

In the year 995 Olaf Triggvason became king of Norway. He was a zealous man and a good Christian, and he was anxious that all Norwegians and all countries where any of them had settled and were inhabited by the descendants of the ancient Norman race (Scandinavians) should become Christianized. So he hired one, whose name was Stefnir, an Icelfander, to go to his country and endeavor to Christianize the people, viz., the ancient Norwegians, who were the first settlers of Iceland, but Stefnir met with so much opposition that he was only too glad to return to Norway.

King Olaf was not disheartened, but sent another missionary, a priest, called Thangbrand. He stayed for two years and amongst others he baptized several of the leaders, among whom were Hjalte Skeggjason, Hall Thordarson and Gissur. The priest was a wicked man and killed several of his enemies and then returned to Norway, where he had an interview with the king and excused his failure by telling him that the heathen religion was so deeply rooted in Iceland that it was almost impossible to ever hope to see it Christianized. The king on hearing this, flew into a rage, he being a very quick tempered man and threatened to kill any Icelfander who was living at that time in Norway.

Hjalte and Gissur, who left Iceland during the same summer as Thangbrand, hurriedly called all their countrymen together to look into the matter and try to devise some means of allaying the king's anger and the people unanimously elected Hjalte and Gissur delegates to make a compromise. Having arrived in Norway they sought out the king and had an audience with him and after pleading their case the king made an agreement with them to spare all the Icelfanders in Norway on condition that they became Christians. This was successful, as they were easily persuaded by the bishops. Hjalte and Gissur also agreed to sail the following summer for Iceland with the object of converting the Icelfanders to Christianity. When the time came they set sail, accompanied by a priest, by the name of Thormod. They landed about the time of the sitting of Althing, and the priest delivered a powerful address to all the