

## ***Ælfric's Preface to Genesis: Commentary with Text, Translation, Sources and Analogues and Parallel Passages in Ælfric's Works***

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The language of Genesis is simple, says Ælfric in his preface to his translation of it, but its meaning is complex. Exactly the same is true of his preface—which therefore calls out for detailed interpretation, just as, in his view, does this book of the Bible. The commentary given here attempts to clarify these difficulties. The text, translation, sources and analogues (with translation) and parallel passages are given as aids to this end. Finally, the text is given again with the sources, analogues and parallel passages displayed.

**Keywords:** Old English; Genesis; patristics; translation; sources; analogues

### **Introduction**

*Ælfric's Preface to Genesis* is the first English preface to the first English translation of Genesis. That alone is sufficient to establish its great literary significance. But, beyond that, it also contains the first attested expression in English of an argument about the vernacular translation of the Bible which was to resonate for hundreds of years to come. It is couched as a letter from the author, a Benedictine monk, replying to his secular aristocratic patron Æthelweard's request for the translation. Ælfric cogently expresses orthodox Christian opposition to such translation: The Bible's meaning is too difficult for the laity and the Church must interpret it for them. Æthelweard's wish for there to be an English translation of Genesis represents the wish of the laity to read for themselves the book which encapsulated their religion. The opposition of Catholic and Protestant views, respectively, in the early modern period is strikingly similar. Paradoxically, then, this first translation is headed by a preface which argues against its existence. Anxiety accordingly saturates its every syllable and the author marshals every authority to defend his case and himself. Its recipient, Æthelweard, is silent, but victorious. The following commentary is an attempt to unravel the twists and turns of the author's complex arguments.

## Text

The text is that of Bod. Lib. Laud Misc. 509, except that abbreviations are expanded, names capitalised, punctuation modernised, and missing letters caused by damage are supplied. Two emendations (made for reasons of sense) are noted after the text. The sections indicate the five-part epistolary structure (see Griffith 2000b); further paragraphing has been added in the *narratio*.

### INCIPIT PREFATIO GENESIS ANGLICE

ÆLFRIC MUNUC GRET ÆDELWÆRD EALDORMANN eadmodlice.

Pu bæde me, leof, þæt ic sceolde ðe awendan of Lydene on Englisc þa boc Genesis. Ða þuhte me hefigtime þe to tipienne þæs, and þu cwæde þa þæt ic ne þorfte na mare awendan þære bec buton to Isaace, Abrahames suna, for þam þe sum oðer man þe hæfde awend fram Isaace þa boc oþ ende. Nu þincð me, leof, þæt þæt weorc is swiðe pleolic me oððe ænigum men to underbeginnenne, for þan þe ic  
 5 ondræde, gif sum dysig man ðas boc ræt oððe rædan gehyrþ, þæt he wille wenan þæt he mote lybban nu on þære niwan æ swa swa þa ealdan fæderas leofodon þa on þære tide ær þan þe seo ealde æ gesett wære, oþþe swa swa men leofodon under Moyses æ. Hwilon ic wiste þæt sum mæssepreost, se þe min magister wæs  
 10 on þam timan, hæfde þa boc Genesis, and he cuðe be dæle Lyden understandan; þa cwæþ he be þam heahfædere Iacobe, þæt he hæfde feower wif—twa geswustra and heora twa þinena. Ful soð he sæde, ac he nyste, ne ic þa git, hu micel todal ys betweohx þære ealdan æ and þære niwan. On anginne þisere worulde nam se broþer hys swuster to wife, and hwilon eac se fæder tymde be his agenre dehter,  
 15 and manega hæfdon ma wifa to folces eacan. And man ne mihte þa æt fruman wifian buton on his siblingum. Gyf hwa wyle nu swa lybban æfter Cristes tocyme swa swa men leofodon ær Moises æ oþþe under Moises æ, ne byð se man na cristen, ne he furpon wyrðe ne byð þæt him ænig cristen man mid ete. Ða ungelæredan preostas, gif hi hwæt litles understandað of þam Lydenbocum, þonne þingð him sona þæt hi magon mære lareowas beon; ac hi ne cunnon swa  
 20 þeah þæt gastlice andgit þærto, and hu seo ealde æ wæs getacnung toweardra þinga, oþþe hu seo niwe gecyþnis æfter Cristes menniscnisse wæs gefillednys ealra þæra þinga þe seo ealde gecyðnis getacnode towearde be Criste and be hys gecorenum. Hi cwepað eac oft be Petre, hwi hi ne moton habban wif swa swa  
 25 Petrus se apostol hæfde, and hi nellað gehiran ne witan þæt se eadiga Petrus leofede æfter Moises æ oþ þæt Crist, þe on þam timan to mannun com, began to bodienne his halige godspel and geceas Petrum ærest him to geferan: þa forlet Petrus þærrihte his wif, and ealle þa twelf apostolas, þa þe wif hæfdon, forleton ægþer ge wif ge æhta, and folgodon Cristes lare to þære niwan æ and clænnisse

30 þe he silf þa arærde. Preostas sindon gesette to lareowum þam læwedum folce. Nu gedafnode him þæt hig cuþon þa ealdan æ gastlice understandan and hwæt Crist silf tæhte and his apostolas on þære niwan gecyðnisse, þæt hig mihton þam folce wel wissian to Godes geleafan and wel bisnian to godum weorcum.

We secgað eac foran to þæt seo boc is swiþe deop gastlice to understandenne,  
 35 and we ne writað na mare buton þa nacedan gerecednisse. Þonne þincþ þam ungelæredum þæt eall þæt andgit beo belocen on þære anfealdan gerecednisse; ac hit ys swiþe feor þam. Seo boc ys gehaten Genesis, þæt ys “Gecyndboc” for þam þe heo ys firmest boca and spricþ be ælcum gecinde—ac heo ne spricð na be þæra engla gesceapenisse. Heo onginð þus: “In principio creauit Deus celum et  
 40 terram,” þæt ys on Englisc, “on annginne gesceop God heofenan and eorþan.” Hit wæs soðlice swa gedon, þæt God ælmihtig geworhte on anginne, þa þa he wolde, gesceafta. Ac swa þeah, æfter gastlicum andgite, þæt anginn ys Crist, swa swa he sylf cwæþ to þam Iudeiscum: “Ic eom angin, þe to eow sprece.” Þurh þis angin worhte God fæder heofenan and eorþan, for þan þe he gesceop ealle gesceafta  
 45 þurh þone sunu, se þe wæs æfre of him accenned, wisdom of þam wisan fæder. Eft stynt on þære bec on þam forman ferse, “Et spiritus dei ferebatur super aquas,” þæt is on Englisc, “and Godes gast wæs geferod ofer wæteru.” Godes gast ys se halga gast, þurh þone geliffæste se fæder ealle þa gesceafta þe he gesceop þurh þone sunu, and se halga gast færþ geond manna heortan and silð us synna  
 50 forgifenis, ærest þurh wæter on þam fulluhte, and sibban þurh dætbote. And gif hwa forsihð þa forgifenis þe se Halga Gast sylþ, þonne biþ his synn æfre unmyltsiendlic on ecnysse. Oft ys seo halige þrinnys geswutelod on þisre bec, swa swa ys on þam worde þe God cwæþ: “uton wircean mannan to ure anlicnisse.” Mid þam þe he cwæð, “uton wircean,” ys seo þrinnis gebicnod; mid þam þe he  
 55 cwæð, “to ure anlicnisse,” ys seo soðe annis geswutelod. He ne cwæð na menifealdlice “to urum anlicnissum,” ac andfealdlice “to ure anlicnisse.” Eft comon þri englas to Abrahame and he spræc to him eallon þrim swa swa to anum.

Hu clipode Abeles blod to Gode buton swa swa ælces mannes misdæda wregap hine to Gode butan wordum? Be þisum litlum, man mæg understandan hu deop  
 60 seo boc ys on gastlicum andgite, þeah þe heo mid leohtlicum wordum awriten sig. Eft Iosep, þe wæs gesæld to Egipta lande and he ahredde þæt folc wið þone miclan hunger, hæfde Cristes getacnunge þe wæs geseald for us to cwale and us ahredde fram þam ecan hungre helle susle. Ðæt micele geteld þe Moises worhte mid wunderlicum cræfte on þam westene, swa swa him God sylf gedihte, hæfde  
 65 getacnunge Godes gelapunge þe he silf astealde þurh his apostolas mid menigfældum frætewum and fægerum þeawum. To þam geweorce brohte þæt folc gold and seolfor and deorwirþe gimstanas and menigfælde mærpas; sume eac brohton gatehær, swa swa God bebed. Ðæt gold getacnode urne geleafan and ure gode ingehid þe we Gode offrian sceolon; þæt seolfor getacnode Godes spræca  
 70 and þa halgan lara þe we habban sceolon to Godes weorcum. Ða gimstanas

getacnodon mislice fægernissa on Godes mannum. Ðæt gatehær getacnode þa stīpan dædbote þæra manna þe heora sinna behreowsiað. Man offrode eac fela cinna orf Gode to lace binnan þam getelde, be þam ys swiþe menigfeald getacnung; and wæs beboden þæt se tægel sceolde beon gehal æfre on þam nytene  
 75 æt þære offrunge for þære getacnunge þæt God wile þæt we simle wel don oþ ende ures lifes: þonne biþ se tægel geoffrod on urum weorcum.

Nu is seo foresæde boc on manegum stowum swiþe nærolice gesett, and þeah swiðe deoplice on þam gastlicum andgite, and heo is swa geendebyrd swa swa God silf hig gedihthe þam writere Moise, and we ne durren na mare awritan on  
 80 Englisc þonne þæt Liden hæfþ, ne þa endebirdnisse awendan buton þam anum, þæt þæt Leden and þæt Englisc nabbað na ane wisan on þære spræce fandunge. Æfre se þe awent oþþe se þe tæcþ of Ledene on Englisc, æfre he sceal gefadian hit swa þæt þæt Englisc hæbbe his agene wisan, elles hit biþ swiþe gedwolsum to rædenne þam þe þæs Ledenes wisan ne can. Is eac to witanne þæt sume  
 85 gedwolmen wæron þe woldon awurpan þa ealdan æ, and sume woldon habban þa ealdan and awurpan þa niwan, swa swa þa Iudeiscan doð. Ac Crist sylf and his apostolas us tæhton ægþer to healdenne þa ealdan gastlice and þa niwan soþlice mid weorcum. God gesceop us twa eagan and twa earan, twa nosþirlu and twegen weleras, twa handa and twegen fet, and he wolde eac habban twa gecyðnissa on  
 90 þissere worulde geset, þa ealdan and þa niwan, for þam þe he deþ swa swa hine silfne gewyrð, and he nænne rædboran næfð, ne nan man ne þearf him cweþan to: “hwi dest þu swa?” We sceolon awendan urne willan to his gesetnissum and we ne magon gebigean his gesetnissa to urum lustum.

Ic cweþe nu þæt ic ne dearr ne ic nelle nane boc æfter þissere of Ledene on  
 95 Englisc awendan, and ic bidde þe, leof ealdorman, þæt þu me þæs na leng ne bidde, þi læs þe ic beo þe ungehirsum oþþe leas gif ic do. God þe sig milde a on ecnisse.

Ic bidde nu on Godes naman, gif hwa þas boc awritan wylle, þæt he hig gerihte wel be þære bysne, for þan þe ic nah geweald, þeah þe hig hwa to wo gebringe  
 100 þurh lease writeras, and hit byð þonne his pleoh na min. Mycel yfel deð se unwritere, gif he nele hys woh gerihtan.

Textual emendations:

26 MS 7 began: began

80 ealdan: (supplied from MS Brit. Lib. Cotton Claudius B. iv).

## Translation

In so far as possible the translation is idiomatic, but some of the theological content resists modern idiom.

Ælfric the monk greets Æthelweard the earl respectfully.

You asked me, sir, to translate the book of Genesis for you from Latin into English. It then seemed onerous to me to agree to this, and you responded that I need not translate further in the book than the part dealing with Isaac, Abraham's son, because another man had translated the rest for you from Isaac to the end.

5 It is now apparent to me, sir, that this task is very dangerous for me or for any man to undertake, because I fear, if some foolish man reads this book or hears it read, he will expect to live now in the period of the New Law as our forefathers lived then in the time before the Old Law was enacted, or as men lived under Moses' law. I once knew a priest, my tutor at the time, who had the book of  
10 Genesis and he knew a bit about Latin, and he said that the patriarch Jacob had four wives, two sisters and their two female servants. What he said was quite right, but he didn't know, nor did I then yet, just how great the difference is between the Old Law and the New. In the beginning of this world a brother married his sister and a father had children by his own daughter and many men  
15 were bigamous to increase the population, for it was not possible in the beginning to take a wife who was not a close relative. If someone wishes to live so now after the advent of Christ as men lived before or under Moses' Law, that man is certainly not a Christian, nor is he even fit for any Christian man to eat with him. If uneducated priests come to understand a little from those books of the Bible,  
20 then it will immediately seem to them that they can become renowned teachers; they are ignorant, however, of their spiritual meaning and of how the Old Law was a sign of things to come and how the New Testament, following the incarnation of Christ, was the fulfilment of all those things which the Old Testament prefigured about Christ and his chosen ones. They also often talk  
25 about Peter the apostle, asking why they are not allowed a wife as Peter was, and they do not wish to be told or to find out that the blessed Peter lived according to Moses' law, until Christ, who came at that time to men, began to preach his holy Gospel and chose Peter first as his disciple: then Peter straightaway abandoned his wife, and all of those twelve apostles who had wives abandoned both wives  
30 and possessions, and adhered to Christ's teaching in the New Law and to the practice of chastity which he himself then initiated. Priests are appointed as teachers to the laity. Now it would be appropriate if they could understand the Old Testament spiritually together with what Christ himself and his apostles taught in the New Testament in order properly to guide the people towards God's  
35 faith and properly to set an example towards correct actions.

I will say also in advance that this book is spiritually profound, and yet I am writing no more than the bare text. It will then appear to the ignorant that the entire sense is contained in the simple narrative, but that is very far from the

truth. This book is called Genesis which means “book of creation” because it is  
 40 the first book and because it speaks of the origin of everything (but it does not  
 speak of the creation of the angels). It opens in this way: *In principio creavit deus*  
*celum et terram*, which, in English, is “In the beginning God created heaven and  
 earth.” When Almighty God wrought creation in the beginning, just as he wished  
 45 to, it was literally done so. However, in the spiritual sense, the beginning is Christ,  
 as he himself said to the Jews: “I who speak to you am the beginning.” Through  
 this beginning God the Father wrought heaven and earth, because he fashioned  
 all creation through the Son, who was eternally begotten of him, the wisdom  
 proceeding from the wise Father. The book’s first sentence continues: “Et spiritus  
 50 dei ferebatur super aquas,” which, in English, is “And the Spirit of God was  
 carried over the waters.” The Spirit of God is the Holy Ghost through whom the  
 Father brought to life all those creatures he shaped through the Son, and the Holy  
 Ghost travels through men’s hearts and offers us forgiveness for our sins, first  
 through the water of baptism and later through confession; and, if anyone rejects  
 the forgiveness which the Holy Ghost offers, then his sin is eternally unforgivable.  
 55 The Holy Trinity is again revealed later in the book in God’s words “Let us make  
 man in our likeness.” When he said, “let *us* make,” the Trinity is indicated; when  
 he said “in our *likeness*” the true unity is revealed, for he did not say in the plural  
 “in our likenesses,” but in the singular “in our likeness.” Likewise, three angels  
 visited Abraham and he spoke to all three of them as if to one.  
 60 How did the blood of Abel cry out to God if not in the same way that every man’s  
 sins silently denounce him to God? From this small example it can be seen how  
 profound the book is in its spiritual sense, even though composed in ordinary  
 language. Again, Joseph, who was sold into Egypt and saved the people from the  
 great famine, signified Christ, who was sold into death and saved us from the  
 65 eternal famine of hell’s torment. The great tabernacle which Moses constructed  
 with marvellous skill in the desert prefigured God’s church which he himself  
 established with many ornaments and excellent practices. The people brought  
 gold and silver and precious gems and many wonderful things to that  
 construction; some also brought goat hair, just as God commanded. The gold  
 70 symbolised our faith and the good intentions which we must offer up to God; the  
 silver symbolised God’s words and the holy teachings we must hold to in God’s  
 works; the gemstones symbolised the various virtues of the saints; the goat hair  
 symbolised the stern penance of those who repent their sins. Various sorts of  
 cattle were sacrificed to God in the tabernacle—which has multiple symbolic  
 75 meanings—and it was commanded that the rump should always remain whole on  
 the beast in the sacrifice to signify that God wishes us to behave well until the end  
 of our lives: then the tail-end of our deeds is sacrificed.

Now, the previously mentioned book is very concisely expressed in many  
 passages and yet very profoundly so in the spiritual sense and it is disposed in

80 this way just as God himself dictated it to Moses, its scribe, and I certainly dare  
 write no more in English than the Latin says, nor change the sequence except in  
 one respect—where the Latin and the English have a different word order. A  
 teacher or translator, when turning Latin into English, must always ensure that  
 the English has its own idiom or else it will be very misleading for the person who  
 85 does not know the syntax of Latin. It should also be noted that there were certain  
 people who had been misled who wanted to discard the Old Testament, and some  
 wanted to retain the Old and discard the New, just as the Jews do; but Christ  
 himself and his apostles taught us both to hold the Old in the spiritual sense and  
 the New literally in our works. God gave us two eyes and two ears, two nostrils  
 90 and two lips, two hands and two feet, and he also wanted two Testaments in this  
 world, the Old and the New, because he does as he pleases and he has no  
 councillor, nor need any man say to him “Why are you doing this?” We must turn  
 our will to his instructions, and we may not bend his instructions to our desires.

I state now that I neither dare nor wish to translate any Latin book into English  
 95 after this one, and I beg you, noble lord, that you ask this of me no longer lest I  
 be either disobedient to you, or dishonest if I do. May God be merciful to you for  
 ever and ever.

I ask now in God's name, if someone should wish to copy this book, that he  
 should correct it carefully against the exemplar, because I will have no power in  
 100 the matter if someone introduces errors into it by using incompetent scribes, and  
 it will then be his responsibility, not mine. The bad writer does great harm if he  
 will not correct his error.

## Commentary

The commentary, like the text, is divided into the five parts of the epistolary structure (Poole 1915, 41–48; Murphy 1971, 7–1; Huppé 1978; Mooney 1979, 233 and n. 21; Camargo 1991, 22; Griffith 2000b, 226–28): *salutatio* (the greeting), *exordium* (the beginning, with personal and anecdotal material), *narratio* (the main argument or statement of facts), *petitio* (the request of the patron), and *conclusio* (the injunction to the scribe). Rhetorical schemes aid the definition of the structure; tropes help to illustrate the subject matter (see below, *passim*). With the exception of the *salutatio* (which is governed by its own rules in this respect), each part begins with a sentence opening with a principal clause with a subject pronoun followed by a finite verb denoting an act of speech and a following subordinate clause introduced by *þæt*. Ends of the sections show stylisation, with parallelism and alliteration. The substance of the commentary seeks to avoid undue repetition of material found in my other publications on this text, but, for reasons of completeness and sense, some overlaps are inevitable.

### A: *Salutatio*

**ÆLFRIC MUNUC . . . eadmodlice** The salutation follows epistolary convention: the author names himself and the recipient of the letter, giving the rank of each, together with an indication of the relationship between the two. Alfred's salutation in his epistolary Preface to the translation of Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis* offers a comparison: "Ælfred kyning hateð gretan Wærferð biscep his wordum luflice ond freondlice." But the selection and ordering of the elements appears not to be rigidly fixed by those conventions, as Ælfric's salutation to the same person in the epistolary preface to *The Lives of the Saints* shows: "Ælfric gret eadmodlice Æðelwerd ealdorman." The humility of Ælfric's greeting—*eadmodlice*—acknowledges the ealdorman's lordship and is the extent in this section of the attempt to achieve the recipient's goodwill. As the preface proceeds, the relationship becomes more complex, for the monk is a trained and ordained priest, whilst Æthelweard, no matter how senior and powerful in the eyes of the world, remains a member of the laity (see below, note to ll. 63–64). The paired A+B+C patterning—two groups of three words with semantic and grammatical patterning (name/rank/verb; name/rank/adverb) and alliteration—is echoed at the ends of both *exordium* (ll. 32–33) and *narratio* (ll. 92–93).

### B: *Exordium*, lines 1–33

1–33 **þu bæde me . . . to godum weorcum** In terms of *ars dictaminis* (admittedly, in part understood from later epistolary formularies), the author's *exordium* is not standard. It deals with personal material in the main—previous correspondence between writer and recipient, and Ælfric's experience of reading Genesis with his former teacher—which is appropriate enough for this part, but, beyond the repeated polite use of *leof* (ll. 1 and 4), it does not seek further to secure the goodwill of the addressee. The matter in hand is too serious for that, and the form soon becomes more complex. One standard *prefatorial* exordial topos is absent: there is no dedication, neither to Æthelweard nor to God.<sup>1</sup> The reason for its absence becomes clear only later: the author's refusal to take responsibility for his work.

1–4 **þu bæde me . . . þa boc oþ ende** The opening may seem curious in that Æthelweard is directly addressed and yet told things he already knows—what Ælfric previously said to him and how he himself responded. This account of the previous communications between monk and *ealdorman* reveals the ambiguity of the text's genre as a letter to a patron and also a preface to a work intended, most anxiously, for others. This duality lies at the heart of some of the difficulty

<sup>1</sup> See Curtius (1979, 86): "in the exordium the topos of dedication is also a favorite."

and much of the complexity of this text, for it is not always clear where Ælfric is addressing just the single recipient of the letter, as opposed to the broader readership of the preface, and where he has both in mind. The beginning is particularly marked by this problem: Æthelweard is addressed but the information is directed at us.

