

# HOMILIES

by li Of York Wulfstan

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*Homilies by Wulfstan II, Archbishop of York, including sermons on Matthew 24 about the end times, false prophets, persecutions, and the importance of remaining faithful to Christian teaching.*

8 Chapters

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## 00 Homilies

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00 Homilies by Wulfstan II, Archbishop of York (1002 A.D.)

## 01 Matthew 24

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### 01 Matthew 24

Jesus went out of the temple, and his disciples came to him and showed him the building of the temple. Responding, he said to them: "Indeed I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be destroyed." As he was sitting then upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him in secret, saying: "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will the sign of your coming be, and of the end of the world?" And responding, Jesus said to them: "See that no one seduces you. Many will come in my name, saying: I am Christ, and they will seduce many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; these things must come to be, but it is not yet the end. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be pestilence and famine and earthquakes in various places. All of this is the beginning of sorrows. Then they will betray you to tribulation, and they will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. And then many will be offended and will betray each other and hate each other. And many false prophets will arise and seduce many. And because iniquity will abound, the love of many will cool. But he who will endure to the end, he will be saved. And this gospel will be preached throughout the entire world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come. But no man knows the day and the hour, nor the angels in heaven, but the Father alone. Therefore watch, because you do not know the hour your Lord will come."

Beloved people, it happened once in the town that is named Jerusalem that our Lord's thanes began to speak with him about the great temple-building that was erected there in honor of God. Then he said to them that it must happen in later days that each stone would be thrown to the ground. And then they began to ask him again secretly when that must happen, and also by what signs a man might perceive when his second coming was at hand, and when this world's end must come. Then he answered them and said that they had need to be careful that no one deceive them too fraudulently with lying teaching and terrible boasts, because, he said, many will yet come in the future who will lie falsely and boast terribly, who will name themselves [God] and pretend to be God, as if it were Christ himself. "But say what they will," he said, "do not believe them ever." And he said that great strife must arise widely in the world before the end, and he taught that a man should not then be too weak-minded, and he said that the end was not yet entirely at hand. He said also that nations must strive violently among themselves, and many earthquakes and misfortunes must occur in the world before the world ends. And that will be the beginning, he said, of the sorrows that will come to humanity. It is certain that he meant for us to know very well the sorrow and the pain that will come in the world before the time when Antichrist rages and terrifies all the world. Because then there will be a grim and painful persecution of Christian folk, and those who love God will be hated and set against everywhere. And deceitful liars will then arise and spread too widely and through false teaching lead too many astray. But it will be well forever afterwards in the world for those who do not weaken then in any way. And one thing I will yet say to you for certain, that this gospel will undoubtedly be known all around the world before the world ends, as the book says, and afterwards the end will come as quickly as God wills it. And

nevertheless there is no one on earth nor any angel in heaven who knows the appointed day except God himself. And thus a man must watch and take heed always so that he may indeed be prepared for the judgment, when he comes to us, for we know with certainty that it is very near. And at that judgment, to which all people must go, our Lord himself will immediately show us his bloody side and his pierced hands and the very cross on which he was hung for our need; and he will surely know how we have repaid him and how we have held our Christianity.

Beloved people, let us be careful and do as is needful for us, love God above all other things and work his will as best we can. Then he will reward us as is most pleasing to us. To him be praise and glory always without end, amen.

## 02 Mark 13

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### 02 Mark 13

Jesus was asked by his disciples about the end of time; he said to them: When you will see the abomination of desolation, etc. Woe to those who are pregnant and nursing in those days. There will be such tribulations as there never were from the beginning of the creation that God created until this time, nor will be, etc.

Beloved people, our Lord's apostles asked him himself once about the end of this world. He said to them that such hardships and tribulations must come into the world before the end such as never before had happened and never would again. And the gospel says: "Woe to the women who bear children and feed them during that wretched time." Indeed, it must of necessity become very evil in the world because of people's sins, for now is the time that Paul the apostle foretold long ago. He said once to the bishop Timothy that the in the last days of this world it would be a dangerous time because of people's sins, and people would then love, he said, the deceitful world all too much and be overly greedy for worldly treasures, and too many would become too proud and entirely too arrogant and too boastful, and some would blaspheme horribly against God's divinity and despise the teachings of scripture and love injustice, and some would become deceitful and very fickle and treacherous, guilty in their sins. And let him know it who can, now is the time that this world is involved with manifold crimes and with many evils, and it has become worse widely in the world, just as the gospel says: "Because iniquity abounds, the love of many grows cold." That is in English, because evil grows entirely too widespread, true love cools. No one loves God as a person should. No one remains faithful to anything, but injustice rules far and wide, and loyalty among people is uncertain, and that is seen in many ways, let him know it who can.

