

Chester Cycle 1572/2010**Play 21****The Prophets of Antichrist**

Cast: EZECHIEL, EXPOSITOR, ZECHARIAH, DANIEL, JOHN THE EVANGELIST

EZECHIEL “Facta super me manus domini et eduxit me spiritus domini, et demisit me in medio campi qui erat plenus ossibus et circumduxit me per ea in giro.” [*“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass them round about”*] These things are in the Book of Ezechiel, Chapter 37.

	Harken, all that love heal!	<i>salvation</i>
	I am the prophet Ezechiel.	
	What I saw I will not conceal	
	but as me thought I will tell.	
5	God his spirit did with me deal	<i>share</i>
	that led me long with word-es lele	<i>true</i>
	into a field where bones fele	<i>many</i>
	all lay bare, without flesh or fell.	<i>skin</i>
	Then spake that ghost unto me	
10	and said: “Man's son, how likest thee?	
	Thinkst thou not well that this may be,	
	these bones might turn and live?”	
	Then bade he me tell and prophesy	
	that he would revive them soon on hie	<i>speedily</i>
15	with flesh and sinews and skin thereby	
	which soon he can them give.	
	After that, life he for them get,	<i>obtained</i>
	rise of their graves he them let,	
	and made them stand upon their feet,	
20	speak, go and see –	
	this saw I right in my sight –	
	to know that he was God Almighty	
	that Heaven and Earth should deal and dight	<i>ordain</i>
	and never shall ended be.	
EXPOSITOR	Now, that you shall expressly know	
26	these prophet's word upon a row,	<i>in their entirety</i>
	what they will signify I will show	
	that much may do you good.	
	By them understand may I	
30	the Day of Doom skilfully,	
	when men through God's posty	<i>power</i>
	shall rise in flesh and blood.	
	Therefore this prophet said full yare	<i>long ago</i>
	he saw a field of bones bare,	
35	and soon that ghost with them can fare,	
	gave them flesh and life.	
	Believe this fully without ween	<i>doubt</i>
	that all which dead and rotten been	
	in flesh shall rise, as shall be seen -	
40	man, maid, and wife.	
	They that shall be saved shall be as bright	
	as seven times the sun is light;	

	the damn-ed dark shall be in sight, their doom to underfo.	<i>receive</i>
45	Both saved and damned after that day die they may not by no way, God gave you grace so to act ay that bliss you may come to.	<i>any means always</i>
ZECHARIAH	“Levavi oculos meos et vidi; et ecce, quatuor quadrigae egredientes de medio duorum montium.” [“ <i>And I turned and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold there came four chariots out from between two mountains</i> ”] This is in the Book of the Prophet Zechariah, chapter 6.	
50	I, Zachary – men, believe ye me – lifted up my eyes a sight to see, and, as me thought by my lewty, four chariots came anon	<i>faith</i>
55	out of two hills, believe ye me – silver hills they were, as know we! Great wonder I had in my degree whither that they would gone.	
60	Red horses in one were, certainly; another black that went them by; the third was white, I know not why; the fourth of diverse hue. They were strong, pulling mightily.. Then at once answered I to that angel in my body who told me word-es true --	
65	I asked him then what it might be and he answered at once unto me. “These chariots,” he said, “which thou dost see, four winds they are iwiss, which shall blow, and ready be	<i>are power</i>
70	before Christ, that prince which is of posty. There is none so fell their fit may flee nor gain their desire from this.”	
EXPOSITOR	Now, for to moralise aright, which this prophet saw in sight, I shall attempt through my might to you in meek manner, and declare that soon in hight more plainly, as I have tight.	
75	Listen now, with hearts light this lesson for to lear.	<i>immediately</i>
80	Four chariots this prophet saw, how they out of two hills took their way – the hills of silver, the sooth to say, the horses of diverse hue. Which hills signify may Enoch and Hely, truly, that as good silver shall be ay, steadfast men and true.	<i>learn</i>
85	Four chariots he saw, as thinks me, skilfully may likened be to saints of four manners of degree that then shall suffer annoy. Four horses is also certainly	<i>always</i>
90		<i>tribulation</i>