We must presume that the *ealdorman* did not ask “sum oðer man” to translate Genesis from Isaac onwards before he had learnt of Ælfric’s reluctance to undertake the entire task, for the idea that he wanted two translations of the second half of the book is untenable. If this is so, then it follows that Æthelweard understood, or chose to understand, Ælfric’s initial reply that the task was “hefigtime” (“burdensome” or “troublesome”) in superficial quantitative terms, and, having found a second translator, relieved Ælfric of some of this burden, in the hope that he would now accept the reduced commission. But Genesis is not particularly long, and Æthelweard should hardly have expected a Latinist of Ælfric’s ability to have found this troubling, nor a scholarly Benedictine to have realised so late in the day that the symbolic sense of Genesis was complex. Æthelweard’s response was, therefore, disingenuous—taking Ælfric’s first response to him as false modesty—and his commissioning of the translation of the second half of the book by another man a ploy to force Ælfric’s hand: he makes clear by this means that, with or without Ælfric, the project will go ahead. By the word *hefigtime* Ælfric was surely referring—briefly, self-effacingly, euphemistically—to the danger of Æthelweard’s proposal in the hope of discouraging him, but his patron was not at all discouraged. Ælfric, perhaps attempting to avoid discourtesy to such a powerful aristocrat, now diplomatically re-expresses the reason for his reluctance as if it were a new thought—but in a fashion that is nonetheless more explicit: “*Ða þuhte me hefigtime . . . Nu þincð me . . . swiðe pleolic.*” And that it is very dangerous not just for Ælfric, but for any man (l. 5 “*ænigum men*”), to undertake moves the author’s reluctance beyond the personal remit of the modesty topos. This is serious. The wider audience is left in no doubt that the translation was produced at the insistence of a secular lord in the face of monastic opposition, and we might see in this misunderstanding between monk and aristocrat (and in the monk’s use of euphemism) the first examples of a theme which pervades the preface: the ease with which texts may be misconstrued, either naively or wilfully.

Æthelweard’s negotiations with the two translators offer some evidence of his commitment to biblical translation. At this remove we can only guess at his motives, but it is likely that his interest was stimulated by the educational plans of King Alfred as expressed in the preface to his version of Gregory’s *Cura Pastoralis*:

Then I remembered how the Law [the Hexateuch, or the Old Testament] was first written in Hebrew, and later, when the Greeks learned it, then they translated it all

into their own language, together with all the other books [of the Bible]. And afterwards the Romans likewise, when they had learned them, had them all turned into their own language by scholarly translators. And also all other Christian peoples rendered some part of them into their own language. Accordingly, it seems preferable to me, if it seems so to [all of] you, that we also should translate those books which everyone should know into the language we can all understand.

The development of this argument leads us—and may so have led Æthelweard<sup>2</sup>—to expect that translation of the Old Testament (or of those parts dealing with the Law) was to be at the forefront of the great Alfredian project, but the actual achievement does not seem to have measured up to the stated ambition, for only Alfred's version of the first fifty psalms survives (not, in any case, part of the Law), and there is no good evidence of any more substantial undertaking.<sup>3</sup> As the king makes clear that he will only proceed with the agreement of his audience (the bishops?), perhaps their dissent dissuaded him, but no doubt is expressed by him about the propriety of biblical translation. On the contrary, it seems to lie at the heart of his project. Alfred's naive approach to such translation is very similar to that of Æthelweard (in so far as we can glean this from Ælfric's representation of it), and their shared view bespeaks a continuity of interest on the part of the West Saxon royal family in making the Bible available in the vernacular.

**3 buton to Isaace** Ælfric does not specify the chapter and verse indicated by the vague reference to Isaac, nor why Æthelweard should have wished him to stop at this particular point in Genesis. The text of the translation in MS Camb. Univ. Lib. II. I. 33, commonly thought of as Ælfric's translation, breaks off at chapter 24.22; Dodwell and Clemoes (1974) believe that Ælfric was responsible for most of the text up to the end of chapter 22;<sup>4</sup> the last question in his version of Alcuin's *Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, which may have been written as a parallel commentary to the translation,<sup>5</sup> deals with chapter 22 (though the source continues).<sup>6</sup> Bede's commentary *Libri Quatuor in Principium Genesis usque ad Nativitatem Isaac et Eiectionem Ismahelis Adnotationum* closes with the birth of Isaac and for Bede, this event—the fulfilling of God's covenant with Abraham—

<sup>2</sup> There is no proof that Æthelweard knew Alfred's preface—although Godden (1978, 103–104) shows that Ælfric knew the translation of the *Cura Pastoralis*—, but he certainly knew of Alfred's translations and explicitly mentions the version of Boethius (Campbell 1962, 51).

<sup>3</sup> However, the author of the *Liber Eliensis* claims that Alfred turned the whole of the Old and New Testaments into English (Blake 1962, 54); Wilson (1970, 67) believes that the chronicler here ascribes to Alfred the extant OE versions of the Bible. For early evidence that translations other than his own were ascribed to Alfred, see Warner (1917, 133, ll. 21–22).

<sup>4</sup> See Dodwell and Clemoes (1974, 47) who regard chapters 23–24.10 as by Ælfric, but revised by the compiler of the larger text.

<sup>5</sup> It is the coincidence of ending which suggests this relationship between the two texts (see Clemoes 2000, 40).

<sup>6</sup> The final question in Ælfric's version deals with God's temptation of Abraham. Shepherd (1966, 30) wrongly thinks that Alcuin's text also ends at this point.

represented the fulfilment of the New Law, so that this portion of Genesis can accordingly be seen to present a complete cycle of theological ideas: “the effects of the Fall have by then been fully displayed and the Redemption has been fully foreshadowed” (Woolf 1972, 64).<sup>7</sup> That this became a traditional place to end a selection from Genesis is suggested too by the fact that *Genesis A* concludes with the paraphrase of 22.13, and psalter illustrations and the later mystery cycles also attest to its popularity (see Woolf 1972, 63–64; Doane 1978, 398–99). Æthelweard's selection of Isaac may not indicate any particular learning on his part: perhaps he had been told that this part of the Bible could be understood to stand for all of it and sought to flatter Ælfric by offering him a task of the greatest importance, or perhaps he chose this point because the story of Abraham and Isaac highlights the primacy of obedience to higher authority. In any event, that Æthelweard reserves the more important first half of the book for Ælfric surely indicates that he regards him as the superior of the two Latinists and tends to confirm the view that he was not taken in by Ælfric's demurrals that the work was too difficult for him. Ælfric too may have thought of himself as the superior reader of Genesis, for the other man, it seems, effects his part of the translation without any objections (is there, perhaps, disdain in Ælfric's allusion to the other anonymous translator as “sum oðer man,” cf. perhaps l. 6 “sum dysig man”?).

**6 ræt oððe rædan gehyrþ** A calque of the Latin formula “vel legendo, vel audiendo or sive legendo, sive audiendo,” found in, for example, the Latin preface to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*. The register of Ælfrician prose modulates between what appears to be ordinary English and English influenced by his Latinity (see, e.g., l. 34, on the use of *pluralis auctoris*).<sup>8</sup>

**7–13 þære niwan æ . . . þære ealdan æ** By “the Old Law” in line 8, Ælfric refers to the Mosaic law, the ten commandments and the many and various rules laid down in Exodus and Leviticus, but later, in lines 13, 21, and again in 85, he uses the same phrase to mean the entirety of the Old Testament. Hence, the contradiction that Jacob, who lived before the Old Law, is yet held in lines 11–12 to exemplify it, is merely an apparent one. Slippage between these specific and general uses of the term are characteristic of the thought of St. Paul (cf. Rom. 5.13–14 and 3.19–21, and see Hastings 1915, 687). However, the labelling of Christianity as “the New Law” is a later idea: “It was in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers of the 2nd century—as for example the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Epistle of Barnabas*—that Christianity came to be regarded as ‘the New

<sup>7</sup> Hawk (2016, 209 and n. 7) notes, also, Bede's remark, in his listing of his works in the *Historia ecclesiastica*, that his commentary on Genesis proceeds “usque ad natiuitatem Isaac.”

<sup>8</sup> Pope (1967–68, 1. 108) rightly points out that “the general debt of Ælfric's style to Latin is very great, though often half concealed by his sensitive respect for English idiom.”

Law’ . . . What distinguishes this sub-apostolic view from that of St. Paul, however, is that the idea of ‘the New Law’ not only verbally but also materially implies a moralism that was quite foreign to the Apostolic Age, inasmuch as the idea of Law has coloured the conception of the Gospel” (Hastings 1915, 693).<sup>9</sup> The tripartite notion of the history of the law found here is largely a patristic commonplace, but the many examples helpfully collected by Baker and Lapidge (1995, 338) from the writings of Augustine, Gregory, Isidore, Bede, Hrabanus Maurus, Hincmar and Byrhtferth characterise these periods as before the law, under the law and under grace, and Ælfric elsewhere uses this formulation. The substitution of the earlier notion of *the New Law* for the period of grace is unusual and shows the mingling here of patristic commentary with the canonical proscription of incestuous fornication.

7 **þa ealdan fæderas** Editions of the Preface gloss this phrase as “patriarchs” (Cassidy and Ringler 1971, 414; Mitchell and Robinson 2012, 358; Wilcox 1994, 174), but dictionaries of OE do not allow this sense and Latin *patriarcha* is glossed and translated in OE only as *heahfæder* (Chapman 1905, 202; Lazzari and Mucciante 1984, 134–35)—which is the meaning in “þam heahfædere Iacobe.” The true sense of the phrase is “men of old” or “our forefathers” (cf. *eald(e)fæder* “forefather,” “ancestor”), and this is confirmed by the parallel between “swa swa þa ealdan fæderas leofodon” and “swa swa men leofodon”: Ælfric is talking of men in general in these periods.

9–18 **Hwilon ic wiste . . . cristen man mid ete** It may be wondered why Ælfric should have been so worried that knowledge of the literal text of Genesis might cause the English laity to think that they could marry their kin, but both his reading and his experience may have given him reason to think that the English could be susceptible to such laxness. Pope Gregory’s letter to Augustine of Canterbury, the *Libellus Responsionum*, which is incorporated into Bede’s *History*, deals with certain questions which seemed urgent to Augustine in his converting of the Anglo-Saxons. His fifth question addresses the issue of consanguinity and marriage, and Gregory’s response reveals that the pagan Anglo-Saxons had formed marriages to a degree of familial proximity forbidden by Church Law:

Sacred law forbids a man to uncover the nakedness of his kindred; hence it is necessary that the faithful should only marry relations three or four times removed, while those twice removed must not marry in any case . . . Now because there are many of the English race who, while they were unbelievers, are said to have contracted these unlawful marriages, when they accept the faith, they should

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<sup>9</sup> For St. Paul, Judaism is a religion of Law, Christianity one of Grace.

be warned that they must abstain, because such marriages are a grave sin (Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 85).

This answer is also in part interpolated into the *Excerptiones Pseudo-Ecgberhti*, a collection of Frankish ecclesiastical canons usually regarded as a source for Ælfric's *Letters* (see Thorpe 1840, 2. 117–118, sections 132–33; Fehr 1914, xcvi–cvi), though some think that the direction of influence is the other way around (Cross and Hamer 1997, 5–13 and 1999, 22). Here it is reported that Gregory wrote to Felix, Bishop of Messana, clarifying his reply to Augustine:

We decree, that each and every individual is to preserve his own lineage down to the seventh generation. And as long as they understand that to marry those close in relationship is certainly not permitted, and will not be permitted, to any of the Christians. And we do not wish to be criticized in this matter by you or by the other faithful, because we have conceded to the English people in these things, in giving not a model but a reflection; we did this so that they would not reject the value of Christianity, which they had imperfectly acquired. (Cross and Hamer 1999, 159)<sup>10</sup>

Whether or not Ælfric was thinking of these texts, he obviously knew canon law. He may well have believed also that a sin once committed through ignorance might re-emerge if misunderstood to be authorised by biblical example. That this was not merely a bookish misgiving is attested by a relatively recent royal scandal. MS D of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that in 958 the Church compelled the separation of King Eadwig from his wife Ælfgifu because they were too closely related: “Her on þissum geare Oda arcebiscop totwæmde Eadwi cyning and Ælgyfe forþæm þe hi wæron to gesybbe” (Plummer and Earle 1892, 1.113).

Æthelweard was a blood relative of Eadwig: in his Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* he notes that he was the great-great-grandson of Æthelred I (Campbell 1962, 38–39). It has also been argued with some plausibility that Æthelweard was Ælfgifu's brother and, therefore, that she was Eadwig's third cousin once removed and that, accordingly, Æthelweard was also Eadwig's brother-in-law (Campbell 1962, xv n. 6, xxxi, and 55; see, also, Whitelock 1930, 118–19; Yorke 1988, 76–77). If this is correct, the marriage certainly involved a degree of consanguinity forbidden by the rules as expressed in the *Excerptiones*.<sup>11</sup> Ælfric, then, because of his doubts about biblical translation, deals immediately, explicitly, even boldly, though in general terms, with a possible consequence of such translation which directly involved his patron's family and which may have

<sup>10</sup> Ælfric is unlikely to have known a collection of Gregory's letters as there is no evidence of Carolingian copies reaching England before the Conquest (see Ogilvy 1967, 150–51).

<sup>11</sup> Ælfric may have known of at least one earlier irregular marriage in the royal house of Wessex: Alfred's brother Æthelbald married his stepmother, Judith.

made uncomfortable reading for Æthelweard.<sup>12</sup> In the sensitivity of this issue may lie a further explanation for the demur that the work was ‘troublesome’ and for the apparent brevity of this initial response, for Ælfric must have been reluctant to touch on such a sensitive matter—and another explanation too, if one were needed, for the careful humility of the opening greeting which is followed so swiftly by a potentially offensive discussion.

**9–10 se . . . hæfde þa boc Genesis** In *The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 157, Ælfric lists the books that a mass-priest should have as mass-book, books of canticles, lectionary, psalter, manual, penitential and calendar (Fehr 1914, 126), but, apart from the psalms, no other books of the Old Testament. Nor do his sources for this statement, some of which are more extensive, include such (Gatch 1977, 42–43). This mass-priest is presented, then, as comparatively learned.

**10 be dæle** Literally “in part,” is *litotes* for “in full,” and so means “he knew a bit about Latin” or “he knew a thing or two about Latin” (see Griffith 1991, 176–81).<sup>13</sup> This trope is, of course, particularly appropriate in a work whose argument is that a text may mean more than it says literally.

**11 feower wif** The allusion to Jacob’s four wives is obviously biblical, but it is not a quotation from the Bible. The four wives are discussed in some detail by Jerome in the treatise *Against Jovinianus*, which appears to be a source for the passage on the apostles’ wives in lines 24–30 (Book I, sections 5 and 19). Ælfric’s phrasing, splitting the four wives into two twos, “feower wif—twa geswustra and heora twa þinena” is, however, not found in Jerome and is strictly unnecessary; he could simply have said that Jacob had “feower wif” and have ended his sentence there, with no apparent loss to the point about multiple bigamy. The sisterhood of the first two wives, Rachel and Leah, is mentioned presumably because it was forbidden in Christian custom for a man to marry his sister-in-law and this magnifies Jacob’s apparent abomination (see Gregory’s response to Augustine’s fifth question, Colgrave and Mynors 1969, 84–85). The pairing of pairs, however, closely follows Augustine’s “*duas germanas sorores, earumque singulas famulas*,” in his interpretation of their symbolic significance in *Contra Faustum Manichæum* (Zycha 1891, 594) where Jacob’s quadrigamy is first compared to the bigamy of Abraham (with a freewoman and a bondwoman) and the statement in Gal. 4:24 that “these women are the two Testaments.”<sup>14</sup> Because there were four wives rather than only two, Augustine then says that this application does not suit so well, before going on to a more complicated

<sup>12</sup> On Æthelweard and his family, see Cubitt (2009, 165–84).

<sup>13</sup> On Ælfric’s Latin teachers at Winchester, see, also, Lapidge (2002, 301–9).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the similar description also in book 22: “quattuor iste uxores Iacob, quarum duae liberae duae ancillae fuerunt,” (Zycha 1891, 645; “Jacob had four wives, two of whom were free and two were handmaids”).

interpretation with the two free women indicating the New Testament and the two lives of the Christian in Christ (corporeal and spiritual). This passage is repeated by other patristic writers.<sup>15</sup> The freedom of the sisters is implied in Ælfric's phrasing by the force of the possessive *heora*: only those who are free have servants or slaves. It appears, therefore, that Ælfric has put words into his *magister*'s mouth, or represents what he said, in a way that makes him seem—ironically—to imply more than he knew, for the additional analysis of the four into two pairs matters crucially in the symbolic meaning but is of merely marginal or supplementary significance in the literal. Such implication would be available only to a knowledgeable reader. This pairing of pairs also anticipates the later paired pairs of the parts of the body and their analogy to the two Testaments (Griffith 2017).

**12–13 ac he nyste . . . þære niwan, 18–24 Ða ungelæredan preostas . . . be hys gecorenum** The lines are similar to part of section 146 of the *Excerptiones Pseudo-Ecgberhti* which scorns the “blind teacher who does not understand the difference between the Old Testament and the New” (for discussion, see above ll. 7–13 and, below, 13–16).<sup>16</sup> Ælfric is not, however, openly critical of his former teacher, reserving his contempt instead for the uneducated priests. The contrast is between the priest who knows Latin and understands too that there is a difference between the meaning of the two Testaments (but does not fully comprehend this difference), and those ignorant of Latin who, if they come to know a little of that language, will think that the full meaning of the book lies in the literal sense of the bits they think they understand. The contrast is sharpened by two distinctions. First, Ælfric calls his teacher by the Latin term *magister*—presumably a term of respect—but the *ungelæredan* priests aspire only to be *lareowas*, the usual English word. Secondly, Ælfric's teacher is a *mæssepreost*, a minister of the seventh order,<sup>17</sup> who might celebrate mass and officiate at weddings (see Langefeld 2003, 310–11), and this point was unlikely to have been lost on learned readers, given the subject matter here of bigamy and consanguinity. The unlearned ones, on the other hand, are referred to only as *preostas* (and wish to be married!). Contrasting alliteration (*mæssepreost*: *magister*; *ungelæredan*: *lareowas*) underscores the point.

**12 Ful soð he sæde** Although Ælfric is opposed to interpretation of Scripture which is confined to the literal—whether it be the self-interested literalising of the

<sup>15</sup> The passage is also found in Isidore, *Quæstiones in Vetus Testamentum: In Genesin*, chap. 25 (Migne 1862, vol. 83, col. 259B), and pseudo-Bede *Quaestionum super Genesim* (Migne 1862, vol. 93, col. 335D).

<sup>16</sup> For patristic discussion of the difference between the two testaments, see, for example, Isidore, *Sententiarum*, De differentia Testamentorum, Book I, chap. 20 (Migne 1862, vol. 83, col. 586).

<sup>17</sup> “Seofon hadas syndon gesette on cyrcan: an is hostiarius, oðer is lector, þridða is exorcista, feorða acolitus, fifta subdiaconus, sixta diaconus, sefoða presbiter . . . presbiter is mæssepreost” (Fehr 1914, 8–11).

ignorant priests of lines 20–25, or the more sophisticated judaizing of the heretics of lines 85–86—it is a mistake to think that he ever *rejects* its literal sense, even concerning practices such as bigamy or circumcision which had become unacceptable (although, for pragmatic reasons, it seems that he wishes for unlearned priests to be aware only of the spiritual meaning of the Old Testament in ll. 31–33).<sup>18</sup> He here affirms the historical truth of the fact that Jacob had four wives, but to his way of thinking this does not denote in its literal terms a universal truth, the historical actuality not requiring contemporary application, and its proper moral interpretation resting on an understanding of the New Testament. In this his view closely resembles, and may be derived from, that of Augustine:

All these events signified something other than what they were, but none the less they themselves existed in the world of material reality. And when they were narrated by the sacred historian, they were not set forth in figurative language, but rather in a narrative of events that prefigured what was to come (Taylor 1982, 2. 38).<sup>19</sup>

The use of *soðlice*, then, to mean “literally” (ll. 41, 87, where it contrasts with *gastlic(e)*, “spiritual(ly), symbolic(ally)”) demonstrates Ælfric’s acceptance of, but not over-riding commitment to, the literal sense.

**12 ac he nyste, ne ic þa git** If the implication is that the young Ælfric did not then know the greatness of the difference between the two Testaments because his magister did not know it, then the author here touches lightly on the biblical parable of the blind teacher referred to explicitly in the *Excerptiones* and in Ælfric’s *First Letter for Wulfstan*: “Can the blind lead the blind? Do they not both fall into the ditch. The disciple is not above his master” (Luke 6:39–40, Matt. 15: 14; see Fehr 1914, 53, 131).

**12–13 hu micel todal ys betweohx þære ealdan æ and þære niwan** Had his magister understood the spiritual meaning of Genesis and so Augustine’s interpretation, then he would have known too that the very example from the book that shocked him—the sexual profligacy of the patriarch and, in the literal sense, the differentness of the Old Testament—signified the freedom offered by the two sisters (*liberae*) and, therefore, the great symbolic difference between the New Testament and the Old. The irony for the adept reader continues.

**13–16 On anginne þisere worulde . . . on his siblingum** Ælfric here distinguishes the beginning of this world from the beginning (l. 40 “on anginne”),

<sup>18</sup> Wilcox’s remark (1994, 26) about “Ælfric’s rejection of the literal sense” with respect to circumcision needs clarification, for he does not deny its historical truth but, rather, its contemporary application.