Alas, alas, but there was great joy and help at hand from the best of men when Christ came into this world through a human birth, and he came to us all as the greatest help and the best comfort. And great is the depravity that is now at hand, let him endure that misery who must endure it, when Antichrist will be born. Christ was the best of all children ever born, and Antichrist will be the worst of all children ever born in this world of those who ever came before or who will come afterwards. Now it must of necessity become very evil, because his time is coming quickly, just as it is written and has long been prophesied: "After a thousand years Satan will be unleashed." That is in English, after a thousand years Satan will be unbound. A thousand years and also more have now passed since Christ was among people in human form, and now Satan's bonds are very loose, and Antichrist's time is well at hand. And thus it is in the world always the longer the weaker. People are deceitful, and the world is worse, and that injures us all. And indeed it must henceforth become more oppressive for the righteous and the innocent; now the evil and the deceitful spread widely throughout the world against the coming of the greatest evil that will come to men. That is the archfiend Antichrist himself.

Alas, great was the oppression that Christians suffered long ago in the world, often and constantly, through cruel traitors, far and wide, and indeed it must henceforth happen many times again, now that the devil himself may wield his power, and the devil's son may terrify Christians so strongly. And often before there were many persecutions, although never the same as this will be. For it often happened in the past that God's saints worked many miracles openly through God's power among those who suffered the persecution, and through that many people repented, but it will not be so in Antichrist's time. Holy people may not then work any signs openly in that time, but must suffer all that is done to them. Nor will God himself then manifest his power or his miracles during that time, as he often did before, but he will allow the devil Antichrist and those who support him to rage and rave for a certain while. He will be born a human man, but still he will be entirely filled with the devil's spirit. And the visible fiend will work many wonderful signs through the devil's power and many illusions through sorcery. And for three and a half years he will rule over mankind and deceive most people with his sorcery, more than were ever deceived before in any way. And those whom he may not deceive with his artifices he will threaten and and subdue horribly and wretchedly torture in many ways and forcibly compel to bow to his false teachings. He will begin to lie very devilishly and deny Christ and say that he himself is God's own son, and bring all too many people into heresy. And because of the people's deeds God will allow him to injure them violently for a certain time, because people will be so thoroughly ruined by sin that the devil may openly tempt them to find out how many he can seduce into eternal damnation. And those who are so blessed that they hold to God's law very earnestly and steadfastly persevere in correct belief will then endure the greatest persecution that ever any people have endured before in the world, and much more than people ever endured anywhere before or ever will afterwards. But he will be blessed who does not weaken, because quickly afterwards eternal comfort will certainly come to him through God's power. Indeed, is it any wonder, though the human devil may grievously oppress the sinful, when God permits him to work so great a miracle among his own saints that through the arch-fiend Enoch and Elias will be martyred, whom God himself preserved for many hundreds of years in soul and body for one purpose, that they might strengthen the people with their teaching so that they might not all perish together at the same time through this devil, who will terrify all men and afflict all the world? There is no one alive who may say or can say how evil it will be in that devilish time. Brother will not spare brother at that time, nor a father his child, nor a child his own father, nor a kinsman his kinsman any more than a stranger. And nations will strive and fight among themselves before the time that this will happen. Strife and contention will also arise far and wide, and slander and hatred, plunder and rapine, war and hunger, burning and bloodletting and violent disturbances, plague and pestilence and many other evil events. And many signs will be seen widely in the sun and the moon and in various stars, and many kinds of terror and many sudden dangers will occur on earth to terrify people's hearts. And all will perish if God through his might does not shorten the days of the arch-criminal. But for the protection of his chosen ones and those whom he will hold and help, he will destroy the arch-fiend and sink him into the pit of hell with all of that company who followed him and too easily believed his evil teachings. Then God's judgment will rightly decide between them, and then certainly those who now love God and follow God's laws and earnestly obey God's teachings and hold them well, and who steadfastly persevere in correct belief until the end, they will have eternal reward in heavenly joy with God himself and with his saints forever afterward. There is eternal bliss and ever will be, world without end, amen.

