



<County: Herefordshire>

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<Text: Piers Plowman C>

<fol. 3v><line 4>now is mede þe maide ; no mo of hem alle
þour3 bideles and bailifs ; brou3t by-fore þe kyng
þe kyng called a clerk ; y can not his name
To take mede þe maide ; and maken hure at ese
I schal asaie hure my self ; and sothely apose
what man of þis world ; þat hure is leuest haue
And 3if 3heo worche wisly ; by wise men counsail
I wole for 3yue hure alle gultes ; so me god help
Corteisliche þe clerk þenne ; as þe kyng hy3ht
Toke mede by þe myddel ; and mildeliche hure brou3t
Into boure wiþ blisse ; and by hure gan sitte
There was murthe and munstralcý ; mede to plesen
þat wendeþ to westmnnstre ; worschupeþ hure many
Gentiliche wiþ ioie ; þe justises some
Busked hem to þe boure ; þere þis burde dwelled
Confortynge hure as þei coupe ; by þe clerkes leue
And seide morne not mede ; make þou no sorwe
For we wolle wisse þe kyng ; and þy way schape
For to wende at þi wille ; where þe leof likeþ
For al conciense cast ; or craft as y trowe
Mideliche mede þo ; merciede hem alle
Of here gret goodnesse ; and 3af hem echone
Coupes of clene golde ; coppes of seluer
Rynges wiþ rubies ; and other riche 3iftes
þe leste of here meyne ; a Motoun of gold
whanne þei hadde lau3t here leue ; at þis lady mede
þenne comen clerkes to conforten hure samen
And buden hure be bliþe ; for we been þyn owne
For to worche þi wille ; þe while we mowen dure
And Mede hendeliche ; by hy3t hem þe same

<fol. 4r>To louen hem lelliche ; and lordes hem make
 And purchasen 3ou prouendres ; whil 3oure pans lasteþ
 And bigge 3ou benefyce3 ; pluralite to haue
 And in constorie at Court ; do calle 3oure names
 Schal no lewedenesse let ; þe clerk þat y louye
 þat he ne worþ furst awaunced ; for y am by knowe
 þere connyng clerkes ; schullen clokke by-hynde
 Thenne come þer a confessour ; coped as a frere
 To mede þe maide ; myldeliche he saide
 þou3 lewede men and lered ; hadde layn by þe boþe
 And falshede yfonde þe ; al þis fourty wynter
 I schal assoile þe my-self ; for a seem whete
 And 3ut be þy bedeman ; and brynge adoun conciense
 Amonge kynges and kny3tes ; and clerkes 3if þe like
 Thenne mede for hure mysdedes ; to þis man kneled
 Schrof hure of hure synnes ; schameles y leue
 Tolde hym a tale ; and tok hym a <gap> noble
 Forto beo hure bedeman ; and bere wel hure erynde
 Among kny3tes and clerkes ; conciense to turne
 And he assoiled hure sone ; and sithe he saide we haue
 A <gap> wyndowe a worchinge ; wol stonde vs ful hie
 wolde 3ee glase þat gable ; and graue þere 3oure name
 In masse and in matynes ; for mede we schal synge
 Solempneliche and softeliche ; as for a soster of oure ordre
 loueliche þat lauedy ; lau3hyng seide
 I schal be 3oure frend frere ; and faile 3ou neuer
 þe while 3ee loueþ þese lordes ; þat lecherye haunteþ
 And lakkeþ no3t þese ladies ; þat louyeþ þe same
 hit is bote frelete of flesche ; 3e fyndeþ wel by bokes
 And a cours of kynde ; where of we comen alle
 who may a-scape þe sclaunder ; þe scape my3t sone be mended
 hit is synne as of seuene ; noon sauner relesed
 haue mercy quod mede ; on men þat hit haunteþ
 <fol. 4v>And .^[y] schal keouer 3oure kerke ; and 3oure cloitre make
 Boþe wyndowes and walles ; y wole amende an glase
 And do peynte and purtreyen ; who paiede for þe makynge
 þat euery man schal se and seie ; y am a soster of 3oure ordre
 And god to alle good folk ; suche grauyng defendeþ
 To writen in wyndowes ; of eny wel dedes

