  
**clombe**, *pl.* 3 *s.* climbed 71/5.  
**clope**, *n.* garment *B.* 140/35.  
**cole**, *n.* live coal 12/24.  
**colour**, *n. vnder c.* of with the pretext of *P.C.* 91/32, *D.* 114/24; by the occurrence of *P.C.* 91/36.  
**combrance**, *n.* entanglement *S.* 153/9.  
**combrid**, *pp.* burdened, encumbered 21/3; **kumbred** 55/1.  
**combros**, **koumbrous**, **kumbros**, *adj.* obstructing 35/22, *H.D.* 124/33, 35.  
**come**, *v.* **com(e)** to attain 19/7; **to be comen** to to be reached 11/17-18; **comyn abouen** *pr.* 3 *pl.* transcend *H.D.* 122/13.  
**comendacion**, *n.* praise *P.C.* 81/29.  
**comendid**, *pp.* recommended 43/12.  
**comoun**, *adj.* in common 12/3; general 35/12; normal *P.C.* 84/41; ordinary way of *P.* 104/35; ordinary *P.C.* 94/17; **comounist** *see wit.*  
**comoun**, *v.* associate 32/31; communicate *P.C.* 95/26; *pr. p.* **comounyng** associating 22/40; *n.* communicating 44/20.  
**comounly**, **comon**, *adv.* usually 52/10; frequently 60/33; in the common way *D.* 117/29.  
**companye**, *n.* society 27/7.  
**companous**, *adj.* in company *D.* 109/28, 116/19.  
**compleccion**, **con-**, *n.* temperament 47/10, *P.C.* 93/8; physical organism 47/34; *pl.* dispositions 55/36; **troublid complexion** = *L. inordinationem*, immoderation *H.D.* 127/19.  
**comprehencion**, *n.* inclusion 64/21.  
**comprehende**, *v.* grasp 10/27; *pr.* 3 *s.* includes 64/19.  
**conceyte**, **conseyt(e)**, *n.* general notion 2/30; conception 65/29, *P.C.* 95/11; opinion 73/10; understanding *P.C.* 76/29; *pl.* thoughts 40/16; **to my conseite** in my opinion *P.* 107/35.  
**conceyue**, **conseyue**, *v.* understand 72/32; *pr.* 1 *s.* think of *D.* 113/2; **conseyued** *pp.* thought out 13/30; conceived *D.* 113/3.  
**concience**, **consience**, *n.* = the faculty which distinguished between what is and what ought to be 24/15; conscience *P.* 102/2; inmost thought *B.* 137/8.  
**conclude**, *pp.* confounded 11/39.  
**concupiscence**, *n.* = deep-rooted inclination to evil, the penalty of original sin, carnal desires *H.D.* 127/19; inordinate desire for the things of this world *B.* 130/8. *See Com.*  
**condesendip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* comes down 33/11.  
**condicion**, *n.* quality 38/29; characteristic *P.C.* 86/28; *pl.* aspects 16/4.  
**confo(u)rme**, *v.* model 27/1, 31/17; **confourmyd** to *pp.* made according to the pattern of 42/4; **conformed** possible example of a common confusion with **confirmed** 64/3.  
**confusion**, *n.* **in c.** of in refutation of 24/3-4; to the confusion of *D.* 109/31; **in-c.** upsetting *S.* 150/26.  
**congelid**, **conielyd**, *pp.* massed 13/12, *H.D.* 124/36; coalesced 44/11; **conielyd in a lumpe**, lumped together 40/32.  
**connyng**, *see kunnyng*.  
**conpleccyon**, *see compleccion*.  
**conpunccioun**, *n.* pricking of conscience *B.* 132/16.  
**conseyue**, *see conceyue*.  
**consentes**, *n. pl.* acquiescence *D.* 112/27.  
**contemplacyon**, *n.* = union with God *title*; religious meditation *B.* 134/8; = sight of God *B.* 143/8, 144/23. *See Introd.*, pp. xxx et seq.  
**contenaunce**, **contynaunce**, **kontenaunce**, *n.* bearing 48/27; behaviour (of two people towards each other) 30/33; expression 26/32; deportment 55/12; *pl.* behaviour 26/36; expressions 56/10.  
**conteneþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* contains 23/28; *pr.* 3 *pl.* **contenen** 60/10; *pp.* **contenyed** 41/34.  
**contynow**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* persevere *D.* 112/1.  
**continouaunce**, **continouaunce**, *n.* steadfastness *P.C.* 83/1; perseverance *D.* 112/29; **in c.** continuously, *P.C.* 97/12.  
**contynowel**, *adj.* continuous 11/15.  
**contynowely**, **contynouely**, **contynuely**, **contynouly**, *adv.* continuously 2/10, 40/39, 34/10, *S.* 149/28.  
**contrary**, *adj.* antithetical *H.D.* 124/22.  
**contrariyng vnto**, *pr. p.* counteracting *H.D.* 124/38.  
**contrey**, **cuntre**, *n.* district *P.C.* 76/28, *D.* 113/7.

- corious, curious**, *adj.* speculative 2/5; subtle 12/34; careful 54/26; studied 55/1; elaborate 58/35; abstruse *P.C.* 76/22; fine *P.C.* 79/27; probing *P.C.* 83/2, *see Com.* 2/3-5 *for the basic meaning.*
- coriouse(e), cur-**, *n.* subtlety 2/26; inquisitiveness 2/37; speculative activity 12/40; ingenuity 13/15, 66/1; enquiry 40/27; brain-racking *P.C.* 76/16; involutions 76/33; abstruseness 76/35.
- coroun**, *n.* crown *D.* 110/40.
- coroune**, *v.* crown 61/9.
- cortesie**, *see cortesye.*
- corumpid**, *adj.* corrupt *H.D.* 124/30.
- costomable, cust-**, *adj.* habitual 24/7, *S.* 153/20.
- costum**, *adj.* from habit *S.* 151/7.
- costumabely, costumably**, *adv.* habitually 73/30; *B.* 140/34.
- costume, custume**, *n.* practice *B.* 141/40; habit *S.* 153/22; **haue it in c.** have the habit 59/1; **in c.** as a matter of habit 37/31; **in c. of** by the habit of 40/2.
- cotidiane**, *adj.* daily *P.C.* 95/9.
- counfortable**, *adj.* comforting 18/14.
- counforte, coumforte**, *n.* strength 46/34; consolation *P.* 106/35; *pl.* comforts 52/24.
- counfortid**, *pp.* strengthened 52/15.
- counsel, -seil, -seyle**, *n.* judgment 5/41; spiritual direction 8/26; spiritual director 24/11, *S.* 151/18.
- couplid**, *pp.* linked 39/29; joined *B.* 133/8.
- cours**, *n.* successive progress 2/20, 7/22; procedure 39/36; compass, range *P.C.* 84/40; **c. of kynde** ordinary procedure of nature 6/14, 11/34, *D.* 109/19.
- coueyte**, *v.* want *P.C.* 87/20.
- couerhid**, *pp.* covered up *H.D.* 124/31.
- coueryd**, *pp.* veiled *H.D.* 122/11.
- couetyse**, *n.* inordinate desire 53/14.
- craft(e)**, *n.* expertise *P.C.* 77/8, *H.D.* 124/12.
- create**, *adj.* created 10/28.
- criing on**, *pr. p.* shouting 43/17.
- crokid**, *adj.* = curved away from God in intention, deviating 22/2; bent 63/21; perverted *D.* 114/24.
- crokyng**, *n.* deflection *P.C.* 87/39.
- cun**, *v.* be able, know how to 37/25; **kon** 14/19; **kun** 45/4; **kunne** *P.C.* 98/34; **kanne** *pr. 3 pl.* know 31/36; **coup** *pt. 1 s.* could 45/14; **coudest** *pt. 2 s.* 49/8; **coupe** *pt. 1 pl.* 59/36; *see skil(e).*
- cuntrey**, *see contrey.*
- cup(pe)**, *cup* 60/1, 3.
- cure**, *n.* spiritual charge 36/14; pastoral care *P.C.* 93/16.
- curious, curioste**, *see corious, coriouse(e).*
- cursid**, *adj.* damned *S.* 147/19; accursed *S.* 152/15.
- curteis**, *adj.* courteous *B.* 133/18.
- curtesye**, *n.* courtesy 38/7; **ȝif . . . c. to sey** if one may say it in a reverent and seemly way 51/39.
- curtesly**, *adv.* with courtesy 28/2.
- daliaunce**, *n.* intimacy 20/35.
- dampnable**, *adj.* deserving damnation *S.* 152/4.
- dampne**, *v.* condemn *B.* 137/11.
- dar**, *pr. 1 s.* dare 28/12; *pr. 2 pl.* **dor(e)** *P.C.* 84/36, 85/18; *pr. 3 pl.* **doren** *P.C.* 84/39.
- dur** 56/40.
- daunger**, *n.* subjection *S.* 150/25.
- deceyte, disc, diss-**, *n.* deception *B.* 142/33, *P.C.* 98/29, *D.* 112/12; pitfall *P.C.* 86/31; *pl.* **deseites, disceites** *S.* 149/36, 150/19.
- deceyuiþ**, *pr. 3 s.* outwits *B.* 137/19.
- declaracioun**, *n.* exposition *P.* 103/29.
- declare**, *v.* explain 41/19; *pr. 3 s.* reveals *S.* 147/14.
- declaring**, *n.* exposition *P.* 103/31.
- dede**, *n.* action 36/10; **in dede** in fact *P.* 101/18.
- dedein**, *n.* contempt 20/18.
- dedein**, *v.* disdain *P.C.* 88/38.
- deed**, *adj.* dead 38/34.
- deedly**, *adj.* mortal, subject to death 1/18; **deadly**, = leading to damnation *P.* 106/17.
- deedly**, *adv.* = in a way to merit damnation 35/20.
- deedlynes**, *n.* mortality *B.* 138/23.
- deep**, *n.* death 37/34; **to þe deep** to death 25/18-19.
- defayle**, *v.* be lacking 32/10; die away *D.* 116/26; *pr. 1 s.* am not able 22/29; *pr. 3 s.* falls short *D.* 115/31.
- defailing**, *n.* failing 6/39; want 11/13.
- defautes**, *n. pl.* faults 4/15; **for defaute of** through default of 28/17.
- defendid**, *pt. 3 s.* spoke in defence of 28/38.
- defoule**, *v.* contaminate *P.C.* 83/9; **defoulid** *pp.* defiled *P.C.* 76/9; desecrated *P.C.* 87/18.
- degre(e)**, *n.* stage 7/24; status *D.* 109/19; *pl.* grades 23/9; **in d. of** in the state of 9/1; **by d.** gradually *P.C.* 89/4.
- deintee**, *n.* esteem 74/8.
- deinteous**, *adj.* dainty 20/32.
- delaid**, *pp.* deferred *B.* 132/25.
- delaiing**, *n.* delay *B.* 144/17.
- delices**, *n. pl.* delights *B.* 130/3.
- deme**, *v.* judge 4/13; *pr. 1 s.* think *H.D.* 126/12; **demed** *pp.* given judgment to *B.* 135/9; **for demyng of** as a precaution against being thought *D.* 109/9.
- deming**, *n.* judgment *S.* 150/34.
- demure**, *adj.* quiet, composed 48/27.



- deniinges**, *n. pl.* negations *H.D.* 125/7.  
**deniingly**, *adv.* by negation *H.D.* 128/13.  
**departable**, *adj.* divisible 64/23.  
**departe**, *v.* separate 50/14; *pp.* distinguished *P.C.* 76/4.  
**departyng**, *n.* distinction 38/32; division *P.C.* 75/31.  
**depeynted**, *pp.* depicted 58/33.  
**depnes**, *n.* depth 25/28.  
**dere**, *adj.* dear *S.* 149/21; **more d. wip** dearer to 52/25.  
**dere**, *v.* afflict 37/35; harm 57/28.  
**derk**, *adj.* obscure, beyond understanding 13/19; = hard to understand 26/16 *H.D.* 119/17.  
**derkly**, *adv.* obscurely 68/26.  
**derknes**, *n.* darkness 9/29.  
**dese(e)rt**, *n.* deserving 38/10, 29.  
**despite**, **dis-**, *n.* contempt 47/3, *P.C.* 89/30.  
**determinid**, *pp.* decided 65/10.  
**deuely**, *adj.* diabolical *S.* 152/9.  
**deuelnes**, *n.* devilish conduct *S.* 152/12.  
**deuyne**, *adj.* superhuman *H.D.* 124/20.  
**deuinite(e)**, **deuenite**, **diuinite**, *n.* = Mystical Theology *P.C.* 88/1; = (Science of) Godhead *P.* 105/30, *H.D.* 123/6; Godhead *H.D.* 119/17; **Cristes deuinitee** Christian Theology *H.D.* 122/4; **affirmatyue deuinitee** positive statements about God *H.D.* 126/29-30; **negatyue d.** negative statements about God *H.D.* 126/30-31; **Hid Diuinite** translates *L. Mystica Theologia* *H.D.* 119/1.  
**deuisid**, *adj.* distinct *D.* 114/13.  
**deweliche**, *adv.* = as you should *P.* 102/28.  
**dietyng**, *n.* taking of daily food *D.* 109/17.  
**dize**, *v.* die 30/16; *pl.* 3 *s.* **deied** *P.C.* 85/12.  
**distyng**, *n.* preparation 26/10.  
**directe**, *pp.* directed 9/16.  
**discrecio(u)n**, **discrecyon**, *n.* moderation 35/3; sure judgment 37/40; discrimination 57/37; = instinctive knowledge of what to do *D.* 117/27; = profound self-knowledge by virtue of which one comes to the knowledge of God *B.* 141/32.  
**discret(e)**, *adj.* judicious 20/8; discriminating 51/15.  
**discre(e)tly**, *adv.* judiciously 44/35, *D.* 117/25.  
**discusse**, *pr.* 2 *s.* *subj.* try (as a judge) *P.C.* 92/25.  
**disce(e)se**, *n.* distress 42/16; discomfort *B.* 136/8; **done . . . dissece**, cause . . . trouble 33/1.  
**diseyuable**, *adj.* deceptive *B.* 134/22.  
**disisid**, *pp.* troubled 33/32.  
**dispendyng**, *n.* spending 11/28.  
**dispendist**, *pr.* 2 *s.* spend 11/18.  
**dispite**, *see* despite.  
**dispitous**, *adj.* malevolent 20/19.  
**dispose (it)**, *v. refl.* apply (itself) 5/6; **disposid** *pp.* inclined *D.* 112/18.  
**disposicioun**, **disposission**, *n.* dispensation 52/12; tendency 56/22; state of soul *P.C.* 75/9; temperament *D.* 110/8; *pl.* inclinations *D.* 110/13.  
**disseite**, *see* deceive.  
**disseyuid**, *pp.* misled 13/1.  
**disseure**, *v.* separate 57/38.  
**dissolucioun**, *n.* dissoluteness, laxity *B.* 141/24.  
**distyngyng**, *n.* classifying 2/37; **distyngwid** *pp.* divided 2/14.  
**diuers(e)**, *adj.* various 5/33; different 17/13; dispersed *P.C.* 78/18.  
**diuers(e)ly**, *adv.* differently 10/37; in different ways *P.C.* 88/29.  
**diuersete**, *n.* variety 52/16; **diuersitees** *pl.* unlikenesses *H.D.* 124/36.  
**do(o)**, *v.* **do imp.** act 37/27; **do on** continue with 68/4; **do on fast** take immediate action 8/34, 34/21; **do forþ** go on trying 38/38; advance *P.C.* 93/36; **do wip** act upon 39/1; **do þat in þee is** do your best 9/15; **do þee wel** do well for you 38/8; *pp.* **do** 1/19; **done away** removed *H.D.* 120/25; **done** to added *B.* 132/25; **done up** raised *H.D.* 124/4.  
**doctour**, *n.* Doctor (title given to leading Schoolmen of Medieval Philosophy) *P.* 102/36.  
**doelful**, *adj.* fraught with sorrow 25/17.  
**doelfulnes**, *n.* anguish 42/13.  
**doyng**, *n.* activity *P.C.* 78/2; action *P.* 103/4; *pl.* activities *P.C.* 83/22; **doyng away** negation, rejection *H.D.* 121/26; **doinges away** *pl.* *H.D.* 127/27-28; **doyng** to addition *B.* 132/23.  
**dole**, *n.* trouble *P.C.* 96/16.  
**doles**, *n. pl.* wiles *S.* 150/21.  
**dome**, *n.* judgment 35/26; Last Judgment 11/27; **Day of Dome** 61/18; *pl.* judgments 2/9.  
**domesman**, *n.* judge 12/6.  
**donwardes**, *adv.* downwards 59/16.  
**dor(e)**, *see* dar.  
**double-eggid**, *adj.* = with two cutting edges 37/39-40.  
**doughtely**, *adv.* with his might *P.C.* 96/15.  
**doute**, *n.* uncertainty 29/13; **is no doute** is certain 37/31; **No doute bot** No doubt that *S.* 148/31.  
**drawe**, *v.* draw, lead *P.* 105/1; **drawen hem** *pr.* 3 *pl. refl.* betake themselves 28/11; **drawe away** *P.C.* 83/9; **drawen bac** *P.C.* 83/13; **drawe nere** *P.* 106/10; **drawe . . . up** *H.D.* 119/15.  
**drawzt**, *n.* pulling, attraction 8/22.  
**drede**, **dreed**, *n.* fear *P.* 101/29, *B.* 131/17, 18; **for drede** lest 39/4.