## 03 Luke 21

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### 03 Luke 21

"There will be signs in the sun and the moon and the stars, etc." This gospel says and makes clear that many portents must occur widely in the world, both in the heavenly stars and in earthly movements, before the judgment comes that is common to us all. And certainly, just as a flood came once before because of sin, so also a fire will come over mankind because of sin, and it is now coming very quickly. And therefore there are many and varied evil events occurring widely among people, and it is all because of sin. And yet more evils and afflictions will come, as the book says, than ever happened before anywhere in the world; that is, when Antichrist rages and terrifies all the world, and that is now coming very quickly. And therefore it is always the longer the worse in the world, as we ourselves know very well. And it is also clear and to be seen within ourselves that we obey our Lord too weakly, and that we are too disbelieving of God's might and his mercy, and that we anger him more often than we need to, and also that we keep good faith among ourselves too weakly in front of God and the world. And therefore many evil events injure and afflict us harshly, and foreigners and strangers severely oppress us, just as Christ clearly said must happen in his gospel. He said, "Nation will rise up against nation, etc." That is in English, "nations will rise up," he said, and become opposed, and strive violently and contend among themselves because of the injustice that has become too widespread among people on earth."

Beloved people, this earth was clean at its creation, but we have since greatly fouled and defiled it with our sins. And our misdeeds also constantly accuse us, because we do not want to hold God's law as we should, nor to grant to God what we should. Nor do we give tithes as is required of us, nor distribute alms as we need to, but in every way all that we should do in God's grace lessens. And therefore much of creation also oppresses and strives against us, just as it is written: "the world will fight for God against insensible men." That is in English, all the world strives greatly against proud people who will not obey God, because of their sins. Heaven strives against us when it sternly sends us storms that greatly injure cattle and land. The earth strives against us when it withholds earthly fruits and sends us too many weeds. It is also written that the sun will grow dark before the world ends and the moon will darken and the stars fall because of the people's sins, and that will be when Antichrist rages that it will be like as if it were so. It is said that the sun will grow dark; that is, when God will not reveal in Antichrist's time his strength and his power as he often did before. Then it will be like as if the sun had grown dark. And the moon, it says, will darken. That is, that God's saints will not perform any miracles then as they often did before. And the stars, it says, will fall from heaven. That is, that liars and false Christians will quickly fall from correct belief and eagerly bow down to Antichrist and honor his helpers with all their might. And then there will be the greatest terror that ever was, and the most widespread persecution in the world. Then kinsmen will not protect kinsmen any more than strangers. And about that terrifying time Matthew the evangelist truly said thus: "In those days there will be such tribulations as have never been from the beginning of the world or afterwards." That is in English, that such misery and affliction will then be in the world such as never before was nor ever again

will be. And quickly afterwards all the hosts of heaven will be roused through divine might; and earthdwellers will be raised from death to the judgment. Then the one who before would not believe the truth will know that Christ in his majesty will repay each person for his earlier deeds. Woe to the one who earlier earned the torments of hell! There are eternal flames grimly flickering and there is eternal horror; there is groaning and lamentation and perpetual wailing; there is each and every terror and a crowd of all the devils. Woe to the one who must dwell there in torment! It would be better for him if he had never become a man than that he come to this. For there is no one living who may tell of all the horrors that he must endure, he who falls entirely into that torment. And it is worst of all that no end at all will ever come for him in the world.

Alas, beloved people, let us do what is needful for us, protect ourselves earnestly against that terror and help ourselves while we may and might, lest we die when we least expect to. But let us love God above all other things and work his will as earnestly as we can: then he will repay us as will be most pleasing to us when we have the best need. To him be praise and glory in all the world, world without end, amen.

## 04 On the Antichrist (Old English)

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### 04 On the Antichrist (Old English)

