

<County: Nottinghamshire>

<Code: L0278>

<MS reference: London, BL Harley 2409>

<Text: Visions of St Catherine of Sienna>

<fol. 70r>Here folowes how ye holy mayden Kateryne  
 of Seen first began to sette hyr hert fully to godward.

JN ye yere of oure

lorde Criste a thousand thre

hundreth foure score and sex . ye . viij . day

of Januer . ye holy mayden Kateryne of

Seen told til a special familiere spekand

of hir-self as it had bene of a-noyer persone

. yat in ye begynnyng of hir turnyng

to godward . and of hir enlumynyng .

she set ogayne ye lufe of hir owen person

as for a sadde grounde of hir lyuyng . ye

stoon of knowyng of hir-selfe . yis stoon

she departed in thre parties . ye first pert

is consideracion of hir first makynge :

how yat she had no beyng of hir selfe

bot only of god . who boye made hir of not

& kepide hir . and al yis dide he onely of grace

. and no3t of hir dessert . ¶ ye secunde

part is consideracion of ye beyng of

mankynde be ye whilk : efter yat we had

destruyd oure wele-beyng and loste grace

of fyne and feruent lufe . crist bo3t

<fol. 70v>vs ogayne wiy his awen dereworthy blode .

ye whilk luf mankynd neuer deserued . ¶ Ye

thrid part is consideracion of ye synnes

yat she had done efter yat she had receyued

ye grace of baptyme . Be ye whilk synnes

she had deserued endeles dampnacion . Where

-for she merueyled of ye euerlastyng godenes

of god : y<sup>t</sup> he commanded no3t ye erthe to deuoure  
 hir . ¶ Of yies yre considerations  
 yer grew in hir so grete a hate vntil hir  
 selfeward ; yat she coueyted no-ying to  
 be done efter hir wil : bot al efter ye wille  
 of god . wham she sagh wil bot onely hyr  
 gode & hir *profite* . ¶ And of yis it folowed  
 yat al tribulacion & temptacion turned hir  
 to grete ioie bothe for she saghe yat it  
 come of goddes wille and for it toke vengeance  
 on hir for synne . ¶ And yerfore she  
 sayde yat she had souereyne desplesance of  
 al vayne yinges of ye whilk before-tyme  
 she had liking and plesance . For-why  
 ye dauntynge of hir moder in ye whilk  
 she was wont fortill haue grete likyng  
 <fol. 71r>she fled as a swerd or venym And al enmytees  
 she suffred with likyng . Temptacion  
 of ye fende boye she lufed yam & she despised  
 yam . In als mykel as yei broght hir  
 vntil feleable lust : she despised yam . and in  
 als mykel as yai trubled hir : she lufed yaim .  
 ¶ Efter yis she come to gret desire of goostly  
 clennes . And when she had long tyme  
 besily prayed our lord . yat he wolde vouchesafe  
 forto graunte hir parfit clennes . At  
 ye last he appered vntil hir & said . My doghter  
 if you wil haue ye clennes yat you desires  
 : ye nedes forto be parfitely oned vnto  
 me yat am souereyn clennes . And y<sup>t</sup>  
 sal+tou be if you kepe yies yre poyntes y<sup>t</sup>  
 folowes . ¶ Ye first poynt is : if you so ordeyne  
 yine entent vnto me yat you make  
 me ye ende of al yi werkes & euermore besy  
 ye forto haue me befor yi sight . ¶ ye second  
 poynt is if you vtterly forsake yine  
 owen wil and no hede takyng to mannes  
 wil in al ying yat be-falle ye . onely take  
 hede vnto my wille . yat wil yi holynes .

