

Virtue, Liberty, and Independence

The purpose of this blog is to inform readers of the profound positive influence of Christianity upon our history, culture, and heritage. As a Christian and a Pennsylvanian; I desire to illuminate the principles which Christians have made to fulfill the state motto.



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2009

King Alfred's Book of Dooms (Judgments)

American law was established upon English common law.

King Alfred's code, or Alfred's Dooms as it was called, begins with an almost literal transcript of the Decalogue. The only variation is that the second commandment is omitted from its rightful place. The second commandment stands at the tenth. Immediately following the Ten Commandments are selections from the Mosaic code; primarily from the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd chapters of Exodus. They are very slightly modified.

Please understand that King Alfred is spoken of as the "**Father of English Common law**" for he created the first written code of English common law.

The ancient British historians declare that English common law began as far back in antiquity as 1100 B.C. It was codified by Brutus (Brute) of Troy grandson of Aeneas descendant of Judah – Zarah. The law was codified in 500 B.C. by Malmutius and codified again by the Saxon lawgiver King Alfred the Great.

Alfred, renowned Saxon lawgiver and administration place Divine origin in the forefront of Saxon law. The following excerpts are from "Alfred the Great" who proclaims the Law of Moses as the foundation of Anglo – Saxon law and administration.

I have contrasted the appropriate selections of Mosaic law with King Alfred's book of dooms".

The King's Laws

Exodus 21:

- 1.) *Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.*
- 2.) *If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve; and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.*
- 3.) *If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.*
- 4.) *If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out by himself.*
- 5.) *And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out free.*

Blog Archive

- ▶ 2007 (6)
- ▶ 2008 (46)
- ▼ 2009 (23)
 - ▶ August (8)
 - ▼ September (9)
 - [The Declaration of Independence](#)
 - [King Alfred's Book of Dooms \(Judgments\)](#)
 - [The 1797 Treaty of Tripoli](#)
 - [Philosophic Basis of the 1st Amendment](#)
 - [The Separation of Church and State](#)
 - [Chronology of 1st Amendment Debate](#)
 - [Separation: Examination of the Record](#)
 - [European Enlightenment - not a Primary Influence](#)
 - [The Creature from Jekyll Island](#)
 - ▶ November (6)
- ▶ 2010 (37)
- ▶ 2011 (42)

About Me



[CITY-ON-A-HILL](#)

[View my complete profile](#)

6.) *Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever.*

Alfred's dooms:

11.) *These are the dooms that thou shall set them: If anyone buy a Christian bondsman be he bondsman to him six years, the seventh be he free unbought. With such clothes as he went in, with such go he out. If he himself have a wife, go she out with him. If, however, the lord gave him a wife, be she and her bairn the lords. If then the bondsman say, I will not go from my lord, not from my wife, nor from my bairn, not from my goods, let then his lord brings him to the church door and drill through his ear with an awl, to witness that he be ever henceforth a bondsman.*

Obligation of an oath had no sanction by West Saxon law until Alfred's era. It was carefully enforced in Alfred's code. Saxons regarded "pledges" as obligations which were to be carefully observed and enforced. A Saxon was to return a man's pledged garment before sunset only "*if he have but one wherewith to cover him.*" There is a slight variation in the Dooms (judgments) regarding Exodus 23:6.

The "Dooms" which follow are almost a literal transcript of the 21st chapter of Exodus. The exception is that the 17th verse is omitted. A slight modification of Hebrew Law in the first verses of the 21st chapter is characteristic.

Exodus 22:1.) *If a man shall steal an ox or a sheep and kill it, or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.*

Alfred's Judgment:

24.) *If any one steal another's ox and slay or sell him, give he two for it, and four sheep for one. If he have not what he may give, be he himself sold for the fee.*

Exodus 22:

2.) *If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.*

3.) *If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then shall he be sold for his theft.*

Alfred's Judgment:

25.) *If a thief break a man's house by night and be there slain, be he not guilty or manslaughter. If he doeth this after sunrise he is guilty of manslaughter, and himself shall die, unless he did it of necessity. If with him be found alive what he stole, let him pay for it two-fold.*

Exodus 22:

4.) *If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep, he shall restore double.*

5.) *If a man shall cause a field or a vineyard to be eaten, and shall put his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyards, shall he make restitution.*

Alfred's Judgment:

26.) *If any man harm another man's vineyard, his acres, or any of his lands let him make boot as men value it.*

Exodus 23:

3.) *Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.*

6.) *Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.*

Alfred's Judgment:

43.) *Doom thou very evenly; doom thou not one doom to the wealthy, another doom to the poor; not one doom to the more beloved, other to the more loathed doom thou not.*

Exodus 23:

7.) *Keep thee far from a false matter, and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.*

Alfred's Judgment:

44.) *Shun thou aye leasings.*

45.) *A sooth fast man and guiltless, slay thou him never.*

Exodus 23:

8.) *And thou shalt take no gift, for the gift bindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.*

Alfred's Judgment

46.) *Take thou never meed monies, for thy blind full oft wise*

men's thoughts, and turn aside their words.

Exodus 23:

9.) Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Alfred's Judgment

47.) To the stranger and comer from abroad, meddle thou not with him, nor oppress thou him with no unright.

Alfred then omits the rest of the Levitical law given in this section of Exodus concerning cultivation of land, sabbatical year, sacrifices, and feasts.

His "dooms" (judgments) ends with:

48.) Swear ye never to heathen gods, nor in nothing call ye to them.

In all forty-eight dooms King Alfred proceeds with the following declaration:

"These are the dooms that the Almighty God Himself spake to Moses, and bade him to hold; and when the Lord's only Begotten son, our God, that is Christ the healer, on middle earth came He said that He came not these dooms to break, not to gainsay, but with all good to do, and with all mild-heartedness and lowly-mindedness to teach them. Then, after his throes, ere that His apostles were gone through all the World to teach, and while yet they were together, many heathen nations turned they to God. While they altogether were, they sent errand-doers to Antioch, and to Syria, Christ's law to teach. When they understood that they sped not, then sent they an errand-writing to them."

Alfred then quotes, in verbatim, **James' epistle from the Jerusalem council** to the Church at Antioch. He then proceeds with the following comments:

"That ye will that other men do not to you, do ye not that to other men. From this one doom a man may think that he should doom every one rightly; he need keep no other doom book. Let him take heed that he doom to no man that he would not that he doom to him, if he sought doom over him."

Apparently, Alfred had no doubt and need of council from anyone. In his view, these are the judgments (dooms) which the Almighty God Himself has given to the King and the People of England as he had given them to the ancient Hebrews. The remaining Dooms stand on a foundation ordained by his forefathers and their wise counselors with additions and amendments as he and his wise sages approved. He introduces this portion of the Book of Judgments with the following remarks:

"Since that time it happened that many nations took to Christ's faith, and there were many synods through all the middle earth gathered, and eke throughout the English race they took to Christ's faith through holy bishops, and other wise men. They then set forth, for their mild-heartedness, that Christ taught as to almost ever misdeed, that the worldly lords might, with their leave, without sin, for the first guilt, take their fee boot which they then appointed except for treason against a lord, to which they durst not declare any mild-heartedness, for that Almighty God doomed none to them that slighted Him, not Christ, God's Son, doomed none to him that sold Him to death, and He bade to love a lord as himself."

Alfred and his witan (wise counselors) by the fourth article of his code, modified the code of synods, placing the king and lords on the same footing as freemen; recognizing the kings and lords *"were-gild."*

The preface continues with the following statement:

"They in many synods set a boot for many misdeeds of men; and in many books they wrote here one doom, there another."

He proceeds to proclaim collected dooms approved by Alfred and his wise counselors which are from other sources. **King Ina's dooms** are by themselves at the end of Alfred's code.

God gave His Law to His people inscribing them on external tablets of stone. In the latter days, He wrote them *"upon fleshly tables of the heart"* of His people.

Posted by City-On-A-Hill at [7:40 PM](#)

0 comments:

[Post a Comment](#)

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)

Marching to Valley Forge