<sup>19</sup> For a consideration of Ælfric’s debt to Augustine, see Grundy (1991).

for the beginning of this world is preceded, as Gen. 1:1 makes clear, by the creation of heaven. The period of the first age of the world before there was written law is indicated. The books covering this era—i.e. Genesis and the first part of Exodus—provide only one instance of a father having children by his own daughter (Lot and his daughters, Gen. 19:30–38) and only a single instance of a brother married to his sister (Abraham and Sarah, Gen. 20:11–12, although Ælfric might be thinking of Cain's wife). These examples ultimately justify the generalisation, but Ælfric may here be remembering the major discussion in patristic writings of the difference between marriage in the first and the present age which is chapter 16, Book XV of Augustine's *The City of God*, especially as “uiri sorores suas coniuges acceperunt” (“men took their sisters as wives”) appears to be the direct source for “nam se broðer hys swuster to wife.” A possible additional source is section 146, “On Ancient Matrimony,” of the *Excerptiones Pseudo-Ecgberhti*. This section, as the preface does, emphasises the differences between natural, Mosaic and Christian law in the regulation of the marrying of kin, and cites St Paul on this in 1 Cor. 5, a chapter which Ælfric alludes to in lines 16–18. The various parallels between the first part of the preface and some of the later sections of the *Excerptiones* suggest a relationship between the two texts, but it is not always possible to show which influenced the other; the congruence of idea and attitude, however, demonstrates both the orthodoxy of Ælfric's remarks and the canonical flavour of this part of the preface.

**16 æfter Cristes tocyme** Although the preface is in no sense formally alliterative, in the *exordium* Ælfric draws together a number of words for key ideas by sound as well as sense: here we may note *Crist* (repeatedly), *Cristen* (twice), *tocyme* “incarnation,” *gecyðnis* “Testament” (thrice), *gecorenum* and *geceas* “of the choosing of the apostles,” and *clænnisse* “chastity.” These terms collectively characterise the New Law and such clusters of alliteration in the author's pre-rhythmical prose make us “feel that the sounds themselves, apart from the meaning, are forming a coherent pattern” (Pope 1967–68, 1.111). In the *narratio*, where the discussion moves on to the Trinity, Christ is instead spoken of as “Sunu” (“the Son”).

**18 ne he furþon wyrðe . . . man mid ete** Showing hospitality to a person represents in the Bible and in Jewish culture more than a covenant of friendship, as is illustrated later in the preface by Abraham's hospitality to the Trinity in the guise of three angels. In particular, sharing bread or eating together was regarded as indicating a shared outlook. The enforcement of communal meals—along with celibacy and the common ownership of property (cf. ll. 28–29 “forleton ægþer ge wif ge æhta”)—was one of the main features of the Benedictine reform in its effect on the lives of clerics, and Ælfric includes this as an aspect of his picture of a model monastery at work in his homily on the deposition of St Martin (Godden 1979, 291; John 1959–60, 74–77). Exclusion from the common table was a

penalty prescribed by the Benedictine Rule for both trivial and graver faults (Schröer 1885–88, 48–50; Gasquet 1936, 55–56). Biblical justification is plentiful: 2 John 10–11 admonishes the elect not to receive the unorthodox, for to greet them is to become a partner in their evil works; Jude 12 warns against the dangers of sharing communal meals with the followers of Cain; Christ especially upsets the Pharisees (Matt. 9:10–11) because he chooses to eat with publicans and tax-collectors, those made unclean by violating religious laws or who are disreputable by virtue of their profession (although this example tests the principle). The source, however, is the injunction in 1 Cor. 5:11–12 forbidding eating with fornicators which is cited in Carolingian canon law in the section on incest, and by the *Excerptiones* in the passage on ancient marriage between kin. Ælfric also alludes to 1 Cor. elsewhere in the Preface. The inversion of the pronoun (*him*) and the preposition which governs it (*mid*) is common enough in OE, but their separation by a subject phrase of three words (*ænig Cristen man*) is much less so (Mitchell 1978, §§29, 44); such inversion in the poetry would place stress upon the preposition (e.g. *Beowulf* 889b “ne wæs him Fitela mid”), and a rhythmical explanation here is possible, but—perhaps—a mimetic explanation is to be preferred: the physical isolation of the sinful from the orthodox at the common table is reflected in the extreme separation of phrasal elements (mimesis being apparent in other aspects of the style of the Preface, and physical separation being apparent too in *Beowulf* 889b).

18–33 **Ða ungelæredan preostas . . . to godum weorcum** The oxymoronic phrase *unlearned priests* heralds a shift to a new concern, the role of the priesthood and the proper guidance of the laity. Unsurprisingly, there are echoes in this of the opening of Alfred’s version of Gregory’s *Cura Pastoralis* as well as canonical analogues.

24–30 **Hi cweþaþ eac . . . silf þa arærde** Monastic concern about clerical celibacy is particularly acute during the Benedictine reform. The new monks installed at Winchester in 964 appear to have displaced secular priests, some of whom seem to have been married (Knowles 1963, 41; John 1959–60 and 1964–65), and Benedictine texts of the Reform period frequently comment on their shameful practices (Lapidge and Winterbottom 1991, 34–35; Birch 1885–93, 3.397–415; Macray 1886, 19–20 and 27; Liebermann 1903–16, 1.248; Stevenson 1858, 2.260).

25 **and hi nellað gehiran ne witan** A nearly tautological formulation perhaps influenced by the common biblical idiom “to hear (with the ear) and understand (with the heart)”; see, for example, Isa. 6:10, Matt. 13:13, Acts 28:27.

28 **þa þe wif hæfdon** By this formulation, Ælfric sidesteps the question which vexed both advocates and opponents of celibacy: the precise text and interpretation of 1 Cor. 9:5 (which, in the Vulgate, reads “Have we not the power to carry about a woman, a sister, as well as the rest of the apostles”). Jerome in

*Against Jovinianus* concludes that the other apostles cannot have been married, since nothing is said explicitly in the Gospels about their wives (Book I, section 26). Ælfric's remarks in section 84 of the *Letter for Wulfstan* ("some others who followed the Saviour had wives and children before their conversion") suggest that he did not follow Jerome's literalist position.

**33 wel wissian . . . to godum weorcum** The comment to this effect in the prologue to the Benedictine Rule would certainly have been known to Ælfric (cf. Æthelwold's translation: Schröer 1885–88, 3 "mid geleafan and godra weorca biggenge"). As Gatch (1977, 44) remarks, however, "Often such expressions echo commonplaces of the Carolingian canonists," and this seems to be the case here with strong echoes in *The Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang* and Wulfstan's *Institutes of Polity*.<sup>20</sup> The *exordium* closes with repeated paired A+B+C structures with alliteration: the adverb *wel* is repeated and followed by second class weak infinitives (*wissian* . . . *bisnian*) which in turn are followed by prepositional phrases introduced by *to*, with play on *God* and *good* and a traditional linking of faith and deeds.

*C: Narratio, lines 34–93*

34–35 The shift to authorial *we* (*pluralis auctoris* or *pluralis modestiae*) after the opening use of the first person singular (see lines 1, 4, etc. and also the note to l. 79) may have been prompted by the fictitious speech of the unlearned priests to which this statement is a sort of response: compare lines 24 "Hi cweþaþ eac" and 34 "We secgað eac," but, in any case, it marks off the opening of the *narratio*. As Sloty (1927) has pointed out, such use of the first person plural is often motivated by a reluctance to assume responsibility (rather than by a modest aversion to self-emphasis), and this fits the context here very well: by making a symbolically profound work available to unlearned readers ("þam ungelæredum"), the author dreads that he may be the unwilling cause of, or may be held responsible for, their misinterpretations. This deictic shift to the plural is characteristic of Ælfric's Latin prefaces in contexts of self-abnegation (see, e.g., Wilcox 1994, 107, l. 3 and 111, l. 5) and, given its rareness in OE, is probably here an Englishing of Latin syntax and style.<sup>21</sup> Ælfric's defensiveness may have been particularly sharp at this moment as this is the first statement which (stunningly) betrays an acceptance of Æthelweard's request (*foran to* "in advance," "beforehand")—everything presented so far having pointed to a more complete letter of refusal. Indeed,

<sup>20</sup> With Ælfric's phrasing "wel wissian . . . wel bisnian," compare Wulfstan's formula, *Institutes of Polity*, *ge wel bodian*, *ge wel bisnian* (Jost 1959, 84, 109).

<sup>21</sup> For possible OE examples of the *pluralis auctoris* and discussion, see Mitchell (1987, 1, §251); for ME examples, see Mustanoja (1960, 123). The various kinds of usage of plural pronouns with singular referent are listed by Zilliacus (1953, 8–11).

nowhere in the preface does Ælfric state simply that he has translated the book (as he does quite openly elsewhere, e.g. in the English preface to *The Lives of the Saints*). Nonetheless, this grammatical shift indicates the point of transition from epistolary to prefatorial form (though the epistle re-emerges in the *petitio*), and the substance of the following text, Genesis, now takes primary place in the *narratio*

37–38 **Genesis, þæt ys “gecyndboc” . . . spricþ be ælcum gecinde** A common prefatorial *topos* gives the title of the following book and explains its meaning. The English term for Genesis is attested elsewhere in Old English only in the Aldhelm glosses. The Aldhelm gloss in MS Digby 46 *geneseos i. generationis, gecyndboca* (De Virginitate 13.1 (Nap) 1154) is similar in structure and sense to Ælfric’s explanation. But Hawk (2014, 359 and n. 14) is probably right to see here the first definite example in the text of the influence of Isidore; in his *Etymologiarum Libri*, Isidore explains the title: “[it] is so called because the beginning of the world and the begetting of living creatures are contained in it” (Barney et al. 2011, 136). That Ælfric would have recourse to the standard work on etymology for the meaning of the title is quite natural (though Isidore’s etymology is repeated by others),<sup>22</sup> but the pun (such as it is) provides another example of a trope appropriate to his argument: a word may, in any one usage, have more than one sense (see notes to Isaac and synecdoche, *hefigtime* and euphemism, *be dæle* and litotes, *twa geswustra* and irony, above; and to *tægél* and punning, *twa eagan* and analepsis, below).

39–57 **Heo onginð þus . . . swa swa to anum** The frequency of passages in Ælfric’s works on the subject of the Trinity with very similar phrasing is testimony both to the “concern with Trinitarian doctrine in late Anglo-Saxon England” (Raw 1997, 1), and to the orthodoxy of Ælfric’s thought. Here and elsewhere, when he discusses the Trinity, the problem of heresy is a major concern.<sup>23</sup> Unsurprisingly, this large section of the preface deals with the first chapter of Genesis (because this was for patristic authors an especially dense and complex part of that book). Two patristic genres in the main underlie the selection and the handling of the material in this section: the *hexamaeron* (dealing with the science of the first six days of creation) with examples by Basil, Ambrose and Bede, all of which Ælfric seems to have known, and the *quaestiones* or *interrogationes* (lists of brief questions and answers focussing on difficult biblical material from the Old Testament), especially Alcuin’s *Interrogationes Sigewulfi* (for which Ælfric is indebted for aspects of his comments on Gen 1:1–2, 1:26 and

<sup>22</sup> On Ælfric’s use of, and interest in, etymology, see Hill (1988).

<sup>23</sup> See Grundy (1991, 26): “Often, too, it is in the context of discussion concerning the trinity that the question of heresy is raised . . . among the OE homilists Ælfric is alone in showing any interest in heresy”; trinitarian heretics mentioned by Ælfric are listed by her. The early eleventh century saw the appearance in the West of new trinitarian heresy (Raw 1997, 24).

4.10),<sup>24</sup> but also Isidore's *Quæstiones in Vetus Testamentum* and, possibly, Augustine's *De diversis quaestionibus octaginta tribus*.<sup>25</sup> But this material is all viewed through the lens of the New Testament, so that Gen 1.1 *in principio* is interpreted as signifying "through Christ" via Christ's remark to this effect in John 8:25 *Principium quia et loquor vobis*. Elsewhere in the preface this approach to reading the Bible is repeated, but in a selective way, so that, for example, the tabernacle of Moses from Exodus is interpreted via 1 Cor. 3:12 and the patristic commentary on that verse, but without the verse being quoted; for Ælfric, as for Jerome (*Epistulae ad Damasum* (no. 18)): "Whatever we read in the Old Testament, we find also in the Gospel; and what we read in the Gospel is deduced from the Old Testament."

**46 on þam forman fers** As *Et spiritus dei*, etc. is the second verse of Genesis, not the first, *fers* here must mean "sentence," "section" or "passage," not "verse" as glossed by Mitchell and Robinson (2012, 360), and Wilcox (1994, 175).

**47 geferod** Hawk (2014, 361) discerns—intriguingly—the influence of Isidore's approach to etymology in the paronomastic translation of *ferebatur* by "geferod," which, as he argues, is "peculiar for its quality as an aural analogue."

**52–57 Oft is seo halige prinnys . . . swa swa to anum** Mitchell and Robinson (2012, 201, n. to l. 68) rightly note on this section that "Ælfric (who was a grammarian) concentrates on the significance of grammatical number in the scriptural passage," but it should also be noted that he follows here a long tradition of interpreting it in this fashion, and so displays his knowledge of patristics at least as much as his interest in grammar. In particular, the contrast he draws between what Genesis does and does not state about grammatical number is highly characteristic of these analyses. Scripture itself engages in such comment on the Old Testament: "Now the promises were pronounced to Abraham and to his 'issue'. It does not say 'issues' in the plural but in the singular, 'and to your issue'; and the issue intended is Christ" (Gal. 3:16).

This style of analysis in patristic exegesis goes back at least to the second century and the works of Justin Martyr (Ackroyd and Evans 1970, 415–16). Later patristic authors use it prolifically.<sup>26</sup> The ungrammatical mixing of number in Gen. 1:26 reveals, therefore, the divine use of *anacoluthon* as a means of conveying the sublimity of the Trinity, and Ælfric, as his Latin preface to his *Grammar* demonstrates, was well aware of Gregory's remark at the end of the

<sup>24</sup> For Ælfric's use of Alcuin's *Interrogationes* in his few additions to the text in the translation of Genesis, see Biggs (1991).

<sup>25</sup> On the origins of dialogue form in exegesis, see Alcamesi (2010, 176, n. 7). On Ælfric's translation of the Alcuin text, see Fox (2012).

<sup>26</sup> Especially for Alcuin: "Genesis was specially near to [Alcuin's] heart, he often cites Genesis 1. 26...and it becomes a key passage in the dispute about images" (Wallace-Hadrill 1983, 215).

preface to his *Moralia*, that God was not subject to the rules of Donatus (Wilcox 1994, 115).

**56–57 Eft comon þri englas . . . swa swa to anum** The example from Gen. 18 is related to the two from the first chapter by the shared figurative representation of the Trinity. Whilst this may seem repetitive, stylistically it is highly appropriate for Ælfric to bring together a triad of such illustrations. His interpretation of all three is conventional and so the sudden jump, as it might appear to a modern reader, from one part of the text to another, is justified in exegetical and theological terms; Haymo's *Homiliae de Tempore*, homily 56 (Migne 1852, col. 335B–D), where the author within the space of a few lines brings together this scene of Abraham, Christ as the beginning with quotation of John 8:25 (cf. ll. 47–48), and wisdom as characterising God in this beginning (cf. l. 50), is comparable.<sup>27</sup> That the angels announce to Abraham in 18. 18 the promise of a son, Isaac, who represents both Christ and the New Law, also importantly links these two chapters of Genesis as figures of the beginning (and the fulfilment of the divine covenant), and of the Old and the New Testament, and provides further theological justification for the division of the book up to Isaac and beyond.

**58–59 Hu clipode . . . butan wordum** Ælfric now directly, but temporarily, imitates the form of his catechistic source, Alcuin's *Interrogationes Sigewulfi* (the phrasing in his translation of Alcuin is notably similar). The other material from this source is transformed from the interrogative to direct statement. The surprise of the change is increased by the compressed running together of the original question and answer into a single sentence so that the underlying dialogue form becomes the rhetorical device of *hypophora* which marks a transition in an argument—here a movement in the exegesis to other subjects of theological import prefigured in the Old Testament (so justifying a new paragraph in the text here).<sup>28</sup> A change of relationship between author and reader is signposted, for the initial explicit humility of the monk addressing the powerful aristocrat has given way to the pedagogue authoritatively, but implicitly, instructing a pupil (with whom we readers, presumably, are included).<sup>29</sup> Alcamesi is right to say that “it is evident that both for Alcuin and for Ælfric the dialogue format is only a framework: the *Quaestiones* are not a record of an actual conversation between Alcuin and Sigewulf” (Alcamesi 2010, 199), but the preface

<sup>27</sup> On Ælfric's use of Haymo's *Homiliary*, see Smetana (1961).

<sup>28</sup> In the usual form of the *quæstiones* the questions begin sections and are followed by the responses and so such questions may well have been perceived by the author as introductory in nature. On *hypophora* as “a transitional device, allowing the writer to change directions or enter a new area of discussion,” see Harris (2017, 42).

<sup>29</sup> The *Interrogationes* is typical of its genre in being a set of responses to difficult theological issues raised by a perplexed reader of the Bible. On the form and its history, see Kamesar (1993, 82–96).

records a correspondence between monk and nobleman, so that, in this uncertain mingling of genre, we may wonder whether the *ealdorman* was not intended at this moment to see himself in the subordinate role of Sigewulf. There is here, in any case, a sharper assertiveness from the author, although it does not last for long. But decorum too has played a part: the juxtaposition of the sublimity of creation and the Trinity, on the one hand, and of the murder of Abel and the crying of his blood from the earth, on the other, is shocking at both the literal and symbolic levels, and rightly registered by the startling shift of syntactic mode. Sin enters the *narratio*.

**59 be þisum litlum** The phrase is sometimes glossed or translated in the plural, “through these little things” (e.g. Raffel 1998, 175), but the *hypophora* expressing the cry of Abel’s blood marks the start of a new paragraph, and, in any case, Ælfric is unlikely to have referred to the Old Testament encoding of the Trinity, which he has just been discussing, in this meiotic fashion. The phrase is singular and alludes only to the immediately preceding example.

**61–76 Eft Iosep . . . on urum weorcum** Though Sisam (1953, 300) has remarked on the inappropriateness of this piece as a preface to the Pentateuch (presumably because Ælfric refers to the following book as Genesis), the tabernacle of Moses and the sacrifice of the rump are taken from later parts of the Pentateuch. Their appearance raises the question of whether this piece was written as a preface for Genesis only or for a larger work (the Pentateuch, or the Hexateuch). Ælfric’s statement that “seo boc is gehaten Genesis” can surely only mean that he had inferred that the *ealdorman* would stitch together the two translations he had commissioned—his own and that by “sum oðer man”—and that his introduction would stand as a preface at least to the entire book of Genesis, and so he may well have touched upon its broader text and the example of Joseph for that reason. The imitation of Jerome’s helmeted introduction to his version of Samuel and Kings which outlines his principles of Bible translation and which also dwells on the meaning in Exodus of the tabernacle and the gold, silver, gems and goats’ hair is natural enough given the similarity of Ælfric and Jerome’s concern to protect the authority of Scripture, and is not out of place in a preface to a translation of any part of the Old Testament.<sup>30</sup> But the later references to Leviticus cannot be so easily explained and the juxtaposition of material from that book with the immediately following reference to “seo foresæde boc” (presumably Genesis) is jarring at least to a literal reader. A theological unity, however, runs through this biblical material.

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<sup>30</sup> “This prologue of the Scriptures can function as a helmeted preface for all the books which we are converting from Hebrew to Latin, so that we are able to know that whatever is outside of these should be removed into the apocrypha” (Gallagher and Meade 2017, 202).

Uniting the blood of Abel, the selling of Joseph, the tabernacle of Moses and the offering of the rump are the contrasting, but theologically associated, themes of sacrifice and redemption on the one hand, and of sinfulness and judgement on the other, but the spiritual meaning shifts between the allegorical (or typical), the tropological (or moral) and the anagogic (or heavenly), so that these links are discontinuous and partly hidden. Abel, like Joseph, is a conventional type of Christ, and his blood an image of the Passion, but this sense is not given, though obviously suggested by the immediate juxtaposition with the Christological or anagogic interpretation of the life of Joseph. The cries of Abel's blood announce the first murder and stand here, in a tropological reading, for the sins of each man which silently indict him before God, so inviting divine judgement and necessitating Christ's sacrifice. Joseph's betrayal by his brothers echoes Cain's betrayal of Abel and both acts prefigure the betrayal of Christ by one of his own and, in their historical sense, exemplify the need for a new covenant between God and man. The tabernacle is a sign of God's covenant with Moses, the repository for the two tablets of the Testament (the Old Law and the Gospel) and the holy place in which burnt offerings of many kinds of livestock were sacrificed to God in expiation of sinful breaches of the law. It was frequently taken as a prefiguring (in a typical or allegorical reading) of the Church, in which Christ's sacrifice is re-enacted in the mass, and Ælfric weaves together the material from the Old Testament with the section in 1 Cor. 3 on the building of the Church and commentary on that passage, certainly at least from Isidore and Haymo. Accordingly, the beast in the sacrifice also typifies Christ who passively allowed himself to be slaughtered, but, like Abel's blood, this receives only tropological interpretation as the final sacrifice of the good death of those who live their lives in imitation of Christ. An exegete, then, would have seen a theological coherence in these allusions, but the selectiveness and compression of the author's manner makes it doubtful whether the unlearned would have appreciated this.<sup>31</sup> It stands, nonetheless, as Ælfric's attempt to illustrate that "seo boc is swiþe deop gastlice to understandenne," and he interrupts the sequence of allusions to reiterate the point: "hu deop seo boc ys on gastlicum andgite," even though the exact referent of "seo foresæde boc" (l. 77) is now stretched, as it seems to us, beyond breaking point. It follows that no decisive answer is possible to the question of exactly what portion of the Old Testament Ælfric intended his preface to precede, although it seems unlikely that it was written to head only a text of Genesis up to Isaac.