- drede**, *v.* fear *B.* 137/5.  
**dreedful**, *adj.* terrible 37/40.  
**drenchid**, *pp.* immersed *P.C.* 84/29.  
**dreuyn**, *pp.* forced 41/16; **d. forþe** driven ahead *H.D.* 124/28.  
**drewry**, *n.* treasure *P.C.* 88/2.  
**dronken**, *adj.* intoxicated *B.* 129/14.  
**dronkenesses**, *n. pl.* drunkennesses *H.D.* 126/8.  
**drounyd**, *pp.* drowned *B.* 136/29.  
**dur**, *see* **dar**.  
**dwere**, *n.* doubt 32/1.
- echep**, *pr. 3 s.* adds *B.* 144/15; **echid to pl. 3 s.** added 29/15.  
**eelde**, *n.* age *P.C.* 93/8.  
**eende**, *n.* aim 66/36; *pl.* extremities *H.D.* 122/14; **in þe ende** by the end 1/28; **to þat eende** for the purpose 67/1.  
**endles**, *adj.* infinite 11/1; endless *D.* 111/5.  
**eendli**, *adv.* finally 65/11.  
**erþe**, *see* **erþe**.  
**effecte**, *n.* purpose 7/15.  
**effectuely**, *adv.* effectually 63/14; effectively *P.C.* 80/7.  
**eft(e)**, *adv.* again 25/34; afterwards *P.C.* 96/17.  
**eftsones**, *adv.* soon after *H.D.* 122/5; **tyl eftsones** until later *B.* 133/24-25.  
**eggen**, *pr. 3 pl.* set on edge *P.* 107/1.  
**eyleþ**, *pr. 3 s. impers.* troubles 30/28.  
**eire**, *n.* air 13/21; *see* **softe**.  
**eiper**, *adj. (with n. pl.)* both *P.* 107/23.  
**elementes**, *n. pl.* heavenly bodies 63/1. *See* *Com.*  
**elless**, **ellys**, *adv.* otherwise 1/21; **not ellis bot** nothing other than 22/18; **elless none** otherwise not 38/33; **elless þat conj.** so long as 32/27.  
**emty**, *adj.* void 59/3.  
**enclosid**, *pp.* enveloped 37/3.  
**encrees**, *v.* increase 16/12.  
**encrese**, *n. in e. of* for the increasing of *P.C.* 80/17.  
**encreasing**, *n.* increase *P.* 105/17.  
**ende**, *see* **eende**.  
**enditid**, *pp.* formulated *P.C.* 75/17.  
**enditing**, *n.* formulation *H.D.* 126/22.  
**enflaume**, *v.* inflame 50/18; **enflaumyd**, **enflawmyd**, *pp.* burning, *B.* 133/28; *set ablaze B.* 144/20.  
**enforceþ**, *pr. 3 s.* urges *B.* 138/33; *refl.* forces (himself) *B.* 142/12.  
**enioined**, *pp.* prescribed *P.* 103/5.  
**enioinyng**, *n.* prescription *D.* 118/11.  
**enournementes**, *n. pl.* adornments *H.D.* 126/7.
- ensample**, **exsample**, **ensanple**, *n.* example 6/4, 7; type, pattern 28/27; analogy *P.* 105/6; **at þe ensanple of** according to the example of 29/40; **in e. of** as an illustrative instance of 26/37-38; **bi e. of** in accordance with the example of *P.C.* 79/40.  
**ensampled**, *pp.* exemplified *D.* 110/26.  
**ensclaundre**, *pr. 3 pl.* bring scandal upon *S.* 150/14.  
**enstorid**, *pp.* stored up *P.C.* 80/39.  
**entent**, *n.* purpose 1/4; intention, directing of the mind 1/15; aspiration 9/31; aim *P.C.* 83/12.  
**ententifly**, **-iuely**, *adv.* wholeheartedly 42/35, 7/25.  
**enuirouneþ**, *pr. 3 s.* encircles *D.* 111/23.  
**er**, *conj.* before 10/4; **none er** not before 40/6.  
**eren**, *n. pl.* ears 41/23; **eres** 41/26.  
**erles**, *n. in e. of* as a foretaste of 8/32.  
**ernest**, *n. in e. or in game* = in action or intention 44/29-30.  
**erst**, first 40/6.  
**erþe**, *n.* ground *P.* 103/35; **to þe erþewardes** towards the ground 63/22.  
**eschewe**, **eschue**, *v.* avoid 3/4, 21/10.  
**ese**, *n.* comfort *D.* 118/14; **þe most ese** the easiest *D.* 114/31.  
**eseþ**, *pr. 3 s.* comforts *P.C.* 95/25; **esed of** given relief from 9/24.  
**esy**, *adj.* comfortable *S.* 147/26.  
**etyngly**, *adv.* while eating *D.* 115/12.  
**euen**, *adj.* fellow 29/3; continuous 29/17, *H.D.* 125/29.  
**euen**, *adv.* steadily 13/42; straight 53/26; **e. acording** exactly corresponding 10/13; **e. acordyng to o tyme** only just one at a time 11/26; **e. up** straight up *D.* 111/27; **e. wiþ** on a level with 63/42.  
**euenheed**, *n.* equality *H.D.* 127/33.  
**euenyd**, *pp.* made equal *B.* 135/11.  
**euer**, *adv.* always 34/28; **eueramonge** now and then 69/2; **euermore** always 57/12.  
**euerlastyngnes**, *n.* the eternal *P.C.* 80/33.  
**euydence**, *n.* obviousness *H.D.* 127/1; **by euydence þat** through the instance that *D.* 113/5-6.  
**excesse**, *n.* ecstasy *P.C.* 85/23.  
**excusacion**, *n.* defence 3/26.  
**experte**, *adj.* experienced *P.* 105/29, *D.* 112/28.  
**expositour**, *n.* expounder *H.D.* 119/10.  
**expoune**, *v.* explain 16/4.  
**exsample**, *see* **ensample**.
- fader**, *n.* spiritual director 51/15; Father *B.* 129/3; **goostly faders** spiritual directors *P.C.* 91/28.

- Faderheed**, *n.* Fatherhood *H.D.* 125/25.  
**fage**, *pr.* 2 *s. subj.* beguile *P.* 101/17.  
**fagyng**, *n.* beguilement *B.* 141/23.  
**faile**, *n.* **wipoutyn f.** for certain *B.* 137/25.  
**faile**, *v.* fail 34/20; pass away *D.* 116/26; **f. of** fall short of 15/19; **þee faileþ** *impers.* you lack 8/35.  
**faylyng**, *n.* falling short 37/43.  
**faayne**, *adj.* glad 55/30; *adv.* gladly 48/32; **feyn** *B.* 130/6.  
**fayre**, **feire**, *adj.* just 36/2; lovely 15/3; pleasant *P.C.* 90/12; good *P.C.* 90/26; beautiful *B.* 134/21; *adv.* graciously 30/41.  
**faireheed**, *n.* beauty 20/29; **speches of faireheed** words of fair promise *B.* 135/20.  
**falle**, *v.* occur 2/35; fall 13/4; **fallip** *pr.* 3 *s.* is fitting 33/9; **f. of befall** 22/29; **fallip** to belongs to 34/38; is appropriate to *P.C.* 88/16; needs to 87/36; **it f. to** *impers.* it happens to *B.* 138/25; **f. for to be** befalls *B.* 140/5-6; **fallyn** to *pr.* 3 *pl.* pertain to 63/39; **falle vnder** become subject to *P.C.* 82/14; come within *P.C.* 93/16.  
**fals**, *adj.* false *B.* 137/12.  
**falsheed**, *n.* error 13/17; deception 59/7.  
**fantasie**, **fantasy**, *n.* delusion 12/32; mental image 18/21; illusive image 65/25; image-making faculty *H.D.* 127/29.  
**fantastic**, **fantastik**, *adj.* delusive *P.C.* 91/26; inventive of visible images *H.D.* 121/16; represented in the mind *H.D.* 124/33.  
**fantome**, *n.* illusion *P.C.* 82/16.  
**fare**, *n.* behaviour 58/20.  
**fareþ of**, *pr.* 3 *s.* happens to 57/14.  
**fast**, *adj.* quick *D.* 112/15; *adv.* firmly 8/34, 16/6; swiftly 12/27; hard, steadfastly 60/34; unshakeably *D.* 110/8; **as fast** quickly 27/12.  
**fasten**, *v.* be fixed *P.C.* 98/21; **fastnyd** in *pp.* confined to *H.D.* 121/2.  
**fastingly**, *adv.* in fasting *D.* 115/12.  
**fastliche**, *adv.* steadfastly *H.D.* 121/25.  
**fastning**, *n.* attachment 20/1.  
**fautours**, *n. pl.* partisans 58/3, supporting indications *P.C.* 95/37.  
**favorable**, *adj.* pleasing 55/26.  
**fauored**, *adj.* featured 55/27; **to be fauourid** to win favour *S.* 148/4.  
**fauoring**, *pr. p.* gratifying *P.C.* 87/2.  
**febeli**, *adv.* **so f. as I can** as well as my feebleness permits, however inefficiently 16/22, 62/22, 70/20; *P.C.* 94/19.  
**febilnes**, **febelnes**, *n.* feebleness 47/29, 52/2.  
**feend(e)**, *n.* devil 57/21; fiend 54/3; **fende** *P.C.* 83/24.  
**fe(e)rd(e)**, *pp.* afraid 39/13; **for f. of** for fear of 52/1-2; **for f. þat** for fear lest 54/6.  
**feerdful**, *adj.* terrifying 70/17.  
**feerdnes**, *n.* fearsomeness *P.C.* 84/2.  
**feersnes**, *n.* fierceness *P.C.* 91/38.  
**fe(e)rþe**, *adj.* fourth 2/25, 7/32.  
**feestre**, *v.* fester 48/25.  
**feyn**, *see* **faayne**.  
**feyne**, *v.* counterfeit 53/39; *pr.* 3 *pl.* concoct 12/42; *pp.* pretended *D.* 114/25.  
**feinid**, *adj.* deceptive 47/34; spurious 65/30; **f. þougt** sham *P.* 101/7-8.  
**feynyng**, *n.* pretence 56/7; make-believe *P.* 101/5.  
**feire**, *see* **fayre**.  
**feip**, *n.* trust *P.C.* 85/1.  
**fel**, *adj.* cruel 20/18; **fel fende**, cruel fiend = Devil *P.C.* 83/24; **felle** savage *S.* 147/28.  
**felaw**, *n.* comrade 60/34.  
**felawschip**, *n.* partnership, sharing 9/4.  
**felle**, *v.* put a stop to 9/22.  
**felly**, *adv.* violently *P.C.* 89/28; with destructive malignity *S.* 148/17.  
**fen**, *n.* bog 25/29.  
**fer**, *adj.* **by a fer mene** = at some remove, with some intermediary 39/15; **moost fer** furthest *H.D.* 126/37.  
**ferip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* terrifies *B.* 137/15.  
**fernes**, *n.* remoteness 69/19.  
**ferþer**, *adj.* more remote *H.D.* 127/10; *adv.* further 11/14.  
**ficchid**, *pp.* fixed 13/43.  
**figure**, *v.* typify 63/23.  
**figures**, *n. pl.* images *H.D.* 121/13.  
**fiire**, *n.* fire 34/33.  
**fyling**, *n.* defilement *H.D.* 122/20.  
**fylle**, *v.* satiate *B.* 130/4.  
**filþe**, *n.* defilement 22/22; vile creature 37/17.  
**first**, *adj.* foremost, *P.C.* 79/11.  
**Firstheed**, *n.* First Cause *H.D.* 119/13.  
**flaumyng**, *adj.* burning *P.C.* 96/26.  
**fleen**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* fly 13/12.  
**flesch(e)ly**, *adj.* sensual, unregenerate 2/1; with human feelings 19/37; carnal 34/37; *adv.* in a worldly manner 20/2.  
**fleschlines**, *n.* carnality 48/24.  
**flessche**, *n.* flesh, body *S.* 147/12.  
**flodes**, *n. pl.* high tides *D.* 110/22.  
**floure-de-lices**, *n.* fleurs-de-lis *D.* 111/20.  
**flowyng**, *n.* flux, succession of changes *H.D.* 127/22.  
**foen**, *n. pl.* foes 32/37.  
**folden**, *pp.* penned *P.* 101/16; *see* **foulden**.  
**fole**, *n.* fool 49/29.  
**foly**, *n.* folly 37/11.  
**folily**, *adv.* foolishly 49/1.  
**folowen**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* result in 54/9; **foloudist** *pt.* 2 *s.* followed *D.* 109/23; **so folowyng** consequently 40/4.  
**fonde**, *v.* strive 14/28.  
**for**, *conj.* hence *P.C.* 80/17; **for why (þat)** because, for 13/40, 55/22; *prep.* against 9/7;

- as a precaution against 27/26; in spite of 45/14.
- forbode**, *pr.* 3 *s. subj.* forbid 19/26.
- forby**, *prep.* in preference to 43/1; in comparison with 54/10; by way of distinction from *P.C.* 86/28; *see* **gede**.
- force**, *n.* **maad no force** *po*f would not care if 40/22; **no f. perof** that does not matter *P.C.* 83/28.
- forcestoumid**, *pp.* too customary *S.* 152/38.
- fordone**, *adj.* previously committed 36/25.
- fordone**, *pp.* destroyed 37/13.
- forzete**, *v.* forget 9/15; **forzeten** 6/10.
- forzeuenes**, *n.* forgiveness 3/19.
- forzeuen**, *pp.* forgiven 25/1.
- formaciouns**, *n. pl.* shapes, productions *H.D.* 121/16.
- formest**, *adv.* foremost 35/2.
- forseide**, *adj.* aforesaid *H.D.* 121/5.
- forsobbid**, *adj.* exhausted with sobbing 46/21.
- forsonken**, *adj.* plunged deeply 46/21.
- forp(e)**, *adv.* henceforth *B.* 133/2; **f. of** (let us go) forward with 27/29; **as f. as** to such an extent as 44/7; **as fer f. as** to such an extent as *B.* 145/2; **so f.** similarly 53/35; then in regular sequence *H.D.* 125/9; **do f.** proceed 38/38; **worche f.** work on *P.C.* 94/16-17; **folowep . . . f.** goes on following *P.C.* 95/21.
- forper**, *v.* help forward 11/12.
- forp(e)ryng**, *n. in f. of* in encouragement of 66/11; *as* help towards 67/2.
- forpi**, *adv.* therefore *B.* 138/5; **forpi pat conj.** in order that 10/2; because 13/28.
- forpink**, *v.* repent *B.* 142/19.
- fote**, *n.* step *P.C.* 86/15.
- foulden**, *pr.* 1 *pl.* fold *H.D.* 125/12; **foulden pp.** folded up 15/30.
- foule**, *adj.* dirty 39/39; wicked *B.* 129/26. filthy *B.* 140/35; grievous *B.* 142/15.
- fouler**, *comp. adv.* more grievously *B.* 142/13.
- fourme**, *n.* form 41/4; **f. of leuyng** form of life 7/24.
- freel**, **frele**, *adj.* frail *P.C.* 83/25, 86/15; **frelest** weakest morally 24/24.
- freely**, *adv.* of his own accord 4/23; with free will *P.C.* 75/23; without constraint *P.C.* 82/12.
- freelte**, *n.* frailty 11/38.
- fremmyd**, *adj.* not akin 32/35.
- freend**, **frende**, *n.* friend *H.D.* 120/7, *P.* 101/1.
- frenesie(e)s**, *n. pl.* wild follies 13/4; ragings = *L. furores* *H.D.* 126/7.
- fro**, *conj.* from the time (that) *P.C.* 95/38; *prep.* from *H.D.* 120/21.
- from**, *conj.* from the time that *P.C.* 83/1; *prep.* away from *P.C.* 83/24.
- frute**, *n.* fruit 19/16.
- ful(le)**, *adj.* complete 11/8; perfect 33/2; with the utmost capacity of 41/31; best 74/4; **ful list** free inclination *D.* 114/37; *adv.* very 15/3; fully 23/38; really *P.C.* 85/17; **at pe fulle** fully 10/27.
- fulfille**, *imp.* complete 72/23; *pr.* 2 *s. subj.* carry out *B.* 144/29; **fulfillid pp.** carried out 32/33; filled to overflowing *P.C.* 81/15.
- fulheed**, *n.* fullness 14/19; fulfilling *P.C.* 82/28.
- gader**, *v.* gather 67/30; **gadered on one** collected together *P.* 104/15.
- Gadering**, *n.* Compilation *H.D.* 126/2; *see* sentence.
- galle**, *n.* gall *B.* 144/10.
- gamen**, *n.* play 46/25.
- gamenly**, *adv.* as in play 48/30.
- gamesumli**, *adv.* sportively. *See* *Com.* 48/35-36.
- gapyng**, *adv.* with wide-open mouth 59/1.
- gardine**, *n.* garden *P.* 106/5.
- garnement**, *n.* garment *P.C.* 89/21.
- gelous**, *adj.* jealous 9/3.
- gendrip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* begets *S.* 150/31.
- gesture**, *n.* bearing *P.C.* 95/24.
- gete**, *v.* obtain 3/18; acquire *B.* 134/15; *pr.* 3 *s.* begets 21/34; *pr.* 3 *s. subj.* let him take *P.C.* 92/36; **getyn pp.** begotten 3/7; taken *P.C.* 92/37.
- gigelotes**, *n. pl.* flirts 55/11.
- gladid**, *pp.* made glad 33/33.
- glewe**, *n.* glue *P.* 106/21.
- glose**, *pr.* 2 *s. subj.* deceive *P.* 106/26.
- glosers**, *n. pl.* flatterers 73/12.
- glosing**, *n.* blandishment 20/35; adulation *B.* 141/23<sup>109</sup>.
- glotenye**, *n.* gluttony *H.D.* 127/2; **gloteniees** *pl.* = *L. crapulae* *H.D.* 126/8.
- go before**, *v.* go beyond 11/25.
- Godheed**, *n.* Divinity 8/2; Godhead 22/28.
- godly**, **godlich(e)**, *adj.* divine *P.C.* 86/4; *H.D.* 120/24; saintly *H.D.* 122/3; *adv.* divinely *H.D.* 119/14.
- going**, *n.* movement 60/37.
- goodes**, *n. pl.* good gifts 42/38, *P.* 104/8; good things *B.* 133/26; things *B.* 138/24.
- goodly**, *adj.* good 17/26; *adv.* graciously 3/29; worthily 8/26; readily 39/34; in his goodness *P.C.* 84/17; well *S.* 148/2.
- Goostheed**, *n.* state of Spirit *H.D.* 125/26.
- goostli**, **goostliche**, **gost(e)ly**, *adj.* spiritual 4/18; in the spiritual life 7/21; in the spirit *P.* 102/29; **goostly wittes** mental/spiritual faculties 6/41, *see* *Com.*; 69/37; *adv.* **by g. knowyng** = *L. per intelligentiae puritatem* *B.*