Beloved people, understand very well so that you may correctly and carefully hold that which is most needful for you to hold, that is, correct Christianity. For each of those who do too much that is contrary to it or who do not teach it to others, each of those is named Antichrist. Antichrist is in Latin "contrary to Christ", that is in English, God's adversary. He is God's adversary who abandons God's laws and teaching and through the devil's teaching makes ill use of that which belongs to his Christianity, and then, being himself in sin, too severely befouls or leads other people into sin. And although it may be that many people will never see Antichrist himself with their eyes, still too many of his limbs may now be seen far and wide and may be known by their evil, just as is read in the gospel: "False Christs will arise, etc." Widely it will happen that false liars will arise and be plausibly deceitful, and they will mar many people and bring them into heresy. And such great affliction will occur in many ways throughout the world, as the book says, through the devil's son, who will do such evil as never happened before in the world; for the greatest evil will come to people when Antichrist himself comes, who never before was in the world. And it seems to us that that time is very near at hand, for this world is from day to day always the longer the worse. Now there is great need for all of God's preachers to warn God's people constantly about the terror that is coming to mankind, lest they be caught unawares and be too quickly deceived by the devil. But let each priest act in his own diocese so that the people hear it often and constantly, lest through want of instruction God's people are lost. And although it may happen that none of us who are now alive will live then, still we have need now earnestly to warn our sacred flocks how they may then most warily withstand the devil Antichrist himself, when he spreads his deceitful madness most widely. And let us also now warn very earnestly against his false teachings and pray to almighty God that he protect us against that arch-criminal. May God protect us against the terror, and make room for us in the eternal joy that is prepared for those who work his will. There is eternal bliss and always will be, world without end, amen.

## 05 On the Antichrist (Latin)

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### 05 On the Antichrist (Latin)

All those who profess correct Christianity, but do not live by it or teach it to others as is proper, are Antichrists, because according to this definition they are called by that name. Antichrist means contrary to Christ. Many people of this time will not see Antichrist, yet many of his limbs may be found, as is read in the gospel: "Pseudo-Christ and pseudo-prophets will arise, who will show great signs, so that, if it were possible, they would lead even the elect into error." Understand that when he said "if it were possible," it was not that the Lord, who knows both past and future, was uncertain about anything, but rather that if they are the elect it is not possible. If it were possible, they would not be the elect. Therefore he said "if it were possible," for although they will be anxious because of the multitude of signs, because they will not fall they may be called the elect. Indeed, there will then be tribulations and hardships such as there never were from the day the human race began up until that time. And if his days are not shortened, no one will be able to be saved; but for the sake of the elect his days will be shortened, lest they be led into error.

Therefore the time of the Antichrist will be a time and times and the dividing of time, as is signified and made manifest in scripture: "and the holy city," that is, holy church, "will be trampled underfoot for forty-two months," at which time Enoch and Elias will come, as it is written: "And I will give to my two witnesses," etc. And the beast that will rise from the abyss will conquer them and kill them and throw their bodies into the streets of the city, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, and which is also where our Lord was crucified, that is, that Jerusalem that was the first holy city, but that afterwards was renamed because of sin and error.

Therefore each one who preaches in church must daily warn the people about that time, because, as it is written, the last days will be a dangerous time, so that when those dangerous days come the faithful will not be found unprepared, but will have been taught and educated against the enemy, the ancient serpent who is Satan, and will be prepared to resist him. For then there will be such persecution of the church that, as the Lord predicted, brother will betray brother to death, and the father his son, and sons will rise up against their parents, and they will have mutual hatred for each other. And then many will be made to stumble and will fall into faithlessness before the magnitude of the signs and because of the greatness of the punishments and torments with which Christians will be afflicted by the Antichrist and his ministers, who will be endured by the entire world; but, as it is written, "he who perseveres until the end, he will be saved." And the wise will shine like the stars, and those who teach many will shine like the splendor of the firmament in perpetual eternity.

Therefore it is necessary that each priest, or whoever may read sacred scripture, teach those who do not know their danger, so that a double reward may be earned from the Lord, both for the priests and for those they teach, and no one perish through ignorance. And although many will not live to see this persecution, still they should warn everyone in their earlier preaching, so that when the Antichrist comes, who is the son of perdition, he will find the Christian people, without

exception, prepared to resist him and his followers and strengthened by their faith in Christ, amen.

## 06 On the Coming of the Antichrist

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### 06 On the Coming of the Antichrist

Beloved people, it is greatly needful for us that we be aware of the terrifying time that is coming. Now it will very quickly be Antichrist's time, whom we may expect and also readily know, and that will be the most terrifying time that ever was since this world was first made. He will himself be a devil and yet born a human man. Christ is true God and true man, and Antichrist will truly be a devil and a man. Through Christ comes help and comfort to all of middle-earth, and through Antichrist will come the greatest terror and the greatest affliction that has ever happened before in the world, and all mankind will perish immediately if God does not shorten his days. But God will shorten his days for the sake of those who are chosen by him, and whom he will save. And yet during the time that he exists he will do such great evil as never before. He will turn each person away from correct belief and away from Christianity and entice him to his false teaching, if he may, and God will permit him for a certain while because of two things. One is, first, that people will be so ruined by sin that they will be well deserving that the devil openly tempt those who will follow him. The second is that God wills that those who are so blessed that they persevere in correct belief and steadfastly withstand the devil, he wills that they be quickly purified and cleansed of sin through the great persecution and through the martyrdom that they will then suffer, for there is no one who is not sinful, and each person must suffer sorely either here or elsewhere according to what he has earned through sin. And therefore the persecution of good people will be so harsh, because they must be quickly cleansed and purified before the great judgment comes. Those who have been dead for a hundred years or even longer may now be well cleansed. We may need to suffer more harshly, if we must be clean when the judgment comes; we do not now have the time that those who were before us had. Each may think whatever he himself wants about that; none of us will ever come to God's kingdom until we are as cleanly purified of each sin as ever any gold may be most cleanly purified.

