partye and ye firste chapitle A deuoute meditaciou of ye grete conseile in heuene for restorynge of man and his saluaciou

After ye tyme yat man was exilede oute of ye hye cite of heuene by ye ry3tewys dome of all-my3ty god souereyne kynge yer-of for his trespas and his synne and so wretchedly lay in prison & was haldenn in ye bandes of yat tirante ye deuell of hell y1 none myghte come a3eyne to yat blessed cite ye space of fyue yowsand~ 3er~ & more alle ye blessid spirites of heuene desirynge ye restorynge of her companye y1 was falle douen w1 lucifere hadden grete compassion of so longe myschefe of man y1 was to her restorynge and prayden ofte for his restorynge but specialy & w1 more instauence whenn ye tyme of grace was to men ; what tyme as we mowen deuoutely ymagine ; alle ye blessed~ componye of aungels gederede to-gedyr with one wille and souereyne deuocioun fellen douen prostrate to fore ye throne of almy3ty god kynge of heuene and Gabriell to whome as seynte Bernarde seyy was made speciale reuelaciou of cristes Incarnation in her alle name seyde in yis maner~ . almy3ty lorde it likede to 3our~ hye maieste of 3our~ endeles godenes to make of no3te y1 noble and resonable creature man for our~ conforte & our~ godenes y1 of hym schulde be made ye restorynge of our false companye lucifer and his felawes y1 fellen douen fro vs by apostasye so yat he schulde dwelle her~ in yis blessed~ w2 vs longyng & wyrchippynge 3ow w2-outenn ende . But lo gode lorde nowe alle yai perischen & none is sauede & in so many yousande 3ere passede ; we sene none of hem alle here . Our~ enmyes hauen ye victory &
of hem our~ party is not restorede but ye prison of helle
<fol. 4v>continuely fillede wher to lorde be yai borne to so grete myschefe . For yaw it be done after 3our~ ry3twysnes ; neueryeles lorde it is now tyme of mercy haue in mynde y' 3e made hem after 3oure owne liknes and yawe her forenfadres folily and wrecchedly breken 3our~ maundement ; neueryeles 3our~ mercy is aboue alle yynge wherefore her alle yen ben sette up-on 3ow as ye seruauentes on ye lordes handes til 3e haue mercy & helpe hem wyy a . [heleful] spedeful remedy .

<lat>De contencione
inter misericordiam et veritate</lat>
Here-wiy began a maner of altercacion & disputesoun betwene ye four~ kynges doughtres y' is to say ; mercy and soyfastnes pees & ryghtwisnes Of ye which four~ mercy & pees acordynge to ye aungels prayer forseide ; were fouorable to mannes restorynge But y' oyer two sistres soyfastnes & ryghtwisnes a3eyne seyden ; As seynte Bernard by deuoute meditaciou makey here of a processe faire & longe But forto take y'er-of schortely as to our~ purpose at yis tyme; sumwhat in oyer maner & in oyer wordes we mow ymagine ; sumwhat in oyer maner & in oyer wordes and yenk yus First mercy and pees knelynge to-fore her fader kyg of heuene by ye prophets wordes dauid saide yus ; lorde schalt yu caste a-vey fro ye man w't-outen ende ; or haste yu fore3eten to do mercy ; And yis ofte and longe tyme yai reherseden, yan said our~ lorde let clepe forye 3our~ oyer two sistres ye which 3e seen redy a3eynes 3ow & lett vs see also what yai woole say her--to And yai were clepede & komen alle to-gedir ; mercy began and saide in yis wyse ; my fader of mercy it was 3our~ will euer w't-outen ende amonge 3our~ oyer doughtres my sistres to 3eue me y' prerogatyue aboue alle oyer werkes y' not onely y schulde specyaly regne here w't 3ow in heuene but also y' ye erye schulde be replenyschede & filled~ w't me to so my <fol. 5r>kel vertue ; þat who so wolde treuly & besily aske my helpe in any myschefe or nede ; he schulde w'touten faile fynde 3our~ socour & helpe yurg ye meditaciou of me . But now lo my dere fader w't worryy partye of erye and 3our~ noble creature man in his grete wrechednes & myschefe so longe tyme liggynge criey continuely & askey after my helpe
and now tyme is comen in ye which but 3if 3e helpe & saue hym ; y pery sche & lese my name here a3eynes y'
oyer sister soffastnes seyde . And 3e knowen wele my fader soyfast god yat y am ye begynnynge of 3our~ wordes . And after 3e made man in so grete woryynes y' 3e weddet me to hym in y' condicion y' what tyme he breke 3oure heste ; he & alle y' komen of hym schulde lese her blessed life & be dampnede & done to deye wherefore he forsoke me & betoke hym to 3oure enmye & myne ye fader of lesynge ; wytnesse my sister ryghtwisnes y pery sche & lese my name but he haue ye deye y' he haye deserued .
