

þat staate schal haue stedefast wille and purpos
 þat neuer to do it more ne falle in suche synne wiþ
 his body but wiþ al his power to kepe hym, saue
 þat he may marye him 3if þat he wole; and he þat
 5 wole in þat staate kepe chastite, it behouep þat he
 defoule and chastise his flesh bi scharpe fastynges
 and oþer penaunces. ¶ Dis is þe secunde braunche
 of þis tree.

They may
 marry.

10 **Þ**E þridde braunche is þe staate and þe bonde of
 mariage, for þei schulle kepe hem eueriche for
 oþer, clenliche and truliche, wiþ-out any wrong
 doynge þ^t on to þat oþer, and þat askep þe lawe of
 mariage þ^t þat on holde trewþe and feiþ to þat oþer
 of his body. For after þat þei ben knytte to-gidre
 15 flescheliche, þei ben al on body and on soule, as
 holi writ seiþ, and þerfore schul eueriche of hem
 loue oþer as hymself. For as þei ben on bodi, þei
 schulde ben of on herte bi trwe loue, ne neuere-
 more to departe of herte ne of body while þei lyuen;
 20 wherfore þei scholde kepe here bodies clenliche and
 chastliche, wiþ-out here owen harme, and þerfore
 seiþ seynt Poule þat wommen schulde loue here
 hosebondes and honoure, and kepe hem chaste and
 sobre: chaste, to kepe here bodies from alle oþere
 25 þan from here lordes; sobre in etyng & drynkyng,
 for of to moche etyng and drynkyng comeþ moche
 quekenyng of þe fier of lecherie. ¶ And also scholde
 men kepe here bodies chast, þat þei ne 3eue nouzt
 to a-noþer womman þan to here owen. ¶ Mariage
 30 is a staate þat men schulde wel clenliche and holiliche
 kepe for many skillles. For it is a staate of grete
 autorite. God sett it and made it [in] paradys terrestre
 in þe state of innocence, to-fore þat euer any man

3. Married
 people.

[fol. 95b]

Both women
 and men
 should be
 true to their
 mates.

Marriage
 was estab-
 lished by
 God in
 Eden.

1. staate] S : astaat 2. AS *om.* þat; neuer to do it more] S : neuermore to don hit 3. S *om.* to 3f. saue þat] S : til 7f. Dis . . tree] *not in* S 8. Rubric in S : Þe þride braunche of þis tre 9. staate] S : astaat 16. schul eueriche of hem] S : euerich of hem schulde 18. schulde] A : schulle 25. lordes] A : lorder; &] H : & and, *over the page division* 26. S *om.* to 27f. scholde men] S : Men schulden 28. S *om.* ne 32. H *om.* in, AS : in paradys 33. state] S : astat; to-fore] S : bi fore

Mary
adopted
marriage as
a 'mantle.'

Marriage is
a sacrament
of the
Church.

The deed of
wedlock
may law-
fully be
done in
three ways:

(a) In hope
of offspring.

(b) As a just
return to
one's mate.

dide synne. And þerfore schulde men kepe it
holiliche for God, þ^t ordeyned it, and for þe stede
þat it was made ynne. ¶ After, it is a staate of grete
worþinesse. For God hymself wolde be bore of a
wif, þat was of þe maide Marie, wherfore þe maide 5
Marie made a mantel of mariage wher-vnder Goddes
sone was conceyued and borne. Vnder þat mantel
was hiled from þe deuel þe pryete and þe counseil
of oure raansom and of oure helpe, & þerfore þan
schulde men worschipe it moche and clenliche & 10
honestliche kepe it for þe holynesse þer-of. ¶ After,
men schulde kepe it holiliche, for it is a sacrament
of holy chirche and betokeneþ þe mariage þat is
bitwexe Ihesu Crist and holi chirche, and bitwex
God and þe soule, wherfore þe staate of mariage is 15
so holi and so honest þat þe dede þat was erst dedly
synne wiþ-out mariage is wiþ-oute synne in mariage,
and not onliche wiþ-out synne, but in many caas
grete þanke-worþi of God to wynne bi þe lif wiþ-ouden
ende, and it is wel to wite þat in þre manere wises 20
3e mowe do þe dede of wedeloke wiþ-out synne and
haue grete merite to þe soule. ¶ Þe first is whan
men don þat werke in hope to haue fruyzt of kynde
to serue wiþ God, and to suche vnderstondyng was
first mariage made and ordeined principallliche. 25
¶ Þe secunde caas is whan þat on zeldeþ to þat oþer
his dette whan it is asked, and þerto schal rihtwysnesse
moue a man þat zeldeþ euery wizt þat is his owen;
wherfore 3if þat on werneþ þat oþer and wole not
suffre to haue his riht whan it is asked or praied, 30

