

# ***Church History***



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- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21<sup>st</sup> century



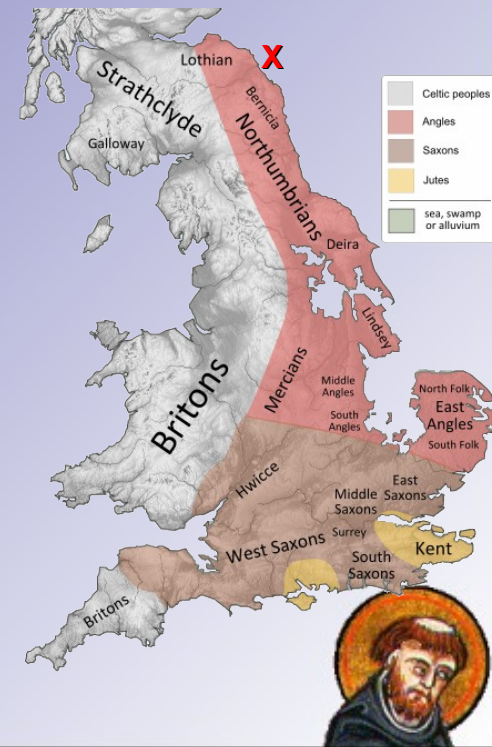
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  - *The “Dark Ages” Overview*
  - *Flagrant Abuses of Authority: Zeno, Theodoric, and Clovis*
  - *Auctoritas Sacrata Pontificum: Gelasius*
  - *The Rise of the Monk: Benedict, Brendan, and Dennis*
  - *The Politics of Death: Justinian and Columba*
  - *Kingdoms of God*
  - *Streamlining the Church*
  - *European Empires: The Carolingians*
  - *European Empires: The Northmen (part three)*



# ***The Early Middle Ages***

- Important stuff was going on up north...
  - 793 The Vikings ransacked Lindisfarne
    - As we've discussed, monasteries were a lot like little towns, except that they were filled with valuables (like food, gold, books, spices, and slaves), and relatively unprotected





# ***The Early Middle Ages***

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793

The Vikings ransacked Lindisfarne

- As we've discussed, monasteries were a lot like little towns, except that they were filled with valuables (like food, gold, books, spices, and slaves), and relatively unprotected
- Over the next few centuries, the Norse continued to raid the shores of Britain, as well as the European mainland
  - In fact, the constant attacks on Britain and northern Europe threatened the peace and stability that Charlemagne had been working on for so long
    - So the Emperor began giving the invading Norsemen various duchies within Europe itself to govern, under Charlemagne's ultimate authority



Scandinavian  
in 9th and  
centuries shown



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  - Eventually, as with the Moors in Spain, the Norse rulers began seeing diplomacy as a better and cheaper policy than continuous warfare and invasions
    - Thus, in 826, the Danish king, Harald Klak, had himself baptised before Emperor Louis the Pious at his capital in Mainz as a diplomatic gesture, and became the first Norse Christian king





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  - Eventually, as with the Moors in Spain, the Norse rulers began seeing diplomacy as a better and cheaper policy than continuous warfare and invasions
    - In 986, warlord Olaf Tryggvason converted to Christianity after a Christian prophet (accurately) predicted that he would have a mutiny on his boat



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    - In 986, warlord Olaf Tryggvason converted to Christianity
    - Becoming King Olaf I of Norway in 995, he then slaughtered every one of his subjects who refused to convert as well, destroying all pagan temples, shrines, and art, leaving all of Norway "saved"





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  - In 987, Vladimir the Great of the Rus' was converted to Christianity

[NOTE: He rejected Judaism because they'd lost Jerusalem and Islam because they prohibited drinking alcohol, and he said "Drinking is the joy of all Rus'. We cannot exist without that pleasure..."]



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[NOTE<sup>2</sup>: He rejected Roman Catholicism because he thought their churches were ugly, and embraced the Byzantine version of Christianity because he thought that Constantinople was the most beautiful city on Earth]





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[NOTE<sup>3</sup>: It also didn't hurt that by converting in Constantinople, he was able to marry Anna, the wealthy sister of Emperor Basil II...]



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    - In 987, Vladimir the Great of the Rus' was converted to Christianity
    - He immediately tore down all pagan altars and ordered the mass baptisms of all the Ukrainian and Rus' tribes
      - By standardizing the worship, he laid the groundwork for what would evolve into the Eastern Orthodox Church





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    - In 1008, King Olof Skötkonung of Sweden was baptised as a Christian by a Benedictine missionary named Sigfrid





# *The Early Middle Ages*

- Import  
793



- Unfortunately, paganism in Sweden was so entrenched that the country wasn't truly Christianized until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when it was invaded by the Norwegian King Sigurd the Crusader





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- That's a *long* period of outreach—350 bloody years of trying to reach the Vikings at home
  - In the meantime, they were tearing through Europe—particularly the British isles



# *The Early Middle Ages*

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The Vikings ransacked Lindisfarne