yan spake ryghtwisnes & seyde Ryghtwys lorde my fader y' haste ordeynde me gouernour of yi dome lastynge w'outen ende and my sister treuye techer of yi lawe & al-yough it so be y' oure sister mercy be stered~ of pitte & a gode 3ele for mannes sauacioun ; neueryele in y' sche wolde haue hym y' hay so gretely forfetede a3eynes 3ow & vs also ; w'outen dew satisfaccioun ; she wolde destruye vs boye hir sistren yat is to say ; treuye & ryghtwisnes & fordo our~ name herewyy ye ferye sister come forye y' is to sey pees . and so firste sobirly blamyng hir sistres for her contrariouse wordes & her strife seide to hem yus knowe 3e not wele sistres y' oure fader haye ordeynede & made his place only yer as y am & y may not abide ne welle yer as is strife an dissencion & y' is not semely but fully a3eynes kynde <fol. 5v>to be amonge vertues . wherfore but 3e cesen of strife & be acordet ; y moste forsake 3ow & my fader also lo her~ a grete controuersy betwene yese foure doughters of our~ lorde & so grete resouns y' it was not seyn how y' in mannes sauacioun mercy & soyfastnes pees & ryghtwisnes myghte fully be kepe & acordet . [yn] yan badde ye fader of heuene yat for as my kelle as he had comited & gifen alle his dome to his dere sone souereyne wisedome kyng euerlastynge w' hym in one godehede ; yat yese four~ doghters schulde go to hym he to termyne yis questioun & gefe a dome yer-on . And . [yan] ye kyng souereyne wise-dome wrote ye sentence & ye dome in yis maner & toke it to his chaunceler Reson to rede it in his name seynge in yese wordes. yis dou3ter soyfastnes seiy y' sche perishey & lesey hir name but man haue ye deye
yat he hay deseruede & w' hir acordey hir sister ryghtwisnes
and on yat oyerside mercy seiy y' she perishey & lesey hir name
but man haue mercy & be sauede and w' hir acordey hir ferye
sister pees . Wherfore to acorde alle yese to-gedir and for
a finale dome in yis matier let be made a gode deye of
man so y' one be founden w' outen synne y' may & wole
innocently & for charite suffre deye for man ; & yan haue
yai alle y' yai asken For yan may not deye lengir halde
hym y' is w' oute synne or trespas and so he schal perse
hym makynge in hym a hole & a wey yurgh ye which man
may passe & be sauede . Jn yis sentence & dome alle ye courte
of heuene wondrynge & commendyng ye souereyne wysedome
; assentenden wele here to but foryermore askeden
amonge hemselfe where y' one my3te be founden y' schuld
fulfille & do yis dede of charite . And yan mercy toke w' hir
reson & soughte amonge alle ye ordres of aungels in
heuene to see wheyeyr any of hem wer able to do yis dede
<fol. 6r>but yer was none . Also soyfastnes sou3te fro heuene to ye
cloudes byneyen weyer yer were any creature y' my3te perfourme
it & yai were all vnable . Rightwisnes wente dou to ye erye
amonge ye hie hilles and in-to ye depe pitte of helle wher y' yer
were any man y' myghte take yis gode & innocente deye but
was none founden clene of synne ; no nor ye childe of one
dayes biryve & so she wente a3eyne vp to hir sistres tellyng
y' alle men hade forfetede & weren vnable & yer was none
y' myghte do y' gode dede wherfore yai wer alle ful sory &
heuy y' yai myghte not fynde y' one y' yai desirede . yan
seyde pees wite 3e not wele y' ye prophete y' seyde yer is none founden
y' may do gode Afterwarde he puttey to more & seiy til
it come to one . yis one man may be he y' 3afe ye sentence
forseide of mannes saaucioun . wherfore pray we hym yat
he wille helpe & fulfille it in dede . For to hym spekey ye
prophete in ye same psalme forseide seyng . lorde y' schalte
saue man and bestes after yi mykel mercy . But yan was
a question amonge ye sistres comitede to Reson for to
termyne which person of yre fader & sone & holy goste
one gode schulde be-come man & do yis mercyful dede .