- 134/12; in a spiritual sense 5/27; in a spiritual way 31/20.
- goostlynes**, *n.* spiritual terms 41/25.
- grace**, *n.* = unmerited favour of God 1/4; beauty *P.C.* 82/32.
- gracious**, *adj.* dependent on grace 4/7; given by divine grace *P.C.* 77/38; with the help of divine grace *H.D.* 124/38.
- graciously**, *adv.* through grace 2/10; **ful g.** with the fullness of grace *P.C.* 85/38.
- gredy**, *adj.* greedy 48/29; avid 54/21; over-eager *D.* 112/17.
- gredely**, *adv.* greedily *D.* 112/14.
- gre(e)tnes**, *n.* magnitude 34/23, *H.D.* 127/32.
- grehounde**, *n.* greyhound 48/29.
- grene**, *adj.* green, unripe *P.* 104/1.
- grete**, *adj.* great 5/26; **greet** 16/19; **gret** 70/32; *comp.* **gretter** 35/38.
- greuep**, *pr.* 3 *s.* injures 20/1.
- grocch-**, **groch-**, *see* **gruch-**.
- grope**, *v.* try to find (by feeling) 19/7.
- grounde**, *n.* foundation 21/18; = apex *P.C.* 81/16, *see* *Com.*
- grounded**, *pp.* established, set on a firm basis 58/4.
- grounding**, *n.* basing 20/6.
- gruc(c)hing**, *adj.* resentful 26/32; discontented 52/8; troublesome 66/6; *adv.* **grochingly** grouchingly *P.C.* 78/2.
- gruching**, **groc(c)hyng**, *n.* resentment 19/39, 53/17; vexation 66/18; displeasure 66/25.
- gruchip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* is discontented 66/9; **grochip** 66/11; *pr.* 2 *s.* *subj.* **grocche** 52/5; **grocheden** *pt.* 3 *pl.* were reluctant *P.C.* 98/15; **gruchid** *pp.* resentful *B.* 136/29.
- ze**, *adv.* indeed 2/6.
- ze**, *pron.* you 20/7; *refl.* **zow** yourselves 30/24; *dat.* **zow** 20/14, **zou** 30/26; **zoure** *possess.* *adj.* your 20/6.
- zede**, *pt.* 3 *s.* went 25/14; **zede forby** went astray 10/19.
- zeeldest**, *pr.* 2 *s.* surrender 37/12.
- zeinsey**, *v.* contradict 54/29.
- zere**, *n.* **zere age** years of age 11/32.
- zeue**, *v.* give 11/31; *pp.* **zeuen** 36/14; **zouen** 10/10.
- zif**, *conj.* if 1/23; **bot zif** unless 1/13; even though *P.C.* 76/17.
- zit**, *adv.* even 1/13; still 1/18; yet 4/21; more-over 23/10 **zit hedirtoward** up to now *P.C.* 86/34-35.
- zone**, *adj.* yonder 63/1.
- zong(e)**, *adj.* young 5/30, 53/5.
- zou**, **zow**, *see* **ze**.
- zouen**, *see* **zeue**.
- habundaunce**, *n.* excess 11/38; plenty 31/39; overflowing 50/10; plenitude *P.C.* 89/36.
- han**, *see* **haue**.
- hande**, **honde**, *n.* hand 9/2; **on pe to honde** on the one side *D.* 114/34; **taken on hande** undertaken *D.* 112/7.
- hangeb**, **honge**, *pr.* 3 *s.* hangs 30/5, 17/31; is attached 53/1; **hangen upon** *pr.* 3 *pl.* depend on 39/21; **heng up** *pt.* 3 *s.* hung up 25/36; *pr.* *p.* **hanging** left in the air 1/27, 73/5.
- happely**, **happiliche**, *adv.* happily *B.* 136/13; perchance *H.D.* 126/29.
- harde**, *adj.* harsh 58/9; difficult 70/17; *adv.* on a hard surface 21/20; firmly 48/23.
- hardnes**, *n.* difficulty *H.D.* 119/9.
- harmyng**, *n.* injury *B.* 139/12.
- hast**, *n.* urgency 41/16.
- hastely**, *adv.* rapidly 41/22; quickly 48/29.
- hasty**, *adj.* in a hurry 54/21.
- hateredyn**, *n.* hatred *B.* 139/6.
- haue**, *v.* hold 3/27; *refl.* behave 2/32; **hap** *pr.* 3 *s.* gains *P.C.* 92/5; **han** *pr.* 3 *pl.* 9/20.
- hede**, *n.* notice *B.* 132/28.
- heder**, *adv.* hither *P.C.* 96/13.
- hedirtoward**, *see* **zit**.
- heed**, *n.* head 54/17; *pl.* **hedes** 53/38.
- heeldyng**, *pr.* *p.* inclining 63/16.
- heelful**, *see* **hele**.
- heiz(e)** **hize**, **hie**, *adj.* high 6/11; heavenly 12/17; noble *P.* 104/37; main 62/31; abstruse *P.C.* 76/22; = rich *P.C.* 81/23; exalted *D.* 116/37; *comp.* **heizer** 17/15; **hier** 17/11; **hizer** 17/12; **hier . . . bot** higher . . . than *P.C.* 98/9; *sup.* **higest** most exalted 41/12, **hiegt** 2/11, **heiest** *P.C.* 93/15.
- heigt(e)**, *n.* height 25/27; summit 33/13; transcendancy 32/6; intensity 41/15.
- heily**, **heilich**, *adv.* supremely *P.C.* 86/1; profoundly *P.* 104/26.
- hele**, *n.* health 44/36; salvation *S.* 150/18.
- hele**, *v.* conceal 49/28.
- heleful**, **heel-**, *adj.* salutary *B.* 144/7, *S.* 153/12.
- helle calues**, *n.* *pl.* = spawn of hell, devils 36/8.
- helpli**, **-liche**, *adj.* helpful 4/18, *P.* 103/19.
- helpe**, *n.* salvation 29/5; well-being *D.* 110/32.
- hem**, *see* **pei**.
- heng**, *see* **hangeb**.
- herd(e)sey**, *n.* hearsay, report 53/3, *D.* 113/15.
- her(e)**, *see* **pei**.
- heren**, *v.* hear 53/34.
- herfore**, *adv.* for this reason 23/23.
- herkyn**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* listen for 58/28

- herof**, *adv.* of this 63/5.  
**hert**, *n.* hart *B.* 135/20.  
**hert(e)**, *n.* heart *H.D.* 125/26, *B.* 137/15.  
**hert(e)ly**, **hertlich**, *adj.* heartfelt 25/17; *adv.* wholeheartedly 7/23; earnestly *P.* 106/25.  
**hete**, *n.* heat 44/19; ardour *P.* 106/16.  
**hetyng**, *n.* promising *B.* 137/16; *see* **hiȝt**, **hoteþ**.  
**heuenwardes**, to **heuenwardes** towards heaven 63/22.  
**heuy**, *adj.* despondent *P.C.* 96/1.  
**heuily**, *adv.* with anger *S.* 148/23.  
**heuynes**, *n.* despondency *P.* 101/30; apathy *B.* 135/4; **heuinesses** *pl.* griefs = *L. tristitia* *H.D.* 126/7.  
**hid**, **hidde**, *adj.* hidden 1/3; unsearchable 2/9; mystical 53/14; concealed 54/28; *pp.* hidden *H.D.* 124/34.  
**hidous**, *adj.* intense 25/10; great 42/8.  
**hidously**, *adv.* terrifyingly 41/20.  
**hier**, **hieȝst**, *see* **heȝ(e)**.  
**hiȝe**, *see* **heȝ(e)**.  
**hiȝt**, *see* **hoteþ**.  
**hynder**, *adj.* latter *P.C.* 80/25.  
**hir**, *see* **sche**.  
**his**, *possess. adj.* its 16/27.  
**hold(e)**, *v.* keep *B.* 134/16; **holde þee imp.** consider yourself 8/23; **holden** *pp.* considered 16/34; kept 35/19; **holde þee bi** support yourself by *P.* 102/17; adhere to *D.* 114/9-10; **holdeþ oute** keeps out *B.* 137/18; **holde up** uphold *P.C.* 85/28-29; **holde silence** maintain silence *D.* 118/18; **holde þee before**, press on *P.C.* 78/20.  
**hoelnes**, *n.* fullness 56/24.  
**hole**, *adj.* undivided 1/15; intact 40/29; sound 74/29; perfect *P.C.* 78/32; restored to health *P.C.* 77/33; recollected *P.C.* 83/15; whole *H.D.* 124/17; undistracted *D.* 117/21.  
**hole**, *n.* recess, hidden depth 25/15.  
**holy**, **holiche**, *adv.* totally 17/31, 67/31.  
**holy**, *adj.* pious 32/3.  
**holyliche**, *adj.* holy-like, having the appearance of being holy *D.* 114/25.  
**holpen**, *pp.* helped 4/5.  
**hom(e)ly**, *adj.* intimate (i.e. with the close intimacy of the spiritually like-minded) 33/19, 21; = feeling a growing closeness to God in the mystical union of love *B.* 133/18, 20, *see* *Com.*; **homliest** most intimate 33/3; *adv.* at home 54/28; **take ouer-homely** presume upon too great familiarity 73/39-40.  
**homlynes**, *n.* intimacy *B.* 133/2; *see* **hom(e)ly**.  
**honde**, *see* **hande**.  
**honeste**, *adj.* well-disposed 17/24; **onest** straightforward 29/33.  
**hongeþ**, *see* **hangeþ**.  
**hope**, *pr.* 1 *s.* imagine 26/1; expect 36/2.  
**horne**, *n.* by **þe h.** (leading it) by the horn 31/35-36.  
**horribilite**, *n.* horribleness *B.* 137/15.  
**hors**, *n.* on **h.** on horseback 60/36.  
**hosbonde**, **hous-**, *n.* husband 39/5; *B.* 140/9.  
**hote**, *adj.* hot 69/22.  
**hoteþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* promises *P.C.* 80/26; *pt.* 3 *s.* **hiȝt** promised 31/1; is called 8/15.  
**house**, *n.* = anchorite's cell, ? Carthusian *domus* *P.C.* 84/3.  
**houles**, *adj.* homeless 30/16.  
**houso**, *adv.* however *D.* 113/19.  
**humours**, *n. pl.* vapours 13/12.  
**hurt**, *imp.* **h. þee not** do not distress yourself 38/26.  
**ich(e)**, **ilch**, *adj.* each 3/3, 11/21; **ilch** 7/34.  
**Ierarchies**, *n. pl.* Hierarchies *H.D.* 125/22.  
**iȝe**, *n.* eye 13/20; *pl.* **iȝen** 13/15; **goostly iȝen** spiritual sight *P.C.* 98/21.  
**ilch**, *see* **ich(e)**.  
**iliche**, *adv.* alike 33/23.  
**ilke**, *adj.* same *B.* 142/32.  
**ymageneþ**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* devise 56/8; **ymagyn of** *pr.* 1 *pl.* imagine *B.* 135/21.  
**ymagenyng**, *n.* imagination *P.C.* 98/7.  
**ymaginacio(u)n**, *n.* = image making faculty of mind *H.D.* 124/17; mental image *B.* 134/21.  
**ymaginatiif**, **-tyue**, *adj.* = working by means of mental images 12/35, 52/32.  
**ympne**, *n.* hymn *P.C.* 75/16.  
**in (+ -ing)**, *prep.* for the purpose of 2/36; by 2/37.  
**inclusid**, *adj.* enclosed *H.D.* 124/25.  
**incomprehensible**, *adj.* beyond the reach 10/36.  
**indiferent**, *adj.* neutral *D.* 109/21.  
**infeccion**, *n.* corruption 65/15.  
**infecte**, *adj.* tainted 54/35.  
**inly**, **inliche**, *adj.* inward *P.C.* 83/30; *H.D.* 119/14, *see* *Com.*; *adv.* inwardly *P.C.* 82/13.  
**innermore**, *comp. adv.* further in *P.C.* 92/6.  
**inobedyence**, *n.* insubordination 65/32.  
**inordynacioun**, *n.* irregularity, excess *H.D.* 127/18.  
**inouȝ**, **inow(i)**, *adv.* enough 15/28, 39/7, *B.* 133/26.  
**inparfite**, *adj.* imperfect 3/9.  
**inrennyng**, *n.* incursion *B.* 136/33.  
**inspirid**, *adj.* infused *H.D.* 119/17.  
**into**, *prep.* up to *P.* 103/7.  
**inwardes**, *adv.* inwardly 53/31.  
**iuel**, *adj.* evil 5/19; **iuel wille** ill-will *S.* 148/21; *n.* *P.* 102/9.



- jangelyng, *n.* babble *B.* 135/32.  
jangle, *v.* chatter 15/6.  
ianglers, *n. pl.* praters 2/1.  
japyng, *adj.* jesting 55/11.  
jogelers, *n. pl.* buffoons 55/11.  
ioie in, *v.* rejoice in *B.* 142/9; *joien pass.* be rejoiced at *P.C.* 90/34.  
juelles, *n. pl.* jewels 71/1.  
iust, *adj.* righteous 12/16.  
iustly, *adv.* properly 12/12.
- kanne, *see* cun.
- kepe, *n.* take good k. of watch carefully *P.C.* 84/9-10; take no k. pay no heed 9/18.  
kepe, *v.* keep 5/2; keep holy 11/35; *imp.* guard 9/6; *pr.* 3 s. seeks after 15/8; kept I neuer . . . sawe I would prefer that they did not see 2/3.  
keping, *n.* having in charge 1/10; in k. of in control of 11/5-6; persevering 11/15; preservation *P.C.* 84/35.  
keuer, *v.* cover 18/16.  
kinde, *n.* nature 6/14; kin 20/29; physical side of man *D.* 109/14; natural constitution *D.* 109/16; sort *H.D.* 124/22; þe k. mankind *B.* 140/6.  
kynd(e)ly, *adj.* natural 49/1; native *P.C.* 93/1; k. witte natural intelligence 2/34, 16/25; *adv.* by nature 57/41.  
kynne, *n.* lineage *S.* 148/5.  
kyrnel, *n.* kernel 59/38.  
knaues, *n.* menial's *P.* 104/3.  
knit, *v.* k. þe . . . knot, tie the knot 49/11-12; knitteþ *pr.* 3 s. unites *P.* 106/7; *pr. p.* uniting *P.C.* 95/36.  
knittingly, *adv.* in union *P.C.* 81/7; k. to sey all told = *L.* *omnino* *H.D.* 128/12.  
knowable, *adj.* that may know, intellectual 10/30, *H.D.* 123/19, 125/14; = that may be known *H.D.* 121/3.  
knowe, *v.* not k. simple negative infinitive used substantivally = act of not knowing *H.D.* 124/6.  
knowyng, *adj.* of knowing 10/35; *n.* knowledge 48/1; *pl.* knowledge *B.* 134/2.  
kombraunce, *n.* burden *P.C.* 77/24.  
kon, kun(ne), *see* cun.  
kontenaunce, *see* contenaunce.  
koure . . . down, *imp.* cower 37/10.  
kumbred, *see* combrid.  
kumbryng, *n.* burden 43/36.  
kumbros, koumbrous, *see* combros.  
kun, *see* cun.  
kunnyng, konnyng, connyng, *n.* learning 2/34, 37; intelligence 27/11; knowledge 72/30; *pl.* knowing *P.C.* 88/3; kunnyng of kinde and of clergie natural knowledge and acquired learning *D.* 113/40.  
lache, *imp.* seize 48/28.  
lacke, lake, lakke, *v.* be without 52/9, *P.C.* 99/2, 47/6.  
lap, lappe, *v.* wrap up *P.C.* 79/18; lappid and foulden wrapped and folded up = contained 15/30; belappid enveloped 23/38; vmbilappid enveloped *P.C.* 89/17.  
last, *n.* lowest *H.D.* 125/11.  
last, *v.* continue *P.C.* 97/5, *B.* 139/15; lastyng *pr. p.* used absolutely while . . . lasts *P.C.* 95/25.  
lastyng, *n.* durability *P.C.* 89/22.  
lat(e), *v.* let 15/7; behave 37/1; lat be *imp.* abstain from 13/17; leave alone 8/34, 68/11.  
late, *adv.* lately *D.* 113/6.  
latter, *adv.* later *B.* 136/6.  
law(e)fully, -lich, *adv.* as in law 28/38; properly, in accordance with the practice enjoined 35/17, *P.C.* 77/20, *P.* 102/2, *D.* 114/5.  
lede, *v.* lead 39/1.  
leef, *n.* leaf, page *S.* 152/26.  
le(e)rne, *v.* teach 37/25; learn 37/40.  
le(e)st, *sup. adj.* least *P.* 104/22; minimal *H.D.* 122/5.  
legge bi þi syde, *imp.* lay aside 38/25; leide up stored 25/15.  
leiȝing, *pr. p.* laughing 55/10.  
leiser, *n.* leisure 26/34.  
lemys, *n. pl.* limbs, minions *P.C.* 84/4.  
lemman, *n.* beloved *D.* 115/28.  
lene to, *v.* incline towards 30/20; lenyn . . . to *pr.* 3 *pl.* rely upon 58/3.  
lenger, *adj.* longer 10/6; *adv.* *P.C.* 95/7.  
lengþid *adj.* removed 61/35.  
leprous, *adj.* leprous; Symound Leprous Simon the Leper 31/14.  
lere, *v.* learn *B.* 140/25; *pr.* 1 s. teach 50/32; lered hym taught himself *B.* 143/10.  
lerner, *n.* teacher *D.* 113/40.  
les, *adv.* less *B.* 136/15.  
lese, *v.* lose 12/11; *pp.* lorne 13/6.  
lesid, *pp.* released *B.* 138/31.  
lesing, *n.* loss 74/16.  
lesing, *n.* lie *P.* 101/19.  
lesing, *pr. p.* detaching *D.* 115/14.  
lesson, *n.* reading 39/24.  
lepe, *v.* relieve *P.C.* 96/15.  
leþir, *see* liþer.  
lette, let, *v.* hinder 18/5, 9; desist 51/2; delay *P.C.* 87/1; letteþ *pr.* 3 s. impedes 9/32; *imp.* lette, lete desist 9/28, 68/5.  
letterly, *adj.* erudite 16/33, 58/1.  
letters, *n. pl.* obstructions *H.D.* 124/38.  
lettyng, *n.* obstruction 54/1; impediment 70/31; hindrance *P.* 107/42.  
leue, *n.* permission *D.* 114/36.  
leue, *v.* leave 28/36; remain 35/15; leave off 31/1; leue to speke of leave off speaking about 27/25; leue of leave off 31/24.

