

# Ancient and Early Modern Translations of Daniel 11:40-45

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## Introduction

At the outset we should make a distinction between early translations and very early, or ancient, translations. The sample includes the Hebrew and nine translations from antiquity, not all of which take the Hebrew as a starting point, and 47 early modern versions representing mostly European languages. The nine ancient translations represent two language phyla (Afro-Asiatic, Indo-European). Thus, we have Coptic, Ethiopic (Ge'ez), and Syriac representing Afro-Asiatic and Armenian, Greek (LXX/OG, Th), Latin, and Old Church Slavonic representing Indo-European.

For clarity, a translation of a translation will here be called a gloss. In regard to Hebrew, the gloss used here is my own.<sup>1</sup>

In regard to ancient translations, I have used published glosses where available. This includes Greek (LXX/OG, Th), Coptic (Bohairic, with Latin gloss), Syriac (Lamsa), and Latin (Douey-Rheims). No such resource was available for Armenian, Ge'ez, or Old Church Slavonic. In such cases I have endeavored to do the gloss myself, with whatever resources are available. I specifically disclaim any knowledge of Coptic, so any characterization of readings drawn from Coptic assumes that the published Latin gloss is accurate.<sup>2</sup>

There are no English glosses of early modern translations into other languages, so I have had to supply those, drawing on available lexical resources and on help from people who speak the languages in question. I here gratefully acknowledge receiving input from my wife Lisa Beardsley-Hardy (Finnish),<sup>3</sup> Ted Erho (Ge'ez),<sup>4</sup> Hovsep Karapetyan (Armenian),<sup>5</sup> Jiří Moskala (Czech),<sup>6</sup> Barna Magyarosi (Hungarian),<sup>7</sup> and Roman Kulicki (Polish).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.historicism.org/Documents/Dan10-12\\_Translation.pdf](http://www.historicism.org/Documents/Dan10-12_Translation.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Henricus Tattam, ed., *Prophetæ Majores in Dialecto Linguae Aegyptiacae Memphitica seu Coptica*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1852).

<sup>3</sup> Director of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, MD. Lisa's mother was born in Finland.

<sup>4</sup> Ted Erho replaces Getatchew Haile as Cataloguer of Ethiopic Manuscripts at Hill Memorial Manuscript Library (HMML), Saint John's University, Collegeville, MN. Daniel Wasse is a friend born in Ethiopia.

<sup>5</sup> Saint Mary's Armenian Church in Washington, DC.

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<sup>8</sup> A friend born in Poland.

Translations are discussed at the level of text, verse, clause, and reading. The first three levels can be discussed in terms of the source language, but readings must be directly comparable, so these will be evaluated on the basis of English glosses.

## Issues

### Chapter issues

Perhaps the one most interesting point to emerge from the study is the fact that Martin Luther (1534) chose to begin Dan 12, not at 12:1, but at what we now call 11:36. About one fourth (26.1%) of the early modern translations in the sample – mostly from Northern Europe, mostly in Germanic languages – follow this example. This idea took about two and a half centuries to run its course, but has now been set aside.<sup>9</sup>

Nine early translations (19.6%) which place our passage in Dan 12 do not use verse numbers, but it is possible to know which chapter contains the passage, because, with or without verse numbers, all early translations in the sample use chapter numbers.<sup>10</sup> When Dan 11:40-45 appears in Dan 12, it effectively becomes 12:5-10.

### Verse issues

I was able to locate facsimile images for about two thirds (67.4%) of the sample,<sup>11</sup> prominently including Papyrus 967. This is a primary witness to the text of LXX/OG. One reason why this document is especially important is because vs. 41 is missing from P967, and with it, the last part of clause vs. 40d and all of 42a. Rahlfs reads something back into vs. 41 from another source, but it doesn't fit in an OG context and P967 omits it. These facts require explanation.

The problem may be that the translator was trying to make sense of the passage, or just skipped visually from the king's entry into Egypt (the Hebrew does not say "Egypt" in 40d) to the fact that, once he arrived, Egypt would not be able to escape. This does make a certain amount of sense, but it is not what the Hebrew says. The reason why the Hebrew appeared to the ancient translator not to make sense is that the last three clauses of vs. 40 are proleptic. They show, not what would happen at the outset, but what would happen eventually, as the events of vss. 41-43 unfold. Thus, some parts of vs. 40 refer to events after vs. 41. I don't see this as a difficulty, but the translator of LXX/OG might have.