- 95 of diverse hues that he can see;
four manner of saints in dignity
liken them well may I:
- 100 “Martyrs,” “Confessors.” -- there be two;
“Heretics Converted” also
that turned shall be from sin and woe
through Enoch and Hely; *Elijah*
“Virgins” also, both one and moe. *more*
Here be diverse hues too
that through God's grace shall go
for him to suffer annoy. *tribulation*
- 105 These red horses call I may
all manner of Martyrs truly,
for red may well betoken ay
Man's blood-shedding.
- 110 The white he saith took their way
above the Earth to go astray *wandering*
are such that neither night nor day
of death dread nothing.
- 115 The black horses which went them by?
By them may well signify
Preachers of God's Word, truly,
that confessors shall be.
- 120 The skewbald horses, by mine intent,
understanding
the which into the south forth went
I may well liken verament
to Jews and pagans eke. *also*
Yet through faith with heart fervent
shall turn to good amendment
when Enoch and Hely have them kent
salvation for to seek. *Elijah; taught*
- DANIEL “Ego, Daniel, videbam in visione mea nocte; et ecce, quattuor venti pugnabant
in magno mare, et quatuor bestiae gradentes ascendebant de mare.” [*“I,
Daniel, saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds strove unpon the
great sea.. And four great beasts came up from the sea”*] These things are in
the Book of Daniel, chapter 7.
- 125 I, Daniel, as I lay on a night,
methought I saw a wondrous sight:
four winds – together they can fight
above the sea on hie; *hastily*
four beasts – out of that sea they yede. *came*
- 130 To the fourth beast I took good heed,
for that to speak of now is need.
The other all I will leave.
- 135 That beast was wondrous stiff and strong,
of teeth and nails sharp and long,
eating overall that he could fong;
the remnant he fortrod. *seize*
Unlike he was to any of lede. *down trod*
Ten horns he had upon his head. *known to man*
- 140 In the midst, one little horn did spread
above all other on high.
- That horn had mouth to speak and eyes to see,

and spake great words, believe you me;
but of the ten, the first three
soon were consumed away.

145 That one horn had so great posty; *power*
the remnant meek to him to be
that highest was in that degree, *rank*
and remained so many a day.

150 Then was it told me right there
that ten horns ten kings were,
but all that one should fear
that sprang upward so fast,
and that he should work against that King

155 that of nought made all thing –
but little while, without leasing,
that king his might should last. *truly*

EXPOSITOR By this beast understand I may
the world to come next Doomsday;
and by that horn, truly,
160 in the midst the ten did spring.
Antichrist I may understand,
that then great lord may be in land
and all the world have in hand
three years and a half during.

for a period of

“Tradentur in manu eius usque ad tempus et tempora et dimidium temporis,
et usque ad annum duos annos et dimidium anni.” [*“They shall be given into his
hand until a time and times and the dividing of times and until one year, two years
and half a year”*] These things are in the Book of Daniel, chapter 7.

165 Ten horns ten kings in land shall be,
of which Antichrist shall slay three.
The other seven this case shall see
and put them to his grace.
This shall befall, certainly,
170 by the understanding that have I
of Daniel's prophecy
that here rehearsed was.

JOHN EVANG. “Dabo duobus testibus meus et prophetabunt diebus mille, ducentis et
sexaginta amicti saccis.” [*“I give (power) to my two witnesses, and they shall
prophesy one thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth”*]
These things are in the Book of Apocalypse, chapter 11.

175 I, John, Christ's own darling,
as I lay in great longing
upon my Master's breast sleeping,
wonders saw I, many one.
My spirit was taken, without lying,
to Heaven before that Highest King.
There saw I many a wondrous thing.
180 One will I tell you anon. *at once*

185 There heard I God greatly commend
two witnesses which he thought to send
false faiths for to defend
that raised were by his foe. *repel*
He said they should prophesy
a thousand days, certainly,
two hundred and sixty.

	In sackcloth clad they should go.	
190	He called them "Candles of great light burning before God's sight." Fire out of their mouths they should flight their enemies for to destroy.	<i>send out</i>
195	Whosoever them harmed, as said he, dead he deserved for to be. To hinder the reign they had posty in time of their prophecy.	<i>power</i>
200	He said they should have powers good to turn the water into blood, and overcome their enemies that were wood, and master them through their might. And when they had done their devoir, a beast should come, of great power, from the pit, without were. Against them he should fight.	<i>mad</i> <i>duty</i> <i>assuredly</i>
205	And slay them also should he in midst of the Holy City where Christ was nail-ed on a tree, for the truth as I you tell.	
210	But after three days and half one, they shall rise, speak and gone, and into Heaven be taken anon, in joy evermore to dwell.	<i>go</i> <i>at once</i>
EXPOSITOR	Now, lordings, what these things may be, I pray you hearken all to me.	
215	As clearly in certainty as I have might and grace, I shall expound this same thing which Saint John saw thus sleeping through help of Jesus, Heaven-King,	
220	immediately in this place.	
225	These two witness, certainly, he said they should come, and prophesy, that one is Enoch, the other Hely -- shall have great power and main that when Antichrist comes in hie God's people for to destroy, that he deceives falsely they shall convert again.	<i>Elijah</i> <i>quickly</i>
230	Many signs they shall show which the people shall well know, and in their token truly trow and believe it steadfastly. And all that turn, believe you me, Antichrist will slay through his posty;	<i>power</i>
235	but truly martyrs they shall be and come to Heaven on hie.	<i>at once</i>
240	The beast that John spoke of here is Antichrist, without were, which shall have the Devil's power and with these good men meet. And at the last, certainly. He shall slay Enoch and Hely	<i>truly</i>