<fol. 71v>For noyther J wil no J suffre any ying falle  
 vnto ye : bot for yi gode & *profite* . And if you  
 take gude hede here-to : yer shal no-yinge  
 make ye sory . you shal no while be wrothe  
 with any man . bot rayher you shal late ye  
 be holden to yam yat does ye wrong . And  
 ouer yis you shal deme no man bot if you  
 openly se his synne . And yan wiy wice you  
 shal be wrothe . & of ye man you shal haue  
 pite . ¶ Ye yridde poynt is . if you deme  
 ye wirkyngs & ye dedes of my seruantes  
 no3t efter yi felyng . bot efter my dome for  
 you knowes wele yat J saide *sumtyme* . yat  
 in my faders house er many dwellyng stedes  
 . And *yerfore* sen yat ye place of blysse is  
 aunsweryng vnto ye desseert of yis lyfe . it  
 folowes yat ri3t as yer er dyuers places of  
 blisse in heuen : so yer er dyuers wayes of  
 dessert in erthe . ¶ Wherfore al ye werkes  
 & ye dedes of my seruants . as loong as yai  
 er no3t expresse ogayns my lore you shal  
 haue yam in reuerence . And be no way mysdeme  
 yem . ¶ If you kepe yies . iij . poynts  
 <fol. 72r>you shal be wele rewled in yi-selfe . And y<sup>u</sup> shal  
 be wele rewled onentes me be ye first poynt .  
 And onentis yi neghbore bothe gode & ille .  
 you sal be wele reuled be ye second & ye yridde .  
 And so you shal no3t go be vices oute of ye  
 ordre of vertues . And more-ouer you shal  
 parfityly kepe ye clennes yat you desyres .  
 my *grace* alway wirkyng yies yings in ye .  
 ¶ Also for more declaracion of ye forsaide matere  
 our loord sayd yat *propre* luf is cause and  
 begynnynge of al wickidnes & castyng dounn  
 of al godenes . Bot yer er two maners of *propre*  
 lufe : For yer is *propre* lufe fleshely & *propre*  
 lufe gostly . ¶ ye first luf is cause of alle  
 fleshely synnes & of alle oyer open wrechednes  
 yat er done for lufe of creatures . As

when for ye lufe of yem ye comandements  
 of god er despised & broken . ¶ Ye seconde  
 lufe yat is called *propre* lufe gostely is y<sup>t</sup> ilke  
 yat efter forsakyng of erthely yings and  
 of al creatures & also of *propre* wille ; it makes  
 men forto folow so mykel yer owen gostely  
 appetite & yer owen dome . yat yai wil  
 <fol. 72v>noither serue god . no walke in goddes wayes  
 bot efter yer owen list & yer owen felynge .  
 ¶ And for als mykel as god wil yat a man  
 forsake his owen wil : *yerfore* no swilk man  
 may long stoond in goddes way . bot hym  
 most nedes falle for he folowes more his  
 owen wil yan ye wille of god . ¶ Swilk  
 men er al yo yat wil chese yem bothe state  
 & exercise efter yer owen dome & no3t  
 efter yat yei er called of god no efter ye  
 counseile of discrete men . Also swilk men  
 er al yo yat conceyue ouer-mykel lufe vntil  
 sum o gostely dede . as vnto fastyng or  
 any oyer swilk . and make yat as it war  
 ye ende of yar wirkyng . And if yai happen  
 forto lose yat : anone yai sal falle to  
 despayre and seese of alle oyer gode dedes .  
 ¶ Foryer-more swilk er alle yo yat sette  
 al yer lufe and yar ese in felyng of gostely  
 comfort ye whilk when yai forgo : on  
 oon yai despayre . A verray gostely lyfer .  
 onely lufes god . and for his sake ye hele  
 of mennes soules & alle oyer yings he  
 <fol. 73r>vses vnto yis ende . And he charges no3t  
 mykel of mennes dedes so yat ye worship  
 of god and hele of mennes soules be ye  
 ende . ¶ he yat has verray gostely lufe .  
 he shuld deme al ying efter ye wil of god  
 and no3t efter ye wille of man . And when  
 he is pryued for a tyme of felynge  
 of gostely comfort : he shuld vmbi-yink  
 hym in his hert & say yis befalne me

