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## **Two Versions of Advent: The Benedictional of Æthelwold and *The Advent Lyrics***

Barbara Raw

The Benedictional of Æthelwold and *The Advent Lyrics* both belong to the period of the tenth-century monastic revival. The Benedictional, written for the personal use of Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, and containing the blessings given by the bishop at mass, was produced at Winchester between 971 and 984, possibly in 973.<sup>1</sup> The poem known as *The Advent Lyrics*, or *Christ I*, is the first item in the Exeter Book, dated by Patrick Conner to the period 950-970.<sup>2</sup> The contents of the manuscript could, of course, date from earlier than c. 950, but the range of exegetical material used by the author of *The Advent Lyrics*, in particular the emphasis on the role of Mary, fits most easily into the period of the monastic revival.<sup>3</sup> The Benedictional and *The Advent Lyrics* are not only contemporary with each other: they derive from a similar liturgical background. The Benedictional, described by its scribe as 'this book of the advent of the Son of the loving Father', embodies the idea that Christ's advent is not merely an event from the past but something made constantly present through the liturgy.<sup>4</sup> *The Advent Lyrics* is a meditation on a wide range of biblical and liturgical texts, in particular, the antiphons sung at the *Magnificat* during the week before Christmas. But although the Benedictional and *The Advent Lyrics* both belong to the same period, and draw on the ideas associated with the tenth-century revival of learning, they present very different interpretations of the season of Advent.

In the early Anglo-Saxon period Advent came at the end of the liturgical year, which began with either the first mass of Christmas or the mass of the Vigil of Christmas. By the tenth century the beginning of the Church's year had been moved back to the First Sunday of Advent.<sup>5</sup> The system was not consistent, however, as Ælfric notes:

Nu ongynd ure gerim æfter Romaniscre gesetnysse on þysum dæge [1 January], for nanum godcundlicum gesceade, ac for þam ealdan gewunan. Sume ure þeningbec onginnað on Adventum Domini. Nis þeah ðær for ðy þæs geares ord, ne eac on þisum dæge nis mid nanum gesceade, þeah ðe ure gerimbec on þyssere stowe geedlæcon.

[Now our reckoning begins on 1 January, according to the Roman practice, not for any religious reason but simply because of old custom. Some of our service-books begin with the Advent of the Lord. However, that is not, therefore, the beginning of the year, nor is there any reason for choosing today, even though our calendars place the beginning of the year at this point.]<sup>6</sup>

Graduals and antiphoners normally began with the First Sunday of Advent; Anglo-Saxon lists of pericopes, on the other hand, continued to begin the year with the Nativity or its Vigil until the mid-eleventh century.<sup>7</sup> There is no consistency, however, even within the same type of manuscript. The Benedictional of Æthelwold begins the year with the blessings for Advent, whereas the Benedictional of Archbishop Robert, the paintings in which were copied from Æthelwold's Benedictional or a related manuscript, places them at the end.<sup>8</sup> Of other manuscripts, the ninth- to tenth-century Leofric Missal and the early-eleventh-century Sacramentary of Robert of Jumièges place the Advent texts at the end of the year.<sup>9</sup> The Leofric Collectar, the Winchester and Canterbury Tropers, the Canterbury Benedictional, Claudius Pontifical I and the Portiforium of St Wulstan, on the other hand, start the year with Advent.<sup>10</sup>

The sense that Advent signified an ending rather than a beginning is reflected in the readings for the season. The epistle for the First Sunday of Advent in the Roman rite was St Paul's warning that the last days had already arrived (Romans 13. 11-14), while the gospel for the following Sunday was St Luke's description of the disasters signalling the end of the world and the return of Christ in the clouds (Luke 21. 25-33).<sup>11</sup> Other readings, though messianic in theme or concerned with the inauguration of Christ's ministry, seem unrelated to what might be considered the main theme of Advent: the expectation of Christ's birth in time. The gospel for the First Sunday of Advent is the account of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21.1-9).<sup>12</sup> The gospels for the Third and Fourth Sundays of Advent and for the Saturday of the final week are concerned with John the

Baptist's role as a witness to Christ (Matt. 11.2-10, John 1.19-28 and Luke 3.1-6).<sup>13</sup> By contrast, St Luke's account of the Annunciation and Visitation (Luke 1.26-38 and 39-47) is relegated to the Wednesday and Friday of Ember Week.<sup>14</sup> This choice of gospel readings is reflected in Gregory the Great's homilies on the gospels, four of which were included in the Advent section of Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, which was one of Ælfric's main sources.<sup>15</sup> Gregory's homilies for Advent include expositions of the signs of the world's ending (Luke 21.25-33) and the passages on John the Baptist (John 1.19-27, Matt. 11.2-10 and Luke 3.1-11) but nothing on the Annunciation.<sup>16</sup> Bede, on the other hand, includes two homilies on the Annunciation and Visitation, based on the readings from Luke 1.26-55, as well as two on John the Baptist, based on Mark 1.4-8 and John 1.15-18, in his Advent series.<sup>17</sup> It seems likely that he was following a Neapolitan series of gospel readings, in which the account of the Annunciation was read on the Third Sunday in Advent,<sup>18</sup> rather than the Roman series used by Gregory, though there is also evidence from Spain and northern Italy for a Marian feast in the period immediately before Christmas<sup>19</sup> and Alcuin's *De laude Dei* includes an antiphon for a Marian feast assigned by Constantinescu to 18 December.<sup>20</sup> Bede does not, incidentally, include a homily for the Feast of the Annunciation on 25 March, even though he knew the feast.<sup>21</sup> Ælfric, unlike Bede, preached on the Annunciation on 25 March<sup>22</sup> and followed Gregory in preaching on the last days of the world and on Christ's return to earth in his homilies for the first two Sundays of Advent.<sup>23</sup>

Ælfric's homily for the First Sunday in Advent<sup>24</sup> opens with a brief reference to Advent as the period when Christians recall Christ's coming to earth in human form, but moves quickly to define this coming as twofold: at his birth and at his return in judgement. Even the Old Testament prophets are seen as referring to both advents:

Ða halgan witegan witegodon æigðer ge þone ærran tocyme,  
on þære acennednysse, and eac þone æftran æt þam micclum  
dome.

[The holy prophets prophesied both about the first coming, at  
the Incarnation, and also about the second coming, at the  
great judgement.]<sup>25</sup>

The church's remembrance of Christ's first coming, Ælfric says, serves as a reminder of the need to be ready for his return. This theme of the imminence of

Christ's return is elaborated in Ælfric's homily for the Second Sunday in Advent, based largely on Gregory's homily for the same day, on Luke 21.25-33,<sup>26</sup> but with additional material from Matthew 24.27-42<sup>27</sup> and a passage in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (4.14-18) which describes how Christians will be caught up in the clouds to meet the returning Christ.

This theme of Christ's twofold coming and of the need to prepare for his return in judgement appears repeatedly in the blessings for the Advent season in both the Benedictional of Æthelwold and the related Benedictional of Archbishop Robert. Belief in Christ's first advent is linked to trust that release from sin will allow the believer to face the coming judgement without fear:

Omnipotens Deus, cuius unigeniti adventum et praeteritum creditis et futurum expectatis, eiusdemque adventus vos illustratione sua sanctificet, et sua benedictione locupletet. Amen.

In presentis vitae stadio vos ab omni adversitate defendat, et se vobis in iudicio placabilem ostendat. Amen.

Quo a cunctis peccatorum contagiis liberati, illius tremendi examinis diem expectetis interriti. Amen.