1. schulde men] S : men schulden 2. for God, þ^t] S :
bi cause þ^t god; S : for reuerence of þe stude 3. After]
S : Also 5. þat] S : whuch; AS *om.* of 5f. þe maide Marie
made] S : heo made 8. S *om.* from þe deuel; pryete
and] S *om.* and 9. S : helpe. fro þe deuel. And; AS *om.*
þan 9. schulde men] S : men schulden 11. After] S : Also
15. wherfore] A : whenfor; staate] S : astat 16. S : and
honest; erst] S : furst 18. caas] A : caases 19. bi] S :
þerw^t. 22f. S : whon a men 24. serue wiþ God] S : serue
god w^t. 25. made] S : .i.maad 26.-p. 249,27. is whan . .
elles where] *Apparently an attempt has been made in S to render
this whole passage illegible. Some sentences are erased entirely
and others so badly stained as to be almost illegible.*

or bi mouþ, or bi signe, as many wommen don
 þat ben schamefast to aske suche þinges, he or sche
 þat werneþ to þat oþer þat biddeþ, doþ synne. For
 he doþ hym or hire wrong of þing þat is his bi riȝt,
 5 for þat on haþ riȝt of þat oþeres body. But he þat
 ȝeldeþ þat he oweþ doþ wel and riȝtfulliche whan [fol. 96a]
 he doþ it in þat entente, and deserueþ þanke of God,
 for riȝtwisnesse dryueþ hym þer-to & not lecherie.
 ¶ De þridde caas is whan a man biddeþ of his wif (c) As a pre-
 10 suche þing to kepe hire fro synne, and nameliche
 whan he seeþ þat sche is so ful of schame þat sche
 wolde neuere bidde here lord of suche þing, and
 þerfore dredeþ þat sche myȝt falle liȝtliche in synne
 but he bede hire þer-of. Who-so praieþ in þat entente
 15 and ȝeldeþ his dette, he ne synneþ not, but deserueþ
 grete þanke of God, for rewþe moueþ hym to do
 þat. ¶ In þes þre þinges is no synne in þe werke
 of wedloke, but in oþere caas mowe men or wommen
 synne oþer dedliche or venialliche, and specialliche
 20 in þre caas. ¶ De first is whan men or wommen
 wolneþ noþing in suche workes but onliche for delite
 and likyng and lecherie, and in suche caas may a man
 or a womman synne dedliche or venialliche. Venyal-
 liche, whan þe delite passeþ not þe bondes of mariage,
 25 þat is to seie whan þe delite is suȝet to riȝt and
 resoun, þat he þat doþ þat ne wolde not do suche þing
 but to his wif. ¶ But whan þe delite and þe lecherie
 is so grete in his wif þat resoun and riȝt is blent,
 þat he wolde do as moche to hire þeiȝh sche were not
 30 his wif, in þat caas it is dedly synne. For suche
 lecheries passen þe bondes of mariage. Wherfore
 God is ofte wroþ wiþ suche folke and ȝeueþ ofte
 grete power to þe deuel to do hem scape, as men
 reden of Sarre, Ragueles douȝter, þat was ȝong
 Sara and
 her seven
 husbands.

4. his] S : his. or hires 11. þat sche . . schame] S : hire so
 schameful, A om. sche 13. dredeþ] S : for dreede 14.
 Who-so] S : þenne hose 15. S om. he ne; deserueþ] S :
 serueþ 18. caas] A : caases; S : men. or wommen mowen
 20. caas] A : caases 22. and lecherie] S : in lecherie 22f. S :
 a mon. [or a w]ommon. may 26. S om. ne 28. his] S : þis:
 A om. is 30. A om. is