In any event, the leaves of P967 were divided up and its various parts and pieces found their way to libraries in Europe and the United States (Princeton, Dublin, Köln,

<sup>9</sup> See [www.historicism.org/other/BASG](http://www.historicism.org/other/BASG), "Early: Chapter Report #1."

<sup>10</sup> See "Early: Chapter Report #2."

<sup>11</sup> See "Early: Text Report #1," "Early: Text Report #2."

Madrid), and two semi-folios are located in Barcelona. The last mentioned have been published separately.<sup>12</sup> But this is not why vs. 41 is missing.

P967 shows that the absence of vs. 41 has nothing to do with misplaced pages or with worn papyrus in the case of leaves we still have. Below is a .jpg of P967, 31r, which contains almost all of our passage. You will notice that the wear to this leaf is at the bottom, lower right, but that the place where we would expect vs. 41 to begin is line 3, toward the top.

The facsimile image on the following page (left column) resides at Köln;<sup>13</sup> the corresponding material from later published editions (Rahlfs, right column) is copied in from the Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft website.<sup>14</sup> The Göttingen edition of LXX/OG omits vs. 41 altogether. Large inline numbers in the text are verse numbers; small superscript numbers are line numbers, showing where each line begins – often in the middle of a word. Material we would expect to find, but do not, is indicated with underscores and material unexpectedly present appears in square brackets. Notice below that vs. 41 in the right column is underlined. We would expect to see it, but it is not there. See fig. 1.

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<sup>12</sup> R. Roca-Puig, *Daniel. Dos semifolios del còdex 967: Papir de Barcelona, Inv. n.º i 43* (Barcelona, 1974), 6.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/ifa/NRWakademie/papyrologie/PTheol1.html>.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.academic-bible.com>. The Göttingen edition omits vs. 41 altogether.

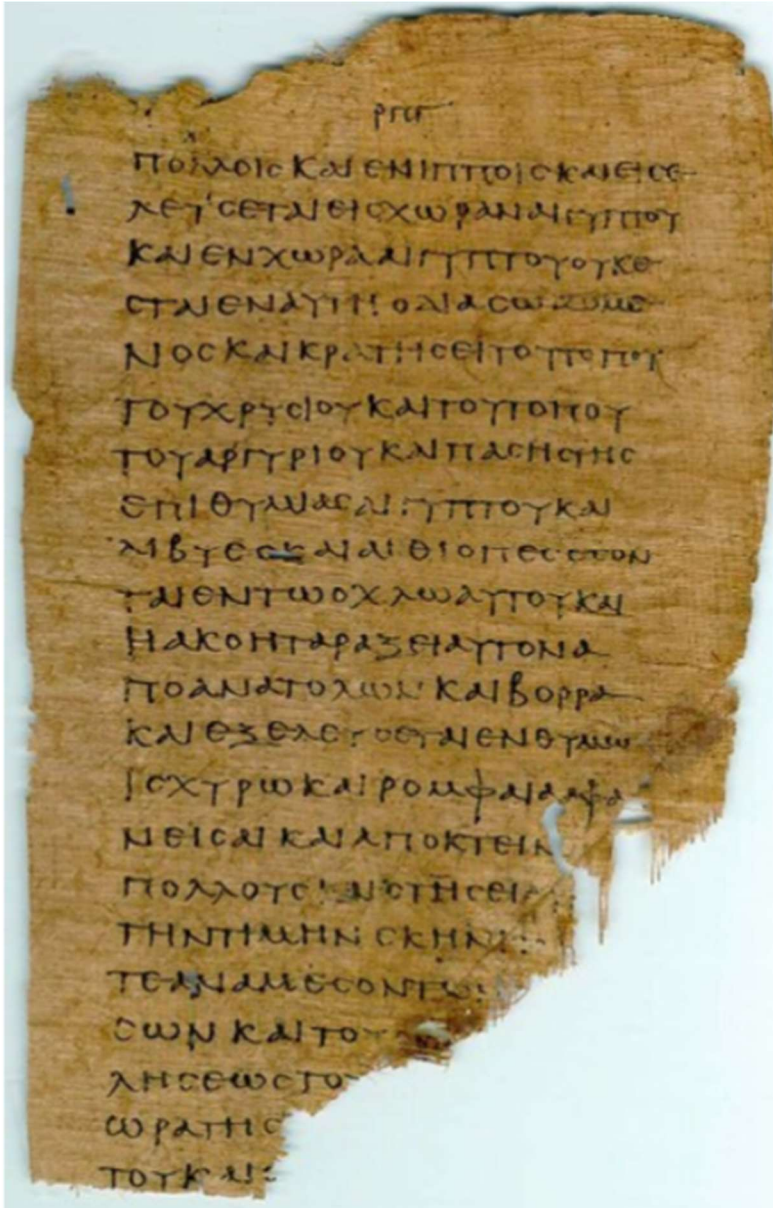


Fig. 1. P967, leaf 31r.