[May Almighty God, the advent of whose only-begotten Son you believe to have happened in the past and whose return you look for in the future, sanctify you through the light of the same Son's coming, and enrich you with his blessing. Amen. May he defend you from all adversity in the race of the present life, and show himself merciful to you at the judgement. Amen. That, freed by him from all stain of sin, you may await the day of his great judgement unafraid. Amen.]<sup>28</sup>

These hopes, expressed here in the first of Æthelwold's two sets of blessings for the First Sunday in Advent, are repeated Sunday by Sunday. The blessings for the Second Sunday open with the words:

Deus cuius adventus incarnationis preteritus creditur, et iudicii venturus expectatur, vos antequam veniat expiet ab omni contagione delicti. Amen.

Prius in vobis deluat omne quod illa futura examinatione puniturus est, ut cum iustus advenerit iudex, non in vobis inveniat quod condempnet. Amen.

[May God, who, we believe, became incarnate in the past, and whose return in judgement we expect, cleanse you from all stain of sin before he comes. Amen. May he wash away everything in you which will be punished at that future judgement, so that when the just judge comes, he will not find in you anything to condemn. Amen.]<sup>29</sup>

In the blessings for the Third Sunday the stress on judgement is changed to a hope that those who recall Christ's first coming to earth will gain their reward, namely eternal life:

Ut qui de adventu redemptoris nostri secundum carnem devota mente laetamini, in secundo cum in maiestate sua advenerit, praemiis vitae aeternae ditemini. Amen.

[So that you who rejoice with devout minds at the advent of our Saviour in the flesh, may be enriched with the rewards of eternal life when he comes again in majesty. Amen.]<sup>30</sup>

The same theme is taken up at greater length in the blessings for the Fourth and final Sunday with their references to the gifts of grace and salvation offered at Christ's incarnation:

Deus qui vos et prioris adventus gratia reparavit, et in secundo daturum se vobis regnum cum sanctis angelis repromisit, adventus sui vos inlustratione sanctificet. Amen.

Vincula vestra dissolvat antequam veniat, ut liberati a vinculis peccatorum, interriti tremendum eius expectetis adventum. Amen.

Et quem venisse in terris pro vestra salute creditis, venturumque ad iudicium sustinetis, eius adventum inpavidi mereamini contueri. Amen.

[May God who restored you through the grace of his first coming, and promised to give you a kingdom with the holy angels at his second, sanctify you through the light of his

coming. Amen. May he loosen your fetters before he comes, so that freed from the bonds of sins, you may await his great coming without fear. Amen. And that you may endure his return in judgement, whom you believe to have come to earth for your salvation, and be worthy to contemplate his coming without fear. Amen.]]<sup>31</sup>

Given this link between Christ's incarnation as a means of saving the human race, and his return, when those who had followed him would receive the reward he had gained for them, it is not surprising that the paintings for the season of Advent in Æthelwold's Benedictional should consist of representations of the Annunciation and the Second Coming.<sup>32</sup>

The choice of subjects for the Benedictional's illustrations for the Advent season, therefore, corresponds to the contrast set up in the texts between Christ's first and second comings; the details of the two paintings, however, relate to a much wider selection of liturgical and exegetical texts. The painting of the Annunciation which is placed next to the blessings for the First Sunday in Advent is headed,

Nuntius e caelo hic stat praedicando Mariae.

Ecce Deum paries hominemque simul benedicta.

[The messenger from heaven stands here announcing to Mary, Behold, you who are blessed will bear one who is both God and man.]

Liturgically, the painting recalls the third responsory at the night office of the feast:

*R.* Missus est Gabriel angelus ad Mariam virginem desponsatam Joseph, nuntians ei verbum: et expavescit Virgo de lumine: Ne timeas, Maria, invenisti gratiam apud Dominum; ecce concipies et paries, et vocabitur Altissimi Filius.

*V.* Dabit ei Dominus Deus sedem David patris eius, et regnabit in domo Jacob in aeternum. Et vocabitur [Altissimi Filius]. Gloria Patri. Et vocabitur [Altissimi Filius].

[R. The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, a virgin betrothed to Joseph, announcing the word to her: and the virgin was afraid at the light. Do not be afraid Mary, you have found grace with the Lord; behold, you will conceive and give birth, and he will be called the son of the Most High. V. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will rule over the house of Jacob for ever. And he will be called the son of the Most High. Glory be to the Father. And he will be called the son of the Most High.]<sup>33</sup>

The details of the painting do not correspond to this text, however: there is no indication in the painting that Mary is afraid nor is there any reference to her betrothal to Joseph or her descent from David. Instead, the artist has placed the gospel event within a symbolic and prophetic context. Mary is shown seated under a baldacchino with an open book in front of her, a detail which refers to the belief that at the time of the Annunciation she was reading Isaiah's prophecy, read at Vespers on the First Sunday of Advent: 'The maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel' (Isaiah 7.14).<sup>34</sup> The point is made by Bede in his commentary on St Luke's Gospel:

*Quia ergo legerat, Ecce virgo in utero habebit et pariet filium, sed quomodo id fieri posset non legerat, merito credula his quae legerat, sciscitatur ab angelo quod in propheta non invenit.*

[For she had read, Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, but how this would come about she had not read; believing these things she had read, she asked the angel about what she had not found in the prophet.]<sup>35</sup>

The gospel event being commemorated is therefore worthy of belief because it fulfils the prophecy.<sup>36</sup> The oval, gold object in Mary's left hand has been identified variously as a weaving shuttle, a distaff, a paten or the vessel containing the bitter waters which the *Protevangelium Jacobi* claims that Mary and Joseph were made to drink in order to prove their innocence.<sup>37</sup> Deshman favours the identification of the object as a paten, emphasizing the symbolic connection between the Incarnation and the eucharist.<sup>38</sup> If, on the other hand, the object is a distaff or shuttle, it may be intended to recall the apocryphal account of Mary



helping to weave the veil for the Temple,<sup>39</sup> or, more importantly, her role as the second Eve.<sup>40</sup>

The most important symbols in the painting, however, are the cloud which surrounds Gabriel in the painting and which is extended to create a cloud-like halo round Mary's head, and the baldacchino under which she is seated.<sup>41</sup> Deshman relates the cloud to the cloud which accompanied God's manifestations of himself in the Old Testament and at Christ's transfiguration (Matt. 17.5, Mark 9.7 and Luke 9.34), to the overshadowing of Mary by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1.35), and to a passage from Isaiah sung as a versicle and response at Vespers throughout Advent:

*V. Rorate caeli desuper, et nubes pluant Justum.*

*R. Aperiatur terra, et germinet Salvatorem.*

[*V. Drop down dew, you heavens, and let the clouds rain the just. R. Let the earth be opened and bud forth a saviour.*]<sup>42</sup>

The baldacchino, which resembles the altar-covering in the final painting in the Benedictional, suggests a parallel between Mary's conception of Christ and Christ's descent on the church's altar at the eucharist.<sup>43</sup> The point is made explicitly by Paschasius Radbertus, whose writings were certainly known at Winchester.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the fact that the cloud fills the arch above Mary's head recalls her role as the new tabernacle: just as the tabernacle made by Moses was filled by the glory of Yahweh (Exodus 40.34-5), so Mary is filled with the glory that is God.<sup>45</sup>

As was said earlier, the texts of the Benedictional link the Annunciation and the Second Coming in terms of a contrast between mercy and judgement, but there is a further connection. Gabriel's words to Mary, 'The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end' (Luke 1.32-3) recall God's promises to David in the Old Testament.<sup>46</sup> The restoration of the Davidic line in the person of the Messiah is made explicit in the description of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem in all four of the gospels (Matt. 21.5 and 9, Mark 11.9-10, Luke 19.38 and John 12.13). Bede clearly had this connection in mind when he interpreted Gabriel's words in relation to the gospel description of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, when the crowds welcomed him as king of Israel, but he also saw a link to Christ's reign in heaven, when he would lead the redeemed into their true

home.<sup>47</sup> The point is echoed by Ælfric in his homily for the Feast of the Annunciation:

Crist heold Dawides cyne setl, na lichamlice, ac gastlice, for ðan þe he is ealra cyninga cyning, and rixað ofer his gecorenum mannum, æigðer ge ofer Israhela folce, ge ofer eallum oðrum leodscipum. Ða ðæ on rihtum geleafan wuniað, and Crist hi ealle gebrincð to his ecan rice.