Tobies wif, and hadde y-had seuene hosebondes,
 and alle weren slawen wiþ þe deuel þe first nyzt þat
 þei wolden ligge bi hire. Wherfore þe aungel seide
 to Tobie he scholde haue hire to his wif. 'And I schal
 þe telle,' seid þe aungel, 'in whiche men þat þe deuel 5
 haþ power ynne,'—in hem þat putten God so oute of
 here hertes and oute of here þouztes þat þei entenden
 to no þing but to here lecheries, as doþ an hors or a
 mule or an oþer best, and þerfore God bynemeþ hem
 oþer while fruyzt þat þ[ei] mowe haue none children. 10
 ¶ And zit mowe men and wommen synne dedliche
 in a-noþer manere, þat is to seie whan þat on draweþ
 þat oþer to do þing azens kynde and in oþer wise
 þan kynde of man askeþ or lawe of mariage graunteþ.
 Suche folke synnen more greuouliche þan any of 15
 þe oþer to-fore seid, but þilke þat in here mariage
 kepen þe drede of oure lord and [k]epen clenliche
 here mariage as it is ordeyned and sette, suche folke
 ben likyng to God. ¶ Þe secunde caas wher men and
 wommen synnen in mariage is whan a man goþ 20
 to his wif whan he scholde not, þat is whan sche is
 seke, as wommen ben comuneliche. He þat ne spareþ
 not whan he wot þat his wif is in suche poynt synneþ
 gretliche, and God defendeþ þat a man come nouzt
 nyzhe his wif in þat poynt for þe perel of þe children 25
 þat comen bitwexe hem. For, as seynt Ierome seiþ,
 in þat tyme ben ofte begete þe maymed folk, þat is
 þe blynde, þe halte and lame, and þe messeles.
 Wherfore þe womman schal telle hire hosebonde þat
 sche is in þat plyt, in þat staate, wherfore þat he 30
 forbere hire to do any þing, and he is holde to suffre
 hire. ¶ Also scholde folke spare of þe dedes of
 wedloke in holy tymes, as at þe hiþe festes þat ben
 solempne in holi chirche, for to be þe more besy and

[fol. 96b]

(b) When it
is done at
the wrong
time.

2. slawen] A : scleyen, S : slain 5. þe telle] S : telle þe;
 S om. þat 6. S : And þat is in hem 10. H : þ, AS : þei
 14. of man askeþ] S : askeþ of a mon 16. to-fore] S : bi fore
 17. H : clepen, AS : kepen 20. is whan] S : is þ^t 22. S om. ne
 27f. þat is þe blynde] A : þat is blynde, S : þ[at] is to seye
 [þe] blynde 28. and lame] S : þe laame 30. S om. in þat staate,
 wherfore 32. scholde folke] S : folk schulden 34.-p.249/1.
 A : bisie entendaunt

entendaunt to serue God and praie goode praiers;
 also in fastynge tymes þat ben in holi chirche scholde
 alle men and wommen forbere suche þinges, not
 for þe synne þat it is to do suche þing *in* suche tyme
 5 —in suche entent may a man do it—but oþerwhile
 schal a man forbere þing þat he may do wip-oute
 synne for to purchase of God þe better þat a man
 wolde, as seynt Austen seiþ. ¶ Also in þe tyme þat
 a womman liþ in childebed scholde euery man kepe
 10 hym from suche worke for schame & for perel þat
 may come þer-of. Men fynden in þe boke þat
 spekeþ of kynde of bestes þat þe olifaunt wole neuere
 touche þe femele after sche haþ conceyued, and a
 man schulde bi resoun be more attempre þan a
 15 best, and þerfore schulde he in suche tyme suffre,
 not for þan I ne seiþ þat he synneþ 3if he doþ þat
 dede bi goode cause in suche tyme, but þer-of God
 is iustice and mote be. ¶ Þe þridde caas wher-ynne
 men mowen greuouliche synne in mariage is in
 20 holy places, as in holy chirche. For in holy places,
 þat ben properliche ordeyned to serue God ynne
 & praien ynne, ne scholde no wiȝt do þe werk of
 mariage for reuerence of God and of þe holi place,
 and who-so ne kepeþ hym not to do suche dedes
 25 in holi places, he synneþ bi cause of þe place. For
 suche þing may be synne in suche stede and suche
 tymes þat is no synne elles-where. ¶ *Þis is þe ferþe
 staat of chastite.*

Example of
the
elephant.

(c) In holy
places.

[fol. 97a]

30 **Þ**E ferþe staate of chastite is of hem þat han ben
 in mariage and deþ haþ departed hem. He þat
 is left in þe lif schal kepe chastite as longe as
 þei ben in widowhode. For þat is an staate þat seynt
 Poule preiseþ moche, and seiþ to widowes þ^t good
 is to kepe and holde þat estate, and 3if hem like not,

4. Widowed
folk.

1. S : and to preie 3. S *om.* and wommen 4. S *om.* it
 8. wolde, as] S : wolde desyren. As 9. S : eueri mon schulde
 13. after sche] S : after þ^t heo 14f. S *om.* þan a best 16.
 I ne seiþ] S : i sei not 25. A : bi þe cause 28. staat of] S :
 astat in 29. staate] S : astaat 32. þei ben] A : he is 33f.
 good is] S : hit is good 34. hem like] S : men lyke