This leaf shows that vs. 41 is missing from P967 because the scribe omitted for whatever reason. We do not know why.

Here now is the same passage in the Göttingen edition:<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup>πολλοῖς καὶ ἐν πλοίοις  
πολλοῖς καὶ εἰσε<sup>2</sup>λεύσεται εἰς  
χώραν Αἰγύπτου **41** καὶ  
ἐπελεύσεται εἰς τὴν χώραν  
μου, **42** <sup>3</sup>καὶ ἐν χώρᾳ  
Αἰγύπτου οὐκ ἔ<sup>4</sup>σται ἐν αὐτῇ  
διασωζόμε<sup>5</sup>νος. **43** καὶ  
κρατήσῃ τοῦ τόπου <sup>6</sup>τοῦ  
χρυσίου καὶ τοῦ τόπου <sup>7</sup>τοῦ  
ἀργυρίου καὶ πάσης τῆς  
<sup>8</sup>ἐπιθυμίας Αἰγύπτου, καὶ  
<sup>9</sup>λίβυες καὶ Αἰθίοπες  
ἔσον<sup>10</sup>ται ἐν τῷ ὄχλῳ  
αὐτοῦ. **44** καὶ <sup>11</sup>[ἡ] ἀκοὴ  
ταράξει αὐτὸν ἀ<sup>12</sup>πὸ  
ἀνατολῶν καὶ βορρᾶ, <sup>13</sup>καὶ  
ἐξελεύσεται ἐν θυμῷ  
ἰ<sup>14</sup>σχυρῶ καὶ ῥομφαίᾳ  
ἀφα<sup>15</sup>ν[ε]ῖσαι καὶ ἀποκτεῖναι  
<sup>16</sup>πολλούς. **45** καὶ στήσῃ  
αὐτοῦ <sup>17</sup>τὴν [τιμνὴν] σκηνὴν  
τοῦ<sup>18</sup>τε ἀνά μέσον τῶν  
θαλασ<sup>19</sup>σῶν καὶ τοῦ ὄρους  
τῆς θε<sup>20</sup>λήσεως τοῦ ἀγίου·  
καὶ ἤξει <sup>21</sup>ῶρα τῆς  
συντελείας αὐ<sup>22</sup>τοῦ, καὶ οὐκ  
ἔσται ὁ βοηθῶν αὐτῷ.

<sup>15</sup> \*\*\*

κατακυριεύσει αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πολὺ καὶ χώραν ἀπομεριεῖ εἰς δωρεάν. <sup>40</sup> καὶ καθ' ὥραν συτελείας συγκερατισθήσεται αὐτῷ ὁ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου, καὶ ἐποργισθήσεται αὐτῷ βασιλεὺς βορρᾶ ἐν ἄρμασι καὶ ἐν ἵπποις πολλοῖς καὶ ἐν πλοίοις πολλοῖς καὶ εἰσελεύσεται εἰς χώραν Αἰγύπτου.

<sup>42</sup> καὶ οὐκ ἔσται ἐν αὐτῇ ὁ διασωζόμενος. <sup>43</sup> καὶ κρατήσῃ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ χρυσοῦ καὶ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἀργυρίου καὶ πάσης τῆς ἐπιθυμίας Αἰγύπτου, καὶ Λίβυες καὶ Αἰθίοπες ἔσονται ἐν τῷ ὄχλῳ αὐτοῦ. <sup>44</sup> καὶ ἀκοὴ ταραξεί αὐτὸν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ βορρᾶ, καὶ ἐξελεύσεται ἐν θυμῷ ἰσχυρῷ καὶ ῥομφαία ἀφανίσει καὶ ἀποκτεῖναι πολλούς. <sup>45</sup> καὶ στήσῃ αὐτοῦ τὴν σκηνὴν τότε ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν θαλασσῶν καὶ τοῦ ὄρους τῆς θελήσεως τοῦ ἀγίου· καὶ ἤξει ὥρα τῆς συντελείας αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἔσται ὁ βοηθῶν αὐτῷ.