[Christ held David's throne spiritually rather than physically, because he is the king of all kings and rules over his chosen people, both the people of Israel and all other nations who live in right belief, and Christ will bring them all to his eternal kingdom.]<sup>48</sup>

There is, therefore, an unstated link between the paintings of the Annunciation and the Second Coming which is quite independent of the texts of the Benedictional, with their emphasis on the contrast between Christ's advent as saviour and as judge.

The Benedictional's painting for the Third Sunday in Advent shows Christ coming in the clouds, surrounded by angels carrying the symbols of the passion: the cross, spear and sponge. There are no close artistic parallels to this scene, though it is sometimes compared to a painting in the Athelstan Psalter, which shows the enthroned Christ among choirs of angels, patriarchs, prophets and apostles, and with the symbols of his passion — the spear, sponge and cross — behind his throne.<sup>49</sup> The lowest register of this scene, which shows Mary among the apostles, resembles that in representations of the Ascension such as that on folio 120v of the Psalter<sup>50</sup> and it is therefore possible that the Athelstan painting, like that in the Benedictional, was intended to show Christ's Second Coming 'in the same way as you have seen him go' (Acts 1.11). It is more likely, however, that the scene represents Christ as judge, displaying his wounds as a reproach to those who have failed to repay him for his sufferings on their behalf, an event described in several Old English sermons and in the Old English poem *Christ III*.<sup>51</sup> The painting in the Benedictional of Æthelwold, by contrast, focuses on Christ's return to earth as 'Rex regum et Dominus dominantium' (Apoc. 19.16), a text written on his thigh in the painting.<sup>52</sup> It is an imperial *adventus* similar to the entry into Jerusalem.<sup>53</sup>

Protocol required that kings and emperors should be met some distance outside a city. When Charlemagne came to Rome in 774, Pope Hadrian I sent the judges of the city to meet him with a banner thirty miles outside the city and, when he was only a mile from Rome,

Direxit universas scholas militiae una cum patronis simulque et pueris qui ad didicendas litteras pergebant, deportantes omnes ramos palmarum adque olivarum, laudesque illi omnes canentes, cum adclamationum earundem laudium vocibus ipsum Francorum susceperunt regem; obviam illi eius sanctitas dirigens venerandas cruces, id est signa, sicut mos est exarchum aut patricium suscipiendum, eum cum ingenti honore suscipi fecit.

[He sent all the *scholae* of the militia, along with the *patroni* and the children who were just starting out to learn their letters, all bearing branches of palm and olive, and all chanting his praises; with shouts of acclamation and praise they welcomed the king of the Franks. His Holiness despatched venerable crosses, that is to say standards, to meet him, just like greeting an exarch or patrician and had him welcomed most honourably.]<sup>54</sup>

The account of Christ's entry into Jerusalem in St John's gospel (12.12-19) describes the crowds as going out to meet him; in the same way, in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (4.17), those who are still alive when Christ returns to earth will go out to meet him in the clouds. The same image is found in the first responsory for the first Sunday in Advent: *Aspiciens a longe, ecce video Dei potentiam venientem, et nebulam totam terram tegentem. Ite obviam ei, et dicite: Nuntia nobis, si tu es ipse qui regnaturus es in populo Israel* [Watching from afar, behold I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth. Go out to meet him, and say, Tell us if you are the one who is to rule over the people of Israel].<sup>55</sup>

The entry of Christ into Jerusalem was frequently portrayed not simply as a royal progress but as a military triumph. The Blickling homily for Palm Sunday, for example, describes the scene in terms of the reception of a king returning from battle:

þa bæron hie him togeanes blowende palmtwigu; forþon þe hit wæs Iudisc þeaw, þonne heora ciningas hæfdon sige geworht on heora feondum, and hie wæron eft ham hweorfende, þonne eodan hie him togeanes mid blowendum palmtwigum, heora siges to wyorþmyndum. Wel þæt gedafenode þæt Drihten swa dyde on þa gelicnesse; forþon þe he wæs wuldres cyning.

[Then they carried waving palm-branches before him, because it was the Jewish custom, when their kings had won a victory over their enemies and they were returning home again, to go towards them with waving palm-branches in honour of their victory. It was very fitting that the Lord should act in the same way, because he was the king of glory.]<sup>56</sup>

Paschasius Radbertus linked the crowd's question about Christ, 'Quis est iste?' (Matt. 21.10), to the psalm verse, 'Quis est iste rex glorie?' (Psalm 23.8),<sup>57</sup> and the artists of the Utrecht Psalter, and of its Anglo-Saxon copy (British Library, Harley 603), illustrated verse 7 of this psalm, 'Attollite portas, principes, vestras, et elevamini, portae aeternales, et introibit rex glorie' [Gates raise high your arches, rise you ancient doors, let the king of glory in!], by a drawing of Christ, dressed in armour and followed by his spear-bearing army, being welcomed at the gate of a city.<sup>58</sup> The same military imagery is seen in the Bury Psalter, where the 'rex glorie' of Psalm 23 is depicted holding spear and shield.<sup>59</sup>

The painting of the Second Coming in the Benedictional does not show the meeting in the clouds mentioned in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, but it does depend on the *adventus* ceremonial in another respect. The king entering a city was accompanied by soldiers carrying his banners; similarly, the victorious Christ would be accompanied by angels carrying the banner of the cross:

Quemadmodum enim ingredientem regem in civitatem, exercitus antecedit, praeferens humeris signa atque vexilla regalia . . . ita Domino descendente de coelis praecedet exercitus angelorum, qui signum illud, id est, triumphale vexillum sublimibus humeris praeferentes, divinum regis coelestis ingressum terris trementibus nuntiabunt.

[Just as the army precedes the king entering a city, carrying on their shoulders the royal standards and banners . . . so, as the Lord descends from the skies, there precedes him an army of angels, who, carrying on their sublime shoulders that standard, the triumphal banner, announce the divine entry of the heavenly king to the trembling earth.]<sup>60</sup>

Ælfric, talking of the Second Coming and the Last Judgement, describes the armies of angels who precede Christ, carrying his cross: 'Engla werod berað þa beorhtan rode him ætforan' [Armies of angels carry the shining cross before him].<sup>61</sup> The passage is based on part of the *Prognosticon Futuri Saeculi* of Julian of Toledo, which states:

Exercitus denique angelorum et archangelorum precedent eum, illud triumphale vexillum miro fulgore coruscans preferentes.

[Finally, armies of angels and archangels precede him, carrying that triumphal banner, shining with wonderful brightness.]<sup>62</sup>

The artist of the Benedictional added two further *vexilla*: the spear and sponge.

The paintings of the Annunciation and the Second Coming, like the others in the Benedictional, are not simply beautiful decorations for an exceptionally sumptuous book; they are aids to meditation for its user. The verses placed opposite the painting of the Annunciation and before the opening words of the blessing for the First Sunday of Advent address the user of the book directly:

Quisque caput cernis presto est benedictio presul

Libri huius nati adventus tibi nam patris almi.