- leueful**, *adj.* legitimate 21/21.  
**leuer**, *adv.* **had l.** would rather 23/4; **me had leuer haue** I would rather have *P.C.* 90/16.  
**leuyng**, *n.* life 1/20.  
**leuing**, *n.* leaving *P.* 102/9.  
**leuiþ**, *see* **liue**.  
**lewdeley**, *adv.* in ignorance 72/16.  
**lewed**, *adj.* uneducated 2/5; **lewder comp.** more of an ignoramus *P.C.* 76/41; **lewdist sup.** most stupid *P.C.* 76/40; simplest *P.C.* 77/6.  
**lyame**, *n.* leash 8/7.  
**liche**, *adj.* like 49/38; **l. to apt** for 72/41; like *B.* 135/15; **make me l. to adapt** myself to *P.C.* 87/1.  
**liche**, *adv.* likely *P.C.* 87/31.  
**lickyn**, **licne**, *pr.* 1 *s.* compare 27/32, *P.* 105/11; **licnid pp.** likened 39/37.  
**licnes**, **lik-**, *n.* likeness 7/8, *B.* 142/36; comparability, = *L. comparatio* *B.* 135/16; appearance 63/18; **in l.** to all appearances 27/19; **in l. for** as an example for 59/25; **at þe l. of** in the likeness of, like 72/3; according to the analogy of *D.* 110/30-31; **to my l.** according to my analogy *P.C.* 96/3; **same skill in l.** self-same reason 27/3.  
**liþe**, *n.* lie *P.* 106/26.  
**liþe**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* tell lies 57/2.  
**ligge**, *v.* lie 55/7.  
**liȝt**, *adj.* easy 34/26.  
**liȝt**, *n.* sight 13/42.  
**lyȝtenyng**, *pr. p.* enlightening *B.* 143/2.  
**liȝty**, *adj.* luminous *P.C.* 88/2.  
**liȝtly**, *adv.* easily 1/29; readily 58/10; joyously *P.C.* 76/13.  
**likeþ**, *pr.* 3 *s. impers.* pleases 15/35.  
**likyng**, *adj.* pleasant 18/14; delectable *P.* 104/19.  
**likyng**, *n.* pleasure 20/4; joy 65/11; satisfaction *H.D.* 120/22.  
**likyngly**, *adv.* lovingly *P.* 106/33.  
**lyme**, *n.* member 33/31; *see* **lemys**.  
**lynynng**, *n.* alignment *H.D.* 124/13.  
**list**, *n.* craft 48/18. *See* *Com.*  
**list**, *pr.* 3 *s.* desires 3/20; **hym lyst impers.** it pleases him 34/29; **hym listiþ impers.** it pleases him 47/4; **us liste** it pleases us 61/19; **bot þee list riȝt wel** have a strong urge *P.C.* 75/14; **list not pt.** 3 *s.* did not want 28/36; **list hir not pt.** 3 *s. impers.* she did not want 26/18; **ȝif þee liste** please *P.C.* 94/11-12.  
**liste**, **lyst**, *n.* zest, desire 9/26, 28.  
**list(e)ly**, *adv.* vigorously 8/13; with eager longing 14/27, 48/18; with zest 31/17.  
**lysty**, *adj.* full of eager longing 26/20, *P.C.* 81/29; with spiritual vigour *H.D.* 120/9.  
**listines**, *n.* eager longing 5/11.  
**listen after**, *v.* listen to 16/14.  
**liþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* lies 12/14.  
**liþer**, **leþir**, *adj.* 1. **strengþe** evil brute force 48/18, *P.* 107/6, *B.* 142/20.  
**liue**, *v.* live 8/9; **leuiþ pr.** 3 *s.* 22/24; **leuyng pr. p.** 7/39.  
**liuely**, *adj.* of life *P.C.* 82/30; life-giving *P.C.* 97/7.  
**loke**, *v.* examine 70/7; **loke after**, **loke in** consider 33/17, 31/4; **loke on** fix attention on 9/6; **lokest after pr.** 2 *s.* concern yourself with *P.* 105/21; **l. ouer** look through 73/3-4; *imp.* make sure *S.* 151/17; **loke þat þou rise** = *L. consurge* *H.D.* 120/17-18.  
**lokyng**, *n.* regard *P.C.* 75/27.  
**londe**, *n.* land *D.* 110/24.  
**longe of**, *adj.* on account of 47/18; **l. on** dependent on *P.C.* 90/39.  
**longen**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* appertain 31/30; **longiþ pr.** 3 *s.* belongs 55/35; goes along with *P.C.* 77/8.  
**(him)longeþ**, *pr.* 3 *s. impers.* (he) yearns 25/21.  
**lorne**, *see* **lese**.  
**losable**, *adj.* in danger of damnation *S.* 149/1.  
**losse**, *n.* perdition *S.* 147/23.  
**loþe**, *v.* loathe 9/13.  
**louely**, **-liche**, *adj.* loving 28/30; of love *P.C.* 82/30; lovable *P.* 104/18; *adv.* lovingly 26/4; in love *P.C.* 82/39; for love *P.C.* 86/1.  
**loue-trist**, *n.* loving faith *P.C.* 84/18.  
**lowe**, *adv.* humbly *D.* 111/34.  
**lust(e)**, *n.* pleasure *B.* 130/2; appetite 66/23; *pl.* desires 66/8.  
**lust(e)ly**, *adv.* with gratification 66/12; with inordinate desire *S.* 149/11.  
**lusty**, *adj.* delighted 66/24; lascivious *S.* 149/6.  
**maad**, *adj.* created 70/1; *see* **make**.  
**mayden**, *n.* maid-servant *B.* 129/12.  
**maister**, *n.* master *S.* 148/15.  
**maistrie**, *n.* **is litil m.** requires little expertise *P.C.* 76/17.  
**make**, **maak**, **maken**, *v.* make 11/35, 33/31, 58/34; **makþ pr.** 3 *s.* writes *B.* 129/2; *imp.* conceive *P.C.* 75/22; *pp.* **maad**, **mad** composed 2/20; made 10/27; done 28/16.  
**makyng**, *n.* creation *P.C.* 78/39.  
**malencoly**, *n.* ill-temper *S.* 148/21. *See* *Com.*  
**maner**, *n.* kind 2/2; way 5/4; manner 55/13; style 72/19; *without following of*, kind of 15/39; *singular form after* **two** 17/9; **in m.** to a considerable degree 39/32; to a certain extent 41/38, 72/18; somehow 73/33; **on a m.** in some degree *B.* 133/3.

- Manheed**, *n.* Manhood 60/25.  
**manyfold(e)**, *adj.* varied *D.* 110/28, *H.D.* 121/16.  
**manly**, *adj.* human 66/28.  
**masid**, *adj.* bewildered *P.C.* 83/26.  
**mater**, *n.* theme 1/26; thing 1/28; subject-matter *P.C.* 93/3; reason *P.C.* 96/7; **m.** of reason for 46/23.  
**material**, *adj.* physical *H.D.* 127/19.  
**mede**, *n.* reward 32/25.  
**medeful**, **meed-**, *adj.* meritorious *P.* 103/8, 10.  
**medel**, *v.* **m.** **hym** of get mixed up with 3/20;  
**medel pee not** *imp.* don't interfere 39/3;  
**most medelid hem aboute** *pt.* 3 *pl.* were most concerned with 70/36; **medelid wip** mingled with, contaminated by 18/21; mixed with *P.* 105/26.  
**medeling**, *n.* adulteration 21/36.  
**meditacion**, *n.* See *Com.* 17/26.  
**meek**, **meke**, *v.* humble 8/29; submit *D.* 112/22; **mekid vnder** made humble by 3/14.  
**meeknes**, *n.* humility 12/12.  
**me(e)nyng**, *n.* purpose *P.* 105/1; expression *D.* 113/17; intention *D.* 115/21.  
**meynyteyn(e)**, *v.* defend 54/23, 31.  
**members**, *n.* *pl.* organs 21/23; see **pryue**.  
**mene**, *n.* intermediary 39/12; means 39/15; method *D.* 117/18; way *S.* 151/40;  
**me(e)nes** *pl.* means 1/21, 41/6; **wipouten** any *mene* directly 4/24; without any intermediate cause *P.* 106/2; **by (pe, som)** **menes** through (the, some) intermediate stages *H.D.* 125/9, 127/31, 35; **by me mene** by me as intermediary *P.C.* 88/31.  
**mene**, *imp.* focus intently on 9/12, 15/26; mean 40/23.  
**mengid**, *adj.* composite *P.* 107/20.  
**menyng**, see **meenynng**.  
**mery**, *adj.* joyful 34/29; **merily** *adv.* pleasantly 68/9; **merilier** *comp.* causing greater joy *P.C.* 96/18.  
**merk**, *v.* designate *H.D.* 126/35; **merkid** *pp.* marked *P.C.* 90/9; made its mark, = *L.* *signatum* *B.* 144/2.  
**merke**, *n.* limit 45/13; *pl.* limitations *P.C.* 87/3.  
**merueyle**, *n.* amazement 16/12; **haue no merueile** do not be surprised 43/1.  
**merue(i)lous**, *adj.* wonderful 11/1, *P.C.* 81/7.  
**mescheues**, see **mischeues**.  
**mesure**, *n.* moderation, limit 44/22; **after pe m.** of in proportion to *H.D.* 126/25; **oute of m.** out of proportion *B.* 142/13; **in m.** temperately 66/21.  
**mesurid**, *adj.* proportionate (i.e. neither more nor less than is proper) 22/3.  
**mesurid**, *pt.* 3 *s.* tempered 22/28.  
**mesuring**, *n.* tempering 10/22; measurement *H.D.* 124/13.  
**mete**, *adj.* measured (having the proper dimensions made to fit) 10/22.  
**mete**, *n.* food 26/10.  
**middes**, *n.* middle 73/5.  
**migt(e)**, *n.* faculty 10/14; force 12/2; power 64/16; *pl.* strength 52/2; **in al here m.** with all their power 9/20-21; **ouer his m.** beyond his power *P.* 104/18.  
**migt(e)ly**, *adv.* with his power 37/19; with great power *D.* 110/35; strongly *H.D.* 121/21; vigorously *S.* 151/4.  
**migtī**, *adj.* powerful *P.* 104/13.  
**minde**, *n.* remembrance 2/39; mind 6/20 *P.C.* 75/31. See *Introd.*, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii; thought 19/17; conscious activity *P.C.* 75/29; source and principle of all conscious activity 64/7; **makip . . . mynde** mentions 29/24; **abouen mynde** transcending mind, in ecstasy *P.C.* 85/21, *H.D.* 125/1-2.  
**mynistre**, *v.* administer 57/9.  
**mynistracion**, *n.* **maak any m.** administer 57/8.  
**mirour**, *n.* mirror 39/37; exemplar *D.* 116/27.  
**mirpe**, *n.* joy 19/5; cheerfulness 55/13.  
**mischeues**, **mes-**, *n.* *pl.* evils 13/5, 47/42.  
**mislikyng**, *adj.* displeasing 66/13; *n.* discomfort 66/19.  
**misreule**, *v.* misgovern *S.* 151/39.  
**misrewlyng**, *n.* disorder 47/36.  
**missomer**, *n.* midsummer *P.C.* 82/19.  
**mistely**, *adv.* mystically *P.C.* 81/22; intuitively (by Divine infusion) *D.* 117/25.  
**mo(o)**, *adj.* more 10/15; **wipouten moo** without any others 10/24.  
**moche**, **mochel**, *adj.* much 1/8; vast *H.D.* 122/5; great *B.* 141/18; *adv.* much 10/25; **inasmooche as in us** as much as is possible to us 31/18; **inasmooche** to that extent 19/15; **insomochel pat** to such a degree that 10/37; so much so that *P.C.* 93/9.  
**mochilnes**, *n.* multitude, = *L.* *multitudinem* *B.* 132/33.  
**Moder**, *n.* Mother 12/17.  
**mone**, *n.* moon 64/1.  
**moneschine**, *n.* moonlight *P.C.* 82/18.  
**moraly**, *adv.* in terms of conduct *P.C.* 82/6.  
**mornyngly**, *adv.* ruefully *P.C.* 76/19.  
**morow**, *n.* **at m.** in the morning *P.C.* 95/21.  
**most**, *pr.* 3 *s.* must *H.D.* 121/18.  
**moste**, *n.* greatest things *H.D.* 125/10.  
**mote**, *pr.* 3 *s.* must *P.C.* 90/35; **moten** *pr.* 1 *pl.* must *H.D.* 124/23.  
**mouply**, *adv.* in spoken words *P.C.* 95/26.  
**mowe**, *v.* may, be able 11/35; *pr.* 1 and 3 *s.* **may** 1/5, 2/16; *pr.* 2 *s.* **maist** 7/23; **maystow** you may 51/1; *pr.* *pl.* **mowen** 5/9, **mowe** 5/22, **mow** 7/32; *pt.* 3 *s.* **migt** 1/29; *pt.* 1 *pl.* *subj.* **mougt** 60/20.

- multypliep**, *pr.* 3 *s.* increases *B.* 144/15.  
**multitude**, *n.* copiousness *H.D.* 126/24, *B.* 144/20.  
**mumlyd**, *pp.* mumbled 41/27.  
**murmuryng**, *n.* grumbling *S.* 148/20.  
**musse**, *imp.* *m.* **3e** not do not be astonished *P.C.* 84/39.  
  
**nakid**, *adj.* = stripped of all concepts 9/31; bare 19/13, *P.* 103/7; unglossed *H.D.* 119/8; absolute *H.D.* 124/24; **nakyd** and **bare** = a clean sheet *S.* 152/37.  
**nakidly**, *adv.* simply 33/24; without clothing (of thought) 39/10, *P.C.* 97/15; in your nakedness *P.C.* 97/18.  
**nakyn**, *v.* strip naked *P.C.* 89/11.  
**nameli**, *adv.* especially 2/33; above all *P.C.* 95/15.  
**napeles**, *adv.* notwithstanding *H.D.* 122/10.  
**ne**, *adv.* (*preceding verb*) not 26/24; nor 1/12; *expletive after doute* *B.* 143/14.  
**nedelynges**, *adv.* of necessity 5/4.  
**nedip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* *impers.* is necessary 32/12.  
**needful**, *adj.* necessary 24/8.  
**needfulnes**, *n.* necessity 44/27; wants 66/7; want *H.D.* 127/20.  
**negatyue**, *see* **deuenite**.  
**nei3**, *adj.* near 62/28.  
**nei3**, *ny*, **ni3**, *adv.* near *P.C.* 78/9; nearly 42/4; **more ni3** *comp.* nearer *H.D.* 126/37; **moost ni3e** *sup.* nearest *H.D.* 126/34; **nei3honde** almost 10/9; **ni3hond** 23/37.  
**nemnid**, *pt.* 3 *s.* named 28/39.  
**nere**, *pt.* 3 *s.* *subj.* if it were not 19/15.  
**nere**, **neer**, *adv.* closely 73/29; near 39/14; *comp.* nearer 38/23.  
**nerenes**, *n.* shortness 62/27; nearness 69/19.  
**nerer**, *comp.* *adj.* closer 42/23.  
**newe**, *adv.* newly 47/21.  
**newely**, *adv.* newly, just *P.* 107/1.  
**newlynges**, *adv.* recently 65/33.  
**next(e)**, *sup.* *adj.* nearest 6/11; closest 27/13.  
**ny**, **ni3**, *see* **nei3**.  
**nice**, *adj.* foolish 55/1.  
**nygromauncye**, *n.* necromancy 57/18.  
**no**, *adv.* not *S.* 151/27.  
**nobilte**, *n.* excellence *P.C.* 87/33.  
**noble**, *n.* = an English gold coin first minted by Edward III *D.* 112/5.  
**nozt**, *see* **nouzt**.  
**nozwhere**, **nouzwhere**, *adv.* nowhere 67/37, 68/24.  
**noye**, *n.* distress *D.* 111/7.  
**noye**, *v.* trouble 51/2.  
**nokyns**, no kind of *P.C.* 78/21.  
**noresching**, *n.* strengthening *D.* 114/20.  
**norische**, *v.* nourish, encourage *P.C.* 97/5.  
  
