

"Al had she taken prestes two or thre."

"He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,
He shal have multiplying of his grain."

"If any wight be in this chirche now
That hath doon sinne horrible, that he
Dar nat for shame yshriven it be."

"Or any woman, be she yong or old,
That hath ymaad hir housbonde cokewold,
Swich folk shal have no power ne nor grace
To offren to my relikes in this place."

"I preche of no thing but for coveitise."

"I have relikes and pardoun in my male
As faire as any man in Engelond.
Which were me yeven by the popes hond."

"Thou woldest make me kisse thyn olde breech,
And swere it were a relik of a seint."

"I wolde I hadde thy coillons in myn hond
In stide of relikes or of seintuarie."

Context:

The "hooly Jewes sheep" which critics believe is a mildly anti-Semitic joke or an attempt at a vague reference to an unspecified OC figure.

The Catholic Church in the Middle Ages believed that the relics had miraculous powers. They were rich in relics. They thought they had the power to cure illness and to make women fertile was a common claim.

In a society that was based on farming the health of livestock was of huge importance therefore the idea of a relic to increase produce would have been very attractive.

In religion, a **relic** is a part of the body of a saint or a venerated person, or else another type of ancient religious object, carefully preserved for purposes of veneration or as a touchable or tangible memorial.

Since the beginning of Christianity, individuals have seen relics as a way to come closer to the saints and thus form a closer bond with God. Since Christians during the Middle Ages often took pilgrimages to shrines of holy people, relics became a large business. The pilgrims saw the purchasing of a relic as a means, in a small way, to bring the shrine back with him or her on returning home, since during the Middle Ages the concept of physical proximity to the "holy" (tombs of saints or their personal objects) was considered extremely important. Instead of having to travel hundreds of miles to become near to a venerated saint, one could venerate the relics of the saint within one's own home.