yan seide Reson y' for als mykell as ye person of ye fader
is proprely dredeful & my3ty . ye person of ye sone al wise
& wyttly. & ye persoun of ye holy-goste moste benygné & godely; ye secounde persoun semey moste conueniente as to ye ful acorde of ye forseide sistres to skilful remedy of man & to ye moste resonable victory of ye enmy. ffor anentys ye firste; 3if ye persoun of ye fader sulde do yis dede; for his drede & myghte mercy & pees myghte sumwhat haue hym suspecte as not fully favorale to hem. and so on y' oyerside for ye souereyne benygnite & godenes of ye holy-goste; trewye & ryghtwisnes my3te drede of not ful satisfaccioun bot to mykel mercy wherfore a gode mene euen to boye parties ye persoun of ye sone is moste conuenient to performe yis dede yurgh his souereyne witte and wisedome.

¶ Also it semeye moste skilful remedy to man for as mykell as he forfetede by vnwitte & folye y' satisfaccioun be made for hym by soyefaste wisdome y' is ye sone so y' as he felle to deye by ye false worde of ye fende y' he rise a3eynn to life by ye trewe worde of gode. And as for moste resonable victory of ye enmye it is skilful y' as he conquerede man by wikked sleghete & false wisedome so he be ouercomen & venkiscede by gode sleghete & trewe wisedome. And whenn reson had seide yis verdeit; ye fader seide it was wille y' it schulde be so. ye sone 3afe his assente yer-to & ye holi-goste seide he wolde wirche yer-to also. And yan fallynge doun alle spirites of heuene & souereynly yan kyng ye holy trinite. ye foure sistres forseide weren kyssede & made acorde & so was fulfilled y' ye prophete dauid seide Mercy & soyefastnes metten louely to-gedir ryghtwisnes & pees hauen kisseed. ¶ And yus was terminet & endet ye grete conseile in heuenn for ye restoryng of man & his sauacion ye which processe schal be taken as in liknes & only as a maner~ of peroble and deouote ymaginacioun stirynge man to loue god souereynly for his for his grete mercy to man & his endles godenes. Also to honour & wirchipe ye blessed aungels of heuene for her gode wille to man & for his sauacion hauynge continuele bisines & also to loue vertues & hate synne y' b.loughte man to so grete wrecchednes An yus mykell & in yis maner may be seide & youghte by deouote contemplacioun of y' was done aboue in heuene before ye Incarnacioun of ihesu. Nowe go we doun to ye erye
and yenke we how it stode w^4 his blessed moder marie
and what
<fol. 7r><mrg>& what</mrg> hir lyuynge here before ye Jncarnacioun of ihesu y^4 foloweth
after . Of ye maner of lyuynge of ye blessed virgine marie,
As it is writen in ye life of our lady seynt Marie
when she was yre 3ere olde ; she was offrede in
ye temple of hir fadir & modir & yer she abode and
dwelled in-to ye fourtene 3ere . An.^{d} what she dide & howe
she lyuede yer-in y^4 tyme we mowen knawe by ye reuelaciouns
made of hir to a deuoute womman whiche men twren
was seynte Elizabeth in ye whiche reuelaciouns is contyned
amonge oyer y^4 our lady tolde to ye same woman
and saide in yis manere when my fader & my moder
lasten me in ye temple y purposede & sette stably in my herte
to haue god to me fader & oftesybes ye w^4 grete deuocioun y
youghte what y myghte do plesyng to god so y^4 he wolde
vouchesafe to sende me his grace And herwiy y was taght
& ylernede ye lawe of my lorde gode . Jn ye which of alle ye
hestes & biddynges principaly y kepte yre in my herte . ye
firste y schalte loue yi lorde gode w^4 alle yi herte w^4 alle
yi soule w^4 alle yy mynde & w^4 alle yy myghtes . ye secunde
you schalte loue yy neghborh as yy-selfe . And ye yridde is
y^4 schalte hate yyn enmy . yese y kepte treuly in herte and
anone y conceyued & toke alle ye vertues y^4 ben contynede in
hem . For yer may no soule haue vertue but it loue god w^4 alle
ye herte for of yis loue comey alle plente of grace . And after
it is comen it abidey not in ye soule but it renney oute
