

PLAY THIRTY-SEVEN- The Harrowing of Hell

(The Saddlers)

JESUS Man on *molde, be **meek to me (*earth) (**humble, obedient)
And have thy Maker in thy mind,
And think how I have *tholid for thee (*toiled, suffered)
With peerless pains for to be *pyned. (*pained, pinned)
The *fore-word of my Father free (*promise, prophecy)
Have I fulfilled, as folk may find;
Therefore about now will I be
That I have bought for to unbind.
The fiend them won with *trayne (*tricks)
Through fruit of earthly food;
I have them gotten again
Through buying with my blood.

And so I shall that *steede restore (*place)
For which the fiend fell for sin;
There shall mankind *wonne evermore (*live, dwell)
In bliss that shall never *blynne. (*dull, diminish)
All that in work my workmen were,
Out of their woe I will them win,
And some sign shall I send before
Of grace to get their games begin.
A light I will they have
To show them I shall come soon.
My body bides in grave
'Til all these deeds be done.

My Father ordained on this wise
After his will that I should wend
For to fulfil the prophecy
And as I spake my solace to spend.
My friends that in me faith *affies (*relies, depends)
Now from their foes I shall them (de)fend,
And on the third day right uprising
And so to heaven I shall ascend.
Sithen shall I come again
To *deem both good and ill (*doom, judge)
To endless joy or pain;
Thus is my Father's will.

Tunc cantent.

(They sing)

ADAM Mi brethren, harken to me here:

Such hope of *heele never ere we had. (*health)
 Four thousand and six hundred year
 Have we been here in this *stedde. (*place)
 Now see I sign of solace *seere, (*separate? Joyful?)
 A glorious gleam to make us glad,
 Wherefore I hope our help is near
 And soon shall cease our sorrows sad.

EVA Adam, my husband *hende, (*clever, noble)
 This means solace certain;
 Such light *gun on us *lende (*has) (**come, assemble, land)
 In paradise full plain.

ISAIAH Adam, we shall well understand;
 I, Ysaias as God me *kenned, (*made known)
 I preached in Neptalym, that land,
 And Zabulon even until end.
 I spake of folk in murk walking
 And said a light should on them *lende. (*come, assemble, land)
 This learned I whilst I was living;
 Now see I God this same hath send.
 This light comes all of Christ,
 That seed to save us now;
 Thus is my point published,
 But Simeon, what says thou?

SYMEON This, my tale of *farleis **feele, (*wonderful) (**excellence)
 For in the Temple his friends me found.
 I had delight with him to deal
 And *halsed **homely with my hand. (*held) (**closely)
 I said, "Lord, let thy servant *lele (*loyal)
 Pass now in peace to life *lastand, (*lasting)
 For now myself has seen thy *hele, (*health, wholesomeness)
 Me *liste no longer to live in land." (*desires, likes)
 This light thou has purveyed
 To folks that lives in *leede, (*land, legal domain)
 The same that I them said
 I see fulfilled indeed.

JOHANNES BAPTISTA As voice crying to folk I *kenned (*made known)
 The ways of Christ as I well can;
 I baptised him with both my hand
 Even in the flood of *flume Jordan. (*river)
 The Holy Ghost from heaven descend
 As a white dove down on him then;
 The Father('s) voice, my mirth to mend,

Was made to me even as man;
"This is my Son," he said,
"In whom me paies full well." (*please, i.e. in whom I am pleased full well)
His light is on us laid,
He comes our cares to *kele. (*kill, quell)

MOYSES Of that same light learning have I;
To me, Moses, he mustered his might
And also unto another, *Hely, (*Elijah)
Where we were on an hill on height.
White as snow was his body
And his face like to the sun to sight;
No man on *molde was so mighty (*earth)
*Grathely to look against that light. (*prepared, able)
That same light see I now
Shining on us certain,
Wherefore truly I *trowe (*trust)
We shall soon pass from pain.

I DIABOLUS Help, Belsabub, to bind *ther **boyes, (*the, those) (*commoners)
Such harrow was never ere heard in hell.

II DIABOLUS Why roars thou so, Ribald? Thou *royis, (*raves)
What is betide, can thou ought tell?