in Jerusalem, as read I,
even in midst of the street.

245 Now, that you shall know and see
what men Enoch and Hely been,
I will tell you, truly,
while that I have time.
250 They are two good men, believe ye me;
to Paradise, through God's posty
were ravished both, and there shall be,
ever, till the day do come.

power

255 The one was taken, for he was good,
long before Noah his Flood,
and there he lives in flesh and blood,
as fully believe we.
The other was taken, withouten were,
after that many a hundredth year;
and there they both are together
260 until that time shall be.

ruly

*Fifteen Signs: the fifteen great signs which, according to the opinion of scholars,
shall come before the Last Judgement, selected from the ancient books of the
Hebrews by a scholar for recital in this play:*

265 Now fifteen signs, while I have space
I shall declare, by God's grace,
of which Saint Jerome mention makes
to fall before the Day of Doom,
the which were written on a row
he found in a book of Hebrew.
Now will I tell in word-es few,
a while if you will dwell.

list

remain

270 The first day, as I written find,
the sea shall rise, against kind
and as a wall against the wind,
above all hills on high
forty cubits, as read we;
275 the second day, so low shall be
that scarcely a man the sea shall see,
stand he never so nigh.

nature

280 The third day after, as read I,
great fishes above the sea shall lie,
yell and roar so hideously
that only God shall hear.
The fourth day next after then,
sea and water all shall bren
against nature, that men may ken,
tinder as if it were.

*that time
burn
know*

285 The fifth day, as read we,
all manner of herbs and also tree
of bloody dew all full shall be,
and many a beast shall be dazed.
290 Fowls shall gather them, as I find,
to fields. Each one in their kind
of meat and drink shall have no mind,
but stand all mad and amazed.

species

The sixth day in the world overall,

295	<p>built things to ground shall fall -- church, city, house and wall -- and men lie in fear. Lightening and fire also, verament, from the sun to the firmament</p>	<i>truly</i>
300	<p>up and down shall strike and glent, and all night be foul fare.</p> <p>The seventh day both rock and stone shall break asunder and fight as fone. The sound thereof shall hear no man, but only God Almighty.</p>	<i>flash</i> <i>horrible</i> <i>foes</i>
305	<p>The eighth day earthquake shall be, that men and beast, believe ye me, to stand or go shall fail posty, but fall to ground all right.</p>	<i>power</i>
310	<p>The ninth day, as our books sayen, hills shall fall and wax all plain, stone turn to sand though God's main; so strongly men shall be stad.</p>	<i>power</i> <i>beset</i>
315	<p>The tenth day men that hid be, out of their caves they shall flee – to speak together have no posty, but go as they were mad.</p>	<i>power</i>
320	<p>The eleventh day, from morning to e'en all graves in the world open shall been that dead may rise, withouten ween, above the earth standing.</p> <p>The twelfth day stars shall fall in hie and fire shoot from them hideously. All manner of beasts shall roar and cry and neither eat nor drink.</p>	<i>evening</i> <i>certainly</i> <i>hastily</i>
325	<p>The thirteenth day shall die all men and rise at once again right then. The fourteenth day, all shall bren, both Earth and also Heaven.</p>	<i>burn</i>
330	<p>The fifteenth day made shall be new Earth, new Heaven, through God's posty; which heaven God grant us in to be, for his names seven.</p>	<i>power</i>
335	<p>Now I have told you, truly, the signs to come before Doomsday. God give you grace to do so ay that you then worthy be to come to the bliss that lasts ay.</p>	<i>always</i> <i>forever</i>
340	<p>As much as here we and our play of Antichrist's signs you shall assay, he comes – soon you shall see!</p>	<i>test</i>