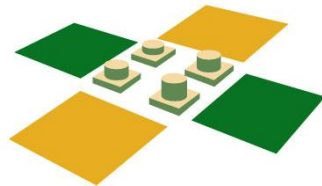
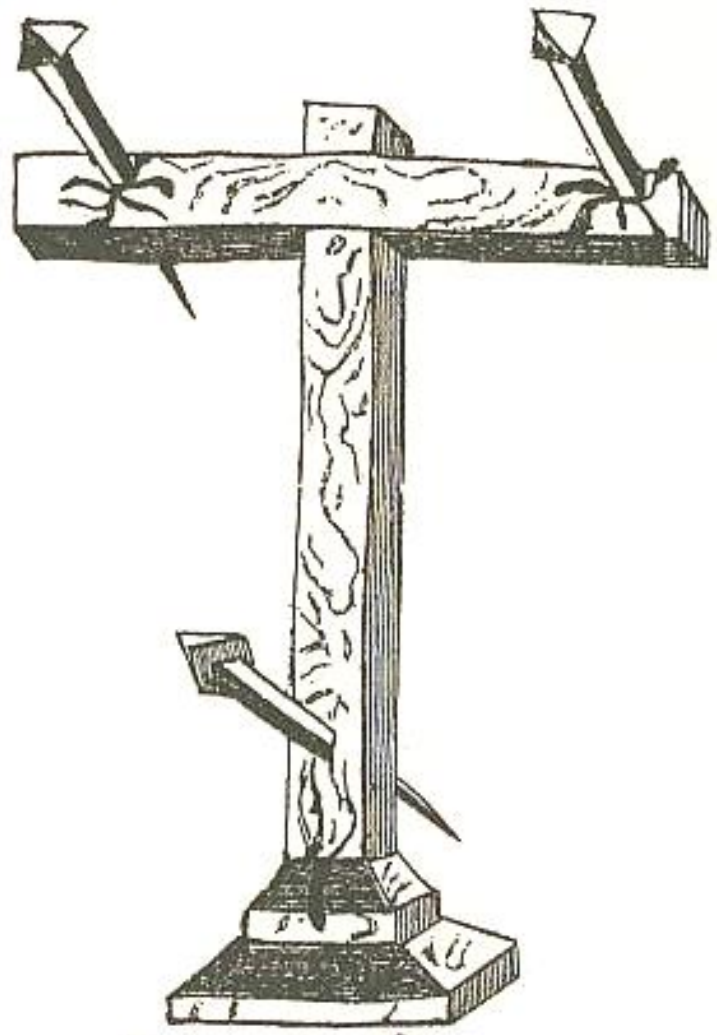


CHRIST'S PASSION
&
CHRIST'S WOUNDS

TWO POEMS



THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP



Hohle Krosse &

CHRIST'S PASSION
&
CHRIST'S WOUNDS

TWO POEMS

John Lydgate *Christes Passioun*
(modernised version)

Here Christ pleads to Man, to remember his passion.

Man, to reform your exile and your loss
From paradise, place most pleasurable,
And to restore you, I hung upon the Cross,
Crowned with thorns, wounded with a lance,
Hands and feet, injuries of my grief,
With sharp nails, my blood made to run down.
Whenever you feel trouble or upset,
Look on my wounds, think of my passion!

Think and remember my bloody face,
The reed, the sponge, the bitter vinegar mixed,
Full rebukes, O Man, for your trespasses!
Hateful spitting fell onto my face,
King of the Jews they scornfully called me,
Blindfolded I was struck to the sounds of false derision;
Man, for your comfort among all your troubles,
Look on my wounds, think of my passion!

Think of the veil that went asunder then,
On Calvary, when I gave up the ghost;
Remember me in the figure of the pelican
Stung to the heart, bleeding in every part of her corpse;
Pale and deadly when all my blood was lost,
Dice thrown up and down for my garments;
Man, in all mischief, when you are at your most troubled,
Look on my wounds, think of my passion!

