Þe bygnyng of þis proscsse
Ryȝt knowynge of man hymself it isse
But some men han gret lettyng
Þat lettyth hem to han ryȝt knowynge
Of hemself þat þey þurst scholdyn knowe
Þat hem to mekenesse ferst sholde drawe
And of . [bat] four þynges J fynde
Þat makyn a manmys wittys blynde
And knowyng of hymself lettyth
þurw wiche four hymself he forgetyth
Of þis seynte bernard witnesse berys
Þe wheche four~ ben wretyn in þis vers
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
<fol. 3ra>Þat ys fauour of þe folk & fayrnesse
And wildeschepe of ȝougȝe & rychesse
Reuyth a man his skyl syȝt & mynde
To knowe hymself what he is in kynde
Þus þese four~ lettya man his insyȝt
Þat he knowith nat hymself aryȝt
And makyn his herte wel hautayn
And ful froward to his souerayn
Þese four~ nurischyn of hym pompe & pride
And oþere vicys many þe man kan nat hide
For in whom on of þese four~ ys
Jȝs seldym seyn eny meknes
Also þey lette a man þat he can nat se
Þe perylys of þe world & of vanyte
Ne þe tyme of deth þat is to come
Ne þinkyth nat on þe day of dome
Ne can nat vndyrstondyn ne se
De peynys þat aftyr þis lyf schuly n be
To synful men þat louyn folye
Ne þe blysse þat gode men ben worþye
But in his delitys settyth his herte faste
And farith as hys lyf scholde ay laste
And 3euyth hym to nou3t but to vanyte
And to al þat lykyng my3te be
Sweche men ben nat led w³ skyl
But folwyn euere her~ owne wil
And of nat ellis þynkyth ne+takiþ hede
What wondyr þow þey haue no drede
For what þey scholde drede þei knowe nou3t
Þerfore þei comne han no dr~de in þou3t
And þ³ is for defaute of knowyng
<fol. 3rb>Þat my3te hem to dr~de bryng
3ıt some men welyn nat vndyrstondyn
Þing þat my3te make hem to dr~dyn
For þat þey nellæ nat her~ but þ³, [hem] payys
Þerfore þ³ prophete in þ³ sauter says
<lat></lat>
He seyth he hath no wil to fele
Ne to vndyrstondyn <add>[for]</add> to don wele
Þe wordis may ben vndyrstandy <add>[ll]</add> of hem her~
Þat wil neþer vndyrstondyn ne ler~
To dr~de god & don his wil
But folwyn her~ lykyng & don & louyn yl
Some vndyrstondyn as þey her~ telle
But no dr~de in her~ herte may dwelle
For þey beleuyn nou3t but þey it se
And for defaute of tr~uthe it may be
But grucchith whan þei dr~dful þyng her~
Þerfore þe prophete seyth in þis maner~
De prophete seyth þey trowede nou3t
But grocchedyn & weryn angry in þout3
Þer ben manye þat beleuyn no þyng
Þat men hem seyn ageynys her~ lykyng
But grucchith gr~tly & wexith froward
Whan men seyn hem ou3t þat hem þinkith hard
Some cunning se in boke & r-de
But sy3nesse in herte reuyth her- drede
So þat it may nat with hem dwelle
And þerfore seyth god in þe gospelle
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
To a tyme some leuyn a þyng
And passyn þer-fro in tyme of fondyng
<fol. 3va>Also seyþ þe prophete dauyd
Jn a psalme þat cordith þer-with
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
He seith in his wordis leuedyn þey
And louedyn his wordis as þey coude sey
But sone þei hadde don & forget
His werkis & þou3tyn no more of þat
Sweche men ben ay vnstedfast
Þat no dr-de may with hem last
For þei ben so wilde whan þei han gwert
Þat on crist is nat her- hert
But who-so can nat drede may ler-
Þat þis tretys wele rede or her-
3if þey it r-de & her- to þe ende
Þe matiris þat ben þer-in contende
And vndistonde alle & trowe
Per-auentur- her- hertys þan schal bowe
Þurgh þat þþ þey scholyn conceyue þer-by
To werchyn gode werkis & fle foly
Þerfor- is þis in ynglys drawyn
Of matyris fele þat ben vnknowyn
To lewde men þat ben vncomande
Þat cumynyn no latyn vndistrande
To make hem-self fyrst to knowe
And fro synne & fro vanytes hem drawe
For to ster- hem to ry3t drede
When þey þis tr-tys her- or r-de
Þat schal pryke concyense with-ynne
And of þat drede may a loue bygynne
Þurgh confort of hefnys her-
<fol. 3vb>As men may aftyrward rede & her-
Þys bok as his self beryth witnesse
Jn seuene partyes dyuysyd ysse
Þe fyrste part to holdyn in mynde
Js of þe wrecchydnesse of manmys+kynde
Þe secunde is of sennys ser-
And of þe vnstablesnesse of þis world her-
Þe þridde part in þis bok is to r~de
Of þe deth & whi it is to drede
Þe ferþe part is of purgatory
Where soulys ben clensyd for her~ foly
Þe fifþe part is of þe day of dome
And of þe toknys þat beforne shullyn come
Þe syxte of þe peynys of helle
Þe þrtyþe þat dampnede schulle ay dwelle
Þe seuenthe is of þe Joyis of hefne
Þese ben þe partyis of þis book sefne
And of ech part fyndyn man may
Sor~ matyrys for+to say in þis book for+to say
Go we now to þat part þat Ferst is
Þat spekyth of manmys wr~chchydnes
For al þat beforne is wr~tyn to loke
Js but an entr~ of þis boke