[O bishop, whoever you are who look on this heading, a blessing is at hand for you from this book of the advent of the Son of the loving Father.]<sup>63</sup>

This address has to be read in conjunction with the poem at the beginning of the book, which explains why it was written.<sup>64</sup> In the poem, the scribe, Godeman, explains that Æthelwold ordered the book to be made so that, at the Last Judgement, he would be able to render an account of his stewardship and present

the congregation entrusted to him to Christ. The blessing referred to in the address to the user promises that he, and his congregation, will eventually share in the eternal life of heaven, symbolised by the figures of the saints which decorate the first seven pages of the manuscript.<sup>65</sup> The focus of the Benedictional, therefore, is on the future judgement rather than Christ's birth. *The Advent Lyrics*, on the other hand, are concerned with God's intervention in human history through one who, unbelievably, was both God and man.

As is well known, *The Advent Lyrics* are partly based on the antiphons sung at the *Magnificat* in the week leading up to Christmas. They are not paraphrases of these antiphons, however, but meditations on the mystery of the Incarnation, expressed in language drawn from a wide range of biblical texts and exegetical material. Moreover, the way in which the text of the poem is arranged in the manuscript shows that it is not to be considered, as is sometimes argued, as a series of twelve lyrics, each based primarily on one antiphon, but as five sections, each of which draws on many different sources and analogues.

The first section of the poem (lines 1-70) introduces two major themes: the hope of heaven and the mystery of Christ. The poet calls on Christ, who holds the key to heaven, to reveal the light to those in prison and to make those who have been exiled from heaven worthy to return there:

we in carcerne  
sittað sorgende, sunnan wenað,  
hwonne us liffrea leoht ontyne,  
weorðe ussum mode to mundboran,  
ond þæt tydre gewitt tire bewinde,  
gedo usic þæs wyrðe, þe he to wuldre forlet,  
þa we heanlice hweorfan sceoldan  
to þis enge lond, eðle bescyrede. (*Advent Lyrics* 25-32)

[We sit sorrowing in prison, hope for the sun, when the Lord of life will reveal the light to us, become a protector to our spirit, and enfold that fragile understanding with glory, make us worthy of what he gloriously forsook, when we, deprived of our homeland, were forced to turn wretchedly to this narrow land.]<sup>66</sup>

There is probably a play on the words *sunne* (sun, line 26) and *sunu* (son): Christ is the sun of justice, who comes to illuminate the world, as he is described in the

antiphon, *O Oriens, splendor lucis aeternae, et sol iustitiae; veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris et umbra mortis* [O rising sun, splendour of the light eternal and sun of justice, come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death] which lies behind a later section of the poem. The three antiphons which underlie the first section of the poem (*O Rex gentium, O clavis David* and *O Hierusalem*) make no mention of Christ as the source of light, a theme which will be taken up later in the poem when Christ's divine nature is explored. The poet's freedom from his apparent sources is seen again in his treatment of the antiphon *O Hierusalem, civitas Dei summi, leva in circuitu oculos tuos et vide Dominum Deum tuum, quia jam veniet solvere te a vinculis* [O Jerusalem, city of the highest God, lift up your eyes round about and see your Lord and God, for now he comes to free you from your chains].<sup>67</sup> In the poem, Jerusalem becomes the heavenly city, the seat of angels (*engla eþelstol*, line 52) in which the souls of the faithful rest (lines 50-54), and Christ's advent is both his descent to earth and his return to heaven. This temporal complexity is typical of the poem. Despite echoes of Old Testament time, the tenses used by the poet make clear that Christ has already come (line 66); he chose a virgin as his mother (line 36); those who speak truth will say that he freed the human race (*ahredde* past tense, line 34); he must release the wretched *swa he oft dyde* (line 17, 'as he has often done in the past'). And this whole process is a mystery:

þæt degol wæs, dryhtnes geryne.  
 Eal giofu gæstlic grundsceat geondspreot;  
 þær wisna fela wearð inlihted  
 lare longsume þurh lifes fruman  
 þe ær under hoðman biholen lægon,  
 witgena woðsong. (*Advent Lyrics* 41-6)

[That was hidden, a mystery of God, all spiritual gifts spread throughout the world; there many shoots were brought to light, through the giver of life, long-lasting teachings, the songs of the prophets, which had previously lain concealed under the earth.]

The passage echoes the Epistle to the Colossians: 'the message which was a mystery hidden for generations and centuries . . . The mystery is Christ among you' (Col. 1.26-7).

This theme of the Incarnation as the great mystery, prophesied over the ages and now revealed in the person of Christ, permeates the rest of the poem.<sup>68</sup> The second section (lines 71-163) begins with an address to Mary, based on the antiphon *O Virgo virginum*, in which she is asked to explain the mystery which came to her from heaven (lines 71-7). But this human curiosity cannot be satisfied:

Forþan þæt monnum nis  
cuð geryne. (*Advent Lyrics* 94-5)  
[Understanding of that mystery is not given to men.]

In this passage Mary is a figure of authority, already in heaven, and offering those who question her the hope that they may follow her:

Hyht is onfangen  
þæt nu bletsung mot bæm gemæne,  
werum ond wifum, a to worulde forð  
in þam uplican engla dreame  
mid soðfæder symle wunian. (*Advent Lyrics* 99-103)  
[There is now hope that a blessing may be common to both  
men and women, world without end, to live forever with the  
true Father in the joy of the angels above.]

The mystery which Mary refuses to explain is elaborated in a passage reminiscent of the antiphons *O Oriens* and *O Emmanuel* (lines 104-63). The reference earlier in the poem to Christ giving light to his creation is extended to give a clear reference to his divine origin:

Swa þu, god of gode gearo acenned,  
sunu soþan fæder, swegles in wuldre  
butan anginne æfre wære. (*Advent Lyrics* 109-11)  
[As you, God from God, truly begotten, son of the true  
Father, were always, without beginning, in the glory of  
heaven.]

Christ is truly God, without any beginning. He is the Word of God, who was in the beginning with God and now is made flesh (lines 120-24). So 'the mighty Son



of God and the son of man' were present together on earth (lines 126-7); God himself is with us (lines 134-5). As was the case in the first section of the poem, the speakers are not the patriarchs in limbo but the Christian congregation who believe in salvation and who remember how men in the past believed that Christ would eventually come and visit the depths, to release those imprisoned there (lines 140-59).

The third section of the poem (lines 164-274) again focuses on Mary, and, once more, she reveals the truth to those who doubt. This time it is Joseph who needs reassurance and explanation but the message is the same: Mary has become the mother of God's Son (lines 204-10) and prophecy has been fulfilled. And, once again, the poet expands this simple statement into a meditation on the nature of Christ. No-one can explain the mystery of Christ's divine parentage, how he was with his Father before anything else existed, before God, the source of life, divided the light from the darkness (lines 215-38). It is because these things are beyond understanding that the speakers need to understand Christ's human parentage (lines 245-8). And again, the petition is the same: that Christ will open the gates of heaven and lead those he bought with his blood back to the place from which they were exiled (lines 251-71).

The fourth section of the poem (lines 275-377) addresses Mary once more. Now she is not simply the figure of authority, explaining the Incarnation to the questioners in the guise of the sons and daughters of Jerusalem and the doubting Joseph; she is queen of heaven, earth and even hell (lines 275-86). In earlier sections of the poem Mary has been shown as the second Eve (line 97), and the true temple in which God comes to rest (lines 206-8); now she is the bride of Christ (lines 280-1) and the locked gate of Ezekiel through which he passed on his way to earth and which he locked after him (lines 306-34). Here the poet departs quite radically from the text of the relevant antiphon. The antiphon reads: *O mundi Domina, regio ex semine orta, ex tuo jam Christus processit alvo tamquam sponsus de thalamo, hic jacet in praesepio qui et sidera regit* [O lady of the world, born from a royal line, Christ came forth from your womb like a bridegroom from his chamber; the one who rules the stars lies in a manger]. The poet, however, turns to Mary as an advocate:

Gefinga us nu þristum wordum  
þæt he us ne læte leng owihte  
in þisse deaðdene gedwolan hyran,  
ac þæt he usic geferge in fæder rice,

þær we sorglease sibþan motan

wunigan in wuldre mid weoroda god. (*Advent Lyrics* 342-7)

[Plead for us now with confident words, that he will no longer let us pursue error in this valley of death, but that he will carry us to the Father's kingdom, where we may afterwards live in glory, and without sorrow, with the God of hosts.]

