

# Alfred the Great and the Rise of the Anglo-Saxons

## *Medieval Church History – Session Eleven*

“Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”  
—1 Kings 3:9 NKJV

### **I. Introduction**

#### A. Why Study Alfred the Great?

“Some oleaginous interviewer once suggested to Winston Churchill that he was the greatest Briton who ever lived. The grand old man considered the matter gravely. ‘No,’ he replied at length. ‘That was Alfred the Great.’”

#### B. The Ethno-Cultural Makeup of the Anglo Saxons

### **II. Alfred the Great: His Life**

#### A. Dates: ca. AD 847/849-899

#### B. Parents: Æthelwulf and Osburh

#### C. The Geopolitical Makeup of England

#### D. The Vikings

1. Who Were the Vikings?
2. Viking Incursion on the British Isles
3. Alfred’s Ascension and Defense of Wessex
  - a. Fortresses (“Burhs”)
  - b. The Fyrd (“The Feared”)

### **III. Alfred the Great: His Contributions**

#### A. Military

1. Conscription Program

2. Increased Taxation

B. Law and Government

1. Alfred's Law Code

2. Rule of Law

C. Education

1. Alfred's Literacy

2. Connection between Learning and Piety

3. Alfred's Literary and Translation Work

4. Curriculum for Young Free Men of Means
  - a. Must Learn to Read and Write English

- b. "Books most necessary for all men to know"

5. Curriculum for Clergy

**IV. Alfred the Great: His Legacy**

A. Protected England from Conquest

B. Gave England a National Identity

C. Made Strides toward a Unified England

D. Established England as a Prominent, Learned, and Self-Sufficient People