**nosen**, *n.* *pl.* noses 59/7.  
**nose-perel**, *n.* nostril 57/21.  
**not**, *see* **nouzt**.  
**not-beyng**, *adj.* non-existent *H.D.* 128/7.  
**noþing**, *adv.* in no way 1/21; **noþing worþ**, worthless *P.C.* 78/4.  
**not-vnderstandable**, *adj.* incomprehensible *H.D.* 128/18.  
**nouzt**, *adv.* nought *H.D.* 124/5; **not but** nothing but 69/20, 21, 22.  
**nouzt**, **nozt**, **not**, *n.* nothing 9/14, 14/35; **of nouzt** to no purpose *B.* 129/18; **doþ for nouzt** acts in vain *B.* 143/8; **nouztas** *adv.* *gen.* of no worth *P.* 103/20.  
**nouztnyng**, *n.* obliteration *P.C.* 84/21, 26; *pr.* *p.* making nothing *P.C.* 86/1.  
**nouzwhere**, *see* **nozwhere**.  
**noumbre**, *v.* count 12/24.  
**nouþer**, **nowþer** . . . **ne**, *conj.* neither . . . nor 44/21-22, 61/24.  
**nowondayes**, *adv.* nowadays 28/9.  
  
**o**, **oo**, *see* **one**.  
**obieccions**, *n.* *pl.* objections *P.C.* 84/33.  
**oblischid**, *pp.* pledged 20/4<sup>63</sup>. Cf. *L.* *obligatio*, vow of obedience.  
**occasyon**, *n.* opportunity *P.C.* 86/30; cause *P.* 107/42.  
**occasyoneely**, *adv.* incidentally 39/14; **occasionally** on this particular occasion *P.C.* 87/23.  
**occupied**, *pp.* absorbed 26/26.  
**of**, *adv.* off *P.* 107/3; *prep.* by 1/13; concerning 2/19; from 2/33; for 91/22; with *B.* 138/14.  
**office**, *n.* duties *P.C.* 93/16.  
**often**, *comp.* *adv.* more often 72/31.  
**oftetyms**, **oftymes** **oftyme**, *adv.* often 25/40, 26/1, *P.* 103/24, *B.* 140/23.  
**oftnes**, *n.* frequency 43/13.  
**on**, *prep.* against 3/24; in 5/14; upon *B.* 144/16.  
**on**, *n.* singleness *H.D.* 128/4.  
**one**, **on**, **o**, *adj.* one 10/13, 3/32, 1/28; **bi one and bi one** one by one 25/29-30; **euer upon one** ever alike 43/30.  
**on(e)heed**, **oonheed**, *n.* oneness, union 17/40, 49/12; unity 63/9; concord *B.* 144/31.  
**ones**, **onys**, *adv.* once 10/4, 50/19; **at ones** at once 11/28-29; at a time 11/29.  
**onest**, *see* **honeste**.  
**onid**, *pp.* kept one *P.C.* 75/36; **o.** to united with 33/29-30; inseparable from 38/32.  
**onyng**, *adj.* unitive *P.C.* 81/40.  
**only**, *adj.* alone 4/6; single 10/13; *adv.* **only**, **onlich(e)** individually *P.C.* 75/7; simply *P.C.* 79/3; only *P.* 103/5, *H.D.* 125/4.



- onlines, *n.* solitude *D.* 109/18.  
 only-wonyng *n.* living as a solitary *D.* 109/4.  
 onside, *adv.* to one side 55/3.  
 open, opyn, *adj.* revealed *H.D.* 122/11;  
     public 2/1; obvious *B.* 142/22.  
 openid, *pp.* expounded 73/10.  
 openyng, *n.* exposition *H.D.* 126/14.  
 opinion, *n.* han o., haue it in o. believe  
     *H.D.* 121/4, 121/23-24.  
 or, *prep.* before *B.* 136/32.  
 ordeind(e), ordeined, *adj.* well-ordered, =  
     related to a right object 22/3, *B.* 129/7,  
     131/9.  
 ordeyne, *v.* arrange 57/27; *pp.* appointed  
     41/2; directed *P.* 107/31; destined *B.* 140/24.  
 ordinaunce, *n.* practice enjoined 24/17;  
     ordination 52/12; direction 70/21.  
 ordinel, *adj.* regular 11/23.  
 oryson, *n.* prayer 39/25.  
 oper, *adj.* other 2/24; second 55/10; *pron.*  
     another 7/35; *pl.* others 1/30; after oper  
     after the other 11/22; þen oper than the  
     preceding one 29/31; wip alle þeese oper et  
     cetera 31/31.  
 oper, *see* ouper.  
 ougt(e), owgt, *n.* anything 9/13; something  
     67/17; *adv. gen. s.* ougtes of any account  
     8/13; ougt bot except *B.* 132/21.  
 oure, *n.* hour 10/16.  
 oure, *pron.* ours *S.* 153/32.  
 oute, *int.* = cry of distress 41/21.  
 outetake, *pr. 1 s.* except 13/34.  
 ouper, *adv.* either 13/41; ouper . . . ouper  
     either . . . or 1/10; oper . . . or 36/14-15.  
 outrageous, *adj.* excessive 44/19; immoderate  
     *B.* 141/23.  
 outrageously, *adv.* to excess 47/26.  
 ouer-, *adv.* too 73/40; *prep.* in addition to  
     1/22.  
 oueraboundaunt, *adj.* superabundant  
     22/24-25.  
 ouer-ferd, *adj.* too fearful 37/42.  
 ouerlappid, *pp.* wrapped up in *H.D.* 124/31.  
 ouerleide, *pp.* overlaid *H.D.* 124/31.  
 ouer-liztly, *adv.* too readily *D.* 112/40.  
 ouermoché, *adv.* too much 52/5.  
 ouerpassyng, *n.* transcendence *H.D.* 120/20,  
     = *L. excessus*.  
 ouer-rudely, *adv.* too violently 48/17.  
 ouer-soné, *adv.* too soon 53/21, *D.* 112/11.  
 owne, owen, owe, *adj.* own 2/33, 46/11; *S.*  
     152/2; þe owne its own 5/6-7.  
 payed, *adv.* content *P.C.* 84/37.  
 par charite, for love's sake 1/31.  
 parauenture, *adv.* possibly 1/29.  
 parbrakyng, *n.* breaking up 51/27.  
 parceyue, *v.* perceive 54/25.  
 parcener, *n.* co-heir 12/8.  
 parfite, *adj.* perfect 1/18, = solely directed  
     towards union with God, *see Com.* 39/30;  
     *comp.* parfiter 3/14; *adv.* parfiteliche 1/5;  
     parfitely completely 12/26.  
 party(e), *n.* part 3/33; *pl.* parties *H.D.*  
     126/6; a party somewhat *B.* 131/1; in  
     party partly 17/17; somewhat *P.* 104/1;  
     in som party to some extent 17/14; in  
     grete party to a large extent 24/10-11; on o  
     partye on one side *B.* 131/21; o þat o  
     partye on the one hand *P.C.* 98/42-99/1;  
     on þe toper partye on the other hand  
     52/21.  
 pases, *n. pl.* paces 6/12.  
 passaunt, *adj.* immoderate 20/22.  
 passe, *v.* exceed *P.C.* 84/40; passē *pr. 3 s.*  
     transcends *B.* 137/31; passen abouen *pr. 3*  
     *pl.* transcend *H.D.* 122/12; passing quasi-  
     *prep.* beyond the limit of *P.* 104/22, *D.*  
     109/19.  
 passibilitē, *n.* change *H.D.* 127/21.  
 passing, *adj.* utmost 16/13, *D.* 118/14; *see*  
     passe.  
 peerce, peerse, *v.* pierce 58/30, 14/28.  
 pees, *n.* haue pees be at peace *P.C.*  
     92/34.  
 peine, *n.* torment (of purgatory) 9/24; pain  
     *P.* 105/17.  
 peyntid, *pp.* depicted 68/27.  
 penaunt, *n.* one doing penance 24/21.  
 perfeccio(u)n, *n.* = highest state of holiness  
     attainable by man 3/17; highest degree *B.*  
     141/40.  
 perilousest, *sup. adj.* most dangerous *P.C.*  
     91/37.  
 persone, *n.* person 20/19; in p. of represen-  
     tative of 3/35; in þi p. for you *P.C.*  
     87/26.  
 perteynē vnto, *pr. 3 s.* relates to *P.C.*  
     92/3-4.  
 pesible, *adj.* gentle *D.* 110/22.  
 pesid, *pp.* reduced to tranquillity *B.* 137/30.  
 peteuously, *adv.* compassionately 28/19.  
 philisophres, *n. pl.* scholars 10/7.  
 pike, *v.* gather 52/22; *pr. 3 s.* steals *P.C.*  
     91/33.  
 pinchers, *n. pl.* carpers, detractors 2/3.  
 pine, *n.* pain 4/13; penalty 19/34; torment (of  
     hell) *B.* 132/7; discontent *S.* 148/21; in p.  
     of as a penalty for 35/23.  
 pine, *v.* distress *D.* 117/33; *pr. 3 pl.* torment  
     33/1; *pp.* in pain 33/32.  
 pinful, *adj.* distressing *D.* 118/13.  
 pipyn, *pr. 3 pl.* cheep 54/19.  
 pistle, *n.* epistle *P.C.* 87/43.  
 plat and pleyn = exactly like *P.C.* 77/27.  
 pley, *n.* play, joyful activity 30/28. *See Com.*



**pley(e)**, *v.* play *P.C.* 95/33, *D.* 115/32.  
**pleying**, *see* **pliing**.  
**pleyingly**, *adv.* as if in a game 48/34.  
**pleyn**, *adj.* entire 25/35; plain 56/22; clear 56/25; *see* **plat**.  
**pleyne** (**pee**), *v. refl.* complain *P.C.* 92/35;  
**pleinen on** *pr.* 3 *pl.* complain about 27/6.  
**pleinly**, *adv.* wholly 22/4; clearly *P.* 102/28; simply *D.* 114/6.  
**pleynte**, *n.* complaint 26/32.  
**plente**, *n.* plenitude 32/11.  
**plesaunce**, *n.* pleasure 17/4.  
**plesep to**, *pr.* 3 *s.* is pleasing to *P.* 103/12.  
**pliing**, *adj.* pliant *P.C.* 97/9; **pleying** *P.C.* 96/19.  
**poerly**, *see* **pore**.  
**point(e)**, *n.* degree 1/16; instance 31/5; **not a poynte** not a whit *P.C.* 89/41; **in poynte** to on the point of 37/21; **pe poynt(e)** and **pe prik** the target and bull's eye *P.C.* 75/10, *D.* 115/16-17; very centre of target, bull's eye *P.* 104/38; **pointe of pe spirit** 41/12-13. *See* *Intro.*, pp. xxii-xxiii, lv.  
**ponyschid**, *pp.* punished *B.* 136/10.  
**pore**, *adj.* poor 59/26; *adv.* **poerly** faintly 56/26.  
**portray**, *pr.* 1 *pl.* represent 65/20.  
**pouert**, *n.* poverty *S.* 153/13.  
**preciousste**, *n.* preciousness 26/13.  
**preentid**, *pp.* impressed 16/25.  
**prees**, *n.* worth *P.C.* 90/40.  
**prees**, **presse**, *v.* press forward 16/33; **p. abouen** press upon 14/32; **p. bitwix** thrust between 18/13; **presep apon** *pr.* 3 *s.* 16/23; **presyng agens** *pr.* *p.* 19/13.  
**preise**, **-yn**, *v.* glorify 29/11; declare the glory of *H.D.* 124/7.  
**preisying**, *n.* = affirmation of the glorious attributes of God *H.D.* 125/23.  
**prelates**, *n. pl.* = ecclesiastical dignitaries of exalted rank, e.g. bishops, or higher 56/37.  
**prentis(e)**, *n.* apprentice 4/26, 32/25.  
**proof**, *see* **profe**.  
**presently**, *adv.* for the present 62/33.  
**presep**, *see* **prees**.  
**presse**, *see* **prees**.  
**presume** (**of**), *v.* be over-confident (**of**) *B.* 132/29; **presume on hymself** *pr.* 3 *s. subj.* set himself up *B.* 140/19; **presumip** takes too much upon himself *B.* 142/12.  
**preue**, *see* **priue**.  
**preue**, *n.* experience *P.C.* 83/1.  
**preue**, *v.* test 2/16; *see* **proue**.  
**prik**, **pricke**, *n.* target 13/43, *D.* 115/24; *see* **pointe**; goad *D.* 117/33.  
**principal**, *adv.* as principal(s) 71/35, *P.C.* 92/40.

**prise**, *n.* price 8/4.  
**priue**, **preue**, *adj.* secret 1/3; privy 21/23; personal, private 36/33, *P.C.* 86/27; **priue or aperte** (vows) taken with or without ceremony 20/4<sup>63</sup>; **pryue membres** genitals 53/42.  
**priuely**, **-liche**, *adv.* covertly, figuratively 29/25; privately 31/20; secretly 41/24; mystically *H.D.* 125/15.  
**priute**, *n.* mystery 34/33; *pl.* **priutees** *H.D.* 121/8.  
**proces(se)**, *n.* passage *P.C.* 83/23; **bi proces of tymes** in the course of time *H.D.* 127/22.  
**profe**, **proef**, **proof**, **proue**, *n.* argument 3/13; result 37/25; experience 11/37, 39/36; actual trial 33/30; test *P.* 107/42; *see* **preue**.  
**profegies**, *n. pl.* prophecies *P.C.* 82/35.  
**profite**, *n.* progress 52/13; proficiency *P.C.* 79/35, *B.* 142/3.  
**profite**, *v.* progress 9/1; be helpful *P.C.* 75/8; **profitid** *pp.* been of service 72/29.  
**profiter**, *n.* benefactor 12/19; **profiters** *pl.* = *L. proficientes*, those making progress, more advanced 39/30. *See* *Com.* 39/30.  
**profre**, *pr.* 3 *s. subj.* offer 16/3; *imp.* put *B.* 143/26.  
**pronounsyng**, *n.* utterance 43/33.  
**propirly**, **properly**, *adv.* in its own nature 42/30; rightly 58/19; appropriately *H.D.* 121/21.  
**propirte**, *n.* ownership 1/10; special quality 4/36; attributes *P.C.* 77/7; **in p.** by right (of possession) *P.* 107/13.  
**propre**, *adj.* particular 54/20; individual *P.C.* 77/1; **is proper** to belongs to 2/10.  
**propre**, *v.* **p. vnto hem** make their own 71/17; **is proprid** to is an attribute of *P.C.* 76/40.  
**proudly**, *adv.* in our pride *P.C.* 92/38.  
**proue**, *v.* test *P.C.* 94/21; **prouen** *pr.* 3 *pl.* try 9/21; demonstrate *S.* 147/7; **proue** *imp.* try 19/11; *pr.* 3 *s. subj.* let . . . put to the proof *P.* 102/37; **prouid** *pp.* experienced 13/4; tested *D.* 110/40; established *B.* 129/26.  
**prudence**, *n.* discernment *P.C.* 81/31.  
**pullid**, *pp.* picked *P.* 107/1.  
**puple**, *n.* people *H.D.* 122/20.  
**purchase**, *v.* gain 25/5.  
**purchasing**, *n.* achievement *P.C.* 82/4.  
**pure**, *adj.* guiltless *P.C.* 95/32.  
**purely**, *adv.* entirely 64/27.  
**purposen hem**, *pr.* 3 *pl. refl.* intend 53/2; **purpose** to *pr.* 3 *s. subj.* intends *P.C.* 86/11; **porpose** *pr.* 1 *s.* *P.* 105/1.  
**purte**, *n.* purity 5/13; **purete** 12/37; **purtee** 46/37; **puretee** 49/25.  
**puruey**, *v.* provide 3/37.