When the speakers look upon the Child at her breast (line 341) this is not a reference to Christ's birth, a variant on the antiphon's reference to the ruler of the stars who lies in the manger. The image is that of a drawing in the *Ælfwine Prayerbook*, where Mary is shown in heaven, standing at the right hand of Christ, and holding the Christ-child as an emblem: a reminder of the reason for her presence in heaven.<sup>69</sup> But, after soliciting Mary's help, the poet returns once again to his theme of Christ the creator, present with the Father and the Holy Spirit before time began, drawing on the antiphon, *O coelorum Domine, qui cum Patre sempiternus es una cum Sancto Spiritu, audi tuos famulos; veni ad salvandum nos, iam noli tardare* [O Lord of the heavens, who live eternally with the Father and the Holy Spirit, hear your servants, come to save us, do not delay].<sup>70</sup> Redemption, the poet says, is entirely dependent on Christ (lines 365-6).

Much of the poem, then, focuses on Mary's role in the story of redemption, but in the fifth and final section of the poem (lines 378-439) the poet returns to his main theme, the dual nature of Christ, who is both God and man. This section opens with a hymn of praise to God, the three in one (lines 378-415). Now that God has revealed himself to those on earth, in accordance with his covenant, they can join the angels and seraphs in praising their king and creator, who came to earth to save the human race and to lead those who honour him to a place of everlasting life. This passage echoes two texts. The first is the *Sanctus* of the mass: *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis* [Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest]. The second is an antiphon for the Octave of Christmas: *O admirabile commercium! Creator generis humani, animatum corpus sumens, de virgine nasci dignatus est; et procedens homo sine semine, largitus est nobis suam deitatem* [O wonderful exchange: the creator of the human race, assuming a living body, deigned to be born of a virgin; and

becoming man without a human father, he bestowed on us his divine nature].<sup>71</sup> The second part of the *Sanctus*, *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*, is taken from Psalm 117.26, and echoes the welcome given by the crowds to Christ as he entered Jerusalem (Matt. 21.9, Mark 11.9-10, Luke 19.38 and John 12.13). This psalm was interpreted from New Testament times with reference to both the Ascension and the Second Coming. In St Matthew's Gospel Christ laments over the city of Jerusalem:

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you refused! So be it! Your house will be left to you desolate, for, I promise, you shall not see me any more until you say: Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! (Matt. 23.37-9)

So, at Christ's return he will be welcomed once more into the city as the Messiah. But this city is not only the earthly Jerusalem. Paschasius Radbertus, commenting on chapter 21 of St Matthew's Gospel, identifies the city approached by Christ with the heavenly Jerusalem and the crowd's question, 'Who is this?' (Matt. 21.10) with the questions in Psalm 23.8, 'Who is this king of glory?', and Isaiah 63.1, 'Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah in garments stained with crimson, so richly clothed, marching so full of strength?'<sup>72</sup> Psalm 23 was traditionally interpreted with reference to Christ's triumphant return to heaven at his ascension; Bede, for example, imagined heaven's inhabitants questioning the angels who accompany the risen Christ, and who demand entry to the heavenly city for the king of glory.<sup>73</sup> The blood-stained garments of Isaiah's triumphant figure (Isaiah 63.1-6) are echoed in the Apocalypse's description of the Word of God who is not simply *Rex regum* [king of kings] but whose cloak is soaked in blood (Apoc. 19.13). The passage from Isaiah is therefore interpreted as a prophetic reference to Christ's retention of the marks of his passion at his triumphal return, a standard theme of treatments of the Second Coming. This final section of the Old English poem, then, reflects back on part of the first of the five sections, based on the Advent antiphon, *O Hierusalem, civitas Dei summi, leva in circuitu oculos tuos et vide Dominum Deum tuum, quia jam veniet solvere te a vinculis*.<sup>74</sup> Whereas the antiphon could refer to the earthly city, awaiting redemption, the Old English poem makes it plain that Christ comes to make his home in the city above:

Eala sibbe gesihð, sancta Hierusalem,  
cynestola cyst, Cristes burglond,  
engla eþelstol, ond þa ane in þe  
saule soðfæstra simle gerestað,  
wuldrum hremge. Næfre wommes tacn  
in þam eardgearde eawed weorþeð,  
ac þe firina gehwylc feor abugeð,  
wærgðo ond gewinnes. Bist to wuldre full  
halgan hyhtes, swa þu gehaten eart.  
Sioh nu sylfa þe geond þas sidan gesceaft,  
swylce rodores hrof rume geondwlitan  
ymb healfa gehwone, hu þec heofones cyning  
siðe geseceð, ond sylf cymeð,  
nimeð eard in þe, swa hit ær gefym  
witgan wisfæste wordum sægdon. (*Advent Lyrics* 50-64)

[O vision of peace, holy Jerusalem, greatest of royal thrones, Christ's city, native seat of angels, in you alone the souls of the faithful rest eternally, exulting in glory. No sign of sin is ever seen in that land, but all violence, sin and conflict, goes far away. You are gloriously full of holy hope, just as you are described. Look now about you at this wide creation, gaze far and wide on every side across the roof of heaven, and see how the king of heaven seeks you in his journey, comes himself, takes up his dwelling in you, as wise prophets announced long ago.]

The same meaning is found in the responsory for the first Sunday in Advent, *Aspiciens a longe*, quoted above.<sup>75</sup>

But Psalm 117 has a further relevance to the themes of *The Advent Lyrics*, for it includes the passage on the cornerstone referred to in the antiphon which lies behind the opening lines of the poem: *O Rex gentium et desideratus earum, lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum: veni, salva hominem quem de limo formasti* [O king of the nations and the one they long for, the cornerstone which makes both one: come and save man whom you formed from the earth]. In the psalm, the reference to the stone 'rejected by the builders that proved to be the keystone' is followed immediately by the words, 'This is the day made memorable

by Yahweh' (Ps. 117.22-4), a verse used as the Gradual for Easter Day.<sup>76</sup> These verses are quoted by Christ in St Matthew's gospel immediately after the description of the entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21.42) and appear several times in the New Testament. In Peter's speech in the Acts of the Apostles they are applied specifically to Christ's death and resurrection (Acts 4.11). In the First Epistle of Peter (1 Pet. 2.4-8) the stone is both the precious cornerstone for those who believe in Christ and, at the same time, the stone over which unbelievers stumble. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, as in the antiphon, the stone forms part of the building which is the church, whose foundations are the apostles and prophets and whose stones are the Christian believers (Ephes. 2.20-22); this cornerstone unites Jews and gentiles, who were previously at war with each other, into a single body (Ephes. 2.11-18).

The Old English poet combined the reference in the antiphon to the stone which joins the two walls together, with the psalm's reference to the stone rejected by the builders (Ps. 117.22) and interprets both in relation to the Christian church. The building held together by the cornerstone is the church of which Christ is the head.<sup>77</sup> And this ruined building is also the human body, since Christ's church is built from living stones (1 Pet. 2.4-8). The theme is that set out by Ælfric in a homily for the dedication of a church.<sup>78</sup> Ælfric ignores the most common interpretation of the two walls as the Jews and gentiles (Ephes. 2.11-18), choosing instead to develop the passage in the First Epistle of Peter (1 Pet. 2.4-8). Christ, he says, is the living stone who holds the building together. And this building, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, is formed from the bodies of the righteous and unites angels with men. Augustine makes a similar point in his commentary on Psalm 117 where the one who comes in the name of the Lord is also the cornerstone, Christ Jesus, the mediator between God and man, who himself is both God and man.<sup>79</sup> The vision of heaven in the final section of the poem, with its promise to humans of eternal happiness, is therefore the culmination of a series of references to Christ as the one who unites the divine and the human in his own person and who can therefore mediate between God and man. He is not simply some heroic figure, descending from heaven to rescue the unfortunates from some dark prison, but a mystery to which the only response is thanksgiving.