I DIABOLUS What, hears thou not this ugly noise?
These *lurdans that in limbo dwell, (*criminals, cowards)
They make *menyng of many joys (*moaning, meaning, purpose)
And musters great mirth them *emell. (*among)

II DIABOLUS Mirth? Nay, nay, that point is past;
More *hele shall they never have. (*health, well-being)

I DIABOLUS They cry on Christ full fast
And says he shall them save.

BELSABUB Ya, if he save them not, we shall,
For they are *sperde in special space; (*locked, fastened, sparred)
Whilst I am prince and principal
Shall they never pass out of this place.
Call up *Astrotte and Anaball (*Astaroth)
To give their counsel in this case,
Bele-Berit and Belial,
To mar *them that such masteries (a)maze. (*i.e. the souls)
Say to Satan our sire

And bid them bring also
Lucifer, lovely of *lyre. (*face, looks)

I DIABOLUS Al-ready, lord, I go. (nb. May read as “Already” or “All ready”)

JESUS *Attollite portas principes,* [**Lift up your gates, princes**]
Open up, ye princes of pains *sere, (*severe, diverse)

Et elevamini eternas, [**And lift up, you eternal (gates)**]
Your endless gates that ye have here.

SATTAN What page is there that makes *press (*crowd, noise)
And calls him king of us in *fere? (*fellowship, all together)

DAVID I learned living, without lies,
He is a king of virtues clear,
A Lord *mickle of might (*great)
And strong in *ilke a **stoure, (*every) (**combat, including spiritual)
In battles fierce to fight
And worthy to win honour.

SATTAN Honour, in the devil’s way, for what deed?
All earthly men to me are thrall.
The lad that calls him Lord in *leede (*land, legal domain)
Had never yet harbour, house, *ne hall. (*nay, nor)

I DIABOLUS Hark, Belsabub, I have great dread,
For hideously I heard him call.

BELLIALL Wey, spar our gates, all ill *mot thou speed, (*may, might)
And set forth watches on the wall.
And if he call or cry
To make us more debate,
Lay on him then heartily
And *garre him **gange his gait. (*get) (**go)

SATTAN Tell me what *boyes dare to be so bold (*boy, commoner)
For dread to make so mickle *draye. (*confusion, disorder, brawl)

I DIABOLUS It is the Jew that Judas sold
For to be dead this other day.

SATTAN Oh, this tale in time is told;
This traitour *traverses us always. (*opposes, thwarts)
He shall be here full hard in hold, (i.e. he shall be held fast here)
Look that he pass not, I thee pray.

II DIABOLUS Nay, nay, he will not wend
Away or I be (a)ware;
He *shapes him for to **shend
All hell ere he go far.

(*prepares) (**destroy)

SATTAN Nay, *faior, thereof shall he fail,
For all his fare I him defy.
I know his *trantis from top to tail;
He lives with *gaudis and with guilery.
Thereby he brought out of our *bale
Now late Lazar of Betany;
Therefore I gave to the Jews counsel
That they should alway *garre him die.
I entered in Judas
That *fore-word to fulfil;
Therefore his *hire he has
Always to *wonne here still.

(*cheater, deceiver)

(*tricks)

(*tricks, jokes)

(*prison, jail)

(*get)

(*promise, prophecy)

(*pay, reward)

(*live, dwell)

BELSABUB Sir Satan, since we hear thee say
That thou and the Jews were same assent,
And *wot he won Lazar away,
That *tille us was ta'en for to tend,
*Trow thou that thou mar him may,
To muster mights what he has meant?
If he now deprive us of our prey
We will ye wit whence they are went.

(*knew)

(*to)

(*trusts, believes)

SATTAN I bid you be not abashed
But boldly make you boun(d)
With tools that ye on trust,
And *ding that **dastard down.

(*strike) (**wretch, coward)

JESUS *Principes, portas tollite,*
Undo your gates, ye princes of pride,
Et introibit rex glorie,
The king of bliss comes in this tide.

[Princes, open your gates]

[And enter the king of glory]

SATTAN Out, harrow, what *harlot is he
That says his kingdom shall be cried.

(*villain, beggar)

DAVID That may thou in my *Sawter see
For that point of prophecy
I said that he should break
Your bars and bands by name
And on your works take wreck;

(*Psalter, i.e. David's songs)

Now shall ye see the same.

JESUS This *stead shall stand no longer stoken: (*place) (*shut up, enclosed)
Open up and let my people pass.

I DIABOLUS Out, behold, our *bail is broken, (*prison)
And burst are all our bands of brass.
Tell Lucifer all is unlock-en.