In this edition we have only the clauses, "And he will advance into the country of Egypt" (40d[i]), "And there will be no one that is delivered in it" (42b). What this skips over – after 40d[i] ("he will enter lands"), is the last part of vs. 40d ("and overflow, and pass through"), all of vs. 41 ("He will come against the Glorious Land and thousands will fall. But these will escape him: Edom, Moab, and the first of the Ammonites"), and all of vs. 42a ("He will extend his hand against various countries"). It picks up again at vs. 42b ("and the land of Egypt will not be spared"), or in McLay's recent translation, "And there will be no one that is delivered in it."<sup>16</sup> What all this means is that, for P967 and the Göttingen edition which follows it, the king's first stop is Egypt with nothing else along the way.

Notice that Rahlfs has, καὶ ἐπελεύσεται εἰς τὴν χώραν μου, for vs. 41: "and he will come upon my land," i.e., for the purpose of attacking it. I don't know where the editor found this reading, but it doesn't fit the sense of the passage surrounding it, nor does it correspond to any other ancient version.

Göttingen is to be followed here, rather than Ralfs, which means that LXX/OG skips over all of vs. 41, and not only that, but the last part of 40 and the first part of 42. Verse 41 is truly and fairly missing from the passage in this version of the Greek.

### Clause issues

I have divided the six verses of our passage into 17 clauses for purposes of analysis, and of them ask 22 questions. Thus, some clauses support multiple questions, and each question can receive more than one answer. I will call these answers readings.<sup>17</sup>

In this study clause divisions correspond to the placement of Hebrew accents in the following manner. Every verse in the Hebrew Bible contains an *atnach*. The function

<sup>16</sup> R. Timothy McLay (Oxford UP: 2009), <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/40-daniel-nets.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> In what follows, all documentation is found as menu items under one link: [www.historicism.org/BASG/Presentation\\_20210502.html](http://www.historicism.org/BASG/Presentation_20210502.html). See "Master List of Attested Readings."

of *atnach* is to divide a verse in half conceptually. An accent that often divides the above halves in half is *zaqeph*. The above two accents account for all the clause divisions in the study, with one exception. Verses 40b and 40c are divided also by *rebia*, which in vs. 40 comes between *zaqeph* and *atnach*. The final accent of each verse is *silluq*.<sup>18</sup>

Having established these clause divisions, it is interesting to notice that ancient Armenian does not have vs. 40d. P967 has part of 40d; Armenian omits it altogether, but contains vs. 41, which LXX/OG omits.<sup>19</sup> In seven early translations (15.2% of the sample) vss. 41c and 41d are reversed.<sup>20</sup> In the Danish translation of Christian III (1550) (2.2%) vss. 42a and 42b are reversed.<sup>21</sup> And in slightly more than half of the early modern translations in the sample (54.3%) vss. 43b and 43c are combined as one.<sup>22</sup>

In early translations that do not use verse numbering (39.1%),<sup>23</sup> it is not always clear where a given clause should appear. In the French translation of Ostervald (1744), the last clause of vs. 40 is treated as though it were the first clause of vs. 41.<sup>24</sup> In one Finnish translation (1642) the last two clauses of vs. 42 are treated by later editors as though they were the first two clauses of vs. 43.<sup>25</sup> Here the issue is not what the text says, but how the verses are numbered. It is only to be expected that, as verse numbering started making its appearance in Europe, there would be some variation in how the numbers are used.<sup>26</sup>

Observations such as these can be drawn directly from a document in its original language. As we move on to readings, however, and the process of evaluating how each translator understood what he was translating, our evaluation will be performed on the basis of English glosses.

## Readings

By readings I mean the answer that a translator supplies to whatever questions are raised by a given clause. These answers are here distinguished from each other with letters. Thus, there are (a) readings, (b) readings, and so on. The letter used in this rating system are largely arbitrary, and yet (a) readings always correspond to the sense of the Hebrew, while (b) readings and any subsequent to that do not correspond to the Hebrew. So there is a contrast between (a) readings and not (a) readings.