**Here begynnynyth þe firste part of þis**

**Book þat is of manmys wr~chchydnesse**
Fyrst whan god made alle þynges of nou3t
Of þe fouleste . [matyr] man he wrow3t
Þat was of þe erthe two skelys to holde
Þat on is for þat god it wolde
Of foul materye make man in dyspy3t
Of lucyfer þat fel so ty3t
To helle when he synnede in pride
And alle þat fellyn with hym þat tyde
<hol. 4ra>hou he schulde haue þþ mor~ schenschepe
And þþ mor~ sorwe whan þey toke kepe
þþ þat man of so foul mater~ schulde dwelle
Jn þþ plase fro wich þei felle
Þat oþer skyl is þis to se
For man scholde þe meker be
<ill><1 word></ill> when he seyth & þynkyth in þow3t
Of how foul mater~ man is wrow3t
For god þurw his godnesse & his my3t
Wolde sen þat plase in hefne bry3t
Was mad voyde þurw þe seyne of pride
Þat was felyd on euery syde
Þurw þe vertu of meknesse
Þat euene contrarye to pride ysse
Þan may no man þedyr com
But he þat meek is & buxum
Þat preuyth þe gospel þe seythe to vs
Hou god seide to his dis. [si]plys
<latt</lat>
<latt></lat>
But 3if 3e be he seide as a child
Þat is to seythe meek & myld
3e schulle nat entr~ in no weye
Jn-to þe kyngdöm þat lastyth aye
Þan behouyth a man ay to seke
Þyng þat makyth a man sonest meke
But oþyng may hem meke more
To þynke in herte as j seide ore
Hou he was mad of foul mater~
And is nat ellys but erþe her~
For þis seip a clerk as j 3ow seythe
<foll. 4rb>What is man but erþe & cley3e
And poudir þat with þe wynd br~kith
And þerfore Joop þus to god spekyth
<latt></lat>
<latt></lat>
He seith þenk lord hou þu made me
Foul erþe & clay her~ to be
Ri3t so J schal turnyn me a-geyn
To erþe & poudir þat is serteyn
Þan seith our~ lord god almy3ty
Ageyn to man þus schortly
<latt></lat>
<latt></lat>
Þenk man he seyþ asschis art þa now
And in-to aschis ageyn turne schalt þow
Þan is man nat ellys to say
But asschis & poudr & erþe & clay
Of þis schulde eu ery man han her~ mynde
And knowe þe wr~cchidnesse of his kynde
Þat may be seyn as j scheuwe can
In alle þe partyys of lyf of man
Al a manmys lyf casten may be
Principaly in þese partyys þre
Þat ben þese to our~ vndyrstondyng
Bygynnyng Midwarde & endyng
Þese þr~ partyis ben þr~ spases cald
Of lyf of ech man 3ong & old
Bygynnyng of manmys lyf þis ferst is
Contenyth moche wr~cchidnes
Þerfore j wele or j ferþer~ pase
Schewe 3ow what a man fy rst wase
Sum tyme was when a man was now3t
Before þat he was forþ y-brou3t
He was be-getyn as j fynde & knowe
Of vil seed with-ynne man y-sowe
He was conceuyyd synfully
With-ynne his modyr body
Wer~ his herberwe wy~ynne was dy3t
As dauud seip in þe sauter ry3t
Lo he seip as manmys kynde is
J am conceuyyd in wikkenedessis
And my modyr hath conceuyyd me
Ijn synne & in caytyfte
þere dwelde man in a foul doniown
And a foul stede of corupcyown
Wer~ he hadde non oþer fode
But wlatsom glyt & leþer blode
And sty nk of fylþe as j seide ar
With þis he was nur schid þar~
Aftyrward when he forþ cam
Fro þe doniown of his modris womb
And was born in-to þis wordlys ly3t
He hadde neyþer str~ngþ ne my3t
Neþer to go ne stonde
Ne to go with Foot ne wî honde
Þan hath aþman lesse my3t þan a beste
When he is born & ser^e leste
For a beste when it is born it may go
Some aþyr r~unyn too & fro
But lygge & spraule crye & wepe
For vnnepís is a child born fully
Þat it ne bygynneth to goule & cry
And be þat cry men may knowe þan
Wheþer it be man or wynman
For when it <add>[is]</add> born it cryith sa
3if it be a man he seiþ a . a
Þat is þe ferste lettir of þe name
Of our~ forme-fadyr Adam
And 3if þe child a wynman be
Whan it is born it iþ seyþ . e . e
E is þe ferste lettir & þe hed
Of þe name of eue þat began our~ ded
Þenfore a clerk made on his maner~
Þis vers of mater þí is wr~tyn her~
<lat></lat>
Alle as he seiþ þí comyn of eue
Þat is to seyne alle men þí her~ leue
When þey be born what so þei be
Þei seyn oþer a . a oþer ee
Þus is her~ bygynnynge
Of our~ lyf sorwe & wepynge
Þe wheche our~ wr~cchednesse sterit vs
And þerfor~ innocent seiþ þus
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
He seyþ alle we ben born gr~tande

<lat></lat>
<fol. 5ra>And makende sorful semblaunde
For to schewe þe gr~te wr~cchidnesse
Of our~ kende þat in vs jsse
Þus wan tyme com of our~ birþe
Alle made we sorwin & no merþe
Nakid he com hedir & bar~
And pore schulle we hens far~
On þese two tymys schulde we þynke þan
For þus seiþ Joop þe holy man
</lat></lat>
</lat></lat>
Nakid he seiþ ferst j com
Hedir ferst out of my modir womb
And nakid j schal turne away
So schulle we alle at our~ laste day
Þus is a man at þe furste comyng
Nakid & bryngith with hym no þyng
But a r~m þat is wlatsum
Þ is his garnement whan he forþ com
Þat is nat but a blody skyn
Þat he before was lappid yn
When he in his modir wombe lay
Þat is a foul þyng to say
A fouler~ to her~ seiþ þe book
And alþer+foulest on to look
Þus is a man as we moun se
Jn wr~cchidnesse . [born] & caytyfte
And for . [th] leue a fewe dayis
Þer~of Joop þus opynly says
</lat></lat>
</lat></lat>
</fo
For lityl þyng in þis world is
But gr~t trouaile & besynes
3it a man is whan he is born
Þe fendis sone & fro god lorn
Ay til he þurgh grace mai come
To bapteme & to crystyndome
Þus may a man his bygy
Full of <rbd><1 word></rbd> wr~cchidnesse & caityfte
Þat oþ<pat<part>er</pat> partye of lyf men kallyth
Þe medeward aftyr as it fallith
Þe wich r~chith fro þe bygy
Of a manys lyf to his endyng
Þe bigynnynge of euery man bolde
Js ful wrecchid as þe tolde
But hou foul man is aftyrward
tellith vs opynly seync bernard

<lat></lat>


<fol. 5va>Seint bernard seith as þe book telles
Þat man her~ is nat ells
But a foul slym wlatsu m to men
And a sek ful of stynkende fen
And wormys fode þei wolde haue
Whan he is ded & beryyd in graue
But some men & wymmen fair~ semyth
Þo sy3t w^t-outy as men demyth
And schewith nat ells but a skyn
But ho so my3te sen hem w^t-yn
Fouler~ sy3te sow he neuere noon
Of caroyne þi hadde flessch & bon
Þerfore ho-so hadde so scharp a sy3t
And cler~ ey3en & as bry3t
As hath a beste þi men linx callis
Þi man se þurgh neyne ston wallis
Liti1 likyng schulde a+man haue þan
For to beholde a fayr wymman
For þan my3te he sen her~ w^t-outyn doute
As wel with-ynne as w^t-outy
And he sei3e w^t-ynne ary3t
He wer~ wol wlatsum to his sy3t
Þus foul ech man ys
As þe book seith & berith witnes
Þan may men se in þis maner~
How foul þe kynde of man is her~
Wherfor~ j holde man nat witty
Þat her~ is ouer proud or ioly

<fol. 5vb>Whan he may iche day her~ & se
What he is & what he schal be
But a proud man of þis takith non hed
For him wantith skele þi him schulde led
Whan he is 3ong & louyth lykyng
Or hath ese & welþe in his fostryng
Or 3if he be at gr~t worschepe
Wher~ hym-self is þan knowith he lest
And farith as an vn~sonable best
Þat his owne wil folwith & nat+elys
And þerfor~ in þe sauter þe prophete tellys

</lat><\lat>
</lat></lat>
</lat><\lat>

Man whan he was in worschepe brou3t
Ry3t vndirstondyng hadde he nou3t
He may be+lyknyd & he is lyk þan
To bestys þe skele ne wit ne can
Þerfor~ ech man þi hath wit & mynde
Scholde þenke on his wr~cchidnesse of kinde
Þat is foul & vil & wlatsom
For he may se fro his bodi com
Al+kennys fylpe wþ stynkende br~the
Bolþe fro aboue & fro beneþe
For mor~ filþe is neiþer hard ne nessch
Þan is þat comyth fro a manys flessch
And þi may a man bolþe see & feel
Þat wele beholdyn hym-self wel
Hou foul he is to manys sy3t
And þerfor~ seynte bernard ry3t

<fol. 6ra>
<lat></lat>
3yf þu wilt he seip entently se
And beholdyn what comyth fro þe
What þurw nose & mowth comonrly
And þurw ofr~ ouertouris of þi body
A fouler~ medlyng sei þe neuer+non
Þan man is of flessch & bon
Al þe tyme þat man her~ lyuys
His kinde no frut ne geuys
Werþer he leue longe or schortwhile
But þyng þe is wlatsum & vile
As filþe & styng & no þyng ellis
And as Innocent in a book þus tellis

Þe gr~te clerk tellith þus in a book
Behold he seip gr~tly & look
Erbis & tr~es þe sest spryngye
Tak good kepe what forþ þei brynge
Erbis forþ brynge flouris & seed
And trees fayr frut branchis to spr~de

<fol. 6rb>And þe forþ bryngist of þy-self her~
Nites & lees & oþer vermyn ser~
Of erbes & tr~es spryngith baume good
And oyle & wyn for manny's food
And of þe comyth mochil foul styng
As fen & oryne & spatlyng
Of herbis & tr~es comyth swete sauour
And of þe comyth wlatsum stynk & sour
Swich as þe tre is swich ben[b]le bowes
And swich is þe Frut þe þeron growes
An eucl tr~ may no good frut ber~
And þ kioweth ech a good gardyner~
A man is a+tr~ þat stondith nat harde
Of wich þ crop is tnyd douwarde
And þe rote toward þe fyrmament
As seiþ þe grete clerk Innocent