leste pruyde be peynted þere ; and pompe of þe worlde
 For god knoweþ þi conciense ; and þy kynde wille
 þy coste and here couetise ; and who þe catel ou3ht
 For þy leue lordes loue ; leueþ suche writynges
 God in þe gospel ; suche *grauyng* not aloweþ
 <lat>nesciat sinistra quid faciat dextra</lat>
 let not þi lift hand ; oure lord techen
 I-wite what þou delest ; wiþ þy ri3t side
 3ut Mede myldely ; marie heo by sou3t
 Boþe schereues and seriauns ; and suche as kepeþ lawes
 To punyschen vpon þe pilories ; and on pynyngstoles
 As bakeres and bruweres ; bochours and cokes
 For þese men doþ most harm ; to þe mene people
 Richen þou3 regraterie ; and rentes hem biggen
 wiþ þat þe poure people ; schulde putten in here wombe
 For toke þei truwely ; þey tymbred not so hey3
 Nother bou3ten borgages ; beo 3ee fulcertayn
 þei han no pite on þe people ; þat *parcelemele* mot begge
 þou3 þei take hym vntydy þyng ; no tresoun þei holden hit
 And þau3 þei fulle not ful ; þat for lawe is seled
 he gripeþ þerfore as grete ; as for þe grete truthe
 Mony sondry sorewes ; in citees fallen ofte
 Boþe þou3 fuyr and flood ; and al þou3 false people
 þat by-gilen gode men ; and greueþ hem wrongly
 þe whuche crien on here knes ; þat crist hem avenge
 here on þis erthe ; or elles in helle
 þat so by-gileþ hem of here good ; þat god on hem senden
 <fol. 5r>Feueres or fouler vueles ; or fuyr on here hoses
 Moreyne or oþer meschance ; and menytime hit falles
 þat jnnocence is yherd ; in heuene amonge seyntes
 þat louten to hem for oure lord ; and to oure lady bothe
 To graunte gilours on erthe ; grace to amende
 And haue here penaunce ; on pure erthe ; & not þe peine of helle
 And þenne falleþ þer fuyr ; on false mennes houses
 And goodmennes for her gultes ; gloweþ on fuyre after
 Al þis haue we seien ; and some tyme þou3 a brewere
 Meny burgages y-brent ; and bodies þer-ynne
 And þou3 a candel clemynge ; in a corsede place
 Ful adoun and forbrent ; forþ alle þe rewe

For þy Maires þat maken fre men ; me þinke þat þei ou3hten
 For to spere and asprie ; for eny speche of seluer
 what manere muyster ; of Marchaundise he vused
 Ar he were vnderfonge freo ; and felawe in 3oure rolles
 hit is not semely for soþe ; in Citee ne in burgh toun
 þat vsereres oþer regratours ; for eny skynnes 3iftes
 Beo fraunchised for a freo man ; and haue a fals name
 Ac Mede þe maide ; þe maire s3heo be-sou3ht
 Of alle suche sulleres ; seluer to take
 Or presentz with out pans ; and oþer pryue 3iftes
 And haue ruthe on regratours ; þat han riche hondes.
 <lat><6 words></lat>
 loue hem for my loue ; quod þis lady mede
 And soffre hem some tyme ; to sulle a3eyns þe lawe
 Salamon þe sage ; a sarmon he made
 In amendement of Meires ; and other stiwardes
 And wittenessit what worþ of hem ; þat wollep take mede
 <lat><8 words></lat>
 Among þese lettred lordes ; þis latyn is mene
 þat fuyr schal falle and for-brenne ; al to blo askes
 þe houses an þe homes ; of hem taken 3iftes .
 <fol. 5v>þe kyng fram counseil cam ; and called after mede
 And seide to se hure ; bote y sau3 not hym þat ladde hure
 Corteisliche þe kyng þo ; as his kynde wolde
 lackede hure a lite wi3th ; for þat 3heo loued gile
 And wilned to be wedde ; wiþ-outen his leue
 Til truthe hadde tolde hure ; a tokne fram hym selue
 And seide vnwittiliche womman ; wrou3ht has þou often
 I haue for 3yue þe meny gult ; and my grace graunted
 Boþe to þe and to þine ; in hope þou schost amende
 And ay þe lenger y lete þe go ; þe lasse truthe is wiþ þe
 For worse wroutes þou neuer ; þenne þo þou fals toke
 3ut y for-3yue þe þis gilt ; godes forbode eny more
 þou teone me and truthe ; and þou mowe be a take
 In þe castel of Corfe ; y schal do the close
 þere as an Ancre ; or a wel worse wone
 And marie þe meschief ; by seynt marie my lady
 þat alle wantowen wommen ; schulle be war by þe one
 And biterliche banne þe ; and alle þat bereþ thi name