as water . but it so be yr he hate his enmyes y^4 is to sey ; vices
& synnes . wherefore he y^4 wolde haue grace & kepe it ; it behouey
yat he dispose & ordeyne his herte to loue & to hate as it
is seide And so J wolde y^4 you do in maner as y dyde y rose vp
algate at mydnyghte & wente before ye autere of ye temple
& yerw^4 als grete desire & wille & affecciou & as y cowde &
<fol. 7v>myghte y askede grace of alle-myghty god to kepe yo yre hestes &
alle oyer biddynges of ye lawe . And so stondyng befo or ye
auter y made . vij . peticiiouns to god ye whiche ben yese . First
y askede grace of god yurgh ye whiche y my3te fulfille ye hest
of loue y^4 is to sey forto loue hym w^4 alle my herte . ye
secunde y asked yat y myghte loue my neghborh after his
wille & his lykyng & y\textsuperscript{t} he wolde make me to loue alle y\textsuperscript{t} he louey . ye yridde yat he wolde make me to hate & to
eschewe alle ynyng y\textsuperscript{t} he hatey . ye ferye ; y askede mekenes
pacience benignite & suetnes & alle oyer vertues by ye
which y myghte be graciously & plesyng to goddes syghte ye
fifte peticiou y made to god y\textsuperscript{t} he wolde lette me see ye tyme
in ye whiche yat blessede mayden schulde be borne y\textsuperscript{t} schuld
conceyue & bere goddes sone and y\textsuperscript{t} he wolde kepe myne
yen yat y myght see hir 3yue Eres y
y myghte her~
y\textsuperscript{t} y myghte serue hir wiy my feete y\textsuperscript{t} y myghte go to hir seruice
. And my knees w\textsuperscript{t} which y myghte honoure & wyrschipe
goddes sone in hir barme Jn ye sexte peticiou y asked
grace to be obeschaunte to ye biddynfes & ye ordinaunces of
ye bichope of ye temple . And in ye . vij . y prayede god to kepe
alle ye peple to his seruice . And when ye forseide cristes
seruaunte hade yese wordes . she seide a3eyne A suete lady
were not 3e full of grace & of alle vertues . And ye blessed maydenn
marie ansuerde wite y\textsuperscript{u} wele for certeyne y\textsuperscript{t} y helde myselfe
als gilty moste abiecte & vnworyy ye grace of god ; as
you And more ouer trowest y\textsuperscript{u} doghter yat alle ye grace y\textsuperscript{t} y hade
w\textsuperscript{t}-oute trauayle ; Nay not so but y telle ye & do ye to wite
y\textsuperscript{t} y hade no grace 3ifte ne vertue of god w\textsuperscript{t}-oute grete trauayle
continuele prayer ardent desire profounde deuociou and w\textsuperscript{t}
many teres & mykell afflictiou spekyng yenkyng and
<fol. 8r>doynge alwey as y couy & my3te y\textsuperscript{t} was plesyng to god y\textsuperscript{t} is
to sey ; outetake ye holy grace yurgh ye which y was halowede
in my moder wombe . And foryer-more our~ lady seide witte y\textsuperscript{u}
wele in certeyne y\textsuperscript{t} yer comey no grace in-to mannes soule but
be prayer & bodely affliccioun . And after y\textsuperscript{t} we haue 3euen to
god yo ynges y\textsuperscript{t} we mowenn yaugh yay ben litel & fewe ;
yan come he in to ye soule bryngynge w\textsuperscript{t} hym so grete &
so hie 3iftes of grace y\textsuperscript{t} it seemy to ye soule y\textsuperscript{t} she faile in hirselves
& lesiwy mynde & yenkey y\textsuperscript{t} euer she seide or dide any
yyng plesyng to god & yan she seemy in hir own sighte
more foule & more wrecchede yan she was euer before . Alle
yis sentence is contynede in ye forseide reuelaciouns . also
seynte Jerome wrytyng of hir life seiy in yis maner yat ye
blessede maiden Marie ordeyned to hir-selffe yis maner of
rule in lyuyenge yf fro ye mornetide in-to ye tierce of pe day
she 3afe hir alle to prayers & fro tierce in-to ye none; she occupide
hir bodily wv weuynge werke. And etfe fro none
she wente not fro prayers to ye angell of god come and
apperede to hir of who hande she toke to ye bodily sustinaunce
and so she profitede algate betterer in ye werke & ye loue of god.