Beloved people, God permits to the devil Antichrist that he might persecute good men, because they must, as I said before, be cleansed through the persecution and afterwards go clean into the kingdom of heaven. Then those who believed his lies and worshiped him, and whom he protected here in front of the world and those he honored here, but they must quickly perish eternally after that and dwell forever afterwards with him in the dark pit of hell. The visible devil will perform many wonders and say that he is God himself, and with his illusions deceive almost every person. And those whom he cannot deceive otherwise, he will compel by force, if he can, so that they forsake God and worship him. If they then will not do so, then they must suffer great persecution and also a miserable death. Oh, blessed is he who is so steadfast that he does not therefore weaken! But certainly there will be all too few whom he does not deceive, either through his treacherous artifices or through the terror that he imposes on mankind. Our Lord Christ healed many of those who were unhealthy in life, and the devil Antichrist will injure and make ill those who were healthy before, and he may not heal any unless he first injured them. But after he has injured a person, afterwards he may act as if he heals him, if he can deceive those to whom he earlier did evil. He is

full of every deceit. Then he will deceive very many people through that, that he injures many people secretly and heals them again in front of people as they look on, when they will see what he does then and will not know what he did before. Each evil he may do, and each he will do. He will make fire come from above, as if it comes from heaven, and he will burn many with that, just as he once before did Job's possessions. But he who turns to him for fear of the fire, he must dwell forever in hell in eternal fire. Neither I nor any other person know how to tell about all the terror that shall happen in the world through the devil. Then we will have great need to pray earnestly to almighty God that he will protect us against that terror and strengthen us according to his will. And those who live in this time have great need to be cautious and to be mindful of the things the devil's men often did in the past through sorcery. The magicians in the land of Egypt did many things through sorcery. Moses, through God's strength, worked many miracles against them. And so we have read in many places that everywhere various people have been led astray through sorcery with the devil's help. It is better that we now give a certain example of this:

One of the devil's men was once in Rome; he was named Simon. He harassed two of God's famous thanes very severely. That was saint Peter and saint Paul. They preached in Rome at the beginning of Christianity, but the devil's man harassed them and hindered that people very wondrously. He said that what God's thanes were preaching was all lies, and he worked many wonders through sorcery while people watched. At one time he made a brass serpent move as if it were alive. And in those days in Rome people had made likenesses, and that heathen folk through the devil's teaching honored them as gods; then through sorcery he also made them move as if they were alive. Then Peter did better things through God's might. He healed variously injured people: the blind and the deaf and the dumb and those with various other afflictions. And everything he did became known at last to the emperor who in those days ruled Rome, and he was praised more highly than Simon. Then he allowed the foolish to think that he was God's own son. And then at last the emperor had Simon brought to him. And when he came and stood in front of him, then through the devil's power he blinded the emperor's eyes and those of the people with him so that they thought at one time when they looked at him that he was like a child whom they looked at; a second time again as if he were a middle-aged man; and another time as if he were a distinguished old man; and so in many ways he practiced deception through sorcery. And then when the emperor had seen this, then he thought that it was God's own son, and the devil's man boasted that he was, and the people too quickly believed him. Then God's thanes strove against that and said that he lied, and through God's might they also made clear with many good things that they were in the right and that everything the arch-liar said was a lie. Then at last Simon said that he would prove that he was God. He commanded a tower to be built and said that he would climb up it and that angels would take him and carry him to heaven. And as all the people watched he climbed up the tower and leapt from the tower into the air as if he would meet the ruler of heaven. Then the emperor cried out and said that it was clear that everything he said before was the truth, and that what Peter and Paul pretended to the people was all lies. Then the saints entreated him reluctantly that he be patient for a while, until it was known what the end would be, and they cried out to God very earnestly. Lo, then saint Peter looked quickly up to the sky and cried out in a louder voice and said: "I charge you, spirits of the devil, you who are carrying the devil's man around the sky and are deceiving people by doing so, that by almighty God's command you let him go now so that he may no longer deceive people with his crimes." As soon as he said this they let him go, and he fell down so that he burst apart. Then God's might was