74–76 **and wæs beboden . . . on urum worcum** *Tægel* is unhelpfully glossed by editors simply as "tail" but renders *cauda* in Lev. 3:9 (cf. *The OE Heptateuch*, Lev. 3:9: "And bringon Drihtne þone rysel and tægl") where it refers to the rump, hind-quarters or tail-end of the sacrificial beast to be cut away all of

<sup>31</sup> Menzer (2000) sees in this difficulty an admonitory function.

a piece: so the sense is “the tail-end of the beast should always be kept whole [*gehal/totam*].” Neither *Bosworth-Toller* nor its *Supplement* allow any sense for *tægel* other than “the tail of an animal,” and *OED* (s.v. *tail*) does not record *tail* in the sense “the terminal or concluding part of anything” before the 14th century. Either, then, the sense of the word’s second use is figurative, and, if so, probably influenced by Ælfric’s knowledge of the extended sense of *cauda* as “the extreme part, ‘tail’ of anything” (see *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *cauda*, sense 3), or the OE word already possessed the abstract sense and Ælfric plays on the two meanings.<sup>32</sup> So l. 76 means: “then the tail-end of our deeds is sacrificed” (with parallelism between “se tægel . . . on þam nytene and se tægel . . . on urum weorcum” to clarify the allegorical link). These remarks on Leviticus which conclude the typological introduction to Genesis are not original to Ælfric but have close analogues in homilies of Gregory and Haymo (and, also, in Bede) which link together perseverance in good deeds and the sacrifice of the *cauda* of the beast. Once again, these are based on the deployment of the New Testament to reveal the symbolic sense of the Old (Matt. 10:22 and Lev. 3:9). They are, however, disposed here in a structurally appropriate fashion: Ælfric begins with the beginning, creation, and ends with the end, sacrifice and death.

77–84 **Nu is seo foresæde boc . . . Ledenes wisan ne can** Greenfield and Calder (1986, 85) note the dependence of this passage on Jerome, but misunderstand both Ælfric’s meaning and that of his source:

Following Jerome’s dictate that in Holy Scripture even the very order of the words is a mystery not to be tampered with, Ælfric warns that he did not dare change the *endebyrdnyse* ‘order, arrangement,’ even though English and Latin do not have the same idiom.

As Marsden (1991, 323–24) has pointed out, *even though* falsely represents *buton þam anum*, which in the context can only mean “except in this one respect,” and Ælfric’s clear statement in these lines is that the biblical translator dares not alter the order of the original *except* where not to do so results in obscure or nonsensical translation (which might itself result in heresy). Neither, however, does Jerome say in the letter to Pammachius that biblical word order is a mystery not to be tampered with, but rather that the translation of Scripture, though it involves much closer attention to the divine wording of the original, does not require its invariable preservation. Selective quotation from Jerome’s argument

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<sup>32</sup> Ælfric deploys a number of terms in the preface with more than one sense, sometimes punningly—*æ* (“law”/“Testament”), *anfeald-* (“single”/“simple”), *boc* (“book”/“Book of the Bible”), *gecynd* (“origin”/“species”), *geladung* (the Church as “building” and “congregation”), *awendan* (“change”/“turn”/“translate”), *ful soð/soðlice* (“truly”/“literally”)—reflecting in his style the doubleness of meaning that is his theme.

has encouraged the incorrect view that he simply contrasts sense-by-sense paraphrase with a word-by-word rendition which preserves the word order of the original even where this produces nonsense in the translation; but the true contrast he makes is between such paraphrase and a *more* literal approach which keeps the original order where it makes sense in the language into which Scripture is being translated. Ælfric accordingly follows Jerome's argument faithfully, as may be seen in his translation of the first two verses of Genesis, where "on anginne gesceop God heofenan and eorðan" is good Old English (with inversion of subject and verb after an initial adverbial phrase: cf. ll. 13–14) and exactly reproduces the original order, but "and Godes Gast wæs geferod ofer wæteru" reverses *spiritus dei* to conform to the more idiomatic Old English order of "Godes Gast" and, of course, acknowledges that English, unlike Latin, has no synthetic passive.

**79 And we ne durren na mare awritan** Although the preface begins and ends in the first-person singular (see lines 1–9 and 94–99 respectively), the author changes to the plural in the interim. These shifts in number may seem perplexing, but they follow certain principles: *ic* occurs in the expression of his personal experience (ll. 5–13), *ic* or authorial *we* in statements about his writing, copying, or translating of the book, and the inclusive *we* in the context of the moral application of Scripture to the life of the Christian. The singular is used in those parts (*exordium*, *petitio*, *conclusio*) addressed explicitly to a narrow audience (Æthelwold, the potential copyist), the plural in the *narratio* where a stronger sense of the broader readership has induced in the writer either anxiety (*pluralis auctoris*) or an urge to instruct (*pluralis sociativus*).<sup>33</sup> In lines 34–35 (see note above), the plural represents the use of authorial *we*, but in lines 68–76 and again in 86–93 it includes the reader and all Christians (*pluralis sociativus*).<sup>34</sup> Here, however, echoing lines 34–35 ("and we ne writap na mare"), he reverts to the *pluralis auctoris*,<sup>35</sup> and the motivation appears to be the same in both cases: in the face of the profundity of Genesis, the author's syntax evades responsibility for his translation of it.

**83 gedwolsum** is *hapax legomenon*; *DOE* offers the senses "misleading," "confusing" which give good sense, but lessen the etymological connection with *gedwola* ("error") and remove, in translation, the link with the immediately following *gedwolmen* ("heretics").

**84–93 Is eac to witanne . . . to urum lustum** Ælfric follows in lines 84–90 the pseudo-Jerome commentary *Tractatus sive homiliae in psalmos*, Ps. 95,

<sup>33</sup> On Ælfric's shifting use elsewhere of exclusive and inclusive *we*, see Waterhouse (1982).

<sup>34</sup> In lines 93–99, Ælfric directly follows the first-person plural of the source (*habemus, nostri*).

<sup>35</sup> Ælfric, as one of the first two translators of the Old Testament into English (the other being the man who has translated from Isaac), cannot mean by this use of *we* to include himself amongst a class of Bible translators.

where these remarks form the substance of the commentary on verse 2: "Show forth his salvation from day to day."<sup>36</sup> He does not mention the psalm verse itself, or the allusions in the commentary to the Manichaeans and to the apostles being sent out two by two. In referring to heretics who discarded the New Testament (who are not Jews, but only *like* Jews: note the comparison and present tense in "swa swa þa Iudeiscan doð"), he also departs slightly, but notably, from the source and must be thinking of a Christian sect—where the source names only the Jews. A heresy such as this is self-evidently most unusual and likely to have occurred only in the earliest period of the church when Christianity was first isolating itself from Judaism. The only group who seem to fit the bill are the Ebionites as described by Eusebius (Book III, chapter 27 and 29; see McGiffert 1905, 159–62), an early Judaizing Christian sect who insisted on the strict observance of the Old Law and "moreover, thought it was necessary to reject all the epistles of [St. Paul], whom they called an apostate from the law; and they used only the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews and made small account of the rest."<sup>37</sup> As Eusebius goes on to describe the Nicolaitans, an early antinomian sect reputed to "commit fornication without shame" (Chapter 29, verse 2)<sup>38</sup> it is quite possible that Ælfric is thinking of these, as well as the Manichæans, as examples of those who wished to do the opposite and to discard the Old Law: in the eleventh century, perhaps because of Eusebius's remarks about Nicolaus and his wife, the name became attached to incontinent and married priests (Hastings 1900, 3.547, n. 3), an issue of obvious concern to Ælfric here (and elsewhere). The reason for the main changes is clear enough: Ælfric does not fear that Anglo-Saxon readers of a vernacular Old Testament might convert to Judaism or lapse into Manichaeism, but rather that, in reading for themselves, they may pick and choose for themselves which parts of it to follow and which to discard, as, seemingly, had happened before. His interest, accordingly, is in the symbolic parallel between the structure of the Bible and that of the human body, both divinely created, both binary in form, and both unified structures (which the heretics would tear apart).

The theme of antinomianism (and licentiousness) leads on quite naturally (but again in somewhat submerged fashion) to the quotation from Jerome's Letter to Oceanus (69.5), this part of which focusses on the problems posed by ancient marriage (the theme running through the earlier part of the Preface): "Paul knew that the Law allowed men to have children by several wives and was aware that

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<sup>36</sup> The *Tractatus* was known in late Anglo-Saxon England: see Gneuss (2001, numbers 453, 455, 914).

<sup>37</sup> On Ælfric's use of Eusebius (known to him in the Latin translation by Rufinus) in *The Catholic Homilies*, see Förster (1894, 51–55) and Lapidge (2006, 257–58).

<sup>38</sup> Licentiousness was commonly attributed to those who rejected the law, and, conversely, those who were held to be sexually incontinent were often charged with antinomianism.

the example of the patriarchs had made polygamy familiar to the people. Even the very priests might at their own discretion enjoy the same license.” Ælfric does not re-iterate that topic explicitly, but the quotation shows that his mind is still deeply engaged throughout this section with the issue of sexual permissiveness apparently licensed (to the “ungelæredan preostas”) by the Old Testament and closely associated with antinomianism. *Lustum*, then, means more for Ælfric in line 87 than just desires in general; he has in mind particularly the pleasures of the flesh (note *concupiscentias* in the biblical source, Eccles. 18:30).

These underlying themes in the *Tractatus* and Jerome’s Letter to Oceanus remind us of Jacob’s quadrigamy, and a stylistic leitmotif joins that part of the *exordium* quite clearly with the end of the *narratio* here. The several pairings of pairs here, “twa eagan and twa earan, twa nosþirlu and twegen weleras, twa handa and twegen fet,” repeat the pattern first seen in “twa geswustra and heora twa þinena” and found nowhere else explicitly in the preface—though it is, perhaps, implied in the selection of patriarchs here, Abel (and Cain), Isaac (and Ishmael), Jacob (and Esau). And these pairs are united in their ideas, in the first case by marriage, in the second, by the body, so that all belong to the one flesh. What might have seemed to the ingénue as an otiose continuation in the earlier passage, now appears strongly bound in with the binaries here. Running through all this doubleness, either explicitly here in the *narratio* or implicitly in the *exordium*, is a comparison with the two Testaments. Retrospectively, Ælfric’s anecdotal (but ironic) illustration of the danger of reading Genesis without training now takes on clearer spiritual significance. And in this, we find an answer to a problem of the preface: why did Ælfric raise the difficult matter of Jacob’s quadrigamy, then assert the spiritual depth of Genesis, but not return openly to the question of what it was in *spiritual* terms that therefore justified Jacob’s actions? Furthermore, this trope—a type of *analepsis*—by which a later part of a text reveals the true, but previously hidden, meaning of an earlier part is highly appropriate to the argument of this text; it is, indeed, mimetic of it. But it follows too, that, although this text is in English and addressed to a lay aristocrat, it is composed at least in part as if it were in Latin and for the learned. The absence of a Latin preface to the Genesis alongside this English one, by contrast with the double prefaces to all of Ælfric’s other major English works (the two series of *Catholic Homilies*, the *Grammar*, *Lives of the Saints*), is, therefore, not an accident. Ælfric is, in truth, writing simultaneously for two different kinds of audience: monastic and ecclesiastical readers (including future scribes), and lay readers or listeners (including Æthelweard). And if his own teacher, a minister of the seventh order, did not understand the spiritual sense of Jacob’s quadrigamy, then Ælfric can hardly have thought that the laity could possibly have done so, either from this elliptical presentation of it or from the literal translation that follows the preface.

84–92 **Is eac to witanne . . . “hwi dest þu swa”** The link between antinomian heresy and the Scriptural prohibition on Man interrogating his God is found also in Augustine's *Eighty-Three Different Questions* (Question 68), and may derive from there, but it is perhaps a natural enough connection for a learned Benedictine to make.

92–93 **We sceolon awendan . . . to urum lustum** Tricolonic A+B+C ordering re-appears at the end of the *narratio*, again with grammatical, lexical and semantic repetition, but also with chiasitic adaptation following the source in Jerome's *Epistle* 69.5 (A: “we sceolon awendan . . . we ne magon gebigean” with parallel 1<sup>st</sup> class weak infinitives; B: “urne willan . . . his gesetnissa”; C: “to his gesetnissum . . . to urum lustum”). The repeated datives ending the parts of the *narratio* also echo the end of the *exordium* (l. 32 “to godum weorcum,” l. 54 “to anum,” l. 71 “on urum weorcum,” l. 87 “to urum lustum”).

*D: Petitio, lines 94–97*

94–97 The *petitio* shifts the preface back to epistolary form with its appeal to the *ealdorman* not to ask Ælfric to undertake any further translation of the Bible. Readers of the preface are not addressed. Given that this closes a piece which records Æthelweard repeatedly asking Ælfric to translate Genesis before the beginning of that translation, it has the air of a vain request, although it does not appear to be affected. The respectful address to the lord (“leof ealdorman”), not heard since the start of the *exordium*, and the prayer for his eternal well-being are renewed efforts to secure his good-will. The refusal to translate any further book of the Bible after this one (l. 94 “æfter þissere [bec]”) is striking, as has often been observed, both because Ælfric had broken this commitment before (note the Prayer appended to The Second Series of *The Catholic Homilies*),<sup>39</sup> and also because he went on to translate substantial further amounts of Scripture,<sup>40</sup> including another part of the Pentateuch (the second half of Numbers).<sup>41</sup> Given the subject matter to be translated (e.g. Jacob's quadrigamy) and the horrors of misreading the Old Testament to which Ælfric alludes, it is not possible to construe this promise as an empty rhetorical gesture (as Nichols 1968 does). Clemons (2000, 40) may be right to conclude, given the “remarkable

<sup>39</sup> “Ic cweðe nu þæt ic næfre heononforð ne awende godspel, oþþe godspeltrahtas of ledene on englisce” (Godden 1979, 345).

<sup>40</sup> A list is given by Wilcox (1994, 38 and n. 126–28); see Clemons (2000, 29–72), Kleist (2019, Appendix 4) and Kleist and Upchurch (2022, xvi–xix) for the generally accepted chronology of his works.

<sup>41</sup> Dodwell and Clemons (1974, 42–53), mainly following Jost 1927, argue that, apart from most of the first half of Genesis, Ælfric contributes only the translation of Num. 13–26 and Joshua to the Hexateuch. This is confirmed by Ælfric's statements in the *Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo* (see Marsden 2008, 209; Raith 1952, 306–7).

coincidence,” as he says, that Ælfric’s translation of Alcuin’s *Interrogationes* breaks off at ‘just about the point’ at which his translation of Genesis does,<sup>42</sup> that it was commentary intended to clothe the nakedness of the literal translation he had completed, thereby lessening his worries about misinterpretation.<sup>43</sup> He certainly makes liberal use of this text in the preface, referring directly to at least four of Alcuin’s questions and answers (numbers 26, 37, 40, and 87), and these borrowings could have suggested to him the usefulness of further translation of the *Interrogationes*. But it is not clear, if that is the case, why he would not have been at least as worried about the unclothed version by the second translator and so have completed this second work.<sup>44</sup> In Oxford, Bodl. Lib. Laud Misc. 509 and London, BL Cotton Claudius B iv., the two manuscripts in which the preface stands as an introduction to the fuller translation of the Hexateuch, this broken commitment to translate no more of the Bible reveals Æthelweard’s further ignoring of his request and testifies to Ælfric’s falseness to his promise (“leas gif ic do”). As he had made and broken exactly this commitment before, the repetition cannot be read as naivety —and, in any case, he surely knew from previous experience that Æthelweard would be back for more. If this is neither rhetorical gesture nor moral innocence, then only one interpretation remains: Ælfric knew exactly what he had done, what he was doing, and, quite probably, what he was going to do. He records the *ealdorman*’s harassment and advertises his own falseness. He humiliates himself: “þæt gatehær getacnode þa stiþan dædbote þæra manna þe heora sinna behreowsiað.” A simpler sort of self-abasement occurs in his Latin prefaces.<sup>45</sup>

**95 God þe sig milde a on ecnisse** The *petitio*, the request to the patron, concludes the epistolary parts of the preface, the *conclusio* ends the preface. The request that God be merciful to the *ealdorman*, accordingly, functions not just as a petition on his behalf, but also as kind of valediction to him. It is not formally an epistolary valediction (which in Latin opens “vale” or “valete,” in OE “wes(að) hal(e)”) such as that with which Ælfric closes his English preface to the *Lives of the Saints*—“vale in domino.” If that were so, then the *conclusio* would have the

<sup>42</sup> But at Question 201 (on chapter 22. 1), rather than at Question 213 (on 24.14), whilst his Genesis stops at 24.22.

<sup>43</sup> Wilcox (1994, 44) notes also that the later biblical translations show more significant omissions from the source and that such selectivity may have been intended to protect against misinterpretation.

<sup>44</sup> Bremmer (2013, 165), in considering the question of why Ælfric translated Alcuin’s *Interrogationes*, finds sufficient answer in Ælfric’s belief that Genesis “provided the foundation of Christian learning”; but this does not address the problem of why his translation of Alcuin breaks off nearly at the point where his translation of Genesis does.

<sup>45</sup> See, e.g., the Latin preface to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*: “et adscribatur dehinc hic codicellus tuae auctoritati, non utilitati nostrae despicibilis persone” (“and henceforth that this little codex be ascribed to your authority, not to the profit of our contemptible person”; Wilcox 1994, 108, 128).

flavour of a postscript, rather than being, as it is, integral to the five-part prefatorial structure. Indeed, though it may have the flavour of a commonplace clerical formula (cf. perhaps, Luke 18:13 “*deus propitius esto mihi peccatori*,” “O God, be merciful to me, a sinner”), this clause appears nowhere else verbatim in OE; the closest analogue, in the *Confessionale Pseudo-Ecgberhti*, associates it with the need for confession for one’s sins (as in the verse from Luke), and that link may be relevant here, given the view expressed of the danger of biblical translation. The text, nonetheless, has (perhaps inevitably so, as both epistle and preface) a sort of double ending, or an ending of paired parts. The *petitio* and *conclusio* are very nearly of the same length (both have two sentences and eight clauses); both are bound together by alliteration (*l*-, in the *petitio*, *Ledene*, *leof*, *leng*, *læs*, *leas*; *w*-, in the *conclusio*, *awritan*, *wel*, *geweald*, *wo*, *writeras*, *woh*); the syntax of their openings is exactly parallel (“*Ic cweþe nu*,” “*Ic bidde nu*”);<sup>46</sup> both deal with literary issues (translation, copying); and both invoke God (“*God be sig*,” “*on Godes naman*”).

*E: Conclusio, lines 98–101*

91–94 **Ic bidde nu . . . hys who gerihtan** An injunction to the scribe to copy correctly is, in most circumstances, a natural enough final *topos* in a preface (but hardly relevant to a letter); it is general in the conclusions to Ælfric’s English prefaces (even where epistolary, as in the preface to *The Lives of the Saints*), but largely absent from his Latin ones.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps he feared less diligence in the copying of the vernacular. The phrasing that this should be done “according to the exemplar” (ll. 99 “*be þære bysne*”) presupposes the existence of a model to be followed and suggests that the preface was written after the translation, where the *exordium* gives the impression that that has yet to be done and that the preface predates the translation. The metamorphosis from letter to introduction leaves rough edges: somewhere between the preface’s beginning and its end the translation appears to have been done, but nowhere is this said in so many words.

The term for the bad scribe, *unwritere*, is found only here and in the identical injunction in the preface to the *Grammar*. The phrasing of his other injunctions varies, though those of the prefaces to the two series of *Catholic Homilies* are quite similar. The earliest of these, the preface to the First Series, which predates the one here, reads “*Mycel yfel deð se ðe leas writ, buton he hit gerihte*,” and so it appears that Ælfric has chosen to replace the idiomatic clause “*se ðe leas writ*”

<sup>46</sup> On the structuring function of repetitious sentence openings in vernacular Anglo-Saxon letters, see Griffith (2000b, 225–26).

<sup>47</sup> A similar injunction is also found at the end of his *Libellus de veteri testament et nouo* which is couched as a letter to Sigeweard: “*Loca hwa ðas boca write, write hig be þære bysne*” (Marsden 2008, 230).

with a very rare word possibly of his own invention (and, if so, presumably less transparent).<sup>48</sup> If it is a neologism, then perhaps he intended the prefix not only to have the moral force that it has in, say, *unman* (“a bad man”), but also the revocative sense that it has in the etymologically related adjective *unwritten* (“unwritten”): the bad scribe or author unwrites the text and makes it mean something different from what it originally meant.

If Clemoes (2000, 42) is correct in placing the composition of the *Grammar* before that of this text, then the end of that preface is the direct source for the passage here and the lines serve as a sort of portable conclusion. But their effect here is different (and this difference does not depend upon the chronology of Ælfric’s works). In the preface to the *Grammar* the lines seem to mean no more than they say and are fit for purpose, but the shared moralistic final sentence with emphatic OVS order—that the *unwritere* does great harm if he will not correct his error—concludes this preface with a strong sense of displaced or transferred blame. Æthelweard’s misguided project of Bible translation risks the misreading and the misinterpretation of the text and so the emergence of heresy—which seems an unlikely product of scribal error. At the end of the English preface to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*, the version of this portable conclusion reads: “Mycel yfel deð se ðe leas writ, buton he gerihte; swylce he gebringe þa soðan lare to leasum gedwylde” (“great evil does he who writes badly, unless he should correct it; as if he should bring true doctrine into false error”). But if the English laity should misconstrue their English Genesis there will be no *as if* about it: true doctrine will turn to heresy. So, through submissiveness to secular power, Ælfric shoots wide of his real target, and surely knows that he is doing so—and the enormous danger involved in translation into the vernacular (l. 6 “swiðe pleolic”) now weakens into that merely of miscopying (l. 93 “pleoh”), with the blame heaped, in an apparently unnecessary act of hyperbole, on the poor hypothetical copyist (“to wo . . . lease . . . mycel yfel . . . his woh”) rather than the real powerful nobleman. The combination of this with the peevishness of his remark that “hit byð þonne his pleoh na min” (l. 93; “it is then his fault not mine”) and the self-abasement of the *petitio* leaves us with an acute sense of unease: the weak compliance of the author and the uncompromising insistence of the *ealdorman* are both disturbing. What can we think of this stubborn lord who perseveres with such danger, and of this monk who knows this truth but helps him still—and tells us all of this? Is Ælfric, perhaps, including himself as an *unwritere*, even if not so poor a one as “sum oðer man”? How could he not have thought—as his remarks on Jacob’s quadrigamy, on married priests, on the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, and on the discarders of Testaments in one way and another, all testify—that he was opening the Christian equivalent of Pandora’s box? He translates the old

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<sup>48</sup> On Ælfric’s neologising in his *Grammar*, see Williams (1958).

book fearing his English readers will not understand it! Why does he not serve his God better than his king? Whatever the responsibility of others and however multiple his evasions, he knows he is complicit in a sinful act with potentially catastrophic consequences: the dissolution of his universal church and the eternal hunger of hell-torment. For Ælfric, the translation of Genesis into English is the textual equivalent of the blood of Abel—and the preface is its cry.