- put**, *v.* place 13/26; press on 9/10; *pp.* thrust 19/1; offered *P.C.* 87/44; **p. azeyn** drive back *B.* 137/12; **p. apon** press on 9/8; **p. awey** remove *H.D.* 127/7; dispel *S.* 148/1; **put bak** thrust back *P.C.* 93/4-5; **p. doune** repress *B.* 134/28, thrown down *S.* 148/13; **p. forþ** produce *D.* 110/6; **p. of** driven out *S.* 148/10-11; **p. oute** *S.* 148/28; **p. under** put down *P.C.* 93/22; **putteþ** to *pr* 3 *s.* adds *P.C.* 82/10.
- quakip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* trembles 22/26.
- qualite**, *n.* characteristic 57/9.
- quantite(e)**, *n.* magnitude *P.* 103/15, *H.D.* 126/23; size *H.D.* 124/12; *pl.* dimensions 69/24.
- queynte**, *adj.* fanciful 12/33; strange 53/41; extraordinary 59/5; elaborate *P.C.* 98/2; **make . . . queinte** conceive . . . ingeniously 32/3.
- queynt(e)ly**, *adv.* ? knowingly? oddly 55/3; wilily *S.* 148/15.
- queintise**, *n.* wiliness *S.* 148/14.
- quik**, *adj.* alive 18/38; ready *P.C.* 79/40.
- ransake**, *v.* turn inside out *P.C.* 85/18; *pr.* 3 *s.* searches thoroughly *D.* 116/4.
- ransakyng**, *n.* close investigation *P.C.* 85/35.
- raper**, *comp. adv.* more quickly 41/22; **rapest** *sup.* most quickly *P.C.* 94/12; **þe raper** the more quickly *P.* 101/6; **neuer þe raper** no more for that 43/13; no sooner for that *P.C.* 96/27.
- rauische**, *v.* force *P.* 107/27; **rauischid** *pp.* rapt 26/23; **raueschid** *P.* 104/18.
- rauisching**, **rauesching**, *n.* ecstasy 7/4, *B.* 145/8.
- rebounde**, *v.* = redound, overflow *P.C.* 78/28. *See Com.*
- reche to**, *v.* reach 18/18; *pr.* *p.* ranging 66/4.
- rechelesly**, *adv.* heedlessly 56/15.
- rechelesnes**, *n.* carelessness 3/4; indifference 51/39.
- rechip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* cares 47/1; **what þar reche . . . ?** What does it matter . . . ? 31/40, 43/24, 44/3.
- rede**, *v.* read 1/23; *pr.* 1 *s.* advise 43/10; *pp.* red 1/13; **reed** *imp.* read *P.* 107/41.
- redeliest**, *sup. adv.* most quickly 6/40.
- redy**, *adj.* willing *P.* 102/38; **redier** *comp.* quicker *P.* 102/10; **rediest** *sup.* quickest 8/36.
- rediliche**, *adv.* quickly *P.* 102/12; attentively *S.* 150/1 = *L.* *diligenter*.
- refo(u)rmyd**, *pp.* refashioned 10/17, 11/5.
- refreyne**, *v.* restrain 54/26.
- refresching**, *n.* refreshment *P.* 105/19.
- regnyng**, *pr.* *p.* reigning 66/4.
- reherasing**, *n.* repetition 7/15.
- reynes**, *n.* *pl.* loins 53/42.
- reise**, *v.* lift up *P.* 107/29; **reysed** *pp.* uplift *B.* 134/30; **reysid** *pp.* produced 24/5; raised *B.* 143/7.
- reken up**, *v.* mention in turn 27/16.
- relesing**, *n.* release *P.* 105/17.
- religious**, *n.* bound to a religious order 20/463.
- remedye**, *n.* do *r.* make amendment *B.* 142/29.
- remena(u)nt**, *n.* remainder *D.* 115/13, 116/22.
- remowe**, *v.* remove 26/18.
- remowyng**, *n.* removing 42/33; moving 61/33.
- renne**, *v.* run *P.C.* 83/19; *r. into* fall into *S.* 152/20.
- repaired**, *pp.* restored 11/13.
- reproef**, *n.* shame *P.C.* 93/35.
- reprouid**, *pp.* condemned *P.C.* 76/26.
- reprouyng**, *adj.* censorious 20/19.
- reprouyng**, *n.* blame 27/35.
- requerid**, *pp.* requested 28/31.
- rere up**, *v.* raise up *B.* 134/27.
- resceyte**, *n.* reception *S.* 152/31.
- resyn**, *see* rise.
- resonable**, *adj.* rational *P.C.* 84/34, *B.* 136/26.
- reso(u)n**, *n.* reason = intellectual faculty 9/33, *see* *Introd.*, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii reasoning 11/33; logic *P.C.* 86/4; **resons** *pl.* arguments 11/39; speculations 86/20; activities of reason *H.D.* 123/10; **is no r.** is unreasonable (to think) *P.* 107/2.
- resseyue**, *v.* receive 46/15.
- reule**, *n.* guidance *P.* 105/6.
- reule hem**, *v.* refl. govern themselves 27/21-22; **rewlyd** *pp.* guided *B.* 142/17.
- reuerent**, *adj.* adoring *P.* 102/30.
- reuerse**, *v.* upset, turn in the opposite direction 11/22.
- reuiþ**, *pr.* 3 *s.* robs of 32/1; takes away 46/31; tears away *P.C.* 95/22.
- reward(e)**, *n.* regard 27/37, concern *P.C.* 84/32; **in r. of** in comparison with 37/36-37.
- rewardyng**, *n.* regard *B.* 132/3 = *L.* *respectum*.
- rewler**, *n.* lawgiver 11/24.
- rewme**, *n.* realm *B.* 141/3.
- richesses**, *n.* *pl.* riches 17/3.
- riftid**, *pp.* erupted, belched forth *P.C.* 82/12.
- rigt**, *adj.* correct *H.D.* 124/13; proper *B.* 129/5; *adv.* very 4/4; **rigt as** just as 6/39; **rigt none** none at all *P.C.* 80/43; **þorow rigt** appropriately *B.* 131/24.
- rigtfulnes**, *n.* righteousness 28/12.
- rigtyd**, *pp.* amended *B.* 140/24.

rightwise, *adj.* just 35/26.

rise, *v.* arise 26/29; **rise apon** assail, set upon 18/12-13; **resyn** *pp.* risen 30/41.

ronnen, *pt.* 3 *pl.* ran *P.C.* 85/34; **ronne** *pp.* run 6/11.

roon, *adj.* = soft skin *P.C.* 96/20.

rote, *n.* root *P.* 103/35.

rotyng, *n.* taking root 20/6.

rouz, *adj.* rough 59/38.

roukers, *n. pl.* whisperers, tale-bearers 73/12.

rouners, *n. pl.* gossips 2/2, 73/12.

rowyn, *pr.* 3 *pl.* navigate 55/8.

rude, ruyde, *adv.* violent 48/23; = without proper knowledge *D.* 110/6; immature *B.* 134/7.

rudely, *adv.* violently 46/19.

ruednes, rudenes, *n.* violence 48/26; immaturity *P.C.* 89/3.

ruyde, *see* rude.

saaf, *adj.* saved 29/28.

sacrifice, *v.* sacrifice *P.C.* 80/8.

sacrifier, *n.* sacrificer *P.C.* 80/6.

sacrifige, *n.* sacrifice *P.C.* 79/31.

sad, *adj.* sober 25/23; steadfast 40/37.

sate, *pt.* 3 *s.* sat 26/4.

sauter, *n.* portion of psalms 41/27.

sauable, *adj.* capable of being saved *S.* 152/14.

sauely, -lich(e), *adv.* safely 72/28, *P.* 101/11, 107/35

sauyng, *prep.* but for *P.C.* 88/31.

sauour, *n.* fragrance 69/21.

sauour, *v.* apprehend 65/14; *pr.* 3 *s.* saureop 65/16.

scateryng, *n.* dissipation 15/13.

scaterst, *pr.* 2 *s.* distract *D.* 117/22; **scaterid** *pp.* drawn away 15/12.

schal, *pr.* 1 *s.* shall 11/30; *pr.* 3 *s.* schul 18/7; *pl.* scholen 2/29; schulen 35/10; schul 31/22; *pt.* 3 *s.* schuld should 3/3; scholde 23/7; *pt. pl.* schulden 6/10; schuld 27/20; schulde 10/20.

schame wip, *v.* be ashamed of 31/28; **pee wolde schame** *impers.* you would be ashamed *B.* 141/1-2.

schap pee, *imp. refl.* dispose yourself 9/34.

schap, *n.* form *P.C.* 98/20; shape *H.D.* 127/17.

scharp, *see* were, weryng.

scharply, *adv.* trenchantly 27/15; briskly 36/25; vigilantly *P.* 107/41; sternly *D.* 112/25.

scharpnes, *n.* keen penetration 18/19.

sche, *pron. f. s.* she 25/3; scho 25/7, 12; 26/30; scheo 26/33; *dat.* hir her 28/8.

scheeld, *n.* shield 15/34.

schere away, *v.* shear away 37/39; *pr.* 2 *s.* subj. cut off 21/23.

schete(p), *see* schotep.

schewe, *v.* show 5/15.

schewyng, *n.* display 49/8; revelation 71/9; vnordeynde *s.* manifestation of unruliness 55/19.

schittip, *pr.* 3 *s.* shuts off *H.D.* 123/19; **schit** oute shut out *pp.* *H.D.* 124/26.

scho, *see* sche.

scholde, scholen, *see* schal.

schortyng, *n.* growing lack *H.D.* 126/20.

schortly, *adv.* in brief 12/31; **schortlyer** *comp. adv.* more succinctly 39/1<sup>112</sup>; **schortly** to sey = in a nutshell 53/23.

schote, *n.* shot *D.* 115/23.

schoter, *n.* archer 13/43.

schotep, *pr.* 3 *s.* shoots 13/43; *pr.* 3 *s.* schetep *D.* 116/2; **schete oute** *pr.* 3 *pl.* 57/33; **schotte** *pp.* *S.* 150/17.

schrift, *n.* = Vulgate *confessio*, acknowledgment of the power and glory of God *B.* 133/13.

schriue, *v.* ascribe praise and glory *B.* 133/12; **schreuyng** *pp.* absolved *S.* 151/18.

schul, schulen, schulde, *see* schal.

schuldres, *n. pl.* shoulders 37/2.

sciens, scyence, *n.* learning 10/7; **han it in scyence** have the knowledge how 57/19.

sclaundre, *n.* slander *S.* 150/9; **in s. of** to the discredit of 27/24-25.

scole, *n.* school 5/40; university *P.C.* 76/34.

se, *v.* *see* 25/37; **seing** *pr. p.* used absolutely in the sight of 59/12; **sie**, *pt.* 3 *pl.* subj. saw 59/21.

seable, *adj.* visible *B.* 134/11.

seche, seke, *v.* seek *P.C.* 78/15; 15/2; **seek** at ask for . . . from *B.* 142/29-30.

seching, *adj.* inquisitive *P.C.* 78/1.

seching, *n.* search *D.* 114/33.

seculeres, *n. pl.* secular clergy 20/4<sup>63</sup>.

seek(e), *adj.* sick 30/16, 56/26.

seeknes, sekenes, *n.* sickness 44/26, 25/26.

seeldom, *adj.* rare 43/34, *P.C.* 89/35; *adv.* seldom *B.* 137/3.

seemlines, *n.* propriety 63/20; *see* semely.

seerly, *adv.* separately 11/31; *B.* 142/3.

sees, *v.* cease 43/15; **seese of** desist from 18/2; **cees of** cease from *P.C.* 98/1.

seep, *n.* amends *P.* 101/35.

sey, seie, seyn, *v.* say 31/22, *P.* 103/30; tell *B.* 131/3; **seyn** *pr.* 3 *pl.* speak 31/21; **seide** *pp.* described *D.* 111/1; told *B.* 141/9.

seintes, *n. pl.* blessed in heaven 9/19.

seke, *see* seche.

sekir, *adj.* sure 16/6; **sekerist** *sup.* *P.C.* 92/11.

sekirly, sekyrlyche, sikyrlly, *adv.* certainly 13/29; assuredly 22/19; surely 42/21, 41/31; safely *P.* 102/19.

- sekyrnes**, *n.* certitude 37/41.
- self**, *adj.* very 67/5; same *P.C.* 79/5; **selue** itself 38/32; **God self** God himself 14/18-19; **self fairheed** absolute beauty *H.D.* 125/2; **þe self feend** the Devil himself *S.* 148/30; **man self** man himself *B.* 139/25.
- sely**, *adj.* simple 48/25; poor 56/32; blessed *P.C.* 86/21.
- selynes**, *n.* blessedness *B.* 136/14.
- semely**, **seemly**, *adj.* decorous 14/4; fitting 55/12; dignified 36/5; comely *P.C.* 95/25; appropriate *B.* 135/31; **seemliest** *sup.* 63/20.
- semely**, *adv.* with dignity 55/25; fittingly *P.C.* 88/25.
- sensibilitee**, *n.* power of sensation *H.D.* 127/18.
- sensible**, *adj.* perceptible by the senses 5/25; that can be felt 9/26; endowed with the faculty of sensation *P.C.* 96/35; palpable *P.* 107/28.
- sensualite**, *n.* = the faculty by which we have bodily knowing and feeling of all bodily things 66/4, *B.* 129/16.
- sentence**, *n.* meaning *P.C.* 94/4; theme *H.D.* 119/6; meaning expressed *H.D.* 119/9; **Gadering of Deuine Sentence** replaces *Latin title Symbolica Theologia* *H.D.* 126/2-3; likewise **Gaderid Book of Deuine Sentence** *H.D.* 126/15-16.
- sentre**, *n.* centre *H.D.* 124/13.
- serchid**, *pt.* 3 *s.* searched 25/28.
- sere**, *adj.* distinct *P.* 106/12; various *D.* 116/4.
- seriauntes**, *n. pl.* sergeants, agents *S.* 147/19.
- seruage**, *n.* servitude *S.* 150/25.
- set(te)**, *v.* place 8/31; fix 54/16, *B.* 134/8; affirm *H.D.* 121/18; **sette hym refl.** apply himself 27/10; *pr.* 1 *s.* plant 107/7; *pr.* 3 *s.* puts *H.D.* 123/12; **sette hem fro** *pr.* 3 *pl. refl.* retire from 28/10-11; **set(te)** *pp.* set down 31/7, 58/1; **sette at lytil** little valued 36/4; **setteþ litil bi** pays little attention to 21/7.
- settyng**, *n.* affirmation *H.D.* 126/32; *pl.* positive attributions = *L. positiones* representations *H.D.* 121/19.
- sib**, *adj.* akin 32/35; *n.* relation 33/18.
- sibreden**, *n.* relationship 29/40.
- side**, *adj.* ample *P.C.* 89/21.
- syde**, *n.* on *s.* to one side 54/18.
- sie**, *see se.*
- sixingly**, *adv.* with sighs *S.* 151/5.
- signe**, *n.* gesture *S.* 148/25.
- sigt**, *n.* sight 36/5; consideration *P.* 101/13; seeing *H.D.* 124/15; vision *S.* 149/23; = *L. visio* *B.* 131/24, *consideratio* *B.* 134/29, *speculatio* *B.* 134/31.
- sikirly**, *see sekyrly.*
- silable**, *n.* syllable 41/10; *pl.* **silabes** 41/18.
- singular**, **syngulere**, **synguleer**, *adj.* solitary 7/31, 35, 8/15, *see Com.* 7/34-8/17; special *D.* 109/3, 23; unique *H.D.* 125/24.
- syngulerly**, *adv.* alone *P.C.* 77/2; particularly *P.C.* 82/23; individually *P.C.* 91/39; especially *B.* 141/37.
- syngulerte(e)**, *n.* independent judgment *P.C.* 91/30; singleness, single pointedness *H.D.* 123/16; **singule(e)rtes** *pl.* singularities *D.* 114/24, *S.* 150/10, 12.
- synner**, *adj.* sinful 38/20.
- sip**, **sipen**, *adv.* afterwards *P.C.* 90/2, 8/3; since 26/38; **sipen after** afterwards 72/34; *conj.* since 8/12, 17/6.
- sittyngly**, *adv.* in a becoming manner 56/18.
- skil(e)**, *n.* reason 13/20, 27/3; argument *P.C.* 86/41; *pl.* arguments 32/3; reasoning *P.C.* 93/4; **to kon skyle** to have knowledge 68/20; **is greet skyle** is very reasonable 35/39.
- skilful**, *adj.* reasonable 10/11.
- skulker**, *n.* prowling pilferer *P.C.* 91/32.
- slecke**, **sleckyn**, *v.* extinguish 42/15; slake *B.* 130/1.
- sley3**, **sley**, *adj.* strategic 5/13; prudent, wise *P.C.* 81/29, *B.* 142/19.
- sleight**, *n.* device 37/9; intelligence 72/9; resourcefulness *P.C.* 83/13; trickery *P.C.* 84/15; activity, = *L. industria* *B.* 144/12; stratagem *S.* 148/13; **slepyng sleight** simulation of sleep 46/20; *pl.* stratagems 36/33.
- sleupe**, **slewp(e)**, *n.* sloth 8/21, 20/21, *B.* 135/4.
- slownes**, *n.* indolence 11/38.
- smyte doun**, *v.* strike down 37/39; **smetyn** *pp.* 19/37.
- snapir**, *v.* trip, stumble *P.C.* 83/4.
- so**, *adv.* so as in such a way that *H.D.* 123/5; **so litil as is** however little it is 12/19; *see febeli*; *conj.* so **þat** provided that 47/2.
- sobirnes**, *n.* temperance 44/2; quiet 49/25.
- sodein**, *adj.* sudden 19/22; unexpected 74/23; **sodeyner** *comp.* swifter *H.D.* 126/26.
- sodeynte**, *n.* suddenness *P.C.* 85/32.
- sodenly**, *adv.* suddenly 12/26.
- soffisaunt**, *adj.* sufficient *P.C.* 91/22.
- softe**, *adj.* gentle 48/27; easy 58/14; pleasant *P.C.* 83/29; soft *S.* 147/29; **softe weders of þe ayre** fine weather *D.* 110/23; **softer** *comp.* easier 58/11; pleasanter *B.* 144/8.
- softely**, *adv.* pleasantly 58/39; quietly to myself *P.C.* 76/19; gently *D.* 117/31.
- soft(e)nes**, *n.* tenderness *P.C.* 82/31; sweetness *P.C.* 90/4.
- sogestion**, *n.* incitement *S.* 150/31; *pl.* promptings *B.* 134/28.
- soget(te)**, *adj.* subject 6/13, 63/3.