The treatment of the theme of Advent in the Old English poem, *The Advent Lyrics*, is therefore very different from that in Æthelwold's Benedictional. The texts of the Benedictional reveal a clear sense of the passing of time: the congregation recalls the Annunciation as an event from the past and looks

forward to Christ's return in the future. In the poem, there is no such clear time sequence. Its audience exists in a world where Christ is both awaited and has already come, and where his release of the patriarchs and prophets from Limbo merges with the longing of the hearers for their own release. Whereas the texts of the Benedictional focus on the celebration of Christ's birth as a preparation for the coming judgement, *The Advent Lyrics* do not mention judgement; instead, they focus on the hope of heaven. The Benedictional emphasises the gulf between the divine and the human. In the painting of the Annunciation,<sup>80</sup> Gabriel appears to be moving further into the painting and away from the viewer. He is focused entirely on the figure of Mary and she, in turn, is concerned solely with what passes between them; there is no interaction between the picture and those looking at it. Similarly, in the blessings, it is God himself who is addressed, and who is asked to sanctify and defend Christians in this world and to offer eternal happiness in the next. The poet of *The Advent Lyrics*, on the other hand, addresses his petitions to Christ and to his mother, establishing a relationship of dialogue and intimacy. Finally, the Benedictional presents a world which is static, whereas the poem develops its complex theme of the mystery which is Christ, to reach a climax in its closing section.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> British Library, Add. 49598; complete facsimile, *The Benedictional of St Æthelwold: a Masterpiece of Anglo-Saxon Art. A Facsimile Introduced by Andrew Prescott* (London: British Library, 2002); the miniatures are discussed in detail in Robert Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, *Studies in Manuscript Illumination* 9 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). For the texts see *The Benedictional of Saint Æthelwold Bishop of Winchester 963-984*, ed. by G. F. Warner and H. A. Wilson (Oxford: Roxburghe Club, 1910), and Andrew Prescott, 'The Text of the Benedictional of St Æthelwold', *Bishop Æthelwold: his Career and Influence*, ed. by Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1988), pp. 119-47.

<sup>2</sup> Exeter, Cathedral Library, 3501; Patrick W. Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter: a Tenth-Century Cultural History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1993), pp. 54 and 94. The manuscript was written in three sections: section 1 (fols. 1-52), which includes the poems *Christ I* (i.e. *Advent Lyrics*), *Christ II*, *Christ III*, *Guthlac A* and *Guthlac B*, was the last of the three to be copied (Conner, *Exeter*, pp. 95-147, 148 and 162-4). The poem referred to as *The Advent Lyrics* in the present article is printed in *The Exeter Book*, ed. by George Philip Krapp and Elliott van Kirk Dobbie, ASPR III (London and New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), as *Christ* 1-439, and, as *The Advent Lyrics*, in Robert B. Burlin, *The Old English Advent: a Typological Commentary*, *Yale Studies in English* 168 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968).

<sup>3</sup> See Rosemary Woolf, review of Burlin, *Old English Advent*, *Medium Ævum* 40 (1971), 60-1, Milton McC. Gatch, review of M. Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, *Speculum* 68 (1993), 733-5 (pp. 734-5), and Conner, *Exeter*, pp. 162-4. Susan Rankin, on the other hand, prefers a much earlier date: see Susan Rankin, 'The Liturgical Background of the Old English Advent Lyrics: A Reappraisal', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England; Studies Presented to Peter Clemoes on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. by Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 317-40 (p. 334).

<sup>4</sup> 'Libri huius nati adventus tibi nam patris almi', see Deshman, *Benedictional*, p. 16.

<sup>5</sup> See Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: an Introduction to the Sources*, trans. W. G. Storey and N. K. Rasmussen (Washington, DC: Pastoral Press, 1986), pp. 311-16; W. H. Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy II, The Roman Gospel-Lectionary*, *Alcuin Club Collections* 30 (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), pp. 62-3, and Ursula Lenker, *Die westsächsische Evangelienversion und die Perikopenordnungen im angelsächsischen England*, *Münchener Universitäts-Schriften, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie* 20 (Munich: Fink, 1997), pp. 78-80.

<sup>6</sup> *Elfric's Catholic Homilies: the First Series*, ed. by Peter Clemoes, EETS s.s. 17

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(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), no. vi, p. 228. See also Kenneth Harrison, 'The Beginning of the Year in England, c. 500-900', *Anglo-Saxon England* 2 (1973), 51-70 (p. 51).

<sup>7</sup> Lenker, *Pericopenordnungen*, pp. 79-80 and 110-11.

<sup>8</sup> *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, ed. Warner and Wilson, pp. 2-4 (In Adventu Domini), p. 4 (Vigilia Natalis Domini); *The Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. by H. A. Wilson, Henry Bradshaw Society (hereafter HBS) 24 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1903), p. 5 (Vigilia Natalis Ihesu Christi) and pp. 29-30 (Adventus Christi Ihesu). Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900-1066*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 2 (London: Harvey Miller, 1976), no. 24, p. 53, dates the Benedictional of Archbishop Robert to the 980s. David N. Dumville, 'Liturgical Books for the Anglo-Saxon Episcopate: a Reconsideration', in his *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1992), pp. 66-95 (p. 87), however, argues that the script dates the manuscript to the second quarter of the eleventh century.

<sup>9</sup> *The Leofric Missal*, ed. by Nicholas Orchard, 2 vols, HBS 113-14 (London: Boydell Press, 2002), II 105 (Vigilia Nativitatis Christi) and 228-35 (De Adventu Domini); *The Missal of Robert of Jumièges*, ed. by H. A. Wilson, HBS 11 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1896), pp. 48 (Vigilia Natalis Domini) and 138-44 (De Adventu Domini).

<sup>10</sup> *The Leofric Collectar (Harl. MS. 2961)*, ed. by E. S. Dewick and W. H. Frere, HBS 45 and 56 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1914 and 1921), I, cols 1-16 (De Adventu Domini), cols 16-19 (In Vigilia Natalis Domini); *The Winchester Troper from MSS of the Xth and XIth Centuries*, ed. by W. H. Frere, HBS 8 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1894), p. 3 (De Adventu Domini), and p. 4 (De Nativitate Christi in Gallicantu); *The Canterbury Benedictional (British Museum, Harley MS 2892)*, ed. by Reginald Maxwell Woolley, HBS 51 (London: Harrison and Sons, 1917, repr. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), pp. 3-6 (De Adventu Domini), p. 6 (In Vigilia Domini); *The Claudius Pontificals (from Cotton MS Claudius A. iii in the British Museum)*, ed. by D. H. Turner, HBS 97 (London: Moore and Tillyer, 1971), pp. 1-2 (De Adventu Domini), pp. 2-3 (In Vigilia Domini); *The Portiforium of Saint Wulstan (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 391)*, ed. by A. Hughes, 2 vols, HBS 89-90 (London: Faith Press, 1958-60), I 1-7 (De Adventu Domini), 7-9 (In Vigilia Natalis Domini).