## Sources and Analogues

Quotations are organised into two groups, biblical sources and non-biblical sources and analogues, and are arranged in text order. All are referred to by brief title and page number of their printed edition. Quotations are in modern punctuation. An earlier version of the first two lists appeared in Griffith (2000a, 141–49), a revised version can be seen in the database of the *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici*; here they are further revised, supplemented and provided with translations.

### *i) Biblical sources*

Where part of the preface is loosely based on the Bible (e.g. where Ælfric refers briefly to a larger section of the Bible, rather than quoting from it or paraphrasing it, or if the allusion is of uncertain origin), the source reference is given, either with an English translation, or with an indication of the theme of the allusion where the relevant section is too long for full quotation. Full quotations from the Vulgate (together with English translation) are given where he follows the text more closely, except in those cases where he himself gives the Latin. If a citation to one of the Gospels is followed by “etc.,” some of the other Gospels contain parallel and nearly identical passages. Where, however, there are similar but not identical passages in different parts of the Bible which may be sources, those which are quoted are those with the closest verbal similarities to Ælfric's text, others being merely cited, unless it appears that Ælfric is using more than one of them. Comments are confined to those instances where there is a measure of doubt about the allusion, other remarks being found in the commentary.

11–12 Jacob's four wives: Gen. 29:16–35, 30:1–26.

12 Luke 6:40: “Non est discipulus super magistrum” (“The student is not above the teacher”).

16–18 1 Cor. 5:11–12: “nunc autem scripsi vobis non commisceri, si is qui frater nominatur est fornicator aut avarus aut idolis serviens aut maledicus aut ebriosus aut rapax; cum eiusmodi nec cibum sumere” (“but now I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator or covetous

or a server of idols or a railer or a drunkard or an extortioner; with such a one, not so much as to eat”).<sup>49</sup>

27–29 Matt. 4:18–20 (etc.): “[Iesus] vidit duos fratres, Simonem qui vocatur Petrus et Andream fratrem eius . . . Et ait illis: ‘venite post me . . .’, at illi continuo relictis retibus secuti sunt eum” (“Jesus saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother . . . And he saith to them: ‘Come ye after me . . .’ And they immediately leaving their nets followed him”). But there is also a possible allusion to the selection of the apostles (rather than that of the first disciples), for Ælfric refers here explicitly to *apostolas* and Christ’s act of choosing is more explicit at that point: see Luke 6:13–14 (“he called unto him his disciples; and he chose twelve of them (whom also he named apostles): Simon, whom he surnamed Peter. . .”).

27–29 Matt. 19:27, 29: “tunc respondens Petrus dixit ei: “ecce nos reliquimus omnia et secuti sumus te, quid ergo erit nobis?. . . [Iesus dixit] et omnis qui reliquit domum vel fratres aut sorores aut patrem aut matrem aut uxorem aut filios aut agros propter nomen meum, centuplum accipiet et vitam aeternam possidebit” (“then Peter, answering, said to him: Behold, we have left all things and have followed thee; what therefore shall we have? . . . [Jesus said] And everyone that hath left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall possess life everlasting”); and Luke 5:11: “relictis omnibus secuti sunt illum” (“leaving all things they followed him”).

38 Gen. 1:20–25: the creation of species.

39–40 Gen. 1:1: “In the beginning God created heaven and earth.”

42–45 Col. 1:15–17: “[Filius] qui est imago Dei invisibilis primogenitus omnis creaturae, quia in ipso condita sunt universa in coelis et in terra, visibilia et invisibilia . . . omnia per ipsum et in ipso creata sunt, et ipse est ante omnes et omnia in ipso constant” (“[The Son] who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, for in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible . . . All things were created by him and in him and he is before all, and by him all things consist”).

43 John 8:25: “dicebant ergo ei: ‘Tu quis es?’ Dixit eis Iesus: ‘Principium quia et loquor vobis’” (“they said therefore to him: ‘Who art thou?’ Jesus said to them: ‘The beginning who also speak unto you’”).

44–45 Ps. 103:24: “omnia in sapientia fecisti” (“Thou hast made all things in wisdom”); Prov. 8:22: “Dominus possedit me initium viarum suarum” (“The Lord possessed me (wisdom) in the beginning of his ways”); 1 Cor. 1:24: “. . . Christum,

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<sup>49</sup> Vulgate quotations are from Weber (1975), with some added punctuation, and their translations from Challoner (1956).

Dei virtutem et Dei sapientiam" (" . . . Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God") and cf. also 1:30.

47 Gen. 1:2: "And the spirit of God was carried over the waters."

48–50 John 3:5: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

50–52 Matt. 12:32: "qui autem dixerit contra Spiritum Sanctum non remittetur ei neque in hoc saeculo, neque in futuro" ("he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come"); Mark 3:29: "qui autem blasphemaverit in Spiritum Sanctum non habet remissionem in aeternum, sed reus erit aeterni delicti" ("but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost shall never have forgiveness but shall be guilty of an everlasting sin"). See also Luke 10:11; Heb. 10:26, 29.

53 Gen. 1:26: "et ait: 'faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram'" ("And he said: 'Let us make man in our image and our likeness'").

56–57 Gen. 18:1–5: Abraham speaks to three angels as if they were one; but Genesis refers to men ("tres viri") not to angels (and so Ælfric's translation: "ðry weras"). Their interpretation as angels is probably due to Heb. 13.2 ("and hospitality do not forget; for by this some, being not aware of it, have entertained angels").

58–59 Gen. 4:10: "vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra" ("the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth").

61–63 Gen. 37:27–8 and 41:25f.: Joseph is sold into Egypt but saves the people from famine.

63–64 Exod. 25–35: Moses' construction of the tabernacle as directed by God.

66–67 Exod. 25:1–4, 35:5–6 and 22–6, and cf. 1 Cor. 3:12: the Israelites are ordered to bring gold, silver, precious things and goat's hair to its construction.

69. Silver signified God's words: cf. Ps. 11:7.

72–73 Exod. 29, Lev. 1: the sacrifice in the tabernacle of various kinds of livestock.

73–76 Lev. 3:9–10: "et offerent . . . sacrificium Domino: adipem et caudam totam, cum renibus, et pinguedinem quae operit ventrem atque universa vitalia et utrumque renunculum, cum adipe qui est iuxta ilia, reticulumque iecoris cum renunculis" ("and they shall offer . . . a sacrifice to the Lord: the fat and the whole rump, with the kidneys, and the fat that covereth the belly and all the vitals and both the little kidneys, with the fat that is about the flanks, and the caul of the liver with the little kidneys"). Matt. 10:22, etc.: "qui autem perseveraverit in finem hic salvus erit" ("but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved").

88–90 I Cor. 12:18: "nunc autem posuit Deus membra unumquodque eorum in corpore sicut voluit" ("but now God hath set the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased him").

90–92 Ps. 113:11: “omnia quaecumque voluit, fecit” (“he hath done whatsoever he pleased”). Rom. 11:34: “quis enim cognovit sensum Domini? Aut quis consiliarius eius fuit?” (“For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor?”). Rom. 9:20: “O homo, tu quis es qui respondeas Deo? Numquid dicit figmentum ei qui se finxit: ‘Quid me fecisti sic?’” (“O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it: ‘Why hast thou made me thus?’”). See also Isa. 40:13–14 and 1 Cor. 2:16.

92–93 Eccles. 18:30: “Post concupiscentias tuas non eas, et a voluntate tua avertere” (“Do not go after your lusts but turn away from your own will”).

## ii) *Patristic and canonical sources and analogues*

Sources and analogues are given in the original Latin and, within line entries, are ordered broadly chronologically. Modern English translations follow directly, except where a passage is substantially repeated by another author; these are taken from published translations—where available—with citations following the quotation. Brief references in this list are to passages from the main series of patristic texts referenced in full in the References. Passages which—either because of their degree of verbal similarity with passages in the preface, and/or because of the similarity of such passages to parallel sections in translations by Ælfric—are very probably direct sources are preceded by an asterisk (\*). Analogues have been included if they show a substantial similarity of idea with part of the preface and if they occur in texts of the Church Fathers and later commentators known or likely to have been known by Ælfric, especially Origen (Rufinus), Basil (Eustathius), Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Gregory, Isidore, Bede, Alcuin and Haymo. Some of these analogues may also be sources;<sup>50</sup> some, however, may show that learned Christians with identical beliefs and similar education, when writing on the same topics, wrote in similar ways. Excluded from consideration are those of Ælfric’s remarks which are the merest commonplaces of medieval theology (e.g. the patriarchs of the Old Testament prefiguring Christ) unless possible sources for them are found near other passages which Ælfric has borrowed.

7–9 and 16–17 Isidore, *Etymologiarum Libri*, Book VI, chap. 17 (Lindsay 1911, I, VI, xvii, 16): “Primum enim tempus est ante legem, secundum sub lege, tertium sub gratia” (“For the first age is before the Mosaic law, the second under the law, and the third under grace” (Barney 2011, 144)).

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<sup>50</sup> On the problem of disentangling direct and indirect sources for Ælfric’s texts, see Hill (1992, 1996).

Bede, *Homiliæ genuinæ*, Homily 13 (Migne 1862, vol. 94, col. 69A): “Primum quippe sæculi tempus ante legem patriarcharum exemplo, secundum sub lege prophetarum scriptis, tertium sub gratia præconiis evangelistarum.”<sup>51</sup>

11–12 \*Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichæum*, book XXII, para. 5 (Zycha 1891, 594): “*duas germanas sorores, earumque singulas famulas, quattuor uxorum maritus*” (“the husband of four wives, two full sisters and each of their maidservants”).

12–13 *Excerptiones Pseudo-Ecgberhti*, section 150, De coniugio antiquo (Cross and Hamer 1999, 160): “Et ualde cecus doctor est, qui nescit discretionem inter uetus testamentum et nouum; sed adhuc errat cecatus umbra antique caliginis, nesciens ueritatem gratiæ Christi, et nescit legem et prophetas usque ad Iohannem baptistam prophetasse” (“And the teacher is completely blind, who does not know the distinction between the Old Testament and the New, but still wanders blinded by the shade of ancient obscurity, not knowing the truth of the grace of Christ, and does not know that the law and the prophets were prophesying until John the Baptist” Calder and Hamer 1999, 162).

13–15 Jerome, *Epistulae*, Ad Geruchiam, De monogamia (no. 123), section 12 (Hilberg 1996, 56, 85, ll. 9–10, 17–18): “At patriarchae non singulas habuerunt uxores, immo et concubinas habuere quam plurimas . . . quodsi et post diluuium, et ante diluuium uiguit illa sententia: crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram, quid ad nos, in quos fines saeculorum decucurrerunt” (“But the patriarchs were not monogamous, indeed they had as many concubines as possible . . . and if both before and after the Flood the instruction held good: be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth (Gen 1:28), what has that to do with us on whom the ends of the ages are come”).

\*Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Book XV, chap. 16 (Dombart and Kalb 1955, 476–77, ll. 1–7): “De iure coniugiorum . . . Cum igitur genus humanum post primam copulam uiri facti ex puluere et coniugis eius ex uiri latere marium feminarumque coniunctione opus haberet ut gignendo multiplicaretur, nec essent ulli homines, nisi qui ex illis duobus nati fuissent: \*uiri sorores suas coniuges acceperunt; quod profecto quanto est antiquius compellente necessitate, tanto postea factum est damnabilius religione prohibente” (“On the law of matrimony . . . Now, after the first union between a man, created from dust, and his spouse, fashioned from the man’s side, the human race required the mating of males and females to reproduce and multiply, and the only other human beings who then existed had been born from those first two parents. Since this was the case, men took their sisters as wives. This practice, of course, respectable as it may have been when it

<sup>51</sup> This passage is quoted verbatim by Alcuin, *Commentaria in S. Joannis Evangelium* (Migne 1863, col. 766). For a list of patristic references to the three ages of the Law, see Baker and Lapidge (1995, 338).

was dictated by necessity, later became no less reprehensible when it was forbidden by religion” (Levine 1988, 4. 501–3)).

\**Antiqua canonum collectio*, no. 67, *De incestis* (Richter 1844, 11): “De his, qui se incesti pollutione commaculant . . . cum quibus etiam nec cibum sumere ulli Christianorum, sicut apostolus iussit oportet” (“Of those who tarnish themselves with the pollution of incest . . . with whom it is not proper even for any Christian to take food, as the apostle instructed”).<sup>52</sup>

\**Excerptiones Pseudo-Ecgeberhti*, section 150, *De Conjugio Antiquo* (Cross and Hamer 1999, 160): “Satis igitur manifestum est non posse filios Adam in primordio seculi uxores accepisse, nisi proprias sorores aut propinquas consanguineas” (“Therefore it is clear enough that the sons of Adam in the first beginnings of the world could not take wives, unless they were their own sisters or their close blood-relations” (Cross and Hamer 1999, 162)).

18–21 Jerome, *Epistulae*, Ad Paulinum Presbyterum (no. 53), para. 7 (Hilberg 1996, 54, 453, ll. 3–16): “Sola scripturarum ars est, quam sibi omnes passim uindicent . . . hanc uniuersi praesumunt, lacerant, docent, antequam discant . . . nec scire dignantur, quid prophetae, quid apostoli senserint, sed ad sensum suum incongrua aptant testimonia, quasi grande sit” (“The art of [understanding] the Scriptures is the only one of which everyone everywhere claims to be master . . . everyone lays claim to this art, and they all tear it to pieces. They teach before they learn . . . And they do not deign to find out what the prophets and the apostles thought, but they adapt incongruous testimonies to their own interpretations as if it were a great feat” (Scheck 2023, 205)).

Alfred, *The West-Saxon Version of Gregory’s Pastoral Care*, chap. 1 (Sweet 1958, 1.24–26): “Ac monige sindon me swiðe onlice on ungelærednesse . . . wilniað ðeah lareowas to beonne, and ðynceð him swiðe leoht sio byrðen þæs lareowdomes . . . forhwon beoð æfre swæ ðriste ða ungelæredan þæt hi underfon þa heorde ðæs lareowdomes . . . licet swiðe monig ðæt he æwfæst lareow sie, þe he wilnað micle worldare habban” (“But many are quite like me with respect to want of learning: . . . they wish nonetheless to be teachers, and the burden of teaching seems to them very light . . . why are the unlearned so presumptuous as to undertake the responsibility of teaching . . . many pretend to be pious teachers because they wish to have grand worldly honors” (Fulk 2021, 26–28)).

24–29 \*Jerome, *Adversus Jovinianum*, *libri duo*, book 1, section 26 (Migne 1883, col. 245A–B): “Venit ad Evangelium, et proponit nobis Zachariam et Elisabeth, Petrum et socrum ejus, et consueta vecordia non intelligit istos quoque

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<sup>52</sup> This is a 9th-century collection of canon law thought to be a major source of the *Excerptiones*. The same proscription of incest, together with the warning that Christians should not eat with incestuous fornicators, is found in *Concilia Hispaniae* (Migne 1850, col. 323B), in both the *Penitentials* of Hrabanus Maurus (Migne 1864, vol. 110, col. 486A; Migne 1852, vol. 112, col. 1405B–C), and elsewhere.

inter eos, qui legi servierint, debuisse numerari. Neque enim Evangelium ante crucem Christi est, quod passione et sanguine ipsius dedicatur. Juxta quam regulam Petrus et cæteri Apostoli . . . habuerunt quidem uxores, sed quas eo tempore acceperant, quo Evangelium nesciebant. Qui assumpti postea in Apostolatam, relinquunt officium conjugale” (Coming to the Gospel, [Jovinianus] sets before us Zacharias and Elizabeth, Peter and his mother-in-law, and, with a shamelessness to which we have now grown accustomed, fails to understand that they, too, ought to have been reckoned among those who served the Law. For the Gospel had no being before the crucifixion of Christ—it was consecrated by His passion and by His blood. In accordance with this rule Peter and the other apostles . . . had indeed wives, but those which they had taken before they knew the Gospel. But once they were received into the Apostolate, they forsook the offices of marriage” (Fremantle 1893, 365)).

32–33 Theodulf of Orleans, *Capitula ad presbyteros parochiae suae* (Migne 1864, col. 193A): “plebibus exemplum bene vivendi praebentes” (“setting an example of good living to the people”).

Benedict, *Regula*, Prologue (Logeman 1888, 3, ll. 10–12): “Succinctis ergo fide vel observantia bonorum actuum lumbis nostris, perducatur evangelii pergamus itinera ejus” (“Therefore, with our loins girt by faith, and by the practice of good works under the guidance of His Gospel, let us walk in the path He has marked out for us” (Gasquet 1936, 3)).

Chrodegang, *Regula Canonicorum*, chap. 58, De doctrina et exemplis doctorum (Langefeld 2003, 290, ll. 8–9): “doctor bene agere, ut sequenter possit bene docere” (“the teacher should act well, so that he may subsequently teach well”).

37–38 \*Isidore, *Etymologiarum Libri*, Book VI, chap. 2 (Lindsay 1911, I, VI. ii.3): “Genesis liber inde appellatur, eo quod exordium mundi et generatio saeculi in eo contineatur” (“The book of Genesis is so called because the beginning of the world and the begetting (“generatio”) of living creatures are contained in it” (Barney 2011, 136)).

38–9 \*Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Book XI, chap. 9 (Dombart and Kalb 1955, 328, ll. 6–10): “Vbi de mundi constitutione sacrae litterae loquuntur, non euidenter dicitur, utrum uel quo ordine creati sint angeli; sed si praetermissi non sunt, uel caeli nomine, ubi dictum est: In principio fecit Deus caelum et terram, uel potius lucis huius, de qua loquor, significati sunt” (“When holy Scripture speaks of the creation of the universe, it does not say clearly whether, or at what point, the angels were created; but if they have not been omitted, they are either meant by the word ‘heaven’, where Scripture says, ‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,’ or they are rather included in the meaning of that light of which I have spoken” (Wiesen 1988, 3. 457)).

40–50 Rufinus, *Origen: In Genesim, Homilia Prima* (Delarue and Delarue 1862, col. 145C): “In principio creavit Deus coelum et terram,’ Quod est omnium principium, nisi Dominus noster, et Salvator omnium Christus Jesus? . . . In hoc ergo principio, hoc est, in Verbo suo, Deus coelum et terram fecit” (“In the beginning God created heaven and earth,’ What is the beginning of everything if not our Lord, and Saviour of all, Jesus Christ? . . . accordingly, in this beginning, that is, in his Word, God created heaven and earth”).

Eustathius, *Metaphrasis Latina Hexaemeri S. Basilii*, Book II, para. 6 (Migne 1865, col. 886B–C): “Et spiritus,’ inquit, ‘Dei ferebatur super aquam’ . . . Spiritum Dei dicit, id est sanctum . . . qui beatae ac venerabilis Trinitatis expletor est . . . ‘superferebatur,’ sic interpretatur, id est, ad vivificandam aquarum naturam compellebat” (“And the spirit of God,’ he says, ‘was carried over the water’ . . . by the Spirit of God, that is the Holy One . . . who completes the divine and blessed Trinity . . . ‘was borne,’ so it is interpreted, that is, he prepared the nature of water to produce living beings”).

Ambrose, *Exameron*, Sermo 1, chap. 2 (Schenkl 1896–97, 4–5): “in exordio sermonis sui sic ait, ‘In principio fecit deus coelum et terram,’ initium rerum, auctorem mundi, creationem materiae comprehendens, ut deum cognosceres ante initium mundi esse, uel ipsum esse initium universorum; sicut in evangelio dei filius dicentibus, ‘tu quis es?’ respondit: ‘initium quod et loquor vobis,’ et ipsum dedisse gignendi rebus initium, et ipsum esse creatorem mundi” (“At the opening of his work he speaks thus: ‘In the beginning God made heaven and earth’; He linked together the beginnings of things, the Creator of the world, and the creation of matter in order that you might understand that God existed before the beginning of the world or that He was Himself the beginning of all things. So in the Gospel, in answer to those who were inquiring of Him ‘Who art thou?’, He replied: ‘I am the beginning, I who speak with you.’ All this was that you might know that He gave to all created things their beginnings and that He is the Creator of the world” (Savage 1961, 5)).

Augustine, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, Book I, section 2 (Weber 1998, I. ii. 3): “His respondemus, Deum in principio fecisse coelum et terram, non in principio temporis, sed in Christo, cum Verbum esset apud Patrem, per quod facta et in quo facta sunt omnia. Dominus enim noster Iesus Christus, cum eum Iudaei interrogassent quis esset, respondit: ‘Principium, quia et loquor vobis’” (“We answer them, God made heaven and earth in the beginning, not in the beginning of time, but in Christ. For he was the Word with the Father, through whom and in whom all things were made. For, when the Jews asked him who he was, our Lord Jesus Christ answered, ‘The beginning; that is why I am speaking to you.’” (Teske 1991, 49)).

