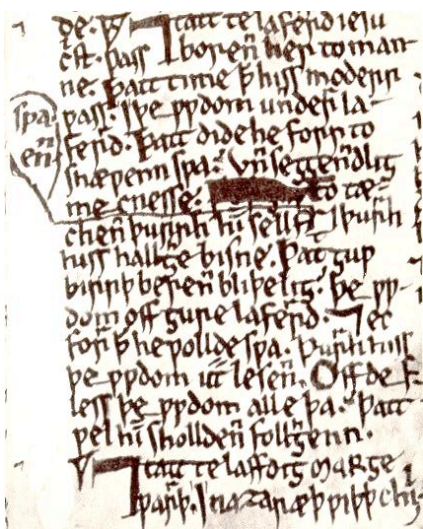


Ormulum (12th century)



Original text

Forp drihtin anan se time comm
 patt ure Drihtin wollde
 ben borenn i piss middellærd
 forr all mankinne nede
 he chæs himm sone kinnessmenn
 all swillke summ he wollde
 & whær he wollde borenn ben
 he chæs all att hiss wille.

Modern translation

As soon as the time came
 that our Lord wanted
 to be born in this middle-earth
 for the sake of all mankind,
 at once he chose some kinsmen,
 all just as he wanted,
 and he decided he would be born
 exactly where he wished.

Wycliffe's Bible (14th century)



Wycliffe translation

For God louede so the
 world, that he gaf
 his oon bigetun sone, that ech
 man that bileueth in him
 perische not, but
 haue euerlastyng lif.

Modern translation

For God loved the
 world in this way: He gave
 his one and only son, so that
 everyone who believes in Him
 will not perish but have
 eternal life.

"The Wife of Bath" from The Canterbury Tales (late 14th century)

Three times she'd travelled to Jerusalem;
And many a foreign stream she'd had to stem;
At Rome she'd been, and she'd been in Boulogne,
In Spain at Santiago, and at Cologne.
She could tell much of wandering by the way:
Gap-toothed was she, it is the truth I say.
Upon a pacing horse easily she sat,
Wearing a large wimple, and over all a hat
As broad as is a buckler or a targe;
An overskirt was tucked around her buttocks large,
And her feet spurred sharply under that.
In company well could she laugh and chat.
The remedies of love she knew, perchance,
For of that art she'd learned the old, old dance.

And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge strem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at Seint-Jame, and at Coloigne.
She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye.
Gat-tothed was she, soothly for to seye.
Upon an amblere esily she sat,
Ywympled wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hippe large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe.
Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,
For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

from Sir Gawain in the Green Knight (late 14th century)

Þe grene knyzt vpon grounde graypely hym dresses,

A littel lut with þe hede, þe lere he discouerez,

His longe louelych lokkez he layd ouer his croun,

Let þe naked nec to þe note schewe.

Gauan gripped to his ax, & gederes hit on hyzt,

Þe kny fot on þe folde he before sette,

Let him doun lyztly lyzt on þe naked