The bitter chalice of my mortal suffering,
Remember it, with friendly kindness,
The round ropes straining with great punishment,
My tender limbs made faint from feebleness,
I was bound to a pillar by violent cruelty,
To make a seat for your transgressions;
For chief comfort in all worldly distress
Remember to think upon my passion.

Crosses were carried up with many great lanterns,
Swords, staves, scourges unbearable,
Terrible crying, hideous to discern,
False accusations beyond number,
Knives, pincers, hard hammers not flexible,
Accomplices of death, accused of treason,
And so that my death was profitable
Man, think upon my passion.

The scaled ladder up the cross stretching,
With virtuous banner put fiends to their flight;
Cockerels crowing, unkind folk rebuking,
As I slumbered and slept the long winter's night;
But they were awake, and with their inward sight
Looked upon my torment, of equity and reason,
With ghostly gladness, to make their hearts light.
Each hour and moment, think on my passion.

All this was done, O Man, for love of you!
A standard splayed, your Lord slain in that fight,
On a sepulchre I lay closed for three days,
Under a stone roof, the sun having lost its light.
Hell robbed through my imperial might...
Called the hardy strong lion of Judah.....
O Man, remember, I ask of you outright,
Give me thanks, think of my passion!

I fought for the full great battle,
Against Satan the tortuous serpent,
Naked on the cross without breastplate or mail
I waited in the field until all my blood was spent;
My Intent was to win your love,
And to that end I was your Champion;
To find your salvation, my flesh was all rent,
When you are wounded, think of my passion.

I stood before bishops, there I found no relief,
I was struck by their ministers in the council,
Brought to Herod, sent home again in white,
Clothed like a fool, the gospel makes mention of this,
Pilate washing off his false vainglory;
Hailed and scorned, clad by a secret agreement
In the colour purple, blindfold in their Praetorium...
Take note of all this, think of my passion.

And, as they did, they were truly unkind;
By law of reason they proved inexcusable.
All these tokens imprint them in your mind,
Gain everything that is in you culpable,
Blood and water, because they were most valuable,
To wash off sin and all old corruption,
Water of baptism, most gracious and notable,
Mingled with the blood of my many passions.

Of these two liquids come all the sacraments,
In number seven, by calculation,
To all that follow my ten commandments,
Refuge is ordained for their salvation.
For the Holy Church took its first foundation,
When Longius' spear through my heart ran,
And blood and water went by my sides down,
The time of my passion was when building first began.

'It is finished,' was said when all was done,
The thief of Paradise was made a Christian,
I was called the Son of God by a Centurion,
And buried by Joseph for three days, I certainly
Lay in my grave, and Mary Magdalene
Awaited devoutly my Resurrection;
Think, with all this, how Adam was again
Restored to joy through my meek passion.

Tokens palpable, clear as a sunbeam,
Were in that hour shown against nature,
When bodies rose, came to Jerusalem,
Their bones healed, out of the sepulchre,
Alive, appeared to many a creature;
Pilate also, as we are made to mention,
Wrote diverse letters, marvels of scripture,
In Greek, Hebrew, Latin, at the time of my passion.

Man, call to mind, and meekly make known,
How Simeon said in his prophecy,
A sword of sorrow should pierce to the heart,
Of my mother, who is called Mary;
She stood with Saint John, swooned at Calvary,
Under my cross, was weak and fell down.
Man, during your life, and at the hour of your death,
Gain upon Satan, think of my passion.

Go, little bell, with all humility
Hang before Jesus, that list for man to bleed,
Before his cross, pray that folk shall see you,
And one day get to read this plea;
Don't lose any time, you are better prepared
If you are ready for your salvation.
There is no better succour, nor better support in your need,
Than to think often upon Christ's passion.

A Prayer by the Wounds of Christ against the Deadly Sins

Ihū, for thi blode þou bledest
And in the firste tyme þu sheddest
In thy member pryve,
Clense me oute of lecherye,
And oute of all Maner folye,
And haue Mercy on me.

