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<Text: Prick of Conscience>

<fol. 3v><line 24>The bigynnyng of alle þis processe

Ryȝt knowyng of a man+hym-self is

Bote *sum* haþ ful grete lettyng

That þei may haue no riȝt knowyng

Of hem-self þat þei furst shold knowe

That furst to mekenes shold hem drawe

Ther-of foure þingis j fynde

That makeþ a mannys witte ofte blynde

And knowyng of hym-self letteþ

Where þorouȝ he hym-self for-geteþ

Of this seint bernard bereþ wittenes

That þes four beþ write in vers

<lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

That is fauour of folk & fairenes

And brennyng of ȝouþ & ryches

Reueþ a man riȝt skele & mynde

<fol. 4r>To knowe hym-self what he is of kynde

The floure letteþ hym in his siȝt

That he may not knowe hym-self riȝt

And his hert makeþ dulle & vnbuxome

To þenke in þe tyme <exp>in þe tyme</exp> þat is to come

Thes foure noreschen pompe and pride

And oþer vices that men shold hide

Jn whom sum haue of þe floures

Seldom is sene any meknes

Also þei letteþ a man þat he can not sese

The periles of the wordle & vanitees

Ne þenke on þe tyme þat is to come

Ne of deþe ne of þe day of dome

Ne can not vnderstond ne se .
 The paynes þat after his lif shalle be
 To synful men that here vseþ folye
 Ne the blis þat god+men beþ wurthy
 Bote in delites setteþ here hertys fast
 Ri3t as his lif sholde euer last
 And 3yueþ hym alle to vanite
 And to þing þat may his likyng be .
 Siche men beþ not ledde with skille
 Bote foloweþ here willes to fulfille
 And no þing elles takeþ hede ;
 What wonder is if þei have no drede
 And alle for defaute of knowyng
 Of þat . þat þei my3t hym to drede bryng
 And some men wole not vnderstonde
 The þing þat my3t make hem dredonde
 For þai wille not here bote þat hem payeþ
 Ther-for þe profete in þe sauter seiþ
 <lat></lat>
 He seith he haþ no wille to fele
 Ne vnderstonde to do wele
 Thes wordes by hem may be said here
 That wille not vnderstond & lere
 To drede god and do his wille
 Some vnderstondeþ as þei here telle
 <fol. 4v>Bote wirkeþ after here owen wille
 Bote no drede in hure hert wille duelle
 And for defaute of trevþe may þat wel be ;
 For þei trowe not bote þat þei see
 Bote þe prophete seiþ in þis manere
 By hym þ^t groccheþ when þei of drede here
 <lat></lat>
 The prophete said and þei trowed nou3t
 Bote grocched & were greued in þou3t
 Thes be men þat trowed in þing
 That men seiþ a3ens here likyng
 Bote grocched & wexeþ fast wroward
 When men seiþ au3t þat þem þenkeþ hard
 Sone can sviche thinke . [&] in bokes rede

Bote li3tnes of hert by-reueþ hem drede
 So þ^t hit may not with hym duelle
 Of whiche spekeþ crist in þe gospelle

<lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

Tille a tyme he seiþ some troweþ a þing
 And passeþ þer-fro in tyme of temptyng
 And also thus saiþ þe *prophete* Dauid
 In a psalme þat cordeþ þer-with

<lat></lat>

<lat></lat>

He said in his wordes trowed þai
 In *praysyng* loued hym as þei gan say
 Bote sone þei hadde done & for3at
 His werkys & þou3t no more in þat
 There-for sviche men beþ so vnstedfast
 That no drede with hem may longe last
 For þei beþ so wilde when þei be in quert
 That þei kunne holde no drede in hert
 Bote ho-so can not drede may lere
 That þis tretys wille rede or here
 Of þei wole rede or here to ende
 The materys þat beþ þer-in contende
 And vnder-stond and trowe
 And þat shalle make here hertis lowe
 To werke godes werkes and fle folie ;
 <fol. 5r>þorou3 drede þer may conceyue þerby
 Ther-fore this boke is in English drawe
 Of diuers maters þat beþ vnknawe
 To lewede men þat beþ vnkunnyng
 That beþ no latyn vnderstondyng
 To make hem . hem-self to knowe ;
 And fro likyng of this lif hem drawe ;
 And forto stere hem to drede
 When þei here clerkis þis boke rede
 Bote 3itte þer is some diuers matere
 That comforteþ hem þat wille hit here
 A3ens þe matiers þat beþ harde
 As 3e mowe wel here afterwarde