BELSABUB What, then, is limbo lost, alas? (*wrecked)
Get Satan help that we were *wroken;
This work is worse than ever it was.

SATTAN I bade ye should be bound (*strike) (*beggar)
If he made masteries more.
Do *ding that *dastard down
And set him sad and sore.

BELSABUB Ya, set him sore, that is soon said, (*upbraid, punishment)
But come thyself and serve him so; (*unless)
We may not bide his bitter *braid:
He will us mar, *and we were mo(re).

SATTAN What, *faitours, wherefore are ye feared? (*beggars, cowards)
Have ye no force to flit him fro(m)?
*Belyve look that my gear be **grathed, (*quickly) (**prepared)
Myself shall to that *gadling go. (*bastard, scoundrel)
How, *bel-ami, abide, (*good friend)
With all thy boast and bear(ing),
And tell to me this tide
What masteries makes thou here?

JESUS I make no masteries but for mine, (*pin, pain)
Them will I save, I tell thee now. (*profit? proving? Testing?)
Thou had no power them to *pyne
But as my prison for their *prowe.
Here have they sojourned, not as thine
But in thy *ward, thou **wot well how. (*custody) (**knows)

SATTAN And what devil has thou done *ay since (*ever)
That never would *nigh them near ere now? (*i.e. come near)

JESUS Now is the time certain (*dwell, live)
My Father ordained before
That they should pass from pain
And *wonne in mirth evermore.

SATTAN Thy father knew I well by sight;
He was a *wright his **meat to win, (*constructor/builder, carpenter) (**food)
And Marie me *menys thy mother *hight, (*knows) (*called)
The uttermost end of all thy kin.
Who made thee be so mickle of might?

JESUS Thou wicked fiend, let be thy din;
Mi Father *wonnys in heaven on height (*dwells, lives)
With bliss that shall never *blynne. (*diminish, dull)
I am his own Son,
His *fore-word to fulfil, (*promise, prophecy)
And same *ay shall we **wonne, (*ever) (**live, dwell)
And sunder when we will.

SATTAN God Son, then should thou be full glad
After no *catel need thou crave. (*cattle, chattel)
But thou has lived *ay like a lad (*ever)
And in sorrow as a simple knave.

JESUS That was for heartily love I had
Unto man's soul it for to save,
And for to make thee (a)mazed and mad.
And by that reason thus duly to have
Mi Godhead here I hid
In Marie mother mine,
For it should not be *kidde (*made known)
To thee nor to none of thine.

SATTAN A, this would I were told in *ilk a town. (*each, every)
So since thou says God is thy sire,
I shall thee prove by right reason
Thou motes his men into the mire. (*compels, drives)
To break his bidding were they bound,
And, for they did at my desire,
From paradise he put them down
In hell here to have their *hire. (*reward, pay)
And thysel, day and night,
Has taught all men among
To do reason and right,
And here works thou all wrong.

JESUS I work not wrong, that shall thou *wit, (*know, understand)
If I my men from woe will win;
Mi prophets plainly preached it,
All this note that now begin.

They said that I should be *obitte, (*recorded as dead, cf. obituary)
To hell that I should enter in
And save my servants from that pit
Where damned souls shall sit for sin.
And *ilke true prophet's tale (*each, every)
Must be fulfilled in me,
I have them bought with bale,
And in bliss shall they be.

SATTAN Now since thee *liste allege the laws, (*likes)
Thou shall be *attainted ere we **twin, (*convicted) (**part)
For those that thou to witness draws,
Full even against thee will begin.
Salamon said in his *saws (*sayings)
That whoso enters hell within
Shall never come out, thus *clerks knows; (*clerics, priests)
And therefore, fellow, leave thy din.
Job, thy servant also,
Thus in his time gone tell
That neither friend nor foe
Should find release in hell.

JESUS He said full *sooth, that shall thou see, (*truth)
That in hell may be no release,
But of that place then preached he
Where sinful care shall ever increase.
And in that *bale **ay shall thou be (*prison, torment) (**always)
Where sorrows *sere shall never cease, (*severe, diverse)
And for my folk therefore were free;
Now shall they pass to the place of peace.
They were here with my will,
And so shall they forth wend,
And thysel self shall fulfil
Their woe withouten end.

SATTAN Oh, then see I how thou moves among
Some measure with malice to *melle, (*mingle)
Since thou says all shall not *gang (*go)
But some shall always with us dwell.