\*Augustine, *Sermo de Principio Genesis* (Morin 1930–31, I, 12, ll. 2–3, 8–14; 13, ll. 15–20): “In principio,’ inquit, ‘fecit Deus caelum et terram.’ Fecit in

principio caelum et terram. Per quid fecit? Per Verbum . . . Ipsum enim Verbum est et sapientia dei, cui dicitur: 'Omnia in Sapientia fecisti.' Si in sapientia deus fecit omnia, et unigenitus eius Filius procul dubio est dei sapientia, non dubitemus in Filio facta esse, quae per Filium facta esse didicimus. Nam ipse Filius est profecto principium. Interrogantibus quippe Iudaeis et dicentibus, 'Tu quis est?' respondit, 'Principium.' Ecce 'In principio fecit Deus caelum et terram . . . Spiritus Dei superferebatur super aquas,' et ipse opifex, nec a Patre et unigenito Verbo seiunctus. Nam ecce, si diligenter attendamus, trinitas nobis insinuatur. Ubi enim dicitur, 'In principio fecit,' usia intellegitur Patris et Filii: in principio Filio, deus Pater. Restat Spiritus, ut trinitas impleatur: 'Spiritus Dei superferebatur super aquas'" ("In the beginning,' he says, 'God made heaven and earth.' In the beginning he made heaven and earth. By what did he do it? Through the Word . . . For the Word itself is also the Wisdom of God, to whom it is said: 'You have made all things in Wisdom.' If God made all things in wisdom, and his only begotten Son is undoubtedly the Wisdom of God, let us not doubt that things were done in the Son, which we have learned were done through the Son. For the Son himself is indeed the beginning. For the Jews were asking and saying, 'Who are you?' he answered, 'the beginning.' Behold, 'In the beginning God made heaven and earth . . . The Spirit of God was carried over the waters,' and he himself was the artisan, and was not separated from the Father and the only begotten Word. For behold, if we pay attention carefully, the Trinity is suggested to us. For when it is said, 'He made in the beginning,' it is understood as the use of the Father and the Son: in the beginning, the Son, God the Father. The Spirit remains, that the Trinity may be fulfilled: 'the Spirit of God was carried over the waters'" ).

Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, Book I, section 6 (Zycha 1894, sect. III, part 1, 10, ll. 7–17): "ut, quemadmodum in ipso exordio inchoatae creaturae, quae caeli et terrae nomine propter id, quod de illa perficiendum erat, commemorata est, trinitas insinuatur creatoris—nam dicente scriptura: 'in principio fecit deus caelum et terram' intellegimus patrem in dei nomine et filium in principii nomine, qui non patri, sed per se ipsum creatae primitus ac potissimum spiritali creaturae et consequenter etiam uniuersae creaturae principium est, dicente autem scriptura: 'et spiritus dei superferebatur super aquam,' completam commemorationem trinitatis agnoscimus" ("Hence, in the very beginning of creation in its inchoate state, which has been called heaven and earth because of what was to be produced from it, it is the Blessed Trinity that is represented as creating. For, when Scripture says, 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth,' by the name of 'God' we understand the Father, and by the name of 'Beginning', the Son, who is the Beginning, not for the Father, but first and foremost for the spiritual beings He has created and then also for all creatures;

and when Scripture says, ‘And the Spirit of God was stirring above the water,’ we recognize a complete enumeration of the Trinity” (Taylor 1982, 1.25)).

\*Isidore, *Quæstiones in Vetus Testamentum: In Genesim*, chap. 1, para.2 (Migne 1862, vol. 83, col. 209B): “In principio fecit Deus cœlum et terram: Principium Christus est, sicut ipse in Evangelio Judæis interrogantibus respondit: ‘Ego principium, qui et loquor vobis.’ In hoc igitur principio fecit Deus cœlum” (“In the beginning God made heaven and earth: Christ is the beginning, as he himself replied in the Gospel to the Jews who were questioning him: ‘I am the beginning, who also speak unto you.’ In this beginning, therefore, God made heaven”).

\*pseudo-Bede, *In Pentateuchum* (Gorman, 1996, 267, §1, ll. 5–6): “Principium igitur Christus est, qui in euangelio dicit: ‘Ego sum principium, quod et loquor uobis.’”

\*Bede, *In Genesim*, Book I, verses 1 and 2 (Jones 1967, 3, ll. 25–29, and 7, ll. 157–61): “Potest autem non inprobabiliter intellegi in principio fecisse Deum cœlum et terram in unigenito filio suo qui, interrogantibus se Iudeis, quid eum credere deberent, respondit: ‘Principium quod et loquor uobis.’ Quia ‘in ipso,’ ut ait apostolus, ‘condita sunt omnia in caelis et in terra’ . . . (7, l. 157). Bene autem cum ‘in principio Deum,’ id est, in filio patrem, fecisse ‘cœlum et terram’ prædiceret, etiam sancti Spiritus intulit mentionem addendo: ‘Et Spiritus Dei superferebatur super aquas,’ ut uidelicet totius simul Trinitatis in creatione mundi uirtutem cooperatam esse signaret” (“Moreover, that ‘in the beginning God made heaven and earth’ can very probably be understood in the words of the only-begotten Son, who, when the Jews asked why they should believe in him, replied: ‘[I am] the beginning, which I also speak unto you.’ ‘For,’ as the Apostle says, ‘in him were all things created in heaven and on earth’ . . . But when [Moses] taught that in the beginning God, that is, the Father in the Son, made ‘heaven and earth,’ he also properly brought in a mention of the Holy Spirit by adding: ‘And the Spirit of God moved over the waters,’ in order to signify that the power of the whole Trinity at once worked together in the creation of the world” (Kendall 2008, 68–69, 73)).

\*Alcuin, *Commentaria in S. Joannis Evangelium*, chap. 21 (Migne 1863, col. 864B):<sup>53</sup> “Respondit dicentibus ‘Tu quis es?’ et ait: ‘Principium, quod et loquor vobis.’ Quare se dicit Dominus Jesus principium? Quia omnia per ipsum facta sunt, sicut Psalmus dicit: ‘Omnia in sapientia fecisti.’ Si igitur omnia in sapientia fecit Deus, id est, in Filio suo coæterno sibi et consubstantiali, Filius utique omnium principium est” (“He answered those who said, ‘Who are you?’ And he said: ‘The beginning, who also speak unto you.’ Why does the Lord Jesus say that

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<sup>53</sup> This passage is found ascribed to Bede, *In S. Joannis Evangelium Expositio*, chap. 8 (Migne 1862, vol. 92, col. 745A).

he is the beginning? Because all things were made through him, as the Psalm says: 'You have made all things in wisdom.' If, therefore, God made all things in wisdom, that is, in his Son, co-eternal with himself and consubstantial, the Son is certainly the beginning of all things").

45 \**The Nicene Creed*, line 7: "ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula" ("begotten of the Father before all ages").

Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus octaginta tribus*, Qu 23 (Mutzenbecher 1975, 27, ll. 13–18): "Quamobrem cum sapiens deus dicitur et ea sapientia sapiens dicitur, sine qua eum uel fuisse aliquando uel esse posse nefas est credere, non participatione sapientiae sapiens dicitur sicuti anima, quae et esse et non esse sapiens potest, sed quod eam ipse genuerit qua sapiens dicitur sapientiam" ("Accordingly, when God is said to be wise, and when he is called wise by that wisdom which it is preposterous to believe that he ever lacked or could lack, he is called wise not by participation in wisdom, as is the soul, which can both be and not be wise. Rather God is called wise because he has himself begotten that wisdom by which he is called wise." (Mosher 2002, 49)).

Augustine, *De trinitate*, Book VI, chap. 2 (Mountain and Glorie 2001, 230, ll. 12–14): "sic et sapiens cum patre dicitur cuius ipse sapientia est, sicut ille sapiens cum filio, quia ea sapientia sapiens est quam genuit" ("and in like manner He is also called wise together with the Father, of whom He Himself is the wisdom. And the Father is wise together with the Son, because He is wise with that wisdom which He begot" (McKenna 1963, 201)).

50–52 \*Augustine, *Sermo LXXI*, chap. 12, sections 19–20 (Migne 1865, col. 455): "Sed perfecta charitas perfectum donum est Spiritus sancti. Prius est autem illud quod ad remissionem pertinet peccatorum . . . Contra hoc donum gratuitum, contra istam Dei gratiam loquitur cor impœnitens. Ipsa ergo impœnitentia est 'Spiritus blasphemia, quæ non remittetur neque in hoc sæculo, neque in futuro'" ("Now perfect love is the perfect gift of the Holy Spirit. But the first gift is that which is concerned with the remission of sins . . . Against this gratuitous gift, against this grace of God, does the impenitent heart speak. This impenitence then is 'the blasphemy of the Spirit, which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come'" (Macmullen 1844, 1. 181)).

54–56 Eustathius, *Metaphrasis Latina Hexaemeri S Basilii*, Book IX, para 6 (Migne 1865, col. 965B): "Non enim dixit 'ad imagines nostras,' sicut et Scriptura testatur: 'Fecit Deus,' inquit, 'hominem non fecerunt.' Prudenter vitavit nunc multitudinem personarum" ("For he did not say 'to our images', as Scripture also testifies: 'God created man,' It is not 'They made.' Here Scripture carefully avoids the plurality of the Persons").

Jerome, *Epistulae*, Ad Damasum (no. 18B), para. 4 (Hilberg 1996, 54, 101, ll. 11–19): "nunc breuiter illud adtingimus, quare in Hebraeo sit positum: 'et quis ibit nobis?' sicut enim in Genesi dicitur: 'faciamus hominem ad imaginem et

similitudinem nostram,’ ita et hic puto dictum: ‘quis ibit nobis?’ ‘nobis’ autem quibus aliis aestimandum est, nisi patri et filio et spiritui sancto, quibus uadit, quicumque eorum obsequitur uoluntati? et in eo quidem, quod unius loquentis persona proponitur, diuinitatis est unitas; in eo uero, quod dicitur ‘nobis’, personarum diuersitas indicatur.” (“Let us now touch briefly upon the question, why in the Hebrew there stands: ‘And who will go for us?’ For even as in Genesis the saying is: ‘Let us make man to our image and likeness,’ so here also I think it was said: ‘Who will go for us?’ Now by ‘us’ what others are to be understood save the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, for whom he goes, whosoever obeys their will? And as for the fact that the person of one speaker is presented, God is one. But as for the saying ‘for us,’ a diversity of persons is indicated” (Mierow 1963, 1. 100)).

Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, Book III, section 19, para. 29 (Zycha 1894, 28, 85, ll. 14–86, l. 4): “hoc primum breuiter dicimus non indifferenter accipiendum, quod in aliis operibus dicitur: dixit deus: ‘fiat,’ hic autem: dixit deus: ‘faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram,’ ad insinuandam scilicet, ut ita dicam, pluralitatem personarum propter patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum. quam tamen deitatis unitatem intellegendam statim admonet dicens: ‘et fecit deus hominem ad imaginem dei,’ non quasi pater ad imaginem filii aut filius ad imaginem patris—alioquin non uere dictum est: ‘ad imaginem nostram,’ si ad patris solius aut ad filii solius imaginem factus est homo. sed ita dictum: ‘fecit deus ad imaginem dei,’ tamquam diceretur: fecit deus ad imaginem suam. cum autem nunc dicitur: ‘ad imaginem dei,’ cum superius dictum sit: ‘ad imaginem nostram,’ significatur, quod non id agat illa pluralitas personarum, ut plures deos uel dicamus uel credamus uel intellegamus, sed patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum—propter quam trinitatem dictum est: ‘ad imaginem nostram’—unum deum accipiamus, propter quod dictum est: ‘ad imaginem dei’ (“I must briefly point out the importance of the fact that in the case of the other works it is written, God said, ‘Let there be’, whereas here it is written, God said, ‘Let Us make mankind to Our image and likeness.’ Scripture would indicate by this the plurality of Persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But the sacred writer immediately admonishes us to hold to the unity of the Godhead when he says ‘And God made man to the image of God.’ He does not say that the Father made man to the image of the Son, or the Son made him to the image of the Father; otherwise the expression ‘to Our image’ would not be correct if man were made to the image of the Father alone or the Son alone. But Scripture says, ‘God made man to the image of God,’ meaning that God made man to His own image. The fact that here Holy Scripture says ‘to the image of God,’ whereas above it says ‘to Our image,’ shows us that the plurality of Persons must not lead us into saying, believing, or understanding that there are many gods, but rather that we must accept the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as one God. Because of the three

Persons, it is said 'to Our image;' because of the one God, it is said 'to the image of God'" (Taylor 1982, 1. 95)).

\*Bede, *In Genesim*, Book I (Jones 1967, 25, ll. 746–9): "In eo enim quod dicitur, 'faciamus,' una ostenditur trium operatio personarum; in eo uero quod sequitur, 'ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram,' una et aequalis substantia eiusdem sanctae Trinitatis indicatur" ("For the expression, 'Let us make,' connotes one action of three persons; but the following phrase, 'in our image and likeness,' indicates the one and equal substance of the same holy Trinity" (Kendall 2008, 90)).

Pseudo-Bede, *In Pentateuchum*, Gen. 1:26–31 (Gorman 1996, 278, §12, ll. 345–50): "Et dixit deus: Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram,' et reliqua usque 'dies sextus.' Cum in aliis operibus dicitur, 'Dixit deus, Fiat,' hic 'Faciamus hominem,' insinuans pluralitatem personarum propter patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum. Et tamen deitatis unitatem intellegendam statim ammonet dicens, Et fecit deus hominem."

\*Alcuin, *Interrogationes et Responsiones in Genesin*, Inter. 37 (Migne 1865, col. 520B–C): "Cur plurali numero dixit: 'Faciamus?' —Resp. Ut ostenderetur trium una operatio personarum . . . Inter. 40. Cur iterum dixit: 'Creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam;' cum antea dixisset: 'ad imaginem nostram?'—Resp. Ut utrumque, et pluralitas personarum, et unitas substantiæ insinuaretur" ("Why did he say in the plural number: 'Let us make?'—Resp. In order to show that the operation of the three persons is one . . . Inter. 40. Why did he say again: 'God created man in his own image;' when he had previously said: 'in our image?'—Resp. That both, the plurality of persons and the unity of substance, may be suggested").

56–57 Ambrose, *De excessu fratris sui Satyri, libri duo*, Book II, para. 96 (Migne 1880, col. 1342C): "Abraham paratus excipiendis hospitibus, fidelis Deo, impiger ministerio promptus officio, Trinitatem in typo vidit, hospitalitatem religione cumulavit, tres suspiciens, unum adorans; et personarum distinctione servata, unum tamen Dominum nominabat, tribus honorificentiam muneris deferens, et unam significans potestatem" ("Abraham, who was glad to receive strangers, faithful to God, and tireless in his service, and prompt in fulfilling his duty, saw the Trinity typified. He added religious devotion to hospitality, for, although he beheld Three, he adored One, and, while keeping a distinction of the Persons, yet he called One, Lord, thus giving honor to the Three but signifying one Power" (McCauley 2004, 239–40)).

Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Book XVI, chap. 29 (Dombart and Kalb 1955, 533–35, ll. 1–2, 30–4, 36–44): "Item Deus apparuit Abrahae ad quercum Mambre in tribus uiris, quos dubitandum non est angelos fuisse . . . Vnde multo est credibilis, quod et Abraham in tribus et Loth in duobus uiris Dominum agnoscebant, cui per singularem numerum loquebantur, etiam cum eos homines

esse arbitrarentur . . . sed erat profecto aliquid, quo ita excellabant, licet tamquam homines, ut in eis esse Dominum, sicut adsolet in prophetis, hi, qui hospitalitatem illis exhibebant dubitare non possent; atque ideo et ipsos aliquando pluraliter et in eis Dominum aliquando singulariter appellabant. Angelos autem fuisse scriptura testatur, non solum in hoc genesis libro, ubi haec gesta narrantur, uerum etiam in epistula ad Hebraeos, ubi, cum hospitalitas laudaretur: ‘Per hanc,’ inquit, ‘etiam quidam nescientes hospitio receperunt angelos’” (“God also appeared to Abraham by the oak of Mamre in the guise of three men, who were undoubtedly angels . . . Hence it is much more credible that Abraham recognized the Lord in the three men, and Lot in two, and that they both spoke to him in the singular number, even though they thought the men to be men . . . But surely there was some quality in them so outstanding, though they seemed to be men, that those who offered them hospitality could not doubt that the Lord was present in them, as often happens in the case of the prophets. And this is the reason why they sometimes addressed them in the plural, and sometimes, using the singular, addressed the Lord in their persons. Moreover, the Scripture states that they were angels, not only in this book of Genesis in which the tale is told but also in the epistle to the Hebrews, which says, in praise of hospitality: ‘Thereby some have even entertained angels unawares’” (Sanford and Green 1988, 5. 141–45)).

Augustine, *De trinitate*, Book II, chap. 10–11 (Mountain and Glorie 2001, 106, ll. 115–22, 107, ll. 16–20): “Sub ilice autem Mambre tres uiros uidit quibus et inuitatis hospitioque susceptis et epulantibus ministravit. Sic tamen scriptura illam rem gestam narrare coepit ut non dicat: ‘Visi sunt ei tres uiri,’ sed: ‘Visus est ei dominus.’ Atque inde consequenter exponens quomodo ‘ei’ sit ‘uisus dominus’ attexit narrationem de tribus uiris quos Abraham per pluralem numerum inuitat ut hospitio suscipiat; et postea singulariter sicut unum alloquitur . . . Cum uero tres uisi sunt nec quisquam in eis uel forma uel aetate uel potestate maior ceteris dictus est, cur non hic accipiamus uisibiliter insinuatam per creaturam uisibilem trinitatis aequalitatem atque in tribus personis unam eandemque substantiam?” (But under the oak at Mambre he saw three men, whom he invited and received as his guests, and served them as they were eating. Still Scripture did not begin to describe that incident by speaking thus, ‘Three men appeared to him,’ but ‘The Lord appeared to him.’ And then relating in the proper order how the Lord appeared to him, it added the story of the three men, whom Abraham invites in the plural number to share his hospitality. Afterwards he addresses them in the singular number as one . . . But since three men were seen, and no one of them is said to be greater than the others in form, or in age, or in power, why do we not believe that the equality of the Trinity is intimated here by the visible creature, and the one and the same substance in the three persons? (McKenna 1963, 75–76)).

\*Gregory *Homiliæ XL in Ezechielem*, Book I, homily 18 (Migne 1857, col. 1152A): “Tunc quippe diem Domini Abraham vidit, cum in figura summæ Trinitatis tres angelos hospitio suscepit . . . sic tribus quasi uni locutus est, quia etsi in personis numerus Trinitatis est, in natura unitas divinitatis est” (“Abraham saw the day of the Lord, when he hospitably received three angels as a prefiguration of the most holy Trinity, in the form of the supreme Trinity . . . he spoke to the three as to one, since although there are three persons in the Trinity, the nature of the divinity is one” (Hurst 2009, Homily 16, 116)).

Pseudo-Bede, *In Pentateuchum*, chap. XVIII (Migne 1862, vol. 91, col. 238A): “Post hæc apparuerunt Abrahæ tres viri, et reliqua. Notandum quod Abraham triplicem figuram habeat: primam Salvatoris, quando exivit de terra sua; secundam Patris, cum immolavit filium; tertiam in hoc loco sanctorum qui adventum Domini cum gaudio susceperunt.”

Haymo, *Homiliæ de Tempore*, homily 56 (Migne 1852, col. 335B): “Sive aliter: Abraham diem Christi videt, et gavisus est, quando in figura sanctæ Trinitatis tres angelos meridie hospitio suscepit. Tres enim vidit, et unum adoravit, quia in Trinitate unitatem credidit.”

58–59 Pseudo-Bede, *In Pentateuchum*, chap. IV (Migne 1862, vol. 91, col. 217D): “Dicit Deus ad Cain, ‘Quid fecisti? vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra’ . . . Hæc est vox clara, quam sanguis ipse exprimit ex ore fidelium. In eo quod dicit, ‘Frater tuus,’ commemorat cogitationem eorum, ut pœnitentia compungerentur” (“God says to Cain, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the earth . . . This is a clear voice, which the blood itself expresses from the mouth of the faithful. When he says, ‘Your brother,’ he mentions their thought, that they should repent”).

Bede, *Hexaemeron*, Book II (Migne 1862, vol. 91, col. 66B): “Vox sanguinis fratris tui clamat ad me de terra:’ Magnam vocem habet sanguis, non solum Abel, sed et omnium interfectorum pro Domino” (“The voice of thy brother's blood cries to me from the earth:’ blood has a great voice, not only Abel's, but also that of all murderers before the Lord”).

\*Alcuin, *Interrogationes et Responsiones in Genesin*, Inter. 87 (Migne 1863, col. 525C): “Quomodo vox sanguinis Abel clamat ad Dominum?—Resp. [Id est] homicidii illius reatus in conspectu [justi] iudicis apparebat” (“How does the voice of Abel's blood cry out to the Lord? [That is] the guilt of that murder was apparent in the sight of the [just] judge”).

59–60 Jerome, *Epistulae*, Ad Paulinum Presbyterum (no. 53), para. 8 (Hilberg 1996, 54, 454, ll. 13, 16, 17–18, 456, l. 16–457, l. 1): “Uidelicet manifestissima est Genesis . . . patet Exodus . . . in promptu est Leuiticus liber . . . si historiam respicias, uerba simplicia sunt; si in litteris sensum latentem . . .” (“That is to say, Genesis is a perfectly clear book . . . Exodus no doubt, is clear . . . The interpretation of the book of Leviticus is readily accessible . . . If you look at the

history, the words are simple enough; but if you consider the meaning hidden in the letter . . . ” (Scheck 2023, 206–8)).

61–63 Pseudo-Bede, *In Pentateuchum*, chap. 41 (Migne 1862, vol. 91, col. 269 A–B): “Post haec Joseph a penuria frumenti salvat Ægyptum, et Christus a fame verbi Dei liberavit mundum” (“After this, Joseph saved Egypt from want of grain, and Christ freed the world from hunger for the word of God”).