of ye ordynance and ye suffraunce of god .  
 who in alle aduersite yat he sendes vntil  
 vs . sekis no3t elles no wil . bot oure holynes  
 . Jf you vmby-yink ye yus : bitter  
 yings shal seme vnto ye swete . Anoyer  
 tyme our lord Jhesu apered vnto yis  
 same forsayde Dame Kateryne & sayde  
 vntil hir yus : Doghter sum clerkes seyne  
 & soye it is : yat ye visyons y<sup>t</sup> cum  
 fro me . yai begynne wiy ferdnes . bot euer  
 ye lengar yai laste . ye more comforte  
 yai gyfe & sykernes . for yai begynne sumwhat  
 wiy bitternes . bot euer yai waxe  
 swetter & swetter . Bot ye visions yat cum  
 <fol. 73v>fro ye enemy . yai haue ye reuerse condicion  
 . for at ye begynnyng yai seme forto  
 gyf sum gladnes and swetnes & sykernes  
 ; bot euer ye lengar yai last . ye more  
 drede and bitternes waxes in yar soules  
 yat sees yam . yis is soye . for my wayes  
 er knowen & departed fro his wayes be  
 ye same difference . ¶ For ye way of penan<sup>n</sup>ce  
 & of my comandements in ye  
 begynnyng semes harde & sharpe : bot euer  
 ye more men go yar-inne . ye more esy  
 & swete it semes vnto yam . ¶ Bot ye  
 way of vices in ye begynnyng semes likand  
 : bot euer ye lengar men goos yer-inne .  
 ye more it waxes bitter and dampnable .  
 ¶ Bot 3it yer is a more siker token yan  
 is yis . For wite you for certayne . yat . J .  
 am verray sothfastnes ; euer<sup>m</sup>ore be ye  
 visions yat cum fro me ye soule profites  
 in more knowyng of sothfastnes . And  
 for als mykel as sothfastnes is ri3t nedeful  
 to ye soule . boye for ye knowyng  
 of me & of ye-selfe . of ye whilk knowyng  
 <fol. 74r>cums . y<sup>t</sup> it despises ye selfe & worshipes  
 me : ye whilk es ye propre office of mekenes

yerfore it is nedeful yat yurgh ye visions  
 yat cum fro me ye soule be made  
 more meke yan it was . and also more  
 knowyng and despisyng ye owen wricchidnes  
 . ¶ Ye reuers here-of falles *in* ye  
 visions yat cums fro ye enmy . For sen  
 yat he is fader of lesyngs and kyng ouer  
 alle ye childer of pride and may no3t  
 gyf bot yat he has : euermore of ye visyons  
 yat cum fro hym yer waxes in ye  
 soule a wele+latyng of ye selfe . ye whilk  
 is ye *propre* office of pride and .<sup>[it]</sup> dwelles still  
 bolned & blowen ful of ye wynd of vanite  
 . ¶ wherfore if you besily examyne  
 yi-selfe you may li3tly *perceyue* fro whens  
 ye visions cums . wheyer fro sothfastnes  
 or fro lesyng . For sothfastnes alway makes  
 ye soule meke . and lesyng makes it  
 proude . ¶ Foryer-more oure saueour sayd  
 vntil hir . Doghter knowes you who . J .  
 am & who you art . Jf you know yies . ij .  
 <fol. 74v>verraily : you shal be a+blissed woman . y<sup>u</sup> ert  
 she . yat ert noght . And J am J yat am . Jf  
 you haue yis knowyng in ye . yine enemy  
 may neuer begyle ye bot you shal ascape alle  
 his snares . And you shal neuer consent to ying  
 yat es ogayn my bidyng . And alle grace &  
 alle vertu and al charite you shal gete w<sup>t</sup> outen  
 difficulte . ¶ Yis Dame Kateryne asked  
 on a tyme of our lorde yat he woldevouche  
 -safe fortill eke hir faith . And our  
 lord annswerd & saide . ¶ Doghter J wil wedde  
 ye in faithe . And oft-tymes when she praied  
 for ye same grace : our lord annswerd hir w<sup>t</sup>  
 same wordes . And efter yat she had besied  
 hir feruently in wakyng fastyng & praying .  
 At ye laste oure lord apered vntil hir & saide .  
 J haue sette and ordeyned a feste day of solempne  
 weddyng of yi soule to me as I haf behette



forto wedde ye to me in faythe . ¶ After yis  
opon a tyme our lord Jhesu wiye his moder  
Mary Johan ye wangelist . Paul ye apostle  
and saynt Domynyk and Daudid ye *prophete*  
apered vntil hir . And oure lady puttande  
<fol. 75r>forth ye right hand of Dame Kateryne . Criste  
putte yar on a ryng and saide . J wedde ye to  
me yi maker and yi saueour in faithe . ye  
whilk shal euer be keped wiy-outen wemme  
vntil ye tyme yat you make yine endles weddyng  
feste wiye me in heuen . ¶ And yarfore  
my spouse . loke yat you wirke now strongly  
and be no3t in doute . For alle yings yat er nedful  
vnto ye for soule or for body . yurgh myne  
ordynaunce and my *puruyance* shal redily be  
brought vnto yine handes . And be ye myght  
of ye faithe in ye whilk you ert now armed .  
you shal selily ouercome alkyns aduersite And  
when yis was sayde . yat ioyful visyon vnapered  
. And ye ryng abode still on hir fynger  
. Deo gracias . <blank line>

**Here endes ye forsayde visions of Dame  
Kateryne Seen**