This boke also bereþ wittenes
 That in-to seuene parties departed is
 The first partie to haue in mynde
 Of the wrecchednes of mankynde
 The secunde of þe wordle luperne
 Of this vnstable lif þat is
 The þridde of deþ bodely
 The fourþe is of payne of purgatory
 The fyfþe of þe day of dome
 And of toknes þat shalle by-fore come
 The seuene is of the payne of helle
 Ther dampned men shul in duelle
 The seuene is of þe ioyes of heuene
 That be more þan tonge can nemene
 And of eche party fynd men may
 In þis boke diuers maters beþ say
 And in þe first partie .^[þat] write is
 Wole j speke of mannes wrecchednes
 For alle þat write .^[is] by-fore to loke
 Is bote entre of this booke

Here bigynneþ þe first part þ^t is of wrecchednes of man

First when god made al+þing of nou3t
 Of a foule mater man was wrou3t
 That was erþe tvo skyles to hold
 That one is for þat god wold
 Of foule maters make men in despite
 Of lucifer þat felle þat tide ;
 <fol. 5v>For þei sholde haue þen more shenshippe
 And more sorowe when þei hit kepe
 That man of so foule mater sholde duelle
 In þat place fro the whiche þei felle
 That oþer skylle is thus to se
 For man sholde here þe meker be
 And when he seep & þenkip in þou3t
 Of howe foule mater he was wrou3t
 For-whi god þorou3 his gret my3t
 That sette þat place in heuene bry3t
 Was made voyde þorou3 þe synne of pride
 That hit were fulfild on eche a side

Thorouȝ þe vertu of meknes
 That euene to pride contrary is
 Ther-for may no man þeder come
 Bote þat is meke and buxome
 That proueþ þe gospel þat saiþ vs
 Hov god seide to his deciples þus
 <lat></lat>
 <lat></lat>
 Bote 3e be he saide as a childe
 That is to say meke & mylde
 3e shulle not entre by no way
 Jn-to heuene riche þat lasteþ ay
 Þan hit by-houeþ þat a+man euere by-seke
 That . þat may make hym meke
 Bote no þing may meke hym more ;
 Than to þenke in hert as j seide ore ;
 How he was made of foule matere
 And is nouȝt ellys bote foule erþe here
 For þus seiþ a clerc as j 3ov say
 What is man bote erþe & clay
 And poudre þat wiþ wynde brekeþ
 And þer-for jobe to god þus spekeþ
 He saide lorde as þu made me
 Foule erþe and clay here to se
 Riȝt so þu shalt turne me a-gayne
 To erþe and poudre þis is certayne
 Than seiþ oure lord god almyȝty
 Aȝens man þus shortly
 <fol. 6r>He saiþ man ashe ar^t þu nov
 And to asches turne a-ȝen shalt þu
 Than is a+man not ellys to say
 Bote asche and poudre erþe & clay
 Of þis sholde eche man here haue mynde
 And knowe þe wrecchednes of his kynde
 That is departed as j shewe can
 In alle þe parties of lyf of man
 Also mannys life cast may be
 Principally in partyes thre
 That beþ to oure vnderstondyng~

Bygynnyng mydwarde and endyng~
 Thees þre parties be þre spaces tolde
 Of þe life of euery man 3ong and olde
 Bygynnyng of man þat first is
 Couetousnes & myche wrecchednes
 Ther-for j wole now or j passe
 Shewe 3ov what a man first was
 Sumtyme was when a+man was nou3t
 By-fore he was goten & wrou3t
 He was goten as we knowe
 Of vile seed of man with synne sowe
 And conceyued þan synfully
 With-in his owen moder body
 Ther his erber wtih synne was di3t
 As dauid saiþ in þe sauter boke ry3t
 <lat></lat>
 <lat></lat>
 Lo he saide as man-kynde is
 J am conceyuede in wrecchednes
 And my moder haþ conceyuede me ;
 Jn synne and in vnchastite
 Thare . [v] duelled in a foul dongoun
 And in a foule stede of corrupcioun
 Where j hadde none oþer fode
 Bote corrupcioun and foule blode
 And stencche and filthe as j saide ere
 With þis he was norisshede þere
 After-warde whan he is out-come
 Fro þe dongoun of his moder wombe
 <fol. 6v>And was bore to þis wordle ry3t
 He hadde noþer strengþ ne my3t
 Noþer to go ne 3itte to stonde
 Ne to crepe with fote ne honde
 Than hath a man las þen a beste
 When hit is bore & is alder leste
 For whan a best is bore so may he go
 Bote a man haþ no my3t þer-to
 Also renne boþe to & fro
 When he is bore so to do

