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Hu lange wilt þu? How long will you forget me?

Guide to Anglo Saxon text and pronunciation

Pronunciation guide

This is not a complete guide to pronunciation of Anglo-Saxon; for simplicity, it only covers sounds occurring in this text.

Consonants

Letter	IPA	Approximate sound	Letter	IPA	Approximate sound
b	b	<u>bat</u>	l	l	<u>let</u>
c	k	<u>cop</u>	m	m	<u>met</u>
ç	tʃ	<u>chop</u>	n	n	<u>net</u>
cw	kw	<u>queen</u>	ng	ŋg	<u>finger</u> (G is sounded, unlike <i>singer</i>)
d	d	<u>dog</u>	p	p	<u>pat</u>
ð	θ	<u>think</u> (start of syllables)	r	r	(rolled/trilled R)
	ð	<u>other</u> (after vowels)	s	s	<u>same</u> (start of syllables or when doubled)
f	f	<u>file</u> (start of syllables)	z	z	<u>maze</u> (between vowels, unless doubled)
	v	<u>live</u> (after vowels)	sc	ʃ	<u>ship</u>
g	g	<u>go</u>	t	t	<u>tin</u>
ġ	j	<u>yo</u>	þ	θ	<u>think</u> (start of syllables)
	h	<u>hat</u> (start of syllables)		ð	<u>other</u> (after vowels)
h	ç	German <u>ich</u> (after I)	w	w	<u>wet</u>
	x	German <u>ach</u> (after A, O)	wl	ɫ	<u>milk</u> ("dark" L, as in Russian)
hw	ʍ	pompously, <u>what!</u> (H is sounded)			

Vowels

Short

Letter	IPA	Approximate sound
a	ɑ	<u>up</u> / German <u>Mann</u>
æ	æ	<u>bat</u>
e	e	<u>let</u>
i	i	<u>hit</u>
o	o	<u>not</u>
u	u	<u>put</u>
y	y	German <u>Brücke</u>

Long

Letter	IPA	Approximate sound
ā	ɑ:	<u>harp</u> / German <u>Hahn</u>
ǣ	æ:	<u>bad</u>
ē	e:	<u>lay</u>
ī	i:	<u>heat</u>
ō	o:	<u>nought</u>
ū	u:	<u>boot</u>
ȳ	y:	German <u>grün</u>

Diphthongs

In the diphthongs, the first vowel has the stress.

Letter	IPA	Approximate sound	Letter	IPA	Approximate sound
ea	æɑ	vowels from <u>at</u> + <u>up</u>	ēa	æ:ɑ	vowels from <u>at</u> + <u>harp</u>
eo	eɑ	vowels from <u>air</u> + <u>on</u>	ēo	e:ɑ	vowels from <u>air</u> + <u>horn</u>

Anglo-Saxon text

For clarity, punctuation and conventions of macrons to indicate long vowels and dots to indicate palatalisation are used, although these do not appear in the source text.

hū lange wilt þū, Drihten, mīn forġitan?

hwæðer þū oð minne ende wylle; oððe

hū lange wilt þū ahwyrfan

þinne andwlitan fram mē?

hū lange sċeal ic settan on mīne sāwle

þis sorhfulle ġeþeaht

and þis sār æt mīnre heortan?

hwæþer ic ælcce dæġe sċyle?

hū lange sċeal mīn fēond bēon

uppāhafen ofer mē?

beseoh tō mē, Drihten, mīn God, and ġehȳr mē.

onliht mīne ēaġan, þæt hi nāfre ne slāpan

on swylcūm dēaðe,

þȳ læs æfre mīn fēond cweðe:

ic eom strengra þonne hē.

þā þe me swencað, hȳ fægñiað

ġif ic onstyreð bēo,

ac ic þeah on þīne mildheortnesse ġelȳfe

mīn heorte blissað on þīnre hālo,

and ic singe þam Gode þe mē eall gōð syleð,

and lofie þinne na man þū hēhsta God.

Phonetic transcription

See pronunciation guide for explanation of individual sounds.

hu: 'laŋ.ge wilt θu: 'driç.ten mi:n for.'ji.tan?

'mæ.ðer θu: oð 'min.e 'en.de 'wyl:.e; 'oð:e

hu: 'laŋ.ge wilt θu: a.'myr.van

'θin:.e 'and.hi:.tan fram me:

hu: 'laŋ.ge fæql itf 'set:.an on 'mi:.ne 'sa:w.le

θis 'sorx.fu:l:e je.'θæqxt

and θis sa:r æt 'mi:n.re 'heqr.tan?

'mæ.ðer itf 'æ:l.tfe 'dæ:j.e 'fy.le

hu: 'laŋ.ge fæql mi:n fe:ond be:on

'up:.a:.ha.ven 'o.ver me:?

be.'seox to: me: 'driç.ten mi:n god and je.'hy:r me:

'on.li:çt 'mi:.ne 'æ:q.jan θæt hi 'næ:v.re ne 'sla:pan

on 'swyl.tsum 'dæ:q.ðe

θy: læs 'æ:v.re mi:n fe:ond 'kwe.ðe

itf eom 'streŋ.gra 'θon:.e he:

θa: θe me: 'sweŋ.kað hy: 'fæj.ni.að

jif itf 'on.styr.ed be:q

ak itf θæ:qx on 'θi:.ne 'mild.heqrt.nes:.e je.'ly:.ve

mi:n 'heqrt.e 'blis:.að on 'θi:n.re 'hæ:.lu

and itf 'siŋ.ge θam 'god.e θe me: æql: go:d 'sy.leð

and 'lo.vje 'θin:.e 'na.man θu: 'he:x.sta god

English translation

This is a direct translation of the Anglo-Saxon text rather than a standard English Bible edition.

How long will you forget me, LORD?

Will you [forget me] until my end?

How long will you turn

your face away from me?

How long shall I put on my heart

this sorrowful thought,

And this pain in my heart?

Shall I [do it] every day?

How long shall my enemy be

exalted over me?

Behold me, LORD, my God, and heed me.

Enlighten my eyes, so that I will never sleep

in such death.

Lest my enemy ever say,

“I am stronger than he.”

Those who trouble me will rejoice

if I am moved.

But I have trusted in your mercy.

My heart rejoices in your salvation,

And I shall sing to God, who gives me good things,

And I shall praise your name, God in the Highest!