And teche þe louye treuthe ; and take consail of resoun
 J haue a kny3ht hi3t conciense ; cam late fro by 3eonde
 If he wilneþ þe to wyue ; wolthou hym haue
 3ee lord quod þat lady ; lord hit me for bede
 Bote y be holly at thin heste ; let hange me elles
 þenne was conciense cald ; to come and a peere
 By-fore þe kyng and his counsail ; as clerkes and oþer
 knelyng to þe kyng ; conciense louted
 To wite what is wille were ; and what he do scholde
 woltou wedde þis maide ; if y wolle asente
 For heo is fayn of þy felaweschup ; and forto be þi make
 Quap conciense þo to þe kyng ; crist hit me for bede
 Er y wedde such a wif ; wo me by tide
 For scheo is freel of hure faith ; and fikel of here speche
 And makeþ men misdo ; meny score tymes
 <fol. 6r>Jn trist of hure tresour ; scheo teoneþ ful meny
 wyues and widewes ; wantoness scheo techēþ
 And lereþ hem to lecherye ; þat louieþ hure 3iftes
 3oure fader scheo felde ; fals and scheo to-gederes
 Scheo haþ apoisoned popes ; scheo apeireþ holy churche
 Js not a+beter baude ; by hym þat me made
 By-twene heuene and helle ; al erþe þau3 men sou3t
 For scheo is tikel of hire tail ; talewys of tonge
 And commune as þe carteway ; to knaues and to alle
 To Monkes to alle men ; þe museles in hegges
 Liggeþ by hem whenne hem luste ; lered and lewed
 Sisours and sompnours ; suche men hure preiseþ
 Schereues of shires ; were schent if sche nere
 Scheo lat passe prysones ; and paieþ for ofte
 And 3yueþ þe gailer gold ; and grotes to-gideres
 To vnfeter þe fals ; and fleo where hym likeþ
 And takeþ truw<add>th</add> by þe top ; and tieþ hym faste
 And hangeþ hym for hatered ; þat harmed neuer
 To beo corsede in constorie ; scheo counteþ not a rusche
 Scheo copeþ þe commissarie ; and coteth his clerkes
 Scheo is assoiled þus sone ; as hure-self likeþ
 Scheo may ney3 as moche do ; in a monthe one
 As 3oure secree seel ; in six score daies
 Scheo is pryue wiþ þe pope ; prouysours hit knoweth

For symonye and hure-self ; seeleþ here bulles
 Scheo blesseþ þese bisschopes ; þou3 þey be ny lewed
 Scheo *prouendreþ* *persones* ; and preostes heo mayteneth
 To holde *lemmannes* and lotebies ; al here lyf daies
 And bryngeþ forþ barnes ; a3eynes forbodene lawes
 <lat><6 words></lat>

There scheo is wel wiþ eny kyng ; wo is þe Reome
 For scheo is fauerable to fals ; þat defouleþ truthe
 By *ihesus* wiþ hure juweles ; þe justise scheo schendeþ
 <fol. 6v>Sche liþ a3eyn þe lawe ; and letteþ hym þe gate
 þat faiþ may not haue his forþ ; hure florynes goþ so þikke
 And ledeþ þe lawe as hure lust ; and louedaies makeþ .
 þou3 wuche loueday is lost ; þat leaute may wynne
 þe mase for amene man ; þau3 he mote euer
 lawe is so lordliche ; and loþ to maken ende
 wiþ presentz and pans ; scheo pleseþ ful fewe
 Truwe burgeises and bonde ; to no3t scheo bryngeþ often
 And al þe *commune* in care ; and in coueytise
 Religioun scheo al to reueth ; and out of rule to libbe
 þer nys Cite vnder sonne ; ne so riche reome
 þis scheo is lowed and lete by ; þat last schal eny while
 wiþ oute werre oþer wo ; or wikked lawes .
 and custumes of couetise ; þe comune to distrie
 In sitting suffraunce ; hure soster and here selue
 hauen maked al most ; bote marie þe helpe
 þat no londe loueþ þe ; and 3ut leost þyn owne
 For mede haþ knut clerkes ; and coueitise to-gedres
 þat al þe wit of þis world ; is woxe into gile
 þus þis lady leret þi land ; nowe lord 3eue hure sorwe
 For poure men dur not playne ; ne here pleynt schewe .
 such a maister is mede ; amonge men of goode
 þenne morned mede ; menyng hure to þe kyng
 To haue space to speke ; spede if scheo my3t
 þe kyng grauntede hure *grace* ; wiþ a good wille
 Excuse þe if þou canst ; y can no more seggen
 For conciense acuseþ þe ; to congeie þe for euer
 Nay lord quod þat lady ; leoueþ hym þe worse
 whwen 3ee witen witerly ; in wham þe wronge liggeþ
 þere þat meschief is gret ; mede may helpen