- soiettes**, *n. pl.* subjects 35/28.  
**sokoure**, *v.* help *P.C.* 84/18.  
**somdele**, *adv.* in some measure *B.* 143/13.  
**sondrid**, *pp.* distracted *D.* 116/3.  
**sone**, *adv.* straightway *P.C.* 97/36; soon *B.* 132/32; **as sone** immediately 53/16-17;  
**sonner comp.** sooner 23/5; earlier *B.* 136/6.  
**sone**, *n.* son *B.* 131/20; *pl.* **sons**, **sones B.** 131/4, 6.  
**Sonheed**, *n.* Sonhood *H.D.* 125/25.  
**sonne**, *n.* sun 64/1.  
**sonnebeme**, *n.* sunbeam *B.* 143/29.  
**sore**, *adj.* grievous 68/29; *adv.* exceedingly 25/7; painfully *D.* 117/33; **sorer comp.** more grievously *B.* 130/3.  
**sory**, *adj.* vile 36/8.  
**sorouful**, *adj.* sorrow-laden *D.* 114/23.  
**sorow**, *n.* make sorow feel sorrow *P.C.* 89/24-25.  
**sorowep**, *pr.* 3 *s.* laments *B.* 132/7; **sorowid**, *pp.* *P.C.* 76/25.  
**sotely**, *adv.* inseparably (in a way that defies analysis) 3/41, 21/35, 23/27; penetratingly 37/16; cleverly *P.C.* 95/14.  
**sotil**, *adj.* wily 7/25; complicated 48/5; refined 61/18; hard to grasp 66/38; spiritualized *P.C.* 82/15; ingenious *P.C.* 83/3.  
**sotylte**, *n.* cunning device 36/37; ingenuity *P.C.* 75/22; fine quality *P.C.* 90/15; *pl.* refinements 36/33.  
**sop(e)**, *adj.* true 11/30, 27/17.  
**sope**, *n.* truth 19/11.  
**sopfast**, *adj.* true 37/41.  
**sopfastly**, *adv.* veritably *S.* 151/10.  
**sopfastnes**, *n.* truth *B.* 140/20.  
**sopliher**, *comp. adv.* more truly 30/19.  
**soude**, *n.* soul 10/14. *See* *Intro.* *pp.* xxxv-xxxvi = *L. anima H.D.* 127/29; soul, spiritual part of man *B.* 142/10.  
**soun**, *n.* sound 69/20; *pl.* **sounes** 50/27.  
**sounde**, *adj.* solid *H.D.* 124/10.  
**sounip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* sounds *S.* 147/5.  
**souerein**, *adj./adv.* supreme *P.* 103/9; *s.-desirable* supremely desirable 10/20; **souereinest sup.** ultimate 1/16; transcendent 26/16; chief 74/10. In *H.D.* = *L. super* = on a higher plane than man can know, absolute, beyond all comparison, e.g. *s.-clerest* 119/19; *s.-schinyng* (= *L. supersplendenter, superlucenit*) exceeding all light 119/16, 124/4; *s.-substancyal* (= *L. supersubstantialis*) beyond all understandable existence 120/24, 124/8, 125/15; *s-substancyaly* (= *L. supersubstantialiter*) 121/4, 124/7; *s-vnknownen* (= *L. superignotum*) exceeding all knowledge 119/16.  
**souereyn**, *n.* **goostly** spiritual director *P.C.* 87/6; *pl.* superiors 20/4<sup>63</sup>.  
**souereynli**, **-liche**, *adv.* in a transcendent manner, *see* **souerein adj.**; *s. fulfillyng* = *L. superimplentem H.D.* 119/21; *s. for to schine* = *L. supersplendere H.D.* 119/19; *s. set* = *L. superposita H.D.* 121/13.  
**souereynte**, *n.* authority 35/27.  
**sparcle**, *n.* spark 12/24.  
**speche**, *n.* speech *S.* 147/5; *see* **faireheed**.  
**special**, *adj.* particular 13/39; outstanding 27/31; **in special** in particular *P.C.* 75/2; individually 79/18.  
**speciales**, *n. pl.* dedicated ones, elect 8/31.  
**specyaly**, *adv.* = in a supreme degree 36/1; specifically *P.C.* 78/34.  
**spede**, *n.* expediency 28/39; well-being *P.C.* 79/35.  
**spedip**, *pr.* 3 *s.* is expedient *P.C.* 79/26;  
**spede þee þe rapen pr. 2 *s. subj. refl.* press on faster *P.* 101/6; **be sped (of)** be successful (in) *D.* 116/10; rapidly achieve *D.* 117/17.  
**speedful**, *adj.* profitable 24/8, 66/25; expedient *D.* 110/10.  
**speedly**, *adv.* swiftly 12/23.  
**speke**, *v.* speak of 34/34; define *P.C.* 87/21.  
**spekingly**, *adv.* = though speaking *D.* 115/12.  
**spere**, *n.* spear 15/37.  
**sperit**, **spirit**, *n.* spirit 28/33; emotion 41/20; in *s.* spiritually 57/16.  
**spice**, *n.* kind 54/10.  
**spille**, *pr.* 2 *s. subj.* spoil 39/4.  
**spoyle**, *v.* despoil *P.C.* 89/11.  
**sporne**, *v.* stumble *P.C.* 82/41.  
**spot(te)**, *n.* mark 39/39, 40.  
**spousid**, *pp.* united in marriage *B.* 129/9.  
**stabelnes**, *n.* stability, = immunity from destruction *D.* 110/31.  
**stalworply**, *adv.* resolutely 14/27; vigorously 58/11.  
**stare in**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* stare at 58/27.  
**staryng wood**, *adj.* stark mad 54/34.  
**stapil**, *n.* remaining root (of tree that has been felled) 69/6.  
**statute**, *adj.* ordained 63/6.  
**statute**, *n.* prescription 41/4; law *D.* 114/16.  
**staunson**, *n.* = membrane separating the nostrils, septum (*staunson* usually signifies 'upright', 'bar', 'prop') 57/35.  
**stede**, **steed**, *n.* place 6/9, *S.* 149/22; to **zeue s. to fall back *D.* 112/11.  
**stedfastliche**, *adv.* steadfastly 24/2.  
**stedly**, *adj.* local 61/38.  
**stedlynes**, *n.* local existence *H.D.* 127/17.  
**stepppyng**, *n.* walking *P.C.* 94/30.  
**stere**, **stire**, **styrre**, *v.* stir, incite 31/29, 39/14; prompt *D.* 117/31.  
**steryng**, *n.* prompting, touch of grace 2/9; exhortation 2/21; impulse 9/12; movement 15/1; emotion 73/22; agitation *P.C.* 83/24; *pl.* wagging *P.C.* 87/19.****



- sterres**, *n. pl.* stars 58/27.
- stifly**, *adv.* firmly, resolutely 12/36; boldly *P.C.* 77/34; **stifly in pat pat in zow** is with all the boldness at your command *P.C.* 85/27; *see stonde.*
- sting up**, *n.* ascent *P.C.* 84/14.
- stille**, *adj.* still, passive 26/19; silent *D.* 109/25.
- stylle**, *v.* calm 42/15.
- stynche**, *n.* stench 69/21.
- stirer**, *n.* inciter *S.* 152/10.
- styrre**, *see stere.*
- stockes**, *n. pl.* vats, = *L. torcularia*, presses *P.C.* 78/28.
- stody**, *imp* cast about 43/5.
- stok**, *n.* block of wood *H.D.* 124/10; **stockes or stones** = inanimate things *H.D.* 121/14-15.
- sonde**, *v.* remain 9/1; stand *B.* 141/3; depend *P.* 103/15; **sondeþ** *pr. 3 s.* is set 17/24; stands 34/22; consists *P.* 102/30; **it s.** things are *P.* 107/40; **sonde stifly** stand firm 7/23; **sonde by** stand by, support 60/35.
- standing**, *n.* standing *P.* 101/29.
- standing**, *pr. p.* (*used absolutely*) it being the case *P.* 102/1.
- streche**, *pr. 3 s. subj.* extend 9/17.
- streyne**, *v.* restrain 66/23; *imp.* exert 48/16; **s. up** stretch up 33/36; *pr. p.* constraining *D.* 109/23; *pp.* constrained 19/37; controlled *P.C.* 82/14; distorted *P.C.* 87/18.
- streynid**, *adj.* forced *D.* 118/8.
- streyninges**, *n. pl.* exertions 48/23.
- streyte**, *adj.* rigorous 34/24; strict *D.* 117/8; narrow *H.D.* 122/6; **maken streite** narrow *H.D.* 126/18; **maad streite** contracted 126/26.
- streitly**, *-liche*, *adv.* unequivocally 54/29; singlemindedly *P.C.* 89/29; tensely *P.* 106/37; strictly *D.* 109/8.
- streitnes**, *n.* severity *D.* 118/12.
- strengpheed**, *n.* strength *P.C.* 86/7.
- strengping**, *n.* strengthening *P.C.* 86/19.
- strengping**, *pr. p.* strengthening *B.* 140/11.
- stresse**, *pr. 1 pl.* force, strain 49/23.
- striuiþ**, *pr. 3 s.* struggles 46/43.
- strongly**, *adv.* vigorously *D.* 112/23.
- studieþ after**, *pr. 3 s.* directs efforts towards *B.* 134/5.
- stuffe hem**, *v. refl.* reinforce themselves 56/9.
- sturdy**, *adj.* diseased, or stunned 54/17. *See Com.*
- subieccion**, *n.* subjection 63/11.
- substancial**, *adj.* = having individual substance *P.C.* 81/9.
- substancialy**, *adv.* materially 59/24; amply 59/29; essentially *P.C.* 79/23.
- substance**, *n.* essential nature 5/20; essence 51/23, *P.C.* 87/32; essential part 44/11; goods *P.C.* 78/26; separate being *H.D.* 125/31; substance *H.D.* 120/19; *pl.* kinds of substance *H.D.* 124/32; essential parts *P.* 107/22; **in s.** in reality 68/1.
- suff(e)raunce**, *n.* submissiveness *P.C.* 93/30; toleration *P.C.* 93/33.
- sufficient**, *adj. s.* to **suffre** will permit 1/9.
- sufficiently**, *adv.* effectively 39/15; adequately 73/32.
- suffise**, *v.* be sufficient *B.* 130/5; **suffiseþ inouþ** *pr. 3 s.* is wholly sufficient 15/28.
- suffre**, *v.* allow 32/30; *pr. p.* undergoing *P.C.* 93/37.
- suffrer**, *n.* one acted upon 39/2.
- suffryng**, *n.* sufferance *P.C.* 93/35.
- suffringly**, *adv.* with patient endurance *D.* 110/39.
- sum**, **somme**, *pron.* some 34/33, 35/24.
- sumtyme**, *adv.* at one time 67/16.
- sumwhat**, *adv.* to some degree 46/34; *n.* something 31/22.
- supposing**, *n.* **bi þi s.** in your judgment 1/19.
- suspecte**, **in s.** in suspicion 54/6-7.
- swarenes**, *n.* squareness 69/19.
- swerde**, *n.* sword 37/40.
- swyne**, *n. pl.* boars 37/22.
- swink and swete**, *imp.* toil and sweat 23/13.
- taast**, *n.* slight experience *B.* 138/2.
- taasten**, *v.* taste 53/36.
- taastyng**, *n.* faculty of taste *H.D.* 120/10.
- take**, *v.* understand 31/8; assume 57/7; receive *D.* 110/40; **t. apon hem** presume 57/34; **t. ende** have an end 11/2; **t. it to us** take it personally *S.* 148/27; **t. to impute to S. 151/35; **t. up** pick up 37/20; **toke to hem** *pt. 3 s.* adopted *B.* 129/12; **taken**, **take** *pp.* undertaken 53/7; received *S.* 147/16; taken *D.* 116/30; **taken in** understood as 27/35; **taken by** instigated by *D.* 118/6.**
- tale**, *n.* account 67/37.
- tariad**, *pp.* kept back *D.* 109/6.
- tariing**, *n.* delay 41/18.
- teching**, *n.* instruction 39/41; *pl.* doctrine *H.D.* 121/8.
- teenful**, *adj.* wrathful 20/17.
- teermes**, *n. pl.* limits *H.D.* 123/3; frontiers *B.* 138/12.
- tendre**, *adj.* delicate 52/14.
- þan**, **panne**, *adv.* then 4/36; **þan and þan** occasionally 2/11.
- þan**, *see þen.*
- þar**, *pr. 3 s. (impers.)* is necessary 9/8; **what þar reche** . . . ? What does it matter . . . ? 31/40.

- bat at**, that which *P.C.* 75/26.  
**beder**, *adv.* thither 17/39.  
**bei**, *pron. nom. pl.* they 2/3; *acc. hem* 1/24; *peim* 13/9; *dat. hem* 2/1, *peim* 13/9; *possess. adj. her(e)* 6/31, 48/22; *peire* 3/13.  
**ben**, *conj.* than 2/40; **first** . . . **pan** of first before *B.* 134/14-15.  
**benk**, *v.* think 9/13; be conscious of *P.C.* 77/3; **pee benk** seem to you 34/29.  
**per(e)**, *adv.* where *B.* 135/18; **p. after** after that 22/16; in like proportion *B.* 139/12; accordingly *B.* 142/35; **p. azein** against it 32/4; **p. by** by it 2/13; **p. fro(o)** from it *D.* 117/22, *S.* 148/30; **p. of** about it 10/3; with it *B.* 130/9; **p. on** on it 48/4; **p. oute** outside it *P.C.* 90/37; **p. to** moreover 9/13; accordingly 20/4<sup>63</sup>; for it 59/24.  
**picke, pik**, *adj.* thick *H.D.* 124/35; plentiful *S.* 151/26.  
**ping**, *n.* something 5/27; anything 14/30; creature 40/33.  
**pink**, *v.* consider *B.* 131/21; **me pinkep** it seems to me 10/3; see **penk**.  
**pirst**, *v.* thirst 30/16; *pr.* 3 *s.* **pirstep** *B.* 130/4.  
**pirst, prist**, *n.* thirst *B.* 130/2, 135/34.  
**pof, pouz**, *conj.* though 15/1; if 35/20; 66/31; **pof al** although *B.* 134/15; **pof al pei** were neuer so though they were outstandingly 18/7.  
**pozt**, *n.* thought 3/1.  
**poø**, *adj. pl.* those 2/7.  
**porou, porow**, *prep.* through 24/13, *B.* 129/4.  
**brid**, *adj.* third 2/23.  
**pries**, *adv.* thrice 72/31.  
**pristy**, *adj.* thirsty *B.* 129/14; see **pirst**.  
**tyme**, *n.* for **pe tyme** for the time being 19/27; **sumtyme** for a time *P.C.* 98/1; **to pe tyme be** until 24/10; **what tyme** whenever 57/7; **be tymes** now and then *B.* 143/32-33.  
**tiping tellers**, *n.* newsmongers 2/2.  
**to, tone, pe to** the one 57/36; **pe tone** 17/9.  
**to**, *num.* two 41/10.  
**to**, *prep.* for *P.* 104/21.  
**togeder(s)**, *adv.* together 17/13, *D.* 111/2.  
**token**, *-yn*, *n.* mark 23/30; sign *B.* 133/21.  
**torettes**, *n. pl.* turrets, = uprights of the heraldic fleurs-de-lis, *D.* 111/22.  
**turnip aboute**, *pr.* 3 *s.* turns round 68/27; **tornen to pr. 3 *pl.* turn into 27/23; **torne pe bak** turn round *B.* 137/25.  
**toþer, pe toþer** the other 17/10.  
**touche**, *v.* affect *P.C.* 85/37; *pp.* mentioned 28/6.  
**touching**, *n.* contact *H.D.* 128/3.  
**touching**, *prep.* with respect to 61/14.  
**trace**, *v.* search out *D.* 115/30; **trasid pp.** discovered *D.* 115/9.  
**trasing**, *n.* inquiry, scrutiny *P.C.* 84/34; tracking *D.* 115/17.  
**trauayle, traucile**, *n.* effort 70/18; labour 23/21, *P.C.* 98/39.  
**trauaille**, *v.* labour 4/12; **trauailen aboute pr. 3 *pl.* seek for 69/38; *pp.* harassed 17/22; **ben trauaylid wiþ** are tortured by 52/17.  
**trauelous**, *adj.* laborious 4/4.  
**tre**, *n.* wood 39/4.  
**treed down**, *imp.* trample down 14/38; **troden down pp.** trampled 12/36.  
**treufeler**, *n.* idle gossip 30/34.  
**treulich, trewly, -lich(e)**, *adv.* properly 10/4, *P.C.* 84/6; rightly 12/16; truly *P.* 102/16.  
**treup, trewp(e)**, *n.* truth 54/31, *H.D.* 128/3, *S.* 151/14.  
**trewe**, *adj.* true 10/7; truthful *P.C.* 85/12; *sup.* surest *P.C.* 92/2.  
**trewly**, see **treulich**.  
**triacle**, *n.* sovereign remedy *P.C.* 77/35.  
**trist**, *n.* faith *P.* 103/2; trust *D.* 112/7.  
**trist**, *v.* believe *P.C.* 85/6.  
**tristely**, *adv.* trustingly, confidently *P.C.* 82/38.  
**tristi**, *adj.* confident *P.C.* 84/10.  
**trone**, *n.* throne 58/32.  
**troublid**, *adj.* disordered *H.D.* 127/19.  
**troubling**, for **t. of** for fear of confusing 27/26.  
**trowe**, *v.* believe 45/5.  
**trumpes**, *n. pl.* trumpets *H.D.* 122/21.  
**tutilers**, *n. pl.* whisperers, scandal-mongers 2/2.  
**twies**, *adv.* twice 28/39.  
**vmbilappid**, see **lap**.  
**unacording**, *adj.* unsuitable *P.* 107/37.  
**vnausid**, *pp.* without warning 12/23.  
**vnbe**, *v.* cease to be *P.C.* 89/29.  
**vnbigonne**, *adj.* eternal, without beginning *H.D.* 119/12.  
**vnclene**, *adj.* impure 18/22.  
**vncoupe**, *adj.* strange 51/11.  
**vncouenably**, *adv.* importunately *B.* 129/21.  
**vndeedly**, *adj.* immortal *B.* 138/22.  
**vndeedlines**, *n.* immortality 61/17.  
**undeportable**, *adj.* indivisible 10/9.  
**vnder**, *prep.* subject to *P.C.* 93/20.  
**vnderloute**, *adj.* subservient 35/28.  
**vnderput**, *v.* support 56/9.  
**vnderstandable**, *adj.* able to understand, intellectual, = *L. intellectuales* *H.D.* 120/11; that can be understood, intelligible *H.D.* 124/32; which the understanding frames *H.D.* 126/1; **v. worching miȝtes** active intellectual faculties *H.D.* 123/14;****