63–66 Jerome, *Præfatio in Libros Samuel et Malachim* (Migne 1845, col. 557A): “In tabernaculum Dei offert unusquisque quod potest; alii aurum et argentum et lapides pretiosus, alii byssum et purpuram et coccum offerunt et hyacinthum, nobiscum bene agetur si obtulerimus pelles et caprarum pilos. Et tamen Apostolus contemptibilia nostra magis necessaria judicat. Unde et tota illa tabernaculi pulchritudo, et per singulas species Ecclesiæ præsentis futuræque distinctio pellibus tegitur et ciliciis, ardoremque solis et injuriam imbrium ea quæ viliora sunt prohibent” (“In the tabernacle of God, someone offers what he can: some offer gold, and silver, and precious stones, others flax and purple, scarlet and sapphire [cf. Ex. 25.2–7]; it will go well with us if we offer skins and goats’ hair. And the apostle judges our more despised members to be more necessary [I Cor. 12:22]. So also the entire beauty of the tabernacle and, in individual likenesses, the ornament of the present and future church is covered with skins and hair, and those things which are more vile prevent the heat of the sun and the injury of the rains” (Gallagher and Meade 2017, 202)).

\*Isidore *Quæstiones in Vetus Testamentum: In Exodum* (Migne 1862, vol. 83, col. 310A–B): “Per hanc arcam, quam de lignis imputribilibus Moyses fabricavit, Ecclesia Christi significatur, aedificata ex omnibus sanctis . . . habentibus interius etiam duas tabulas Testamenti id est observantiam legis et Evangelii” (“Through that tabernacle, which Moses made of incorruptible wood, the Church of Christ is signified, built from all the saints . . . having also on the inside the two tablets of the Testament, that is, the observance of the law and the Gospel”).

\*Bede, *De tabernaculo*, Book II, chap. 1 (Hurst 1969, 42, ll. 1–3): “Tabernaculum quod fecit domino Moyses in solitudine . . . statum sanctae uniuniversalis ecclesiae designat” (“The tabernacle that Moses made for the Lord in the wilderness . . . designates the state of the Holy Church universal” (Holder 1994, 45)).

66–76 Bede, *De tabernaculo*, Book I, chap. 3 (Hurst 1969, 11, ll. 243–46, 250–51, 260–62): “Cui uidelicet aurum offerimus cum claritate uerae sapientiae quae est in fide recta resplendemus, argentum cum et oris nostri ‘confessio fit in salute’ . . . pilos caprarum cum habitum paenitentiae ac luctus induimus . . . lapides onichinos et gemmas ad ornandum ephod ac rationale cum miracula sanctorum quibus cogitationes Deo deuotas et opera uirtutum ornauere digna laude praedicamus” (“We offer gold to him when we shine brightly with the splendour of the true wisdom which is in right faith; silver when with our mouth we make

confession unto salvation . . . goats' hair when we put on the habit of penitence and lamentation . . . We offer onyx stones and precious stones to adorn the ephod and rational when with the praise that is due we extol the miracles which adorn both the thoughts that the saints have devoted to God and their virtuous works" (Holder 1994, 9)).

\*Haymo, *Expositio, In Epistolam I Ad Corinthios* (Migne 1881, col. 525CD): 'aurum,' id est doctrinam sanctam et rectum sensum, 'argentum,' id est eloquia divina . . . 'et lapides pretiosos,' id est diversa genera virtutum . . . " ("gold', that is holy doctrine and right sense, 'silver,' that is divine speech . . . 'and precious stones,' that is different kinds of virtues . . . ).

74–76 Gregory, *Homiliae XL in Ezechielem*, Book II, homily 25, chap. 1 (Migne 1857, col. 1189C): "In cauda quippe finis est corporis, et ille bene immolat, qui sacrificium boni operis usque ad finem debitae perducit actionis" ("For in the tail is the end of the body, and he sacrifices well, who continues the sacrifice of a good work to the end of his due action").

Bede, *In Librum Beati Patris Tobiae*, chap. 11.9 (Hurst 1983, 15, ll. 12–14): ". . . cauda quippe quae finis est corporis finem bonae operationis, id est perfectionem, uel certe mercedem quae sine fine tribuitur, insinuate" ("... for the tail which is the end of the body suggests the end of a good work, i.e. its perfection, or at any rate the reward which is granted without end" (Connolly 1997, 57)).

Haymo, *Homiliae in tempore*, homily 67 (Migne 1852, col. 932B): "Virtus boni operis perseverantia est, et voce Veritatis dicitur: 'Qui autem perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit.' Incassum quippe bonum agitur si ante vitae terminum deseratur. Ex praecepto legis cauda hostiae jubetur offerri. In cauda quippe finis est corporis. Et ille bene immolat qui sacrificium boni operis usque ad finem debitae perducit actionis."

\*Haymo, *Homiliae in tempore*, homily 77 (Migne 1852, col. 478D–79A): "'Qui perseveraverit usque in finem, hic salvus erit.' Hinc est, quod per legem cauda hostiae in sacrificio offerri praecipitur. In cauda quippe finis est corporis, et ille Deo sacrificium acceptum immolat, qui opus bonum usque in finem consummate" ("He who perseveres to the end will be saved.' Hence it is that the tail of the animal to be sacrificed is commanded by law to be offered in the sacrifice. For in the tail is the end of the body, and he who sacrifices the accepted sacrifice to God completes the good work to the end").

77–86 Jerome, *Epistulae*, Ad Pammachium (no. 57), paras. 5–7 (Hilberg 1996, 54, 508, ll. 9–13; 511, ll. 12–16, 20–21; 512, ll. 7–12): "ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera uoce profiteor me in interpretatione Graecorum absque scripturis sanctis, ubi et uerborum ordo mysterium est, non uerbum e uerbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu . . . (6) qualis super hoc genere praefatiuncula sit, in libro, quo beati Antonii uita describitur, ipsius lectione cognosce: ex alia in aliam linguam ad uerbum expressa translatio sensus operit et ueluti laeto gramine sata

strangulate . . . ut nihil desit ex sensu, cum aliquid desit ex uerbis . . . (7) Nec hoc mirum in ceteris saeculi uidelicet aut ecclesiae uiris, cum septuaginta interpretes et euangelistae atque apostoli idem in sacris uoluminibus fecerint” (“Indeed, I not only admit, but freely proclaim that in translation [*interpretatione*] from the Greek—except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery—I render not word for word, but sense for sense . . . (6) read and consider this short preface to a life of St. Anthony: ‘A translation expressed word for word from one language into another conceals the sense just as an overabundant pasture strangles the crops . . . so that nothing is lost from the sense when I have had to change the words . . . (7) Nor should it seem surprising that secular and ecclesiastical writers translate [*interpretes*] in this way, when the Seventy Translators, the Evangelists, and the Apostles did likewise with the Sacred Books” (Davis 2012, 24–25)).<sup>54</sup>

84–90 \*pseudo-Jerome, *Tractatus sive homiliae in psalmos*, Ps. 95.2 *Annuntiate de die in diem salutare ejus* (Morin and Fraipont 1958, 151, ll. 75–78; 152, ll. 95–101): “Nolite eum tantum laudare in ueteri testamento, ne sitis Iudaei; nolite eum tantum laudare in nouo testamento, ne sitis Manichaei. Laudate illum diem de die, hoc est, in ueteri et in nouo testament . . . Quia scriptum est: ‘Adnuntiate diem de die salutare eius.’ Propterea et apostoli bini mittuntur, propterea non habemus unum oculum sed duos, propterea duas habemus aures, propterea duas nares, propterea duo labia, propterea duas manus, duos pedes . . . et corporis nostri membra duorum testamentorum sacramenta testantur” (“Do not praise Him only with the Old Testament, you are not Jews; do not praise him only with the New Testament, you are not Manichæans. Praise Him from day to day, that is, in the Old and in the New Testament . . . Because it is written: ‘Shew forth His salvation from day to day.’ For this reason, moreover, the apostles are sent two by two. For this reason, we do not have one eye but two, for this reason, we have two ears, for this reason, two nostrils, for this reason, two lips, for this reason, two hands, and two feet . . . And the parts of our body testify to the mysteries of the two Testaments”).

Augustine *De diversis quaestionibus octaginta tribus*, Qu. 68 (Mutzenbecher 1975, 174, ll. 9–15): “autem haeretici . . . adversantes legi . . . etiam hoc inter ipsa quae interpolata dicunt numerare maluerunt et negare Paulum dixisse O homo, tu quis es, qui respondeas deo?” (“Some heretics . . . enemies of the law . . . have preferred to count even this among the things which they say are interpolated, and to deny that Paul had said: ‘O man, who are you to answer back to God?’” (Mosher 2002, 158–59)).<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Similar remarks on the absurdity of word for word translation are to be found in the preface to his translation of Eusebius (Fremantle 1893, 483–84).

<sup>55</sup> Mosher identifies these heretics, as in the *Tractatus*, as the Manicheans.

92–93 \*Jerome *Epistulae Ad Oceanum* (no 69.5) (Hilberg 1996, 54, 687, ll. 6–7): “ne tibi soli liceat, non uoluntatem legi, sed legem iungere uoluntati” (“It is not permitted for you alone to bend the law to your will, but rather (for you to bend) your will to the Law”).<sup>56</sup>

Benedict, *Regula*, chap. 7, De humilitate (Logeman 1888, 29–30): “Voluntatem vero propriam ita facere prohibemur cum dicit scriptura nobis: Et a voluntatibus tuis auertere. Et item rogemus deum in oratione ut fiat illius uoluntas in nobis” (“We are forbidden to do our own will, since Scripture tells us, ‘Leave thy own will and desire’. And again, ‘We beg of God in prayer that His will may be done in us’” (Gasquet 1936, 28–29)).

96–97 *Confessionale Pseudo-Egberti*, section I. a. (Spindler 1934, 171, ll. 26–27): “Ðonne byð þe God hold and milde and bliðe; and ðu most mid him þonne rixian in ealra worulda woruld a butan ende”<sup>57</sup> (“God will then be gracious to you, and mild and merciful; and you may then share with him forever without end”).

## Parallel Passages in Ælfric

Capitalisation in the OE quotations follows that in the editions from which the quotations are taken. The translations consistently follow the same style of capitalisation.

*Salutatio The Lives of the Saints*, Preface (Skeat 1881–5, 1. 4): “Ælfric gret eadmodlice Æðelwerd ealdorman and ic secge þe, leof, þæt ic . . .” (“Ælfric humbly greets Earl Æthelwerd and I say to you, sir, that I . . .”).

7–9 *The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*,<sup>58</sup> section 8a (Fehr 1914, 72): “Tria enim sunt tempora huius sæculi: ante legem, tempore patriarcharum, sub lege, tempore profetarum, sub gratia, tempore Christiannorum, post Christi aduentum in carne.’ Ðry timan sind getealde on þissere worlde: An tima wæs ær Godes æ, on þara heahfædera timan, þa ieo wæron. Oþer under Godes lage, on Moyses and on ðare witegena timan. Ðridde under Cristes agenre gife on cristenan tidan, æfter Cristes tocyme.” (“Three periods are counted in (the history of) this world: the first period was before God’s law, in the time of the patriarchs who lived long ago. The second was under God’s law, in the time of Moses and the prophets. The third (is) under Christ’s own grace in the Christian period, after the coming of Christ”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The Second Series*, XII Dominica in Media Quadragesime (Godden 1979, 110): “Þry timan sind on þyssere worulde: ‘Ante

<sup>56</sup> I am very grateful to Ralph Hanna for identifying this source for me (private correspondence, 25.1.2001).

<sup>57</sup> On Ælfric’s use of this text elsewhere, see Jones 1995.

<sup>58</sup> The letters for Wulfstan were first written in Latin and subsequently translated into English with some revisions.

legem, Sub lege, Sub gratia;’ Þæt is ær æ, under æ, under godes gife. Se tima is ‘ær æ’ gecweden þe wæs fram Adam buton æ oð Moysen, ða gesette God æ ðurh Moysen; and se tima wæs gecweden ‘under æ’ oð cristes tocyme on menniscnysse; Ða awende crist ða ealdan æ to gastlicere getacnunge. Nu is se tima fram cristes ðrowunge gehaten ‘under godes gife’” (There are three eras of this world: ‘Ante legem, Sub lege, Sub gratia;’ that is before the law, under the law, under God’s grace. The period is called ‘before the law’ which was without law from Adam to Moses, then God established the law through Moses; and that period was called ‘under the law’ until Christ’s incarnation; then Christ turned the old law to a spiritual significance. Now the period from Christ’s passion is called ‘under God’s grace’”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The Second Series, Dominica IX post Pentecosten* (Godden 1979, 237): “Þa ðreo gear getacnodon ðry timan ðissere worulde: ‘Ante legem, Sub lege, Sub gratia,’ þæt is, ær æ, under æ, under godes gife. Se tima is agan þe wæs ær moyses æ, and se tima is agan ðe wæs under moyses æ, se tima stent gyt ðe is under godes gife, þæt is fram cristes tocyme on menniscnysse oð þyssere worulde geendunge” (“The three years signified three periods of this world: ‘Ante legem, Sub lege, Sub gratia,’ that is, before the law, under the law, under God’s grace. The time before Moses’ law has gone, and the time is gone which was under Moses’ law, (but) the time which is under God’s grace still continues, that is from the incarnation of Christ until the ending of this world”).

12–13 *The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 19 (Fehr 1914, 78): “Ge sceolan witan, gif ge wisdom lufiað, hwæt sy betwux þam twam gecyðnyssum, þære ealdan æ, ær Cristes to-cyme, and þære niwan gecyðnysse, under Cristes gife” (“You must understand, if you love wisdom, the difference between the two testaments, the Old Law, before Christ’s coming, and the New Testament, under the grace of Christ”).

16–18 *The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 19 (Fehr 1914, 78): “. . . men moston ær Moyses æ mislice libban, and under Moyses æ mancyn lifode on oþre wisan. On oþre we sceolan don be ures drihtnes lare” (“. . . men were allowed to live variously before the law of Moses, and mankind lived in another fashion under the law of Moses. We must act in another way according to the teaching of our lord”).

*The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 151 (Fehr 1914, 122): “And se-þe nu hilt þa ealdan æ æfter Cristes tocyme on þa ealdan wisan, he bið amansumod, Canones us tæcað” (“And Canon law teaches us that he who now holds the Old Law in the old fashion after Christ’s advent is excommunicated”).

24–30 *The Letter for Wulfsige*, section 17 (Fehr 1914, 5): “Nu cweðað oft preostas þæt Petrus hæfde wif. Ful soð hy secgað, for-þam-þe he swa moste þa, on þære ealdan æ, ærþan-þe he to Criste gebuge. Ac he forlet his wif and ealle woruldþing, syððan he to Criste beah, þe ða clænnysse astealde” (“Now priests

often say that Peter had a wife. What they say is very true, because he was so permitted then, under the Old Law, before he submitted to Christ. But he left his wife and all worldly things once he submitted to Christ, who instituted chastity”).

*The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 84 (Fehr 1914, 102–4): “Ge secgað for oft, þæt Petrus, se apostol, hæfde wif and cild; and we eac secgað þæt he swa hæfde, and sume þa oþre þe þam hælende folgodan hæfde wif and cild ær hyra gecyrrednysse; ac hi geswycon þæs, sybþan hi coman to Cristes lareowdome, and hyra æhta forleton and ealle woruld-þing” (“You often make the charge that Peter, the apostle, had a wife and children; and we also say that he did so, and some others who followed the Saviour had wives and children before their conversion; but they ceased from that when they accepted Christ’s instruction and abandoned their possessions and all worldly things”).

*The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, sections 147 and 150 (Fehr 1914, 122): “Nu mæg eaþe getimian þæt eower sum ahsige, hwi he ne mote wif habban, swa swa Aaron hæfde . . . Nu is seo ealde æ eall awend on oþer to gastlican þingum, and Godes þenas sceolon healdan hyra clænnysse, swa-swa Crist hit astealde” (“Now it can easily happen that one of you asks why he may not have a wife as Aaron had . . . Now the Old Law has been wholly turned towards spiritual things, and God’s servants must maintain their chastity, just as Christ established it”).

30–33 *The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 8 (Fehr 1914, 72): “Forþan-þe ge [i.e. preostas] synd gesette soðlice to lareowum ofer Godes folce, þæt ge hig Gode gestrynan” (“For you [priests] are rightly appointed as teachers over God’s people, so that you may gain them for God”).

40–51 *Alcuin’s Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, question 22 (Stoneman 1982, 121–23): “Hu is to understandenne on anginne gesceop God heofenan and eorðan? Þæt angin is Crist, Godes Sunu, swa [swa] he sylf cwæð on his godspelle to þam Iudeiscum, þa þa hi axodon hwæt he wære. He cwæð: ‘Ic eom angin þe to eow sprece’. Þurh þæt angin, þæt is þurh þone Sunu, gesceop se Fæder ærest þæt antimber of nahte, of þam þe he sybþan heofonan and eorðan geworhte. Hu is to understandenne þæt se Godes Gast wæs gefeod ofer wæteru? Ne ferde Godes Gast woriende ofer þa wæteru, ac þurh his mihte and wissungenne to gescyppenne and to geliffæstenne þæt ungehiwode antimber” (“How is in the beginning God created heaven and earth to be understood? The beginning is Christ, the Son of God, just as he himself said in his gospel to the Jews, when they asked him who he was. He said: ‘I who speak to you am the beginning’. Through the beginning, that is through the Son, the Father first shaped matter from nothing, from which he afterwards wrought heaven and earth. How is it to be understood that God’s spirit was carried over the waters? God’s Spirit did not set out wanderingly over the waters, but rather through his might and guidance to shape and bring to life that formless matter”).

*Alcuin's Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, question 69 (Stoneman 1982, 236–37): “Se ælmihtiga fæder . . . þurh hine gesceop ealle þa gesceafta þe gesceapene syndon. Forþam þe he is wisdom of þam wisan fæder . . . 7 he ealle þing geliffæste þurh þone lyfigendan gast” (“The almighty Father . . . through him (the Son) created all the creatures which are created. Because he is the wisdom from the wise Father . . . and he brought all things to life through the living spirit”).

*Exameron Anglice* (Crawford 1921, 35–38): “In principio creauit Deus celum et terram.’ Ðæt is on Englisc: ‘God ælmihtig gesceop ærest on anginne heofonan and eorðan’ . . . and ðæt angin is ðæs ælmihtigan Godes sunu, on gastlicum andgite, swa swa ðæt godspell us segð: ‘Ego principium qui et loquor uobis’. Ðis cwæð se Hælend on his halgan godspelle: ‘Ic sylf eom angin ðe eow to sprece.’ He sylf is soð anginn of ðam soðan anginne, and he is soð wisdom of ðam wisan Fæder . . . and he hi ealle geliffæste on ðam life ðe hi habbað ðurh ðone Halgan Gast ðe gæð of ðam Fæder” (“In principio creauit Deus celum et terram.’ that is in English, ‘in the beginning God first created heaven and earth’ . . . and the beginning in the spiritual sense is the son of the almighty God as the gospel tells us: ‘Ego principium qui et loquor uobis.’ The Saviour said this in his holy gospel: ‘I myself who speak to you am the beginning.’ He himself is the true beginning from the true beginning, and he is true wisdom from the wise Father . . . and he brought them all into the life which they possess through the Holy Ghost who proceeds from the Father”).

*Treatise on the Old and New Testament* (Marsden 2008, 202): “. . . se micla wisdom of þam wisan fæder æfre of him anum butan anginne acenned . . . [and] se halga gast, þe ealle þing geliffæst” (“. . . the great Wisdom from the wise Father, eternally begotten without beginning from him alone . . . [and] the Holy Ghost, who brought all things to life”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The First Series, De Initio Creaturæ* (Clemoes 1997, 179): “He gesceop gesceafta þa ða he wolde; þurh his wisdom he geworhte ealle þing, 7 þurh his willan he hi ealle geliffæste. Þeos þrynnes is an god: þæt is se fæder, 7 his wisdom of him sylfum æfre acenned” (“He created creation when he wished to; through his wisdom he wrought all things, and through his will he brought them all to life. This Trinity is one God: that is the Father, and his wisdom, eternally begotten from himself”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The First Series, VIII Kalendas Ianuarii Nativitas Domini* (Clemoes 1997, 195–96): “. . . 7 þæt word, þæt is se wisdom, is acenned of ðam ælmihtigum fæder butan anginne. For ðan þe he wæs æfre god of gode, wisdom of ðam wisan fæder . . . Ac se ælmihtiga fæder gesceop þurh ðone wisdom ealle gesceafta, 7 hi ealle þurh ðone halgan gast geliffæste” (“. . . and the word, which is the wisdom, is begotten of the almighty Father without beginning. For he was always God of God, wisdom from the wise Father . . . But the almighty

Father shaped all creation through that wisdom and brought them all to life through the Holy Ghost”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The First Series*, Feria III De Fide Catholica (Clemoes 1997, 337): “Hwæt is se sunu? He is þæs fæder wisdom . . . þurh ðone se fæder gesceop ealle þing . . . Nis se sunu na geworht ne gesceapen ac he is acenned” (“What is the Son? He is the wisdom of the Father . . . through whom the Father created all things . . . The Son is not made nor created, but he is begotten”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The First Series*, Dominica XVII Post Pentecosten (Clemoes 1997, 463): “Se sunu is þæs fæder wisdom æfre of þam fæder acenned” (“The Son is the wisdom of the Father, eternally begotten of the Father”).