<sup>11</sup> W. H. Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy III: the Roman Epistle-Lectionary*, Alcuin Club Collections 32 (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 19; Frere, *Gospel-Lectionary*, pp. 24 and 56; Lenker, *Perikopenordnungen*, p. 342. For a table showing the Roman series of readings see Margot E. Fassler, 'Sermons, Sacramentaries, and Early Sources for the Office in the Latin West: the Example of Advent', *The Divine Office in the Latin Middle Ages: Methodology and Source Studies, Regional Developments, Hagiography*, ed. by Margot E. Fassler and Rebecca A. Baltzer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 15-47, Table 1.1, pp. 29-30.



<sup>12</sup> Frere, *Gospel-Lectionary*, pp. 24 and 55; Lenker, *Perikopenordnungen*, p. 341.

<sup>13</sup> Frere, *Gospel-Lectionary*, pp. 24-5 and 56; Lenker, *Perikopenordnungen*, pp. 342-3.

<sup>14</sup> Frere, *Gospel-Lectionary*, pp. 25 and 56; Lenker, *Perikopenordnungen*, p. 343.

<sup>15</sup> *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction, Commentary and Glossary*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS s.s. 18 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. xli. For Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, see Réginald Grégoire, *Les homéliaires du moyen âge: inventaire et analyse des manuscrits*, *Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta*, Series Maior, Fontes 6 (Rome: Herder, 1966), pp. 71-114.

<sup>16</sup> Gregory, *Homiliae .xl. in evangelia*, PL 76, 1075-1312, nos. 1, 7, 6 and 20, rearranged as nos. 3-6 in David Hurst, *Gregory the Great, Forty Gospel Homilies, Translated from the Latin* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990), pp. 15-49. The Feast of the Annunciation on 25 March was not celebrated in Rome until about 650 AD, see Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 28-9.

<sup>17</sup> Bede, *Homelie evangelii*, ed. by D. Hurst, CCSL 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), I.1-4, pp. 1-31. Bede's Homilies 3-4 are included in Paul the Deacon's Homiliary for the Wednesday and Friday before Christmas, the days on which the corresponding gospel passages were read in the Roman Series. In modern editions, Bede's four homilies for Advent are placed at the beginning of the year; the earliest complete manuscript of the homilies, however (Boulogne, Bibliothèque municipale 75, s. ix), places homilies 1 and 2 at the end of Book II, with nos. 3-4 at the beginning of Book I; John Chapman, *Notes on the Early History of the Vulgate Gospels* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), pp. 66 and 68, states that Bede probably began the liturgical year with Christmas, and that all four Advent homilies were originally placed at the end of the series.

<sup>18</sup> Bede, *Homelie*, ed. Hurst, p. ix. For an account of the Neapolitan lectionary and its influence on the Lindisfarne Gospels see Chapman, *Vulgate Gospels*, pp. 51-67; the readings are listed in Fassler, 'Sermons', Table 1.2, p. 32.

<sup>19</sup> Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, pp. 28 and 38. See also Radu Constantinescu, 'Alcuin et les "Libelli Precum" de l'époque carolingienne', *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité* 50 (1974), 17-56.

<sup>20</sup> Constantinescu, 'Alcuin et les "Libelli Precum"', p. 42; Clayton, on the other hand, believes that the antiphon is more likely to have belonged to a feast of Mary on the last Sunday of Advent, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, p. 38.

<sup>21</sup> See Clayton, *Cult of the Virgin Mary*, p. 36.

<sup>22</sup> *CHI*, no. xiii, ed. Clemoes, pp. 281-9.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. xxxix and xl, pp. 520-30.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, no. xxxix, pp. 520-3. The homily is based on the epistle for the First Sunday in

Advent, Romans 13.11-14; for its sources see *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction*, ed. Godden, pp. 329-34.

<sup>25</sup> *CHI*, no. xxxix, ed. Clemoes, p. 520.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, no. xl, pp. 524-30; Gregory, *Homiliae*, I.1, PL 76, 1077-81, trans. Hurst, *Gregory the Great*, pp. 15-20; for the sources see *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction.*, ed. Godden, pp. 334-44.

<sup>27</sup> In Anglo-Saxon pericope lists, this is the gospel for the Saturday of the fifth week before the Nativity, see Lenker, *Perikopenordnungen*, p. 341.

<sup>28</sup> *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, ed. Warner and Wilson, p. 2, First Sunday in Advent; *Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. Wilson, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, ed. Warner and Wilson, p. 2; *Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. Wilson, p. 29.

<sup>30</sup> *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, ed. Warner and Wilson, p. 3; *Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. Wilson, p. 29.

<sup>31</sup> *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, ed. Warner and Wilson, p. 3; *Benedictional of Archbishop Robert*, ed. Wilson, p. 30.

<sup>32</sup> British Library, Add. 49598, 5v and 9v, reprod. Deshman, *Benedictional*, pls. 8 and 10.

<sup>33</sup> *Corpus antiphonalium officii*, ed. by René-Jean Hesbert, 6 vols, *Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta*, Series maior, Fontes 7-12 (Rome: Herder, 1963-79), I 4-5 (no. 1b), II 2-3 (no. 1a), and IV 292 (no. 7170).

<sup>34</sup> Biblical quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible unless otherwise stated, but psalm numbers are taken from the Vulgate.

<sup>35</sup> Bede, *In Lucae evangelium expositio* I.i.34, ed. by D. Hurst, CCSL 120 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1960), p. 33. See also *Portiforium of St Wulstan*, ed. Hughes, I 2; Barbara C. Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 28-9, and *The St Albans Psalter (Albani Psalter)*, ed. by Otto Pächt, C. R. Dodwell and Francis Wormald (London: Warburg Institute, 1960), pp. 63-7.

<sup>36</sup> Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, p. 31.

<sup>37</sup> Elizabeth Coatsworth, 'Cloth-making and the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon Literature and Art', in *Medieval Art: Recent Perspectives. A Memorial Tribute to C. R. Dodwell*, ed. by Gale R. Owen-Crocker and Timothy Graham (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 8-25 (pp. 20-21). The passage about the bitter waters is printed in J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament. A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 63, *The Protevangelium of James*, 16.1.

<sup>38</sup> Deshman, *Benedictional*, p. 17, n. 52.

<sup>39</sup> *Protevangelium of James*, 10.1, Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 61.

<sup>40</sup> Eve holds a spindle-whorl in the drawing of the expulsion from Eden in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 11, p. 45, reprod. in Thomas H. Ohlgren, *Anglo-Saxon Textual Illustration. Photographs of Sixteen Manuscripts with Descriptions and Index* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1992), pl. 16.22.

<sup>41</sup> Deshman, *Benedictional*, pp. 10-17. The painting of the Annunciation is one of three scenes in the Benedictional which are related iconographically to scenes on the ninth-century Brunswick Casket (Deshman, pp. 9-10, 262-6 and fig. 1); the cloud, however, seems to be an Anglo-Saxon addition.

<sup>42</sup> Isaiah 45.8; *Portiforium of St Wulstan*, ed. Hughes, I 1-6 (all four Sundays); *Leofric Collectar*, ed. Dewick and Frere, I, cols 1-15 (all four Sundays); *Corpus antiphonarium*, ed. Hesbert, IV 499 (no. 8188).

<sup>43</sup> Deshman, *Benedictional*, p. 17 and pl. 35.

<sup>44</sup> *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, ed. by B. Paulus, CCCMed 16 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), iv, p. 30, Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, pp. 122 and 154. For knowledge of Paschasius at Winchester see *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: Introduction*, ed. Godden, p. lviii, Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, pp. 22 and 97, and Barbara C. Raw, *Trinity and Incarnation in Anglo-Saxon Art and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 153-60 and 165.

<sup>45</sup> Hilda Graef, *Mary, a History of Doctrine and Devotion*, I (London: Sheed and Ward, 1963), p. 10. Cf. *Advent Lyrics* 206-8, below, p. 16.

<sup>46</sup> See 1 Chron. 17.11-14, Psalm 131.11 and Raw, *Trinity*, pp. 150-1.

<sup>47</sup> *Homeliae*, I 3, ed. Hurst, p. 17.

<sup>48</sup> *CHI*, no. xiii, ed. Clemoes, p. 285.

<sup>49</sup> British Library, Cotton Galba A. xviii (Winchester, Old Minster, 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of s. x), 2v, reprod. Ohlgren, *Textual Illustration*, pl. 1.1; possible models for the painting in the Benedictional are discussed by Deshman, *Benedictional*, pp. 62-4.

<sup>50</sup> Reprod. Ohlgren, *Textual Illustration*, pl. 1.17.

<sup>51</sup> See Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, pp. 38-9 and 65-6. The texts are: *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. by Dorothy Bethurum (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), no. ii, pp. 121-2; *The Blickling Homilies*, ed. by R. Morris, EETS o.s. 58, 63 and 73 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1874-80, repr. as one vol. 1967), no. vii, p. 91; *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, ed. by D. G. Scragg, EETS o.s. 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), no. viii, p. 146; *Christ*, 1454-88 (*Exeter Book*, ed. Krapp and Dobbie, pp. 43-4). The source is *Sancti Caesarii Arelatensis sermones*, ed. by G. Morin, 2 vols, CCSL 103-4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953), vol. 103, p. 253, *Sermo* lvii.4.

<sup>52</sup> On the phrase 'rex regum' see Raw, *Trinity*, pp. 117-18, 125 and 141.

<sup>53</sup> Kantorowicz points out that similar terms are used for both events in the New Testament: *hypantes* for the entry into Jerusalem (John 12.13) and *apantes* for Christ's return to earth (1 Thess. 4.17). See E. H. Kantorowicz, 'The "King's Advent" and the Enigmatic Panels in the Doors of Santa Sabina', in his *Selected Studies* (Locust Valley, New York: J. J. Augustin, 1965), pp. 37-75 (p. 43).

<sup>54</sup> *Le Liber pontificalis: Texte, introduction et commentaire*, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 2<sup>nd</sup> series (Paris: Thorin, 1886), ed. L. Duchesne, I 497; *The Lives of the Eighth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis)*, trans. Reginald Davis (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), item 97, para. 35, p. 139. Cf. the description of the reception of a king at Cluny in the eleventh century: *Liber Tramitis aevi Odilonis Abbatis*, ed. P. Dinter, CCM 10 (Siegburg: Schmitt, 1980), II.xxvii.169, pp. 242-3.

<sup>55</sup> *Corpus antiphonarium*, ed. Hesbert, I 4-5 (no. 1b), II 2-3 (no. 1a).

<sup>56</sup> *Blickling Homilies*, ed. Morris, no. vi, p. 67. For discussion of the theme of Christ's kingship see Raw, *Crucifixion Iconography*, pp. 129-46.

<sup>57</sup> Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Matheo Libri XII*, ed. by B. Paulus, 3 vols, CCCMed. 56-56B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984), vol. 56B, p. 1021. See also below, n. 72.

<sup>58</sup> Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 32 (Hautvillers, 816-35), 15v, reprodu. K. van der Horst and J. H. A. Engelbrecht, *Utrecht-Psalter: Vollständige Faksimile-Ausgabe im Originalformat der Handschrift 32 aus dem Besitz der Bibliothek der Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht*, 2 vols (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1984); British Library, Harley 603 (Canterbury, Christ Church, 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of s. xi), 13v, reprodu. Ohlgren, *Textual Illustration*, pl. 2.23.

<sup>59</sup> Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Reg. lat. 12, 37v (Canterbury, Christ Church, xi, provenance Bury St Edmunds), reprodu. Ohlgren, *Textual Illustration*, pl. 3.14.

<sup>60</sup> Ps.-Augustine, *Sermo clv (a) De passione Domini*, vi, 10, PL 39, 2047-53, at cols 2051-2. See also *Ibid.* 9, 'Crux insigne regni'. The passage is quoted in Kantorowicz, 'King's Advent', p. 63, n. 107, and Barbara C. Raw, 'The Dream of the Rood and its Connections with Early Christian Art', *Medium Ævum* 39 (1970), 239-56 (p. 247).

<sup>61</sup> *Homilies of Ælfric, A Supplementary Collection*, ed. by John C. Pope, EETS 259 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), no. xi, 'Sermo ad populum in octavis Pentecosten dicendus', p. 430.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* p. 430.

<sup>63</sup> British Library, Add. 49598, 6r; *Benedictional of Æthelwold*, ed. Warner and Wilson, p. 2, and Deshman, *Benedictional*, pl. 9.

<sup>64</sup> British Library, Add. 49598, 4v-5r, trans. Prescott, *Benedictional*, p. 5.

<sup>65</sup> British Library, Add. 49598, 1r-4r, reprodu. Deshman, *Benedictional*, pls. 1-7.

<sup>66</sup> The antiphons are printed in Burlin, *Advent*, pp. 40-1 and 43, and listed in *Leofric Collectar*, ed. Dewick and Frere, I, cols 15-16. A list of texts containing the Advent antiphons (but not *O admirabile commercium*) is given in Rankin, 'Advent Lyrics', pp. 338-40.

<sup>67</sup> See also below, p. 18.

<sup>68</sup> The word *geryne*, 'mystery', occurs in lines 41, 74, 95, 196, 247 and 423.

<sup>69</sup> BL, Cotton Titus D. xxvii (Winchester, New Minster, 1023-35), 75v; see Raw, *Trinity*, pp. 151-60, pl. XV (b).

<sup>70</sup> See Simon Tugwell, 'Advent Lyrics 348-77 (Lyric No. X)', *Medium Ævum* 39 (1970), 34. The antiphon is found only in the Ivrea Antiphoner, Ivrea, Chapter Library, 106; see *Corpus antiphonale*, ed. Hesbert, I 31 (no. 16b) and III 366 (no. 4012).

<sup>71</sup> See *Leofric Collectar*, ed. Dewick and Frere, I, cols 35-6, and *Corpus antiphonale*, ed. Hesbert, I 58 (no. 23a), II 94-5 (no. 23b) and III 362 (no. 3985). The Old English poem omits the reference to the second element of the exchange, that God became man to make man god. For the teaching, 'Factus est Deus homo, ut homo fieret deus', see Augustine, *Sermo cxxviii*, 1 (PL 39, 1997) and Raw, *Trinity*, pp. 43-4.

<sup>72</sup> Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Matheo*, ed. Paulus, vol. 56B, p. 1012 (on Matt. 21.1-2), and p. 1021 (on Matt. 21.10). Cf. above, p. 11, and n. 57.

<sup>73</sup> Bede, *In Ascensione Domini*, ed. by D. Hurst, CCSL 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), pp. 419-23, trans. M. J. B. Allen and D. G. Calder, *Sources and Analogues of Old English Poetry* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1976), pp. 81-3.

<sup>74</sup> Above, p. 14.

<sup>75</sup> Above, p. 10.

<sup>76</sup> *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, ed. by René-Jean Hesbert (Brussels: Uromant, 1935), pp. 100-101 (no. 80); *Leofric Collectar*, ed. Dewick and Frere, I, col. 134.

<sup>77</sup> *Advent Lyrics* 4: 'heafod . . . healle mære'; cf. Ephes. 5.23: 'Christ is head of the church'.

<sup>78</sup> *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies, the Second Series*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS s.s. 5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), no. xl, pp. 337-9.

<sup>79</sup> *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, ed. by E. Dekkers and J. Fraipont, CCSL 38-40 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956), vol. 40, p. 1663, Ps. 117.22: 'mediator ille Dei et hominum homo Christus Iesus, Deus est.'

<sup>80</sup> British Library, Add. 49598, 5v, reprod. Deshman, *Benedictional*, pl. 8.