



Servant of the **PRINCE OF PEACE**

"The value of history is, indeed, not scientific but moral: by liberalizing the mind, by deepening the sympathies...it prepares us to live more humanely in the present and to meet rather than to foretell the future."

By Carl Becker

We live in a world today where information is everywhere at our fingertips, like no other time in recorded history. Yet, wars are provoked. Weapons are more destructive. Suspicion runs rampant and nations prepare for war expecting a glorious outcome.

So, why don't we action the lessons of history that we know so well. The answer is simple—we can't. For mankind to action the right thing, they need: humility, a conviction to serve God, and the in-flowing of God's Holy Spirit. That is the great lesson of history.

One great leader recognized that lesson and **with the right help** and **the right offer**, he achieved what no other Western leader has ever achieved.

The back story goes like this. "The Angeln and Saxony people made their way over to Britain after the fall of the Roman Empire around AD 410. At this time, the Jutes and the Frisians from Denmark were also settling in the British Isles, but the Anglo-Saxon settlers were effectively their own masters in a new land and they did little to keep the legacy of the Romans alive. They replaced the Roman stone buildings with their own wooden ones, and spoke their own language, which gave rise to the English spoken today. The Anglo-Saxons also brought their own religious beliefs, but the arrival of Saint Augustine in 597 converted most of the country to Christianity. The early settlers kept to small tribal groups, forming kingdoms and sub-kingdoms. By the ninth century, the country was divided into four kingdoms - Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia and Wessex." http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/anglo_saxons/saxons.shtml

It was at this point in their history that a barbaric invasion of the pagan Vikings swept across Europe and into Britain. This is the story of the rise of that great leader. "In 793 the monks on the island of Lindisfarne, off the northeast coast of England, were unpleasantly surprised by the arrival of violent raiders from the sea. Their misfortune was the first clearly dated event in the saga of the Vikings - the last and most dramatic exodus in the long story of migration from Scandinavia, the original home of the Goths and Vandals.

Soon all the Scottish islands and the Isle of Man are in Viking hands, and the intruders are even seizing territory on the mainland of both Britain and Ireland. In 838 Norwegians capture Dublin and establish a Norse kingdom in Ireland. From 865 the Danes settle in eastern England. Thirty years of Danish raids on the east coast of England precede the arrival, in 865, of a 'Great Army' equipped for conquest rather than quick booty. The Danish invaders now consolidate each year's gains by establishing a secure base from which they can continue a campaign of

harassment - which invariably ends with the settled English buying peace from their footloose tormentors.

York is taken in 866 (and becomes, as Yorvik, the Danish capital in England). Nottingham falls in 867, Thetford in 869. By now the kings of Northumbria, Mercia and East Anglia have made terms with the invaders. Next in line is Wessex.

In 870 the Danes advance into Wessex, capturing Reading where they meet the most determined opposition thus far. During the next year nine battles are fought in this district. In 871, at Ashdown on the Berkshire downs, the English win their first significant victory of the war; a Danish king and nine earls are killed on the field of battle. Even so, it proves impossible to recapture Reading. Wessex, like the other English kingdoms, makes peace with the Danes - who withdraw to winter in London.

But the victory at Ashdown has introduced a figure of significance in English history. **The Wessex men are commanded that day by a 23-year-old prince of their ruling family - Alfred, brother of the king of Wessex.**

In popular tradition the story of England, as opposed to Britain, begins with Alfred. And there is a valid basis for this heroic status. He is the first Anglo-Saxon ruler to be accepted as something akin to a national leader. The English see him as such in those regions resisting Danish domination. **With good cause he is the only king of England to be accorded the title 'the Great'.**

His authority derives from his successes against the Danes. His kingly virtues can also be seen, with hindsight, in his encouragement of learning. **But his central achievement is the quarter-century of struggle which follows his victory over the Danes at Ashdown in 871.**

In that same year, 871, Alfred's elder brother dies and he becomes the king of Wessex. By 875 Alfred can claim a small naval victory which is nevertheless a significant beginning. Going to sea with his new fleet, he holds his own against seven Danish ships and even captures one of them.

On land he has similar successes, defeating Danish armies and forcing them to agree to leave Wessex in peace. But the Danes regularly break their word.

In 878 a surprise Danish attack pushes Alfred west into the Somerset marshes. From a single fort at Athelney he organizes local resistance. This is the lowest ebb of the English cause, the nearest that the Danes come to conquering Wessex and establishing their rule over the whole of England.

Within a few months Alfred is strong enough to move east again and defeat the Danes at Edington in Wiltshire. The conclusion of this campaign is a two-week siege of Guthrum, the Danish king of East Anglia, who is encircled in his encampment."

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/plaintexthistories.asp?historyid=ab86>

This was the most critical moment of Christianity in Britain.



britannica.com

The battle against the pagan Vikings was not only a battle over territory but also a religious war. If King Alfred had lost that battle, Christianity in Britain would have been ended by the pagan Vikings. The life-line of Christianity was at stake. King Alfred knew that. He called out to God for help day and night and God heard him.

The Vikings were cruel: burning, killing, raping, pillaging, destroying far and wide. God gave the victory to King Alfred and on that day, King Guthrum and those with him were forced to retreat, hiding in a castle for two weeks, slowly starving.

At the point when they decided to surrender, they expected the fate of torture that they unleashed along their path of destruction. Instead, **King Alfred did what no other Western leader has ever done—he offered them grace.** Utterly amazed at this incredible kindness, King Guthrum asked King Alfred,

“Why are you doing this?” King Alfred replied, **“Because I serve the Prince of Peace.”**

King Alfred offered a peace treaty that touched and moved King Guthrum. Sixty days later, King Guthrum was baptized a Christian and the two kings became fast friends.

“The ceremony of baptism takes place on the river Parrett, with Alfred in the role of sponsor of the new convert. Then the **two Christian kings** go together to Wedmore (the year is still 878), where they spend twelve days in ceremony and feasting and in the agreement of a treaty which finally preserves Wessex from Danish intrusion.

A Danish invasion of Kent in 885 gives Alfred the pretext for expansion eastwards. He drives back the invaders, and in 886 occupies London. This success leads to a new treaty with Guthrum. He and Alfred agree a basis for coexistence between Anglo-Saxons in the south and west and Danes in the north and east of the country - the region which becomes known as Danelaw.” <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/plaintexthistories.asp?historyid=ab86>

For the rest of British history, these people lived in peace, intermarrying and keeping the Christian faith; they became one people once and for all.

“Alfred is described as ‘the mildest, justest, most beneficent of kings’ who ‘crush’d corruption, guarded liberty, and was the founder of the English constitution.” <http://www.historytoday.com/barbara-yorke/alfred-great-most-perfect-man-history>

No other King or Queen in the West has ever been accorded the title ‘the Great’. Truly, King Alfred the Great was a servant of the Prince of Peace.

Today, another leader is drawing attention. President Trump of the United States of America is working to expose the corruption and treason within his country and prosecute them. We have opened a new chapter in history. It is worth paying close attention.

"The true use of history, whether civil or military, is not to make man clever for the next time, it is to make him wise forever." By Sir Michael Howard

Compiled by Janette Andrejowich.