Ihū, for the dropus swete
That þou swetest on olyvete
Ffor drede all to thy dethe,
Oute of wrath clense my life,
Haue mercy on me, sinful caytife,
Ihū of nazarethe.

Ihū, þi peynes weron ful stronge
When the scorges, both smert & longe,
Made thy body to blede.
On thee, Ihū, mercy y crye
To clense me oute of glotonye
And helpe me at myn nede.

Ihū, for thi þorny crowne
That made þi blode to renne a-downe
About thi fayre face,
Let no pride my soule drecche;
Haue mercy one me, sinful wrecche,
Ihū, for thi grete grace.

A Prayer by the Wounds of Christ against the Deadly Sins

The seven deadly sins:

lust, anger, gluttony, pride, greed, sloth (despair), envy

Jesus, for the blood you bled
And in your young years, you shed
In your secret member,
Cleanse me out of **lechery**,
Out of all foolish behaviour,
And have mercy on me.

Jesus, for the sweet drops
Which you sweated on the Mount of Olives
For the fear of your own death,
Cleanse me out of **wrath**;
Have mercy on me, sinful captive,
Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus, your pain was very strong,
When the scourges, both sharp and long,
Made your body bleed.
On you, Jesus, I cry for mercy
To cleanse me out of **gluttony**
And to help me in my moment of need.

Jesus, for your crown of thorns
Which made your blood rain down
About your fair face,
Let not **pride** afflict my soul;
Have mercy on me, sinful wretch,
Jesus, for your great grace.

Ihū, as y vndurstond,
Thou bleddist blode at boþe þine hond
When þat þei were nailed;
Clense me oute of covetise
And graunte me grace sone to ryse,
Of synnes when y am assayled.

Ihūu, þu bledest more blode
When þou were nailed on þe rode
Thoru þi fete with nayles.
Let me nevere in slowthe synke,
But graunt me grace for to swynke
Thynges that me avayles.

Ihū, blessid be thi bones!
Blode and watire ran at ones
Oute of þi precious herte;
Oute of envy clense þou me,
And graunte me loue and charite,
Ihū, for thy woundes smerte.

Haue mercy on me, ihū criste,
Ffor thi dethe and þine vpriste,
And for thi modere loue,
And for thi strong passioun,
Of al my synnes pardoun
And bring vs to hevене aboue. AMEN

Jesus, as I understand,
You bled blood from both your hands
When they were nailed;
Cleanse me out of **covetousness**
And grant me the grace soon to rise,
From sins when I am assailed.

Jesus, you bled more blood
When you were nailed on the rood
Through your feet, with nails.
Let me never sink into **sloth**,
But grant me the grace to gain by labour
Things that might bring me benefit.

Jesus, blessed are your bones!
Blood and water ran at once
Out of your precious heart;
Out of **envy** cleanse me
And grant me love and charity,
Jesus, for your sharp wounds.

Have mercy on me, Jesus Christ,
For your death and your resurrection,
And for your moderate love,
And for your strong passion,
Forgive me all my sins,
And bring us to heaven above. Amen.

SOURCES

Illustration

Image of the Cross from British Library, Add. MS 22029 (vellum roll: poems and images of the passion) reproduced in *Legends of the Holy Rood: Symbols of the Passion and Cross-Poems in Old English of the Eleventh, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Richard Morris, EETS OS, 46 (London, 1871), p. [vi].

Texts

1 (pp. 4–7) ‘Complaint þat Crist maketh of his Passioun’, Oxford, Bodleian MS Laud misc. 683 (SC 798), ff. 12–14^v. Edited H. N. MacCracken, *John Lydgate: The Minor Poems*, Vol. I: Religious Poems. EETS e.s. 107 (1911; repr. 1961), 216–21.

2 (pp. 8–11) ‘Ihū, for thi blode þou bledest’, Oxford, Balliol MS 316A, f. 110. Edited Carleton Brown, *Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century* (Oxford, 1939), 95–7.



THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP