

Ælfric's Life of Æþelþryth

Ælfric of Eynsham

After 987 AD

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Otho B 10. UIIII KALENDAS IULII, NATALE SANCTE ÆÐELDRYÐE UIRGINIS.

1 **WE** WYLLAÐ NV AWRITAN ÞEAH ÐE HIT WUNDORLIC SY

2 þe ðære halgan sancte Æðeldryðe þam Engliscan mædene,

3 þe wæs mid twam werum and swa ðeah wunode mæden,

4 swa swa þa wundra geswuteljað þe heo wyrçð gelome.

5 **Anna** hatta hyre fæder East Engla cynincg,

6 swyðe Cristen man swa swa he cydde mid weorcum,

7 and eall his team wearð gewurðod þurh God.

8 **Æðeldryð** wearð þa forgifen anum ealdormenn to wife,

9 ac hit nolde se ælmihtiga God þæt hire mægðhad wurde

10 mid hæmede adylegod, ac heold hi on clænnysse,

11 forðan þe he is ælmihtig God and mæg don eall þæt he wile,

12 and on manegum wisum his mihte geswutelað.

13 Se ealdorman gewat þa ða hit wolde God,

14 and heo wearð forgifen Ecfride cynincge,

15 and twelf gear wunode ungewemmed mæden

16 on þæs cynincges synscype, swa swa swutele wundra

17 hyre mærdā cyðað, and hire mægðhad gelome.

18 **Heo** lufode þone Hælend þe hi heold unwemme,

19 and Godes ðeowas wurðode; an þæra wæs Wilfrid bisceop

20 þe heo swyðost lufode, and he sæde Bedan

21 þæt se cyning Ecfrið him oft behete mycel

22 on lande and on feo, gif he læran mihte

23 **Æðeldryðe** his gebeddan, þæt heo bruce his synscipes.

24 **Nu** cwæð se halga Beda þe þas boc gesette

25 þæt se ælmihtiga God mihte eaðe gedon,

26 nu on urum dagum, þæt **Æðeldryð** þurhwunode

27 ungewemmed mæden, þeah ðe heo wer hæfde,

28 swa swa on ealdum dagum hwilon ær getimode

29 þurh þone ylcan God þe æfre þurhwunað

30 mid his gecorenum halgum, swa swa he sylf behet.

31 **Æðeldryð** wolde ða ealle worulþincg forlætan,

32 and bæd georne þone cynincg þæt heo Criste moste þeowian,

33 on mynsterlicre drohtnunge swa hire mod hire tospeon.
34 **Pa** lyfde hire se cynincg þeah þe hit embe lang wære
35 þæs þe heo gewilnode, and Wilfrid bisceop þa
36 hi gehadode to mynecene, and heo syððan on mynstre wunode
37 sume twelf monað swa, and heo syððan wearð gehadod
38 eft to abudissan on Elig mynstre,
39 ofer manega mynecena, and heo hi modorlice heold
40 mid godum gebysnungum to þam gastlican life.
41 **Be** hire is awrytan þæt heo wel drohtnode
42 to anum mæle fæstende, butan hit freolsdæg wære,
43 and heo syndrige gebedu swyðe lufode
44 and wyllen weorode, and wolde seldhwænne
45 hire lic baðian butan to heahtidum,
46 and ðonne heo wolde ærest ealle ða baðian
47 þe on ðam mynstre wæron, and wolde him ðenian
48 mid hire þinenum, and þonne hi sylfe baðian.
49 **Pa** on þam eahteoðan geara siððan heo abbudisse wæs,
50 heo wearð geuntrumod swa swa heo ær witegode,
51 swa þæt an geswel weox on hire swuran
52 mycel under þam cynnbane, and heo swiðe þancode Gode
53 þæt heo on þam swuran sum geswinc þolode,

54 Heo cwæð, ic wat geara þæt ic wel wyrðe eom
55 þæt min swura beo geswenct mid swylcere untrumnyse,
56 forðan þe ic on iugode frætwode minne swuran
57 mid mænigfealdum swurbeagum, and me is nu geþuht
58 þæt Godes arfæstnyss þone gylt aclænsige,
59 þonne me nu þis geswel scynð for golde,
60 and þæs hata bryne for healicum gymstanum.

61 **Þa** wæs þær sum læce on ðam geleaffullum heape,
62 Cynefryð gehaten and hi cwædon þa sume
63 þæt se læce sceolde asceotan þæt geswell;
64 þa dyde he sona swa, and þær sah ut wyrms.

