## PLAY TWENTY-ONE- The Baptism

## (The Barbers)

**JOHANNES**   Almighty God and Lord \*verray, (\*in truth)  
Full wonderful is man’s \*lesying, (\*lying, delusion)  
For if I preach them day by day  
And tell them, Lord, of thy coming,  
That all has wrought,  
Men are so dull that my preaching  
Serves of nought.  
  
When I have, Lord, in the name of thee  
Baptised the folk in water clear,  
Then have I said that after me  
Shall he come that has more power  
Than I to taste;  
He shall give baptism more entire  
In fire and \*ghost. (\*spirit)  
  
Thus am I come in message right  
And be fore-runner in certain,  
In witness bearing of that light  
The which shall light in \*ilka a man (\*each)  
That is \*comand (\*coming)  
Into this world, now whoso can  
May understand.  
  
These folk had \*farly of my fare (\*astonishment, wonder)  
And what I was full fast they \*spied. (\*i.e. tried to find out)  
They asked if I a prophet were,  
And I said nay, but soon I \*wreyed; (\*revealed, perceived)  
High apart  
I said I was a voice that cried  
Here in desert.  
  
Look thou make thee ready, \*ay said I, (\*ever, always)  
Unto our Lord God most of might,  
That is that thou be clean holy  
In word, in work, \*ay ready \*\*dight (\*ever) (\*prepared)  
Against our Lord,  
With perfect life that \*ilke a \*\*wight (\*every, each) (\*soul, person)  
Be well restored.  
  
For if we be clean in living,  
Our bodies are God’s temple then  
In the which he will make his dwelling;  
Therefore be clean, both wife and man.  
This is my \*reed. (\*advice, teaching)  
God will make in you holy then  
His \*wonnyng \*stead. (\*dwelling-place)  
  
And if ye set all your delight  
In lust and liking of this life,  
Then will he turn from you as \*tyte (\*quickly)  
Because of sin, both of man and \*wife, (\*woman)  
And from you flee,  
For with whom that sin is rife  
Will God not be.  
  
**I ANGELUS**   Thou, John, take (at)tent what I shall say.  
I bring thee tidings wonder good:  
My Lord Jesus shall come this day  
From Galilee unto this flood  
Ye Jordan call,  
Baptism to take mildly with mood  
This day he shall.  
  
John, of his \*sande therefore be glad (\*sound, message, mission)  
And thank him heartily, both loud and still.  
  
**JOHANNES**   I thank him ever, but I am \*radde (\*upset, afraid)  
I am not able to fulfil  
This deed certain.  
  
**II ANGELUS**   John, thee ought with heart and will  
To be full \*bayne (\*bound, obedient)  
To do his bidding, all bidden;  
But in his baptism, John, take (at)tent,  
The heavens shall be open seen.  
The Holy Ghost shall down be sent  
To see in sight,  
The Father’s voice with great talent  
Be heard full right,  
That shall say thus to him \*forthy (\*therefore)

[SECTION MISSING- UNCLEAR HOW LARGE]

**JOHANNES**   With words few  
I will be subject night and day  
As me well \*awe (\*owe, ought)  
To serve my Lord Jesus to pay  
In deed and \*saw. (\*words)  
  
But well I \*wot, baptism is ta’en (\*know)  
To wash and cleanse man of sin,  
And well I \*wot that sin is none (\*know)  
In him, without nor within.  
What needs him then  
For to be baptised more or \*min (\*less)  
As sinful man?  
[SECTION MISSING]   
  
**JESUS**   John, kind of man is frail   
To the which that I have me knit,  
But I shall show thee skills two   
That thou shall know by kindly wit  
The cause why I have ordained so,   
And one is this:  
Mankind may not unbaptised go  
To endless bliss.  
  
And \*sithen myself have taken mankind (\*since)  
For men shall me their mirror make  
And have my doing in their mind,  
And also I do the baptism take.  
I will \*forthy (\*therefore)  
Myself be baptised for their sake  
Full openly.  
  
Another skill I shall thee tell:  
My will is this, that from this day  
The virtue of my baptism dwell  
In baptism water ever and \*ay, (\*always, ever)  
Mankind to taste,  
Through my grace thereto to take alway  
The Holy Ghost.  
  
**JOHANNES**   All might-full Lord, great is thy grace;  
I thank thee of thy great fore-deed.  
  
**JESUS**    Come, baptise me, John, in this place.  
  
**JOHANNES**   Lord, save thy grace that I forbid  
That it so be,  
For Lord, methinketh it were more need  
Thou baptised me.  
  
That place that I yearn most of all,  
From thence come thou, Lord, as I guess,  
How should I then, that is a thrall,  
Give thee baptism, that \*right-wise is (\*righteous)  
And has been ever?  
For thou art root of \*right-wiseness (\*righteousness)  
That forfeit never.  
  
What rich man goes from door to door  
To beg at him that has right nought?  
Lord, thou art rich and I am full poor,  
Thou may bliss all, since thou all wrought.  
From heaven come all  
That helps in earth, if \*sooth be sought, (\*truth)  
From earth but small.  
  
**JESUS**   Thou says full well, John, certainly,  
But suffer now for heavenly \*mede (\*reward)  
That \*right-wiseness be not only (\*righteousness)  
Fulfilled in word, but also in deed  
Through baptism clear.  
Come, baptise me in my manhood  
\*Appertly here. (\*apparently, openly)  
  
First shall I take, since shall I preach,  
For so behoves mankind fulfil  
All right-wiseness, as \*\*werray \*\*\*leech. (\*righteousness) (\*\*true) (\*\*\*healer)  
  
**JOHANNES**   Lord, I am ready at thy will,  
And will be \*ay (\*ever, always)  
Thy subject, Lord, both loud and still,  
In that I may.  
  
Ah, Lord, I tremble there I stand,  
So am I \*arow to do that deed, (\*afraid)  
But save me, Lord, that all ordained,  
For thee to touch have I great dread  
For doings dark.  
Now help me, Lord, through thy Godhead  
To do this work.  
  
Jesus, my Lord of mights most,  
I baptise thee here in the name  
Of the Father and of the Son and Holy Ghost.  
But in this deed, Lord, right no blame  
This day by me,  
And brings all those to thy home  
That trusts in thee.

**Tunc cantabunt duo angeli *Veni creator spiritus***

***[Then two angels sing “Come, creator spirit”]***

**JESUS**   John, for man’s profit, \*wit thou well, (\*know)  
Take I this baptism, certainly;  
The dragons power \*ilk a dele (\*each part, each work)  
Through my baptism destroyed have I,  
This is certain,  
And saved mankind, soul and body,  
From endless pain.  
  
What man that trusts and baptised be  
Shall saved be and come to bliss.  
Whoso trusts not, to pain endless  
He shall be damned soon, trust well this.  
But wend we now  
Where most is need the folk to \*wise, (\*teach)  
Both I and you.  
  
**JOHANNES**   I love thee, Lord, as sovereign \*leech (\*healer)  
That come to salve men of their sore;  
As thou commands I shall get preach  
And learn to every man that lore  
That ere was \*thrall. (\*slave)  
Now, sirs, that bairn that Marie bore,   
Be with you all.