He seiþ what is man in schap but a+tr~
Turnyd vp þat is down as man may se
Of þe wiche þe rote is þer-of & sprynges
Or þe her þ on þ e heud henges
þe stok nex þe rote growande
Js þe heued with þe nekke folwande
þe body of þe tre þer-by

Js þe brest w þe body
þe bowis beþ þe armys w þe hondys
And þ leggis w þe feet þ stondis
 þe bran[chis men may be skele calle
þe toes & þe fyngrys alle
þis is þe lef þat hongith nat faste
þ is blowyn awei with þ wyndis blaste
And þe body of þat tre
þat þurw þe sunne dreid may be
A man þ is 3ong & ly3t
Be he neuere so stalworpy & wy3t
And comely of schap louely & fayr
Angrys & euelys may hym apayr
And his bewte & his strengþe abate
And make þe hym in wel weik state
And chonge al his fayr colour
þat sone fallyth & fadith as dop a flour
For a flour þat semyth fair & bry3t
Þurgh stormys fadith & lesith his my3t
Manye euel angrys & greuys
Ofte comyn to man þþ her~ leuys
As feueres dropsy & iownes
Tesyk kowhe & òpere maladyes
Þat makyn strenþe & fayrnesse to tyne
As gr~te stormys don a flour to dryne
Þerfore a man may lyknyd be
To a flour þþ is fayr on to se
Þat sone after þþ it is forth brou3t
Welkith & dryuyth til it come to nou3t
<fol. 6vb>Þis schulde ben+ensample to vs
For-whi ioop in his book seiþ þus
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
Man he seiþ as a flour bry3t
Fyrst forþ comyth to our~ sy3t
And is sone broky
& passid a-way
As a schadue in somerys day
And neuere mor~ in þþ same staat dwellyth
But ay passynge as ioop tellith
Of þis þþ prophete witnesse beris
Jn a salme of þþ sauter in þþ vers
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
<lat></lat>
Þþe prophete seiþ þþus as wretyn is
Erly man passith as þþ gres
Erlyche at þþ bygynnynng of þþ day
He florschith & passith a-way
At euyn late he is down brou3t
And fallyth & dr~yith & dryuyth to nou3t
Jn þþ firste bygynnynng of þþ kynde of man
Neyne hundryd wynter man leuede þþan
As klerkis in bokis beryn witnesse
But seþi by-com man of lyf so nessche
And so wolde god þþ it scholde be
For-whi he seide þþus to noe
My gost he+seiþ schal nat ay dwelle
Jn man for he is flessch & felle
His day schal ben to leyyn her-
An hundryd & twenty 3er-
But so gr~et elde mown fewe men ber-
For seþþyn is mannys . [lyf] becomyn schorter-
For-whi þe complexyoun of euery man
Was seþþyn febler~ þan it was þan
Now it is alþe~r febest to se
Þerfor it behouyth mannys lyf schort to be
For ay þe lengere þi man may leue
þe more his lyf schal hym greue
And þe lesse þynke his lyf swete
As in a salme seþþ þe prophete

3yf myþtyneße four~ stor~ . [3er] falle
More is her~ swynk & sorwe w4 alle
For seldyyn a man þi hath þi elde
Hele hath & hym-self be-welde
But now fallyn schortere mannys dayis
As ioop þe holy man þus says

Now he seiþ my fewe dayis ser~
Schullyn endyn in a fewe dayis her~
Fewe men may fourty 3er passe
And fewer~ fyfty as sum tyme wasse

But as sone as a man wexith old
þan wexith his kynde weik & cold
þan chaungith his complexyoun
And his maneres & his condicyoun
þan wexith his herte hard & heuy
And his hefd fle feble & desy
And his fase r~uelþ mor & more
And wexith fouler~ þan it was ore
His mynde is schort whan he ou3t þynkyþ
His nose droppyth his onde stynkip
His sy3te wexith dym þ' he hath
His bak wexith crokyd stoupende he gap
Fyngrys & toes foot & hande
And alle hise towchis ben tremblande
His werk for wo worþis þat he bygynnys
His her mouthy his ey3en renny
His eryn wexyn deef & harde to her~
His tunge foldith his speche is nat cler~
His teeth rotyth his mouþ slaueryth
His wit failith & he ofte dotyth