made clear, although he had permitted the devil's heresy for a long time earlier. We have also read in books that many other servants of the devil harassed God's thanes through the devil's power in other places and led many people astray, but this seems too long a story to tell. You may know by this example alone, of what he did through the devil's power against men of God such as saint Peter and saint Paul, something of what it will be like when the devil himself comes, he who alone knows all the evil and all the sorcery that anyone has ever learned. And he will then make known openly through himself what he often did before through the unhappy people who followed his teachings. The same devil who is in hell, that is the one who will then be within the wretched man Antichrist, and truly be both devil and man, and he will then openly oppress and deceive all mankind more severely than ever happened before. We therefore have very great need to be mindful against such terror, and also to warn those who do not know what is at hand. For the time is near when ignorant people will believe. And that is seen because this world is from day to day worse and worse. I also say truthfully that the devil will oppress each person's thoughts, if he may, so that he does not understand, although men tell him, what he is warned against, and in this way most people will be deceived who are not as mindful or as well-warned in advance as they need to be. Indeed, what living person is there who may be warned in advance well enough that he will not be deceived by the devil, unless almighty God protects him? But let us warn ourselves earnestly and earn from God that he protect us as his will may be. Let us have resolute belief and steadfastly think of our Lord. Then, although it may be necessary that we must abide the evil and suffer hardships on earth, if we do not weaken, but persevere in correct belief, God has ordained for us eternal rest. In God's name I pray that each Christian person think earnestly about himself and willingly worship God and turn away from sin, and earn what may await him in the kingdom of heaven with the one who lives and rules always without end, amen.

## 07 Sermon of the Wolf to the English

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07 Sermon of the Wolf to the English The sermon of the Wolf to the English, when the Danes were greatly persecuting them, which was in the year 1014 after the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Beloved men, know that which is true: this world is in haste and it nears the end. And therefore things in this world go ever the longer the worse, and so it must needs be that things quickly worsen, on account of people's sinning from day to day, before the coming of Antichrist. And indeed it will then be awful and grim widely throughout the world. Understand also well that the Devil has now led this nation astray for very many years, and that little loyalty has remained among men, though they spoke well. And too many crimes reigned in the land, and there were never many of men who deliberated about the remedy as eagerly as one should, but daily they piled one evil upon another, and committed injustices and many violations of law all too widely throughout this entire land. And we have also therefore endured many injuries and insults, and if we shall experience any remedy then we must deserve better of God than we have previously done. For with great deserts we have earned the misery that is upon us, and with truly great deserts we must obtain the remedy from God, if henceforth things are to improve. Lo, we know full well that a great breach of law shall necessitate a great remedy, and a great fire shall necessitate much water, if that fire is to be quenched. And it is also a great necessity for each of men that he henceforth eagerly heed the law of God better than he has done, and justly pay God's dues. In heathen lands one does not dare withhold little nor much of that which is appointed to the worship of false gods; and we withhold everywhere God's dues all too often. And in heathen lands one dares not curtail, within or without the temple, anything brought to the false gods and entrusted as an offering. And we have entirely stripped God's houses of everything fitting, within and without, and God's servants are everywhere deprived of honor and protection. And some men say that no man dare abuse the servants of false gods in any way among heathen people, just as is now done widely to the servants of God, where Christians ought to observe the law of God and protect the servants of God. But what I say is true: there is need for that remedy because God's dues have diminished too long in this land in every district, and laws of the people have deteriorated entirely too greatly, since Edgar died. And sanctuaries are too widely violated, and God's houses are entirely stripped of all dues and are stripped within of everything fitting. And widows are widely forced to marry in unjust ways and too many are impoverished and fully humiliated; and poor men are sorely betrayed and cruelly defrauded, and sold widely out of this land into the power of foreigners, though innocent; and infants are enslaved by means of cruel injustices, on account of petty theft everywhere in this nation. And the rights of freemen are taken away and the rights of slaves are restricted and charitable obligations are curtailed. Free men may not keep their independence, nor go where they wish, nor deal with their property just as they desire; nor may slaves have that property which, on their own time, they have obtained by means of difficult labor, or that which good men, in Gods favor, have granted them, and given to them in charity for the love of God. But every man decreases or withholds every charitable obligation that should by

rights be paid eagerly in Gods favor, for injustice is too widely common among men and lawlessness is too widely dear to them. And in short, the laws of God are hated and his teaching despised; therefore we all are frequently disgraced through God's anger, let him know it who is able. And that loss will become universal, although one may not think so, to all these people, unless God protects us.