866

The Great Heathen Army invaded Britain

- King Ælla stole the kingdom of York from the rightful king, Osbryht, and ruled as a tyrant
  - Rightly sensing York to be in turmoil, Viking leader Ivar the Boneless and his brothers led a large, combined force of Viking war groups—called by contemporary Christian scholars “the Great Heathen Army”—on an invasion of York
  - Even though Osbryht's forces joined with Ælla's to fight them off, the Christians were defeated by Ivar's heavy cavalry, and Ivar was made king of York
  - Ælla was killed in a public demonstration of the Norse “blood eagle” torture





# The Early Middle Ages

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The Great Heathen Army invaded Britain

871

The Army moved southwest to Wessex

- King Ælfred knew that the Viking preference was for raids that gained them supplies

- So he created a series of fortresses along his border that could be used as redoubts for his subjects, called "*burhs*"

- Whenever the Vikings would attack, the people would pull all of their goods and families into the fortresses and defend against the invaders

- This "rope-a-dope" tactic left the Vikings unsupplied and tired, and the Saxons well-stocked and well-defended

- Soon, the Army retreated back north and left Wessex in relative peace

- In fact, the attacks drew the people of Wessex together, and gave King Ælfred—later known as "Alfred the Great"—an unprecedented popularity and wealth to work with



Scandinavian invasions in 9th and 10th centuries shown





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- Ælfred began building up his own kingdom

- He created a standing, mobile army, with heavy, armored cavalry to stand up against the horsemen of the Great Heathen Army

- He invested in the building of ships for the first real "British navy" to stave off Viking attacks from the sea

- He codified and clarified the law of the kingdom, tying it to Scriptures such as the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, and he required that all judges actually be able to read the law for themselves

- Not only did this create a precedent for the modern concept of jurisprudence but it also made literacy a priority





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- Ælfred began building up his own kingdom

- Physically weak as a child, Ælfred had turned his attention to study—especially of literature

- He was thus broken-hearted to see so many monasteries (and their libraries) looted and destroyed by the Vikings

- So he created a series of public schools to educate his subjects in literacy, the arts, sciences, etc.

[NOTE: Ælfred himself was a scholar and translated such works as Gregory the Great's 6<sup>th</sup> century classic *Pastoral Care*, Augustine's *Soliloquies*, and at least fifty of the *Psalms*]





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- To Ælfred, even the lowliest swineherd deserved the right to read and to read *in English*—since Latin was increasingly all but unknown in England to anyone other than the clergy and the elite





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- By the end of Ælfred's reign, nearly everyone in his kingdom could read their own native tongue of English

- In fact, their literacy rate was better than America's is today





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- He also reclaimed the Roman city of Londinium, which had lain mostly abandoned for centuries—and had been ransacked by Vikings for decades—and rebuilt it into the modern city of London

- For that *alone*, the people of Britain would be content to call him Alfred the Great...





# The Early Middle Ages

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793 The Vikings ransacked Lindisfarne  
866 The Great Heathen Army invaded Britain  
871 The Army moved southwest to Wessex  
947 Erik Bloodaxe invaded Northumbria

- Good King Æðelstan of Northumbria tried to work with the Norsemen through diplomacy
  - At the same time that his brother-in-law King Charles was giving Rollo a duchy in Normandy to keep the peace, Æðelstan tried reaching out to King Erik Haraldsson (AKA *Eiríkr blóðøx* or “Erik Bloodaxe”) of Norway
    - But Erik saw Æðelstan's olive branch as a sign of weakness, and once Æðelstan died and was succeeded by his young and inexperienced son, Edmund, Erik attacked Northumbria with an invasion army



# *The Early Middle Ages*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Erik made use of special troops known as the *úlfheðnar* and the *berserkir*
  - These troops wrapped themselves in the skins of animals  
[“*úlfheðnar*” means “men clad in wolf skins” and “*berserkir*” refers specifically to “bear shirts”]





# *The Early Middle Ages*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Erik made use of special troops known as the *úlfheðnar* and the *berserkir*
  - These troops wrapped themselves in the skins of animals and considered themselves shamanically imbued with the strength of those animals
  - Thus, they had no fear whatsoever as they went into battle, and fought with wild abandon
  - Because they fought so aggressively, they were very hard to beat (their opponents wasting precious energy on silly things like defending themselves)
  - They also worked themselves into a frenzy and thus felt little pain or fatigue in battle
  - Contemporary writers described seeing the berserkir losing limbs and continuing to fight without skipping a beat—much like modern policemen describe dealing with people on PCP (“angel dust”) today



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- But Erik saw Æðelstan's olive branch as a sign of weakness, and once Æðelstan died and was succeeded by his young and inexperienced son, Edmund, Erik attacked Northumbria with an invasion army
- Ironically, Bishop Wulfstan of York sided with Erik, because he saw him as less savage than the similarly invading Norse King Olaf Guðfriðson of Dublin
  - When Edmund and King Eadred of Wessex retook Northumbria from Erik, they imprisoned Wulfstan as a traitor





# ***The Early Middle Ages***

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866 The Great Heathen Army invaded Britain  
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955 **The last major Viking presence was gone**

- King Eadred and his successor, Edmund I (grandson of Ælfred the Great) finally removed the Norse presence from British shores, but they discovered an unforeseen problem as an after-affect—

- What do you do with a country at peace, but filled with cavalry soldiers trained for and ready to do battle...?
- When we return, we'll discuss the Tournament, knightly Quests, and the Holy Crusades...