In some cases the Hebrew itself is ambiguous, allowing for a certain variety of viewpoint. A good example of this is found in vs. 41d, where the Hebrew says *were šit*

<sup>18</sup> See "Clause Divisions in the Study and in the Hebrew Text."

<sup>19</sup> See "Early: Clause Report #1."

<sup>20</sup> See "Early: Clause Report #2."

<sup>21</sup> See "Early: Clause Report #3."

<sup>22</sup> See "Early: Clause Report #4."

<sup>23</sup> See "Early: Verse Report #1."

<sup>24</sup> See "Early: Verse Report #2."

<sup>25</sup> See "Early: Verse Report #3."

<sup>26</sup> We have another example of this in Dan 11:23/24, where the last word of vs. 23 is numbered as the first word of vs. 24.

*b<sup>e</sup>nê 'ammôn* "and the first of the children of Ammon." But what does "first" mean? First in status (a)? First in sequence (some) (b)? Last in sequence (remnant) (c)? Most in number (d)? Most in power (e)? All (f)? The clause has been understood in a number of ways. The (c) reading is especially interesting, because it makes "first" mean "last." But on reflection there is a certain logic to this.

Because Greek was the first language into which Daniel was translated, LXX/OG must be taken as a witness to the Hebrew, and we assume the same is true of Th. But in both cases there is considerably less than perfect agreement with the source document. Using the rating system described above, LXX/OG shows 31.8% agreement with MT in Dan 11:40-45, and Th shows 45.5% agreement. The Latin Vulgate is comparatively close to the Hebrew, at 59.1%. But, for whatever reason, the closest correspondence, among ancient translations represented in the sample, is that between Hebrew and Classical Ethiopic, or Ge'ez, at 63.6% (for Ms. groups A, B, L).<sup>27</sup>

Ancient translations provide an introduction to (a) readings and other readings.<sup>28</sup> For the rest, I have done the tally in two ways: readings by translation, and translations by reading.<sup>29</sup> Not all readings are of equal interest, and no (a) reading will receive focused attention here, because it meets our initial expectations at the outset. In what follows, we will only consider (b) readings and beyond. Other categories include: (o) Other, (u) Unspecified, and (x) Not present.

## Discussion

We now review the 22 clause/question/answer combinations that form the exegetical heart of the study. Recall that any clause can raise multiple questions, and that any question can receive multiple answers.<sup>30</sup> Clauses with multiple questions are 40a (1, 2), 40d (1, 2, 3), 43c (1, 2), and 45a (1, 2). The following is a framework for the discussion. For more detail, please see the accompanying slides.<sup>31</sup>

40a(1)	When do the events occur?
40a(2)	Does the passage mention horns?
40b	Does the passage mention a storm?
40c	Is the reference to horsemen, or to horses?
40d(1)	Subclause 1: Where does KN go?
40d(2)	Subclause 2: What does KN do?
40d(3)	How many subclauses are there?
41a	Where does KN go first?
41b	Do many fall, or become weak?
41c	Who or what are affected?

<sup>27</sup> See "Ancient: Percent Agreement with Hebrew."

<sup>28</sup> See "Ancient: All (a) Readings," "Ancient: All Not (a) Readings."

<sup>29</sup> See "Early: Readings by Translation," "Early: Translations by Reading."

<sup>30</sup> See "Master List of Attested Readings," "Early: Translations by Reading."

<sup>31</sup> See "Presentation: Paper."

41d	How many of the Ammonites escape?
42a	How many lands are referred to?
42b	Who or what fails to escape?
43a	Treasure
43b	What else does KN take?
43c(1)	What people groups are mentioned?
43c(2)	Is the focus on them, or on KN?
44a	What provokes KN?
44b	How does he respond?
45a(1)	Is his tent described or named?
45a(2)	Is the mountain described or named?
45b	Who or what reaches its end?

## Conclusion

I return to the analysis of Martin Luther in 1534, which raises the question, What exactly are we studying? Are we in Dan 11, or in Dan 12? By taking the position he does, Luther has touched a nerve within Daniel scholarship, because vs. 36 is almost universally held to be a major turning point in the chapter – and perhaps the major turning point. Another question is, Was he right?

There is a wealth of material bearing on this question, but I do not wish to propose a facile answer at the end of this presentation, when there is no time to give it due consideration. The position Luther took is so substantial, that to do it justice we must build our answer systematically. Perhaps this is a topic that could be considered in a future presentation.