Therefore it is clear and well seen in all of us that we have previously more often transgressed than we have amended, and therefore much is greatly assailing this nation. Nothing has prospered now for a long time either at home or abroad, but there has been military devastation and hunger, burning and bloodshed in nearly every district time and again. And stealing and slaying, plague and pestilence, murrain and disease, malice and hate, and the robbery by robbers have injured us very terribly. And excessive taxes have afflicted us, and storms have very often caused failure of crops; therefore in this land there have been, as it may appear, many years now of injustices and unstable loyalties everywhere among men. Now very often a kinsman does not spare his kinsman any more than the foreigner, nor the father his children, nor sometimes the child his own father, nor one brother the other. Neither has any of us ordered his life just as he should, neither the ecclesiastic according to the rule nor the layman according to the law. But we have transformed desire into laws for us entirely too often, and have kept neither precepts nor laws of God or men just as we should. Neither has anyone had loyal intentions with respect to others as justly as he should, but almost everyone has deceived and injured another by words and deeds; and indeed almost everyone unjustly stabs the other from behind with shameful assaults and with wrongful accusations -- let him do more, if he may. For there are in this nation great disloyalties for matters of the Church and the state, and also there are in the land many who betray their lords in various ways. And the greatest of all betrayals of a lord in the world is that a man betrays the soul of his lord. And it is the greatest of all betrayals of a lord in the world, that a man betray his lord's soul. And a very great betrayal of a lord it is also in the world, that a man betray his lord to death, or drive him living from the land, and both have come to pass in this land: Edward was betrayed, and then killed, and after that burned; and Æthelred was driven out of his land. And too many sponsors and godchildren have been killed widely throughout this nation, in addition to entirely too many other innocent people who have been destroyed entirely too widely. And entirely too many holy religious foundations have deteriorated because some men have previously been placed in them who ought not to have been, if one wished to show respect to God's sanctuary. And too many Christian men have been sold out of this land, now for a long time, and all this is entirely hateful to God, let him believe it who will. Also we know well where this crime has occurred, and it is shameful to speak of that which has happened too widely. And it is terrible to know what too many do often, those who for a while carry out a miserable deed, who contribute together and buy a woman as a joint purchase between them and practice foul sin with that one woman, one after another, and each after the other like dogs that care not about filth, and then for a price they sell a creature of God -- His own purchase that He bought at a great cost -- into the power of enemies. Also we know well where the crime has occurred such that the father has sold his son for a price, and the son his mother, and one brother has sold the other into the power of foreigners, and out of this nation. All of those are great and terrible deeds, let him understand it who will. And yet what is injuring this nation is still greater and manifold: many are forsworn and greatly perjured and more vows are broken time and again, and it is clear to this people that God's anger violently oppresses us, let him know it who can. And lo! How may greater shame befall men through the anger of God

than often does us for our own sins? Although it happens that a slave escape from a lord and, leaving Christendom becomes a Viking, and after that it happens again that a hostile encounter takes place between thane and slave, if the slave kills the thane, he lies without wergild paid to any of his kinsmen; but if the thane kills the slave that he had previously owned, he must pay the price of a thane. Full shameful laws and disgraceful tributes are common among us, through God's anger, let him understand it who is able. And many misfortunes befall this nation time and again. Things have not prospered now for a long time neither at home nor abroad, but there has been destruction and hate in every district time and again, and the English have been entirely defeated for a long time now, and very truly disheartened through the anger of God. And pirates are so strong through the consent of God, that often in battle one drives away ten, and two often drive away twenty, sometimes fewer and sometimes more, entirely on account of our sins. And often ten or twelve, each after the other, insult the thane's woman disgracefully, and sometimes his daughter or close kinswomen, while he looks on, he that considered himself brave and strong and good enough before that happened. And often a slave binds very fast the thane who previously was his lord and makes him into a slave through God's anger. Alas the misery and alas the public shame that the English now have, entirely through God's anger. Often two sailors, or three for a while, drive the droves of Christian men from sea to sea -- out through this nation, huddled together, as a public shame for us all, if we could seriously and properly know any shame. But all the insult that we often suffer, we repay by honoring those who insult us. We pay them continually and they humiliate us daily; they ravage and they burn, plunder and rob and carry to the ship; and lo! what else is there in all these happenings except Gods anger clear and evident over this nation?