65 **Wearð** him þa geðuht swilce heo gewurpan mihte
66 ac heo gewat of worulde mid wuldre to Gode
67 on þam ðriddan dæge syððan se dolh wæs geopenod,
68 and wearð bebyrged swa swa heo bæd sylf and het,
69 betwux hire geswustrum, on treowenre cyste.

70 **Þa wearð** hire swustor Sexburh gehadod
71 to abbudissan æfter hire geendunge,
72 seo ðe ær wæs cwen on Cantwarebyrig.

73 **Þa** wolde seo Sexburh æfter syxtyne gearum
74 don hire swustor ban of ðære byrgene up,

75 and beran into þære cyrcan; and sende þa gebroðra
76 to secenne sumne stan to swilcere neode,
77 forðan þe on þam fenlande synd feawa weorcstana.

78 **Hi** hreowan þa to Grantanceastre, and God hi sona gehradode,
79 swa þæt hi þær gemetton ane mære þruh
80 wið þone weall standende, geworht of marmstane
81 eall hwites bleos bufan þære eorðan,
82 and þæt hlyd ðærto gelimplice gefeged,
83 eac of hwitum marmstane swa swa hit macode God.

84 **Þa** naman ða gebroðra blyðelice þa ðruh
85 and gebrohton to mynstre, mycclum ðancigende Gode;
86 and Sexburh seo abbudisse het slean an geteld
87 bufan ða byrgene, wolde þa ban gaderian.

88 **Hi** sungon ða ealle sealmas, and licsang
89 þa hwile þe man ða byrgene bufan geopenode.

90 **Þa** læg heo on ðære cyste, swilce heo læge on slæpe
91 hal eallum limum, and se læce wæs ðær
92 ðe þæt geswell geopenode, and hi sceawode georne.

93 **Þa** wæs seo wund gehæled, þe se læce worhte ær;
94 eac swilce þa gewæda þe heo bewunden wæs mid
95 wæron swa ansunde, swylce hi eall niwe wæron.

96 **Sexburh** þa hyre swuster swiðe þæs fægnode,
97 and hi þwogon ða syððan þone sawlleasan lichaman,
98 and mid niwum gewædum bewundon arwurðlice,
99 and bæron into ðære cyrcan, blyssigende mid sangum,
100 and ledon hi on ðære þryh, þær ðær heo lið oð þis
101 on mycelre arwurðnyse, mannum to wundrunge.

102 **Wæs** eac wundorlic, þæt seo ðruh wæs geworht
103 þurh Godes foresceawunge hire swa gemæte,
104 swylce heo hyre sylfre swa gesceapen wære,
105 and æt hire hæfde wæs aheawen se stan,
106 gemæte þam heafde þæs halgan mædenes.

107 **Hit** is swutol þæt heo wæs ungewemmed mæden,
108 þonne hire lichama ne mihte formolsnian on eorðan,
109 and Godes miht is geswutelod soðlice þurh hi,
110 þæt he mæg aræran ða formolsnodon lichaman,
111 seðe hire lic heold hal on ðære byrgene
112 git oð þisne dæg; sy him ðæs a wuldor.

113 **Þær** wæron gehælede þurh ða halgan femnan
114 fela adlige menn, swa swa we gefyrn gehyrdon;
115 and eac ða þe hrepodon þæs reafes ænigne dæl
116 þe heo mid bewunden wæs, wurdon sona hale;

117 and manegum eac fremode seo cyst micclum
118 þe heo ærest on læg, swa swa se lareow Beda
119 on ðære bec sæde, þe he gesette be ðysum.

120 **Oft** woruldmenn eac heoldon, swa swa us bec secgað,
121 heora clænnysse on synscipe for Cristes lufe,
122 swa swa we mihton reccan gif ge rohton hit to gehyrenne.

123 **We** secgað swa-ðeah be sumum ðegne,
124 se wæs þryttig geara mid his wife on clænnysse.

125 **Pry** suna he gestrynde, and hi siððan buta
126 ðrittig geara wæron wunigende butan hæmede
127 and fela ælmyssan worhton, oð þæt se wer ferde
128 to munuclicere drohtnunge, and Drihtnes englas
129 comon eft on his forð siðe, and feredon his sawle
130 mid sange to heofonum, swa swa us secgað bec.

131 **Manega** bysna synd on bocum be swylcum,
132 hu oft weras and wif wundorlice drohtnodon,
133 and on clænnysse wunodon, to wuldre þam Hælende,
134 þe þa clænnysse astealde, Crist ure hælend,
135 þam is a wurðmynt and wuldor on ecnysse. AMEN.