For þan may he not stonde ne crepe
 Bote sperne crye & euer wepe
 For vnneþe a childe is bore fully
 That hit by-gynneþ wepe ne cry
 And by þat crye men mowe knowe þan
 Wheþer hit be man or womman
 For whan hit is bore hit cryeth wa wa
 Jf hit criep hit criep A . A
 The first letter is of þe name
 Of oure fore-fader Adame
 And if þe child a woman be
 When hit is bore hit seiþ E E
 That is þe furst letter take hede
 Of the name of Eue þ^t wrou3t oure dede
 Ther-for a clerk made in þis manere
 This vers of metre þ^t sheweþ here
 <lat></lat>
 Alle þees he saith þat come of Eue
 And be borne with lif here to leue
 Whan þei be bore what-so þei be
 Thei sey other A . oþer E .
 This is here þe bigynnyng
 Of oure lif sorowe and gretynge
 To whiche oure wrecchednes stered vs
 As Jnnocent telleþ þat seiþ þus
 <lat></lat>
 He seiþ alle we be bore wepyng~
 Wel sorowful semblaunt makynge~
 For to shewe þe grete wrecchednes
 Of oure kynde þat in vs is
 <fol. 7r>Thus when þe tyme comeþ of oure birthe
 Alle made sorowe and no mirthe
 Naked we come heder & bare
 And pore so shul we hennys fare
 On thes to tymes we shulde þenk þan
 For þus seiþ Job þe ry3tful man
 <lat></lat>
 <lat></lat>
 Naked he seiþ first j come

Hider out of my moder wombe
 And naked j shal hennys passe
 And as job seiþ so hit was
 Thus is a man atte þe first comyng
 Naked & bryngeþ with hym no þing
 And if any cloped forþ come
 His cloping is foule and lothsome
 That is nou3t bote a bloody skynne
 That he was by-fore lapped jnne
 Whiles he in his moder wombe lay
 The whiche is a foule þing in fay
 A fouler to here seiþ þe booke
 And alder+foulest on to loke
 This is a man as we may se
 Jn wrecchednes & in Caytifte
 And forto lyue bote a fewe daies
 Ther-for Job þus openly sais
 <lat></lat>
 <lat></lat>
 He seiþ man þat is bore of womman
 Lyuyng short tyme ful+fild is þan
 Of many maner of wrecchednes
 Thus seiþ Job and soþ hit is
 Also man is bore to nou3t ellys
 Bote to *trauaille* as Job telles
 <lat></lat>
 He seiþ man to *trauaille* is born ful ry3t
 As bridde is here vnto fli3t
 For litel rest in þis lif nov is
 Bote grete *trauayle* and bissynges
 3it a man is when he is borne
 <fol. 7v>The fendes sone and fro god lorn
 Ay tille he þorou3 *grace* may come
 To bapteme and to Cristendome
 Thus may a man his bigynnyng se
 Ful of wrecchednes and caytifte
 That oþer *partye* of lyf men calleþ
 The mydwarde after hit falleþ
 The whicheþ fro þe bygynnyng

Of mannys lyf vnto þe last endyng
 The bygynnyng of man as j haue tolde
 Js foule and wrecched to by-holde
 Bote hov foule is man after-warde
 Telleþ openly seint Bernarde
 <lat></lat>
 <lat></lat>
 Seint Bernard seiþ as the book telleþ
 That a+man is here no þing ellys
 Bote a foule slyme stynkyng to men
 And a sak ful of stynkyng fen
 And wormes fode þat þei wolde haue
 Whan he is dede and leid in *graue*
 Bote *somme* men and *wymmen* fair semeþ
 To si3t with-out as men demeþ
 And sheweþ not ellys bote þe skyn
 Bote ho my3t se þen with-jnne
 Fouler careyne my3t neuer be
 Then he shold þen on hem se
 Therfor he þat hadde so sharpe a sy3t
 And as clere y3en & as bry3t
 As hap a best þat þe lynx calles
 That may se þorou3 stonen walles
 Litel lykyng shold he haue þan
 To be hold or coueyte any womman
 For þen he my3t se with-out doute
 As wel with-jnne as with-oute
 And if he wiþ-jnne sawe hure ry3t
 Che were ful lopsume to his si3t
 Thus foule eche man with-jnne is
 As þe book seiþ and bereþ wittenes
 Than may we say on þis manere
 <fol. 8r>Hov foule þe kynde of man is here
 Where-fore j holde a man not witty
 That here is euer proude and joly
 When he may eche day here se
 What he is & what he shalle be
 Bote proude+man of þis takeþ non hede
 For hym fayleþ witte þat hym shold lede

The man þat is in grete wurchepe
 What hym-self is he takeþ no kepe
 For hym-self he knoweþ lest
 Than he fareþ as a wode best
 That stereþ a-boute in foure fete
 Therfor saith Dauid þe prophete
 <lat></lat>