It is no wonder that there is mishap among us: because we know full well that now for many years men have too often not cared what they did by word or deed; but this nation, as it may appear, has become very corrupt through manifold sins and through many misdeeds: through murder and through evil deeds, through avarice and through greed, through stealing and through robbery, through man-selling and through heathen vices, through betrayals and through frauds, through breaches of law and through deceit, through attacks on kinsmen and through manslaughter, through injury of men in holy orders and through adultery, through incest and through various fornications. And also, far and wide, as we said before, more than should be are lost and perjured through the breaking of oaths and through violations of pledges, and through various lies; and non-observances of church feasts and fasts widely occur time and again. And also there are here in the land Gods adversaries, degenerate apostates, and hostile persecutors of the Church and entirely too many grim tyrants, and widespread despisers of divine laws and Christian virtues, and foolish deriders everywhere in the nation, most often of those things that the messengers of God command, and especially those things that always belong to Gods law by right. And therefore things have now come far and wide to that full evil way that men are more ashamed now of good deeds than of misdeeds; because too often good deeds are abused with derision and the Godfearing are blamed entirely too much, and especially are men reproached and all too often greeted with contempt who love right and have fear of God to any extent. And because men do that, entirely abusing all that they should praise and hating too much all that they ought to love, therefore they bring entirely too many to evil intentions and to misdeeds, so that they are never ashamed though they sin greatly and commit wrongs even against God himself. But on account of idle attacks they are ashamed to repent for their misdeeds, just as the books teach, like those

foolish men who on account of their pride will not protect themselves from injury before they might no longer do so, although they all wish for it.

Here in the country, as it may appear, too many are sorely wounded by the stains of sin. Here there are, as we said before, manslayers and murderers of their kinsmen, and murderers of priests and persecutors of monasteries, and traitors and notorious apostates, and here there are perjurers and murderers, and here there are injurers of men in holy orders and adulterers, and people greatly corrupted through incest and through various fornications, and here there are harlots and infanticides and many foul adulterous fornicators, and here there are witches and sorceresses, and here there are robbers and plunderers and pilferers and thieves, and injurers of the people and pledge-breakers and treaty-breakers, and, in short, a countless number of all crimes and misdeeds. And we are not at all ashamed of it, but we are greatly ashamed to begin the remedy just as the books teach, and that is evident in this wretched and corrupt nation. Alas, many a great kinsman can easily call to mind much in addition which one man could not hastily investigate, how wretchedly things have fared now all the time now widely throughout this nation. And indeed let each one examine himself well, and not delay this all too long. But lo, in the name of God, let us do as is needful for us, protect ourselves as earnestly as we may, lest we all perish together.

There was a historian in the time of the Britons, called Gildas, who wrote about their misdeeds, how with their sins they infuriated God so excessively that He finally allowed the English army to conquer their land, and to destroy the host of the Britons entirely. And that came about, just as he said, through breach of rule by the clergy and through breach of laws by laymen, through robbery by the strong and through coveting of ill-gotten gains, violations of law by the people and through unjust judgments, through the sloth of the bishops and folly, and through the wicked cowardice of messengers of God, who swallowed the truths entirely too often and they mumbled through their jaws where they should have cried out; also through foul pride of the people and through gluttony and manifold sins they destroyed their land and they themselves perished. But let us do as is necessary for us, take warning from such; and it is true what I say, we know of worse deeds among the English than we have heard of anywhere among the Britons; and therefore there is a great need for us to take thought for ourselves, and to intercede eagerly with God himself. And let us do as is necessary for us, turn towards the right and to some extent abandon wrong-doing, and eagerly atone for what we previously transgressed; and let us love God and follow God's laws, and carry out well that which we promised when we received baptism, or those who were our sponsors at baptism; and let us order words and deeds justly, and cleanse our thoughts with zeal, and keep oaths and pledges carefully, and have some loyalty between us without evil practice. And let us often reflect upon the great Judgment to which we all shall go, and let us save ourselves from the welling fire of hell torment, and gain for ourselves the glories and joys that God has prepared for those who work his will in the world. God help us. Amen.

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