*Homilies of Ælfric*, VIII Kalendas Ianuarii Nativitas Domini (Pope 1967–68, 199–200): “Se soðfæsta godspellere us sæde þurh God þæt þæt Word wæs on anginne mid þam ælmihtigan Gode: On anginne wæs þæt Word: 7 þæt angin is se Fæder, mid þam wæs þæt Word wunigen, 7 þæt Word is anginn, swa swa he eft sæde, ‘Ego principium qui et loquor uobis:’ Ic sylf eom anginn, ic ðe to eow sprece.’ Be þam awrat Moyses se mæra heretoga, ‘In principio fecit Deus celum et terram:’ ‘God geworhte on anginne heofenan 7 eorðan,’ 7 þæt anginn is his ancenneda Sunu, þurh þone he gesceop ealle gesceafta 7 hi ealle geliffæste þurh þone lyfiendan Gast: hi þry syndon an anginn 7 an ælmihtig God” (“The true Evangelist told us through God that in the beginning the Word was with the almighty God: ‘In the beginning was the word:’ and that beginning is the Father, with whom the Word abided, and the Word is the beginning, just as he afterwards said, ‘Ego principium qui et loquor uobis:’ ‘I myself am the beginning, I who speak to you.’ Of that Moses, the famous leader, wrote, ‘In principio fecit Deus celum et terram:’ ‘God wrought heaven and earth in the beginning,’ and that beginning is his only-begotten Son, through whom he created all creation and brought them all to life through the living Spirit: these three are one beginning and one almighty God”).

*Homilies of Ælfric*, Feria VI In Quarta Ebdomada Quadragesimæ (Pope 1967–68, 1. 323): “Se wisa Fæder witodlice gesceop and geworhte ðurh his halgan Wisdom, þe his Sunu is, ealle gesceafta; and he hi soðlice geliffæste þurh ðone Halgan Gast” (“The wise Father undoubtedly shaped and wrought all creation through his holy Wisdom, who is his Son; and he truly brought them to life through the Holy Ghost”).

*The Lives of the Saints*, UIII Kalendas Ianuarii Natiuitas Domini Nostri Iesu Christi (Skeat 1881–85, 1. 10–14): (10, ll. 9–11) “Þa iudeiscan axodon Crist hwæt he wære. Ða andwyrde he him þus: ‘Ego sum principium qui et loquor uobis,’ ‘Ic eom anginn, þe eow to spræce’ . . . (12, ll. 34–6) and se sunu is angin, æfre of þam fæder acenned . . . forðan þe se sunu is þæs fæder wisdom . . . (14, ll. 74–5) Swa eac þæs ælmihtigan godes sunu is æfre of þam fæder acenned” (“The Jews asked Christ who he was. Then he answered them thus: ‘Ego sum principium qui et

loquor uobis,' 'I who speak to you am the beginning' . . . and the Son is the beginning, eternally begotten of the Father . . . for the Son is the wisdom of the Father . . . so also the Son of almighty God is eternally begotten of the Father").

*The Letter for Wulfgeat* (Assmann 1889, 1–2): "Se ælmihtiga god . . . gesceop ealle þing gesewenlice and ungesewenlice þurh his soðan wisdom. And se wisdom is witodlice his sunu, ure hælend crist . . . And [se halga gast] ealra manna synna þurh his mihte forgyfð, þam ðe mid dædbote doð geswicennysse . . . And þurh þone gast syndon soðlice geliffæste ealle þa gesceafta þe se fæder gesceop þurh his ancennedan sunu" ("The almighty God . . . created all things visible and invisible through his true wisdom. And the wisdom is undoubtedly his Son, our Saviour Christ . . . And [the holy ghost] through his power forgives the sins of all those men who repent with penitence . . . And through the spirit all those creatures are truly brought to life which the Father created through his only begotten Son").

50–52 *The Catholic Homilies, The First Series*, XXXIII Dominica XVII Post Pentecosten (Clemoes 1997, 464): "[Se þe] forsihð þa forgyfenysse þe stent on þæs halgan gastes gife, ðonne bið his scyld unalysendlic" ("[He who] despises the forgiveness which is granted by the Holy Ghost, then his sin is unforgivable").

*Homilies of Ælfric*, FERIA VI In Quarta Ebdomada Quadragesimæ (Pope 1967–68, 1. 322 and 324): "ac se ðe be ðam Halgan Gaste hosp gecwyð oððe tal, ðonne byð his synn æfre endeless . . . Se mann cwyð hosp and tal ongean ðone Halgan Gast se ðe næfre ne geswicð synna to wyrccenne, and wunað on his yfele oð ende his lifes, and forsyhð þa forgyfenesse ðæs soðfæstan Gastes" ("but the sin of he who blasphemes by the Holy Ghost is endless . . . he who never ceases acting sinfully and persists in his evil to the end of his life and disdains the forgiveness of the true Spirit blasphemes against the Holy Ghost").

52–56 *Alcuin's Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, question 26 (Stoneman 1982, 129): "Hwi is gecweden þæt God cwæde 'Uton wyrcan mannan to ure anlicness[e]?' Forþi is gecweden 'Uton wyrcan': þæt wære geswutelod þære halgan þrynnysse weorc on annysse. Seo halige þrynnys is undergiten on þam worde 'Uton wyrcan', and seo soðe annys is understandan on þam worde 'to ure anlicnysse'" ("Why is it said that God said, 'Let us make man in our likeness?' For this reason, it is said 'Let us make': so that the work of the holy Trinity would be revealed in its unity. The holy Trinity is perceived in the statement 'Let us make', and the true oneness is understood in the statement 'in our likeness'").

*Exameron Anglice* (Crawford 1921, 58–59): "Her ge magon gehyran ða Halgan Þrynnysse and soðe annysse anre godcundnysse. 'Uton wyrcan mannan'—ðær is seo Halige Þrynnys, 'to ure anlicnysse'—ðær is seo annys: to anre anlicnysse, na to ðrim anlicnyssum" ("At this point you can hear the Holy Trinity and the true unity of the one godhead. 'Let us make man'—there is the Holy Trinity, 'in our likeness'—there is the unity: in one likeness, not three likenesses").

56–57 *The Catholic Homilies, The Second Series*, Dominica V In Quadragesima (Godden 1979, 133): “Abraham se heahfæder underfeng þry englas on his gesthuse on hiwe ðære halgan ðrynnysse to ðam he spræc swa swa to anum” (“Abraham the patriarch received three angels in his guesthouse in the form of the holy Trinity to whom he spoke just as to one”).

58–59 *Alcuin's Interrogationes Sigewulfi*, question 44 (Stoneman 1982, 174): “Hu clypode seo stemn Abeles blodes to Gode? Heo clypode swa þæt Caines gylt wearð æteowod on Godes gesihðe, 7 gehwilces mannes dæda clypiað to Gode, and hine gewreg[a]ð oþþe gepingiað, þonne God hi gesihð, swa gode, swa yfele” (“How did Abel's blood cry out to God? It cried so that Cain's guilt was revealed in God's sight and the deeds of each man cry out to God and accuse him or intercede for him, when God sees them, whether good or evil”).

63–66 *The Catholic Homilies, The Second Series*, XII Dominica in Media Quadragesime (Godden 1979): “. . . and he sylf het moysen him gewyrcan an geteld mid wunderlicum dihte gefadod on menigfealdre getacnunge” (114) and “. . . Þæt miccle geteld þe god mid menigfealdum cræfte gedihte hæfde getacnunge þære halgan gelaðunge ðe crist ðurh his tocyme astealde and þurh his apostolas and lareowas getimbrode. On ðisum getelde wæron menigfealde fahnyssa and fornean unasecgendlice frætwunga. Swa beoð eac on godes gelaðunge menigfealde fægernysa ðurh godra manna drohtnunge þe ðæs ecan lifes eallunge gewilniað” (119) (“. . . and he himself ordered Moses to construct a tabernacle for him disposed with marvellous design with multiple meaning” and “. . . The great tabernacle which God designed with manifold skill signified the holy church which Christ founded through his coming and built through his apostles and teachers. In this tabernacle were many colours and almost indescribable ornaments. So also, in God's church there are many fair things through the virtuous conduct of good men who entirely desire eternal life”).

68–71 *The Catholic Homilies, The Second Series*, XL In Dedicatione Ecclesiae (Godden 1979, 342): “Ðurh þæt gold we understandað geleafan and god ingehygd; þurh þæt seolfor rihtlice spræce and getingnysse on godes lare; þurh ða deorwurðan gymstanas halige mihta” (“By the gold we understand faith and good intention; by the silver, rightful speech and conviction in God's teaching; by the precious gems, holy virtues”).

72–73 *The First Old English Letter for Wulfstan*, section 124 (Fehr 1914, 114): “Ac se Aaron sceolde and þa ealdan bisceopas geoffrian Gode on þa ealdan wisan fearras and rammes and buccan and lambru and gehwylcu nytenu” (“But Aaron and the bishops of old had to sacrifice to God in the old manner bulls and rams and goats and lambs and all kinds of cattle”).

78–79 *Treatise on the Old and New Testament* (Marsden 2008, 204): “We nymað of þam bocum þas endebyrdnesse, þe Moises awrat, se mæra heretoga, swa swa him God silf dihte on heora sunderspræce” (“We will follow the order of

the books which Moses, the great commander, wrote, as God himself directed in their private conversation”).

84–85 *The Catholic Homilies, The First Series*, VIII Idvs Ianuarii Epiphania Domini (Clemoes 1997, 235): “Us is eac to witenne þæt wæron sume gedwolmen þe . . .” (“It is also known to us that there were certain heretics who. . .”).

94–95 The Prayer appended to *The Catholic Homilies, The Second Series* (Godden 1979, 345): “Ic cweðe nu þæt ic næfre heononforð ne awende godspel oþpe godspeltrahtas of ledene on englisc” (“I state now that henceforth I will never translate the gospel or gospel commentaries from Latin into English”).

98–101 *Ælfric’s Grammar*, Praefatio (Zupitza 1880, 3): “Ic bidde nu on godes naman, gyf hwa ðas boc awritan wylle, þæt he hi gerihte wel be ðære bysne, forðan ðe ic nah geweald, þeah hi hwa to woge gebringe þurh lease writeras, and hit bið ðonne his pleoh, na min. Micel yfel deð se unwritere, gyf he nele his woh gerihtan” (“I ask now in God’s name, if someone wishes to copy this book, that he should correct it well by the exemplar, because I do not have the power, should someone bring it into error through incompetent copyists, and it will then be his responsibility, not mine. The bad writer does great harm if he refuses to correct his error”).

*The Catholic Homilies, The First Series*, Praefatio (Clemoes 1997, 177): “Nu bydde ic 7 halsige on godes naman, gif hwa þas boc awritan wylle, þæt he hi geornlice gerihte be ðære bysene, þy læs ðe we ðurh gymelease writeras geleahtrode beon. Mycel yfel deð se ðe leas writ, buton he hit gerihte, swylce he gebringe þa soðan lare to leasum gedwylde; for ði sceal gehwa gerihtlæcan þæt þæt he ær to woge gebigde, gif he on godes dome unscyldig beon wile” (“Now I ask and pray in God’s name, if someone wishes to copy this book, that he should correct it diligently by the exemplar, lest I be blamed through (his use of) careless scribes. He who copies badly does great harm, unless he should correct it, as though he should bring true doctrine to false heresy; everyone ought to rectify, therefore, what he previously brought into error, if he wishes to be guiltless in God’s judgement”).<sup>59</sup>

*The Lives of the Saints*, Praefatio (Skeat 1881–85, 1.6): “Ic bidde nu on godes naman, gif hwa þas boc awritan wille, þæt he hi wel gerihte be þære bysne and þær namare betwux ne sette þonne we awendon” (“I ask now, in God’s name, if someone wishes to copy this book that he should correct it well by the exemplar and set down there no more than we have translated”).

*Treatise on the Old and New Testament* (Marsden 2008, 230): “Locahwa ðas boc awrite, write hig be þære bysne and, for Godes lufon, hi gerihte, þæt heo to leas ne beo, þam writere to plihthe and me to tale” (“May whoever copies this book

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<sup>59</sup> This injunction is repeated in the preface to the Second Series of *Catholic Homilies*, see Wilcox, (1994, 112).

do so according to the exemplar and, for the love of God, correct it, so that it is not brought into error to the discredit of the scribe and my disgrace”).

## Text with Intertextual Relations displayed

The presentation of the text here, based on the above lists, displays the preface's true character as a masterpiece of controlled intertextual reference and play. Bold face indicates the biblical quotations and allusions. Italics indicate the parts with direct sources, or close analogues, in patristics and canon law. Underlined are those parts with close parallels elsewhere in Ælfric's corpus. Very few sentences are devoid of any allusion, quotation or parallel. Biblical quotations and patristic borrowings dominate the *exordium* and *narratio*. Almost every word of the *narratio* finds one or more sources in the Bible or in patristics and the skill of the author lies not in *inventio*, but, rather, *dispositio*: given the number and range of these sources, the author's adaptation of the material to the new context, his coherent ordering of it all and his expression of it in his own style is remarkable. Nearly all the *salutatio*, *petitio* and *conclusio* have close parallels elsewhere in Ælfric's prefaces and end pieces. Only the opening history in the *exordium* of the correspondence between translator and patron is unparalleled and appears to be new writing.

### INCIPIT PREFATIO GENESIS ANGLICE

ÆLFRIC MUNUC GRET ÆDELWÆRD EALDORMANN eadmodlice.

Þu bæde me, leof, þæt ic sceolde ðe awendan of Lydene on Englisc þa boc Genesis. Ða þuhte me hefigtime þe to tīpienne þæs, and þu cwæde þa þæt ic ne þorfte na mare awendan þære bec buton to Isaace, Abrahames suna, for þam þe sum oðer man þe hæfde awend fram Isaace þa boc oþ ende. Nu þincð me, leof, þæt þæt weorc is swiðe pleolic me oððe ænigum men to underbeginne, for þan þe ic ondræde, gif sum dysig man ðas boc ræt oððe rædan gehyrþ, þæt he wille wenan þæt he mote lybban nu on þære niwan æ swa swa þa ealdan fæderas leofodon þa on þære tide ær þan þe seo ealde æ gesett wære, oþþe swa swa men leofodon under Moyses æ. Hwilon ic wiste þæt sum mæssepreost, se þe min magister wæs on þam timan, hæfde þa boc Genesis, and he cuðe be dæle Lyden understandan; þa cwæþ he be **þam heahfædere Iacobe, þæt he hæfde feower wif—twa geswustra and heora twa þinena.** *Ful soð he sæde, ac he nyste, ne ic þa git, hu micel todal ys betweohx þære ealdan æ and þære niwan.* On anginne þisere worulde nam se broþer hys swuster to wife, and hwilon eac se fæder tymde be his agenre dehter, and manega hæfdon ma wifa to folces eacan. And man ne mihte þa æt fruman wifian buton on his siblingum. Gyf hwa wyle nu swa lybban æfter Cristes tocyme swa swa men leofodon ær Moises æ oþþe under Moises æ, ne byð se man na cristen, ne he furþon wyrðe ne byð þæt him ænig cristen man mid ete. Ða

ungelæredan preostas, gif hi hwæt lites understandað of þam Lydenbocum, þonne þingð him sona þæt hi magon mære lareowas beon; ac hi ne cunnon swa þeah þæt gastlice andgit þærto, and hu seo ealde æ wæs getacnung toweardra þinga, oþþe hu seo niwe gecyþnis æfter Cristes menniscnisse wæs gefillednys ealra þæra þinga þe seo ealde gecyðnis getacnode towearde be Criste and be hys gecorenum. Hi cwæpab eac oft be Petre, hwi hi ne moton habban wif swa swa Petrus se apostol hæfde, and hi nellað gehiran ne witan þæt se eadiga Petrus leofede æfter Moises æ oþ þæt Crist, þe on þam timan to mannum com, began to bodienne his halige godspel and **geceas Petrum ærest him to geferan: þa forlet Petrus þærrihte his wif, and ealle þa twelf apostolas, þa þe wif hæfdon, forleton ægber ge wif ge æhta, and folgodon Cristes lare to þære niwan æ and clænnisse þe he silf þa arærde. Preostas sindon gesette to lareowum þam læwedum folce.** Nu gedafnode him þæt hig cupon þa ealdan æ gastlice understandan and hwæt Crist silf tæhte and his apostolas on þære niwan gecyðnisse, þæt hig mihton þam folce wel wissian to Godes geleafan and wel bisnian to godum weorcum.

We secgað eac foran to þæt seo boc is swiþe deop gastlice to understandenne, and we ne writap na mare buton þa nacedan gerecednisse. Þonne þincþ þam ungelæredum þæt eall þæt andgit beo belocen on þære anfealdan gerecednisse; ac hit ys swiþe feor þam. Seo boc ys gehaten Genesis, þæt ys “Gecyndboc” for þam þe heo ys firmest boca and **spricþ be ælcum gecinde**—ac heo ne spricð na **be þæra engla gesceapenisse**. Heo onginð þus: “In principio creauit Deus celum et terram,” þæt ys on Englisc, “on annginne gesceop God heofenan and eorþan.” Hit wæs soðlice swa gedon, þæt God ælmihtig geworhte on anginne, þa þa he wolde, gesceafta. Ac swa þeah, æfter gastlicum andgite, þæt anginn ys Crist, swa swa he sylf cwæp to þam Iudeiscum: “Ic eom angin, þe to eow sprece.” Purh þis angin worhte God fæder heofenan and eorþan, for þan þe **he gesceop ealle gesceafta purh þone sunu, se þe wæs æfre of him accenned, wisdom of þam wisan fæder.** Eft stynt on þære bec on þam forman ferse, “Et spiritus dei ferebatur super aquas,” þæt is on Englisc, “and Godes gast wæs geferod ofer wæteru.” Godes gast ys se halga gast, purh þone geliffæste se fæder ealle þa gesceafta þe he gesceop purh þone sunu, and se halga gast færþ geond manna heortan and **silð us synna forgifenisse**, ærest purh wæter on þam fulluhte, and siþþan purh dætbote. **And gif hwa forsihð þa forgifenisse þe se Halga Gast sylþ, þonne biþ his synn æfre unmyltsiendlic on ecnysse.** Oft ys seo halige þrinnys geswutelod on þisre bec, swa swa ys on þam worde þe God cwæp: “uton wircean mannan to ure anlicnisse.” Mid þam þe he cwæð, “uton wircean,” ys seo þrinnis gebicnod; mid þam þe he cwæð, “to ure anlicnisse,” ys seo soðe annis geswutelod. He ne cwæð na menifealdlice “to urum anlicnissum,” ac andfealdlice “to ure anlicnisse.” Eft comon þri englas to Abrahame and he spræc to him eallon þrim swa swa to anum.

**Hu clipode Abeles blod to Gode buton swa swa ælces mannes misdæda wregap hine to Gode butan wordum?** Be þisum litlum, man mæg understandan hu deop seo boc ys on gastlicum andgite, þeah þe heo mid leohtlicum wordum awriten sig. **Eft Iosep, þe wæs gesæld to Egipta lande and he ahredde þæt folc wið þone miclan hunger,** hæfde Cristes getacnunge þe wæs geseald for us to cwale and us ahredde fram þam ecan hungre helle susle. **Ðæt micle geteld þe Moises worhte mid**

wunderlicum cræfte on þam westene, swa swa him God sylf gedihte, hæfde getacnunge Godes gelapunge þe he silf astealde þurh his apostolas mid menigfældum frætewum and fægerum þeawum. To þam geweorce brohte þæt folc gold and seolfor and deorwirþe gimstanas and menigfælde mærpā; sume eac brohton gatehær, swa swa God behead. Ðæt gold getacnode urne geleafan and ure gode ingehid þe we Gode offrian sceolon; þæt seolfor getacnode Godes spræca and þa halgan lara þe we habban sceolon to Godes weorcum. Ða gimstanas getacnodon mislice fægernissa on Godes mannum. Ðæt gatehær getacnode þa stiþan dædbote þæra manna þe heora sinna behreowsiað. **Man offrode eac fela cinna orf Gode to lace binnan þam getelde**, be þam ys swiþe menigfeald getacnung; **and wæs beboden þæt se tægel sceolde beon gehal æfre on þam nytene æt þære offrunge** for þære getacnunge þæt God wile þæt we simle wel don oþ ende ures lifes: þonne biþ se tægel geoffrod on urum weorcum.

Nu is seo foresæde boc on manegum stowum swiþe nærollice gesett, and þeah swiðe deoplice on þam gastlicum andgite, and heo is swa geendebyrd swa swa God silf hig gedihte þam writere Moise, and we ne durren na mare awritan on Englisc þonne þæt Liden hæfþ, ne þa endebirdnisse awendan buton þam anum, þæt þæt Leden and þæt Englisc nabbað na ane wisan on þære spræce fandunge. Æfre se þe awent oþþe se þe tæcþ of Ledene on Englisc, æfre he sceal gefadian hit swa þæt þæt Englisc hæbbe his agene wisan, elles hit biþ swiþe gedwolsum to rædenne þam þe þæs Ledenes wisan ne can. Is eac to witanne þæt sume gedwolmen wæron þe woldon awurpan þa ealdan æ, and sume woldon habban þa ealdan and awurpan þa niwan, swa swa þa Iudeiscan doð. Ac Crist sylf and his apostolas us tæhton ægþer to healdenne þa ealdan gastlice and þa niwan soþlice mid weorcum. God gesceop us twa eagan and twa earan, twa nosþirlu and twegen weleras, twa handa and twegen fet, and he wolde eac habban twa gecyðnissa on þissere worulde geset, þa ealdan and þa niwan, **for þam þe he deþ swa swa hine silfne gewyrð, and he nænne rædboran næfð, ne nan man ne þearf him cweþan to: “hwi dest þu swa?”** We sceolon awendan urne willan to his gesetnissum and we ne magon gebigean his gesetnissa to urum lustum.

Ic cwepe nu þæt ic ne dearr ne ic nelle nane boc æfter þissere of Ledene on Englisc awendan, and ic bidde þe, leof ealdorman, þæt þu me þæs na leng ne bidde, þi læs þe ic beo þe ungehirsum oþþe leas gif ic do. God þe sig milde a on ecnisse.

Ic bidde nu on Godes naman, gif hwa þas boc awritan wylle, þæt he hig gerihte wel be þære bysne, for þan þe ic nah geweald, þeah þe hig hwa to wo gebringe þurh lease writeras, and hit byð þonne his pleoh na min. Mycel yfel deð se unwritere, gif he nele hys woh gerihtan.

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