And þat knoweþ conciense ; y cam not to chide
 Ne to de-praue þi persone ; with a prout herte
 wel þou wost weterly ; bot if þou wilt gabbe
 <fol. 7r>you hast hanged on myn half ; elleuene tymes
 And also gripen of my gold ; and 3af hit where þe liked
 whi þou wrappeste þe nowe ; wonder me thynkethe
 3ut y may as y mi3t ; menske þe wiþ 3iftes
 And mayntene þe manhed ; more þan þou knowest
 Ac þou hast famed me foule ; by-fore þe kyng here
 For culd y neuer kyng ; ne counseild so to done
 Ac y saued my-self ; sixti þousand lyues
 Boþe here and elles were ; in alle kynde londres
 Ac þou þi-self ; who so hit segge durst
 hast arwed many hardman ; þat hadde wille to fi3t
 To brenne and to kruten ; to bete adoun strengthes
 In contrees þer þe kyng cam ; conciense hym lette
 þat he ne fuld no3t his foos ; þo fortune hit wolde
 And as his wirtes were ordeyned ; by þe wille of oure lord
 Caitifliche þou conciense ; consailedest þe kyng leten
 In his enemys hond ; his eritage of Fraunce
 Vn-connyng is þat conciense ; a kynedome to sulle
 þat is conquered þour3 a commune help ; a kynedom or a douchee
 May not be solde soþly ; so many here part askuþ
 Of folk þat fau3t þerfore ; and folwed þe kynges wille
 þe leste ladde þat langed to hym ; be þe londe y wonne
 lokeþ after lordschupe ; oþer oþer large mede
 where-by he may as a man ; for euer more lyue after
 And þat is þe kynde of a kynge ; þat conquereþ on his enemys
 To he<ill><2 chars></ill>e heiliche al his ost ; or elles to graunte
 Al þat <ill><1 word></ill> men may wynne ; to do þer myde here best
 For þi y counsaile no kyng ; eny counsaile aske
 At conciense if he coueite ; to conquere a Reome
 For scholde neuer conciense ; beo my constable
 were y a kyng y-crouded ; by Marye quod mede
 Ne be Marchel ouer my men ; þere y most fi3ht
 Ac hadde y mede be his Marschal ; ouer his men in Fraunce
 <fol. 7v>I durste haue y laide my lif ; and no lasse wedde
 he hadde be lord of þat londe ; in lengthe and in brede
 And also kyng of þat kup ; his kyn to haue holpe

þe leſt brol of his blood ; a barones pere
 Vn-connendly þou conciens ; consailedest hym þennes
 To lete so his lordschup ; for a litel mone
 hit by-comeþ for a kyng ; þat schal kepe a Reome
 To 3eue men mede ; þat mekeliche hym serueþ
 To alienes and to alle men ; to honoure hem wiþ 3iftes
 Mede makeþ hym beo by loued ; and for a+man y holden
 Emperours and Eorles ; and alle maner lordes
 þour3 3iftes han 3emmen ; to rennen and ryde
 þe pope and prelates ; presentz vnderfongen
 And 3euen mede to men ; to meyntene here lawes
 Seriauns for here seruise mede þei asken
 And taken mede of here maistres ; as þei mowe a-corde
 Beggeres and bedemen ; crauen mede for here preieres
 Mynstrals for here munstracy ; a mede þei asken
 Maistres þat techen clerkes ; crauen for hure mede
 Preostes þat prechen ; and þe people techen
 Asken mede and masse pans ; and here mete bothe
 Alle kyne crafti men ; crauen mede for here prentises
 Marchaundise and mede ; mote nede go to-gyderes
 Js no lede þat lyueþ ; þat he ne loueþ mede
 And glad forto gripe hur~ ; gret lord or poure
 Quap þe kyng to conciense ; bi crist at my knowyng
 Mede is worthi me thynkeþ ; þe maistrie to haue
 Nay quod conciense to þe kyng ; clerkes wite þe soþe
 þat mede is euer-more ; a meynutenour~ of gile
 As þe sauter scheweþ ; by suche þat 3yuen mede
 þat vnlawefulliche lyuen ; hauen large handes
 To 3eue men mede ; more oþer lasse
 Ac þer is mede a mercede ; and boþe men demen
 <fol. 8r>A desert for some doying ; deorne oþer elles
 Mede meny tymes ; men 3yuen bi-fore þe doynge
 and þat is noþer resoun ne ri3t ; ne in no reome lawe
 þat any man mede toke ; bote he hit my3t deserue
 And forto vndertake to trauaile for anoþer
 And wot neuer witerlie ; wher he lyue so longe
 Ne haue happe to his hele ; mede to deseruen
 I hald hym ouer hardy ; or elles nat truwe
 þat <lat>manibus</lat> is paied ; or his paie askeþ



harlotes and hores ; and also fals leches
þei asken here huyre ; er þei hit haue deserued
And gilours 3yuen byfore ; and goodmen atte ende
whenne þe dede is y-do ; and þe day ended