<lat></lat>
 Man when he to wurchepe is brou3t
 Ri3t vnderstandyng haþ he nou3t
 He may be lykned and is þan
 To bestys þat no resoun can
 Where-fore ho so haþ witte in mynde
 Shold þenk in þe wrecchednes of his kynde
 That here is foule and wel lothsome
 For he may fro his body come
 Bothe fro a-boue and by-nethe
 Alle maner filthe with stynkyng breþe
 For more filthe is non harde ne nesche
 Then þ^t. þat comeþ fro mannys flesche
 And þat may a man boþe se and fele
 That wille by-holde hym-selue wele
 Hov foule he is to mannys sy3t
 And þerfor seiþ seint Bernarde ry3t
 <lat></lat>

<lat></lat>
 The worde in a boke seiþ to the
 If thu wylte þi-self byssyly se
 What comeþ þorou3 mouþe & nose namely
 And out of oþer entres of þe body
 A fouler dung-heep say þu neuer none
 Than is a man of flesh and bone
 Al+the tyme þat men here lyueþ
 <fol. 8v>His kynde non other fruy3t here 3eueþ
 Wheþer he leue here short or longe while
 3itte he is loply and wel vyle
 As fylthe stynkyng and no þing ellys
 As Innocent in a+book thus tellys
 <lat></lat>

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This clerk telleþ vs þus in a book
 By-holde he seiþ redely and look
 Herbys and trees he seiþ þu sest spryng
 And tak gode kepe what þei forþe bryng
 Herbys forth bryngeþ flourys and seed
 And trees fruyte and braunches to sprede
 And forþ bryngestu þorou3 þi skyn
 Netes luy3 and moche other *vermyn*
 Of hem he seiþ springeþ bavme ful gode
 And oyle & wyn for mannys fode ;
 And of the comeþ myche foule þing
 As fen & vryne and foule spetyng
 Of hem comeþ ful svete sauour
 And of the comeþ stenþe ful sour
 Siche as þe tre is with þe bowes
 Syche is the fruyt þ^t þer-on growys
 An yuel tre may no gode fruyt bere
 And þat knoweþ eche a gardyner
 A+man is a tre in a 3erde
 Of the whiche þe crop is *turned* dunward
 And þe rote towarde the firmament
 As seiþ the grete clerk Innocent

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He saiþ man in shap is bote a tre
 Turned vpward þat doune sholde be
 <fol. 9r>Of whiche þe rote that on hit springeþ
 Js the here that on mannys heuede hongep
 The stok next the rote growyng
 Js the heuede wiþ þe nekke folwyng
 The body of the tre ther-by

Js the brest with bely
 The bowes beþ arnes wiþ þe hondes
 And þe legges with the fete þat stondes
 The braunches may men kyndely calle
 The toos and þe fyngres alle
 This is the leef þat hongep not fast
 That is blowen wiþ wyndes blast
 And the body also of þe tre
 That wiþ þe sonne may i-dried be
 A man that is boþe 3ong and ly3t
 Be he neuer so stronge and wy3t
 And of face boþe fre & faire
 Juelys & sikenes makeþ hym apair~
 And alle his beaute & strengþ a-bate
 And makeþ hym in simple astate
 And changeþ alle his colour
 And makeþ hit fade as doþ þe flour
 A flour þat semeþ fair and bry3t
 Wiþ stormes hit fadeþ & febleþ þe my3t
 And yuelys and gret myscheues
 Comeþ to a man þat here leues
 As feuers dropesy and jaunes
 Tesyk goutes and oper maladies
 That doþ hym suffre gret pyne
 As stormes doþ the flourys dwyne
 Ther-for may a man wel y-likned be
 To a flour þat fair is on to se
 That when hit is for þe brou3t
 Welkeþ and fadeþ til hit come to nou3t .
 This shold be a ensample to us
 For-why Job in a boke seiþ þus
 <lat></lat>
 <lat></lat>
 Man he seiþ as floure bry3t
 Furst comeþ forþ here to þis ly3t
 <fol. 9v>And walkeþ an passeþ sone away
 As a shadowe on þe somers day
 And no tyme in o state duelleþ
 Bote euer passyng as Job telleþ



Of this dauid wittenes beres
In a psalme namely þorou3 þis vers
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
Dauid seiþ thus as wreten is
Man wadeþ a-wey erly as gras
Erly atte þe bygynnyng of þe day
He floressheþ and passeþ a-way
Atte euen late he is doun brou3t
And fayleþ and dvyueþ & goþ to nou3t
In the bigynnyng of þe lif of man
Nyne hundred wynter men leued þan
As clerkes seiþ and bereþ wittenes
Bote after þat by-come mannys lyf lasse
And so wold god þat hit shold be
For-why he saide þus to Noe ;