JESUS Yaa, *wit thou well, else were it wrong, (*know)
As cursed Cayme that slew Abell
And all that hastes themselves to hang
As Judas and Archedefell,
Datan and Abiron,
And all of their assent

As tyrants every each one
That me and mine torment(ed).

And all that *liste not to learn my law (*likes, lusts)
That I have left in land now new,
That is my coming for to know
And to my sacrament pursue.
My death, my rising, read by row,
Who will not *trowe, they are not true. (*trust)
Unto my Doom I shall them draw
And judge them worse than any Jew.
And all that likes to *leere (*learn)
My law and live thereby
Shall never have harms here
But wealth as is worthy.

SATTAN Now here my hand, I hold me paid,
This point is plainly for our *prowe. (*profit)
If this be *sooth that thou has said (*truth)
We shall have more than we have now.
This law that thou now late has laid
I shall learn men not to allow,
If they it take they be betrayed,
For I shall turn them tight, I *trowe. (*trust)
I shall walk east and west
And *garre them work well **werre. (*get) (**worse)

JESUS Nay, fiend, thou shall be *fast (*fastened, bound)
That thou shall flit not far.

SATTAN Fast, that were a foul reason;
Nay, *bel-ami, thou must be smite. (*good friend)

JESUS *Mighill, mine angel, make thee bound (*Michael)
And fast yon fiend that he not flit.
And Devil, I command thee go down
Into thy cell where thou shall sit.

SATTAN Out! Ay, harrow — help, Mahounde!
Now *wax I *woode out of my wit. (*grow) (**mad)

BELSABUB Satan, this said we are,
Now shall thou feel thy fate.

SATTAN Alas, for dole and care,
I sink into hell pit.

ADAME A, Jesu Lord, *mickle is thy might
That makes thyself in this manner
Us for to help as thou has *hight
When both forfeit, I and my *feere.
Here have we lived withouten light
Four thousand and six hundred year;
Now see I by this solemn sight
How thy mercy hath made us clean.

(*great)

(*said, described)

(*companion, i.e. Eve)

EVE Ah, Lord, we were worthy
More torments for to taste,
But mend us with mercy
As thou of might is most.

BAPTISTA Ah, Lord, I love thee inwardly
That me would make thy messenger
Thy coming in earth for to cry
And teach thy faith to folk in *feere,
And *sithen before thee for to die
And bring *boodword to them here
How they should have thine help in hie.
Now see I all thy points appear
As David, prophet true,
Oft times told unto us;
Of this coming he knew
And said it should be thus.

(*fellowship, together)

(*since then)

(*bid-word, i.e. promise)

DAVID As I have said, yet say I so,
Ne derelinquas, Domine,
Animam meam in inferno,
Leave not my soul, Lord, after thee
In deep hell where damned shall go,
Ne suffer never souls from thee be,
The sorrow of them that *wონnes in woe
*Ay full of filth, that may **repleye.

**[You will not leave, Lord
My soul in hell - Psalm 15:10]**

(*dwells, lives)

(*ever) (**turn back, oppose)

ADAME We thank his great goodness
He fetch us from this place;
Makes joy now more and less.

OMNIS We laud God of his grace.

Tunc cantent.

[They sing]

JESUS Adam and my friends in *feere,

(*fellowship)

From all your foes come forth with me;
 Ye shall be set in solace *seere (*separate, diverse)
 Where ye shall never of sorrows see.
 And *Mighill, mine angel clear, (*Michael)
 Receive these souls all unto thee
 And lead them as I shall thee *lere (*learn, teach)
 To paradise with play and plenty.
 Mi grave I will go *till, (*to)
 Ready to rise upright,
 And so I shall fulfil
 That I before have *highte. (*named, described)

MICHILL Lord, wend we shall after thy *saw, (*sayings, commands)
 To solace *sere they shall be send, (*separate, diverse)
 But that their devils no draught us draw, (*i.e. like fire drawn up a chimney)
 Lord, bliss us with thy holy hand.

JESUS Mi blissing have ye all on row.
 I shall be with you where ye wend,
 And all that loyally loves my law,
 They shall be blissed withouten end.

ADAME To thee, Lord, be loving
 That us has won from woe
 For solace will we sing,
Laus tibi cum gloria, etc. [Praise to you with glory; nb. song is unknown]