

**Syntax exercise: Parallel texts.** You have enough tools and experience now to recognize major structural features of OHG texts, and a good way to start thinking about syntax is to do your own direct comparison. On the next page, you have a piece of biblical text in Old High German (Tatian), 16th century German (Luther), and Modern German. Don't worry about spellings, differences in how the translations are phrased and such, even though much of that will be pretty clear to you. In looking at the OHG version, you should notice some morphological features we've already discussed at length or in passing, like *gi-* on a preterit verb form (rather than past participle as in the modern language), the 1SG.PRES. verb ending *-ên* (which you may recall was found in some classes, while others had *-u*), as well as nouns that are more clearly inflected than in modern German, such as *forhtu* (*forhta*) and *burgî* (*burg*).

Our focus now, though, is on another simple goal, to identify key differences in the syntax between these parallel texts — a piece of Biblical prose in OHG, Early New High German and Modern German. Read the text and identify as many distinctive traits of the OHG text as you can on the following counts:

- Does the use of articles and subject pronouns match what you expect from the discussion above?
- Are there clear word order differences? If so, what are they — in verb placement, genitive placement, etc.?
- Are there differences in the use of cases and prepositions?
- Is there any negation in the OHG? If so, how does it differ from negation in the modern language?

Focus on substance, and don't worry about giving technical descriptions. [from Wells, will replace with my own data set]

### Tatian

Quam thara gotes engil  
inti gistuont nâh in,

inti gotes berahtnessî  
bischein sie;

giforhtun sie im thô in  
mihhilero forhtu.

Inti quad im thie engil:  
ni curet iu forhten,

ih sagên iu mihhilan  
gifehon, ther ist allemo  
folke,

bithiu uuanta giboran ist  
iu hiutu Heilant, ther ist  
Christ truhtîn in Dauides  
burgi.

berahtnessî = Herrlichkeit  
mihhil = groß  
ni curet = don't! (< *kiosan*)  
(gi)feho = Freude  
bithiu uuanta = da, weil,  
denn  
truhtîn = Herr

### Luther

Vnnd sihe, der engel des  
herrnn trat zu yhn,

vnd die klarheytt des  
herren leuchtet umb sie,

vnnd sie furchten sich  
seer.

vnnd der Engel sprach  
zu yhn: furcht euch  
nicht,

seheth, ich verkundige  
euch grosse freude, die  
allem volck widderfaren  
wirt,

denn euch ist heutte der  
heyland geporn, wilcher  
ist Christus der herre,  
ynn der stadt Dauid.

### Riethmüller

Plötzlich trat ein Engel  
Gottes mitten unter sie,

und das majestätische  
Licht des Herrn  
überstrahlte sie.

Da erschrakten sie bis  
auf den Grund ihres  
Herzens.

Aber der Engel sprach  
sie an: «Erschreckt  
nicht!

Höret, ich bringe euch  
eine überwältigende  
Freude, die für das  
ganze Volk bestimmt ist.

Heute ist in Davids Stadt  
für euch der Retter  
geboren: Christus, der  
Herr.»