- v. pinges** intellectual concepts *H.D.* 127/28.
- vnderstondyng**, *n.* intelligence 25/38; interpretation *D.* 111/10; understanding *H.D.* 122/9; *pl.* faculties of understanding *H.D.* 123/12; **to my v.** as I understand it *P.* 107/8-9.
- vndiscreetly**, *adv.* unwisely 53/38.
- vndon**, *adj.* analysed, explained 16/5.
- vnfele**, *v.* lose the feeling of 25/12.
- vnformed**, *adj.* without definition *P.C.* 82/13.
- vngrorable**, *adj.* impalpable *H.D.* 119/21.
- vnkyndely**, *adj.* unnatural 47/36.
- vnknowe**, *v.* be ignorant of *S.* 149/36.
- vnknowyng**, *n.* = abandonment of knowledge, ceasing to know *title*, 70/6, *H.D.* 124/5; ignorance 27/39; **vnknouing** ignorance *S.* 151/13.
- vnkunyngly**, *adv.* ignorantly *B.* 129/21<sup>7</sup>.
- vnleueful**, *adj.* unlawful 18/5.
- unlicly**, *adj.* inappropriate 18/8.
- vnlicnes**, *n.* dissimilitude *H.D.* 127/33.
- vnlisty**, *adj.* listless 47/29.
- vnlistines**, *n.* listlessness 20/20.
- vnmaad**, *adj.* uncreated 70/2.
- vnmesurid**, *adj.* immoderate *B.* 131/12.
- vnmygtfulnes**, *n.* impotence *H.D.* 127/20.
- vnmyndfully**, *adv.* without thought 41/27.
- vnnepes**, *adv.* scarcely *P.C.* 76/23.
- vnnumerable**, *adj.* innumerable 28/16.
- vnordeind(e)**, *adj.* uncontrollable 44/26; inordinate 50/32; disorderly, unruly 54/24; uncontrolled 56/13.
- vnpassyngliche**, *adv.* = without departing from itself, without changing, = *L.* *ingressibilitet* *H.D.* 125/30.
- vn purchasid**, *pp.* not acquired 74/13.
- vnreproued**, *pp.* uncensured, unrejected 20/10.
- vnresonabiltee**, *n.* irrationality *H.D.* 126/21.
- vnresonable**, *adj.* irrational *P.C.* 76/40.
- vnrestful**, *adj.* disquieting *P.C.* 84/1.
- vnrestfulness**, *n.* restlessness 55/20.
- vnrewlid**, *pp.* uncontrolled *P.C.* 91/38.
- vnscaterid**, *pp.* undistracted *P.C.* 83/15.
- vnseable**, *adj.* invisible *B.* 134/8.
- vnseemly**, *adj.* improper *S.* 150/10.
- vnstityng**, *adj.* unbecoming 56/13.
- unspekable**, *adj.* ineffable 1/4, *H.D.* 126/28.
- vnstabelnes**, *n.* instability 55/20.
- vntemprid**, *adj.* intemperate *B.* 141/24.
- vnunderstondably**, *adv.* in a way not to be understood *H.D.* 128/19.
- vnwetyyn**, *adj.* = hidden, not to be learnt, *i.e.* the fount of *P.C.* 84/23.
- vnwetyng**, *pr. p.* used absolutely not knowing 63/14.
- vnwise**, *adj.* uninitiated *H.D.* 121/1.
- vnworschip**, *n.* dishonour 27/33.
- upon**, *prep.* by 41/16.
- uprising**, *n.* resurrection *P.* 107/23.
- vse**, *n.* practice *P.C.* 88/16.
- vse hym**, *v. refl.* practise 34/6; **use pee** accustom yourself by practice *B.* 144/25; **usid in pp.** accustomed to 15/21.
- vtter**, *adj.* outward 68/19; entire *P.C.* 84/34; **vtter man** = physical man 6/35.
- utterly**, *adv.* fully 30/32.
- vtward**, *adj.* outward 53/30.
- vaale**, *n.* valley 71/38.
- vanite**, *n.* worthless activity 54/2.
- veyle**, *n.* veil (of the Temple) 71/14.
- veyne**, *adj.* useless *B.*, 137/1; of vanity *S.* 147/27; empty *S.* 148/3.
- venemos**, *adj.* pernicious 56/29.
- venge of**, *v.* avenge on 37/19.
- venial**, *adj.* pardonable 20/5.
- verrey**, *adj.* true 2/10.
- verrely**, **verely**, **-liche**, *adv.* with certainty 2/16; certainly *P.C.* 84/6; truly *P.C.* 87/31; fully *P.C.* 87/36; **more v.** with more exactitude 22/16.
- vertewe**, **verteue**, *adj.* strength 1/8; moral goodness 22/3; Power *H.D.* 126/1; *pl.* qualities of moral goodness 21/34; **by v. of** by the efficacy of 9/24.
- vertewos**, **vertuous**, *adj.* virtuous 9/25, 58/5.
- vili**, *adv.* shamefully *P.C.* 91/16.
- visage**, *n.* face 39/39.
- visibilite**, *n.* manifestation 63/10.
- voide**, *v.* dismiss *D.* 117/15; **v. away** remove *H.D.* 124/18; **voided**, **-id**, *pp.* let out 56/15; emptied of their force *P.C.* 86/21.
- vouchesaaf**, *v.* condescend 38/13; **vouchepsaaf** *pr. 3 s.* grants 19/10.
- wake**, *v.* keep vigil *P.C.* 83/18; **wakip** *pr. 3 s.* watches *B.* 137/12; **wakyng ouer** *pr. p.* watching over 56/37.
- wakyng**, *adj.* vigilant 45/8.
- waking**, *n.* keeping vigil *P.* 103/11; **wakinges** *pl.* being awake *H.D.* 126/10.
- wallid aboute**, *pp.* enclosed *H.D.* 125/13.
- wanyyn**, *pr. 3 pl.* wane 74/21.
- wantip**, *pr. 3 s.* is lacking 35/34; **w. pee** *impers.* you lack 45/18.
- wantonnes**, *n.* indiscipline *B.* 141/24.
- wantoun**, *adj.* untrained *P.C.* 78/1; unruly *P.C.* 86/19.
- wantounly**, *adv.* without discipline 66/25.
- war**, *adj.* on guard 5/28.

- warnes**, *n.* caution 5/26.  
**wawes**, *n. pl.* waves *D.* 110/21.  
**waxep**, *pr. 3 s.* grows *B.* 132/5; *see wexip*.  
**weders**, *n. pl.* weather *D.* 110/23; *see softe*.  
**we(e)l**, **wele**, **wel**, *adv.* well 13/29; 44/34;  
 fully 24/7; much 13/30; rightly *P.C.* 86/17;  
**þat weel were him** so so that it would  
 be thus well with him 48/37; **weel is**  
**inasmoeche** so far so good 73/28-29.  
**weelpayednes**, *n.* full satisfaction 51/21.  
**weelwyllyng**, *n.* goodwill 47/9.  
**weelwilnes**, *n.* goodwill *P.C.* 86/10.  
**weep**, *pt. 3 s.* wept 25/7.  
**wey**, *n.* in good **wey** on the right path 54/4.  
**weike**, *adj.* weak 8/19.  
**weyknes**, *n.* weakness *B.* 142/28.  
**wellyng**, *pr. p.* springing up 57/3.  
**welþe**, *n.* well-being 20/26; *pl.* good  
 things 66/26.  
**weltre**, *v.* wallow 66/25.  
**we(e)nde**, *v.* go 47/30, 63/6.  
**wene**, *v.* imagine 10/2.  
**wenyng**, *n.* opinion 73/41.  
**were**, *n.* perplexity 109/5.  
**were** . . . **neuer so sharp**, *pr. 2 s. subj.* if you  
 wear extremely prickly haircloth 21/20.  
**weri**, *adj.* torpid 8/21; **wery wip** tired of  
 45/30.  
**werid**, *adj.* damnable 8/25.  
**werines**, *n.* sluggishness 20/20; burden-  
 someness *B.* 135/4.  
**wering**, *n.* wearing (a special habit) *S.*  
 150/4; **scharp weryng** wearing a hair  
 shirt *P.* 103/12.  
**werk(e)**, *n.* activity 2/17; affliction 41/19;  
 exercise *P.C.* 86/37; deed *S.* 148/25; *pl.*  
 actions 26/36.  
**werre**, *n.* on **w.** in war 15/38.  
**weten**, *-yn*, *see wite*.  
**wetyng**, *n.* wetting 48/24.  
**wetyng**, *n.* knowing 5/3; understanding  
 19/14; knowledge 22/35; *see wite*.  
**wetyngly**, *adv.* knowingly 19/17.  
**wexip**, *pr. 3 s.* grows 69/3.  
**wham**, *pron.* whom 30/40.  
**what**, *interrog.* how much . . . ? 19/16; **what**  
**perof?** What of it . . . ? *P.C.* 92/4-5.  
**wheder**, **weþer**, *adv.* whither *P.C.* 96/14.  
 17/39.  
**whens**, *adv.* whence 50/28.  
**wher**, *see weþer*.  
**whereaneintes**, *adv.* whereabouts 40/5.  
**whereso**, *adv.* wherever 25/14.  
**whereporou**, *adv.* whereby *S.* 153/3.  
**weþer**, *adj.* either *P.C.* 92/24.  
**weþer**, *adv.* no matter which 40/37.  
**weþer**, **wher**, *pron.* which of the two 15/34;  
*interr.* introducing alternatives, whether (or  
 not) 56/17.  
**whetteþ**, *pr. 3 s.* stimulates *B.* 144/15.  
**whi**, *adv.* why; **for whi** because 16/27; **for**  
**which reason** *H.D.* 126/13; *conj.* for the  
 reason that 63/22-23.  
**whiche**, **þe whiche**, *pron.* who 63/7.  
**while**, *n.* time 8/23.  
**whiles**, **þe whiles þat**, *conj.* whilst 31/22.  
**whinen**, *pr. 3 pl.* whine 54/21.  
**who**, *pron.* as **who** as if one *P.C.* 89/20, *D.*  
 111/9-10.  
**wigt**, *n.* weight *H.D.* 127/17.  
**wigt**, *n.* being *S.* 149/37.  
**wilde**, *adj.* unruly *P.C.* 86/20, 91/26.  
**wil(e)**, *pr. 3 s.* intends 9/5; *wills* *P.* 107/8;  
**wol(e)** will *P.* 107/27, 30; **wolen** *pr. 1 pl.*  
*H.D.* 126/31.  
**wilful**, *adj.* voluntary 44/2.  
**wilfully**, *adv.* willingly 15/13; intentionally  
 68/1.  
**wille**, **wyl**, **wile**, *n.* *see* *Introd.*, pp. xxxviii-  
 xxxix affection 33/11; desire 33/27; intent  
 20/4; **will** = faculty directed to conscious  
 and intentional action *P.* 102/36; *pl.*  
 intentions *B.* 144/32; **by wille and**  
**auisement** of set purpose and deliberately  
 1/12; **iuel wille** ill-will *S.* 148/21.  
**willy**, *adj.* willing 9/7.  
**wilnable**, *adj.* that can be willed 10/21.  
**wilne**, *v.* wish 33/3.  
**wynne**, *v.* come 17/39; **w.** to gain 7/26;  
 succeed in 37/29.  
**wirche**, *see worche*.  
**wise**, *n.* way *B.* 136/27; **make him on none**  
**oper wise** make nothing else of him *P.C.*  
 75/22.  
**wisely**, *adv.* with his wisdom *P.C.* 84/17.  
**wisse**, *pr. 3 s. subj.* guide *D.* 113/34.  
**wite(n)**, **weten**, *v.* know 6/16; **is to weten** is  
 to be known 22/15; **wite** *pr. 1 s.* *P.* 107/36;  
**wote** *pr. 1 and 3 s.* 11/37, 40/5; **wote** *pr.*  
*2 s.* 7/39; **wost(e)** *pr. 2 s.* 9/23, *H.D.*  
 120/18, 124/14; **wote** *pr. 2 pl.* 30/27;  
**wite** *imp.* *B.* 140/31; **wist** *pt. 3 s.* 25/23;  
**wetyn** *pp.* 60/23.  
**wip**, *prep.* against 8/23.  
**wipal**, *adv.* moreover 16/19.  
**wipholden**, *pp.* refused 38/21.  
**wipinne**, *adv.* inwardly *P.C.* 75/17.  
**wipinneforþ**, *adv.* within *H.D.* 120/14.  
**wipouten**, *adv.* outwardly *P.C.* 75/18;  
 outside *B.* 137/17; **fro wipoutyn** from  
 outside 50/21.  
**wipoutforþe**, *adv.* without *H.D.* 120/13.  
**wipoute(n)**, *prep.* beyond 10/39; outside  
 17/34; apart from 58/18; without *P.* 106/2.  
**witnes**, *n.* testimony 20/8, *D.* 112/27; **to**  
**witnes** as witnesses 24/11.  
**witnes**, *v.* furnish proof of 33/27; *pr. 3 pl.*  
*subj.* testify to 24/15.



- witte, wit**, *n.* intellect 2/26, 12/35, *P.C.* 86/39; understanding *P.C.* 77/4, *B.* 137/31; reason *P.* 104/12; *pl.* senses 6/39; intellectual faculties 12/40; **wittes of þe spirit** spiritual intelligence 41/34; **goostly wittes** spiritual senses of perception 6/41, *see Com.*; = *L. spirituales sensus B.* 129/6; *see kyndely*; **comounist wit of kynde** = lowest denomination of natural intelligence *P.C.* 76/18; **natureel (naturele) witte** natural intelligence *H.D.* 124/14; natural faculties *P.C.* 82/14; **outward wittes** bodily senses 69/25; **lese his witte** lose his wits 57/26.
- witterly, wittirly**, *adv.* truly 18/30; rightly *P.C.* 82/25.
- witty**, *adj.* wise *P.C.* 92/32.
- wittid**, *adj.* intelligent *P.C.* 76/23.
- wlatsomnes**, *n.* loathing 20/18.
- wode**, *n.* wood *H.D.* 124/12.
- wode**, *see wood*.
- wole(n)**, *see wyll(e)*.
- wonder**, *n.* **haue no w.** do not be surprised 11/9; **no w. þof** it is not surprising if 42/3; **what w. þof** is it surprising if . . . ? *B.* 141/39; **bot if more w. were** unless it were most exceptional 18/22.
- wonderful**, *adj.* miraculous 9/27; indescribable 25/10.
- wondryng**, *n.* perplexity *P.C.* 83/27; **in (to þe) w. of** to the wonder of 36/1, *P.C.* 85/39.
- wone**, *v.* stay 13/24; *pr.* 3 *s.* exists 50/34; **wonyng** *pr. p.* living 35/21.
- wonyng**, *n.* dwelling *D.* 109/8; **wonyngstede** dwelling-place *B.* 137/28.
- wont(e)**, *adj.* accustomed *P.C.* 95/22, 40.
- wood**, **wode**, *adj.* mad, enraged 9/21, 37/22; frenzied *P.C.* 83/27; *comp.* **woder** 40/33.
- woodnes**, *n.* madness 47/3; fury, = *L. furor B.* 141/25; **woodnesses** *pl.* frenzies, = *L. insaniae H.D.* 126/8.
- worche, wirche**, *v.* work 4/7, 5/11, bring about 34/12; fashion *P.C.* 96/22; **worchip** *pr.* 3 *s.* is successful *P.C.* 88/33; **wrouȝt** *pl.* 3 *s.* fashioned 8/3; worked 71/6; *pp.* done 2/23; brought about 9/2; produced 34/10; *see forþ*.
- worching**, *adj.* operative 10/14; at work *P.C.* 75/19; active *H.D.* 123/14.
- worching**, *n.* activity 10/2; action 59/9; practice *P.C.* 87/9; exercise *P.C.* 89/23; effect *P.* 101/15; *pl.* activities *H.D.* 120/11.
- worde**, *n.* saying *P.C.* 93/24.
- word(e)ly**, *adj.* worldly 8/1, *H.D.* 120/21.
- worschip**, *n.* honour *S.* 147/27; **do . . . w.** pay honour 27/31; *pl.* honours 17/3.
- worschip**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* honour 41/3; *pp.* **worschepid** 36/6.
- worschipful**, *adj.* hallowed *P.C.* 88/32; worthy of honour *S.* 148/7.
- worp**, *pr.* 3 *s.* becomes 47/2.
- worp**, *see noþing*.
- worpely, worpilich**, *adv.* fittingly *P.C.* 83/32, 1/5; befittingly *P.C.* 85/38; with real desert *P.* 103/21; gloriously *P.C.* 96/16.
- worpi**, *adj.* deserving *P.C.* 76/25; eminent *P.C.* 85/17; good *P.C.* 91/16; noble *P.* 104/14; worth *D.* 109/9; **worpiest** *sup.* best *D.* 115/17; **more worpi** of more worth 18/36.
- worpines**, *n.* value 2/24; eminence 8/24; dignity 10/23; nobility *P.C.* 86/27; excellence *P.C.* 87/17; quality *P.C.* 97/3; merit *S.* 153/7.
- wost, wote**, *see wite*.
- wrastlyng**, *pr. p.* wrestling 68/8.
- wrappe**, *n.* anger 43/23.
- wrappes**, *imp.* be angry *B.* 139/19.
- wrech, wrecche**, *n.* sinner 23/5<sup>79</sup>, 14<sup>80</sup>, 37/17.
- wrec(c)hidnes**, *n.* badness 3/15; sinfulness 22/22.
- wretyn**, *pp.* written 1/13.
- wrist**, *n.* carpenter 39/4.
- wripen**, *pr.* 3 *pl.* twist 55/2.
- writte**, *n.* Holy Writte Holy Scripture 57/10.
- wronge**, *adv.* wrongly 69/29.
- wrope**, *adj.* wroth *B.* 139/20.
- wrouȝt**, *see worche*.



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