

## Muspilli

Original in Old High German

... his day will come when he must die. As soon as the soul starts on its way and leaves the corpse behind., a legion comes from the stars of heaven and another comes from the fire of hell: they fight over the soul. The soul must worry until the decision is made to which host the soul must go. For if Satan's followers obtain it, they will lead it immediately to where only pain awaits, in fire and darkness: that is truly a terrible sentence. But if those who come from heaven fetch it and it belong-s to the angels, they will bring it immediately to the kingdom of heaven. There, there is life without death, light without darkness, shelter without cares; no one is ill there. For if a man gains a place in paradise, a dwelling in heaven, he will receive much help. Therefore it is very necessary for each man that his heart force him to do God's will gladly and heartily to avoid the fire and pain of hell, where old Satan awaits with hot flames. He who knows that he is a sinner should consider this with care. Woe to him who must pay for his sins in darkness and burn in the fires. It is truly a horrible fate if the man cries to God and no help comes to him. The miserable soul still hopes for salvation, but it no longer rests in the thoughts of the heavenly God for it did not show itself worthy of this according to its acts here in the world. Thus when the mighty king sets the time and place of the judgement, each family must come, for no man dare avoid the order thinking that not every man need come to the judgement. There before the judge he must account for everything which he did in the world.

I have heard the men who are learned in the law of the world tell about how the Antichrist will come to battle with Elias. The enemy is armed; then the battle will begin between them. The fighters are so powerful, the cause so great. Elias fights for the eternal life, he wishes to strengthen the supremacy of the righteous: therefore he who rules heaven will help him. The Antichrist stands with the archfiend, with Satan who must allow him to be destroyed: therefore he shall fall wounded on the battlefield and be defeated there.

But many men of God believe that Elias will be injured in the battle and when Elias' blood drips on the earth, the mountains will burn, no tree will remain standing on earth, the rivers will dry up, the swampland will consume itself, the heaven will slowly perish in flame, the moon will fall, the earth will burn, no stone will remain standing (or: when these signs appear on earth). The day of judgement will be at hand and it will come with fire to punish men. No person's kin can help him before the Muspilli. For when the entire earth is consumed and fire and air sweep everything away, where then is the allotted ground for which a man fought with his relatives? The ground is burned away, the soul stands there not knowing what to do nor how to make amends and thus it goes to hell.

Therefore, it is necessary for a man, when he comes before the judgement, to have judged correctly himself. For then he need not worry when he comes to the judgement. The weak man never knows who is watching him when he offends the law through bribery. He does not realize that then the devil stands hidden nearby. He quietly stores up the tales of all the evil things the man ever-did and tells them all when he comes to the Last Judgement. Therefore, no one should ever take bribes.

When the heavenly horn-sounds and the Judge, who is to judge the living, starts on his way, the greatest of heavenly hosts sets out with him. The horde is so bold, that no one can withstand it. Then the judge goes to the place which has been marked for the judgement, and there the judgement about which men have always spoken will take place. Then angels travel over the land and awake the people, directing them to go to the judgement. Then each man will arise from the earth; each will free himself from his grave. He will, however, retain his body so that he can give an account of everything and be judged according to his deeds.

Then he who is to judge and pass sentence on the living and dead sits down and a legion of angels, holy men, stands about him, the area is so great. Many who have risen from their rest come to the judgement. And there no one can hide anything. There the hand will speak and the head talk and likewise every other part of the body even unto the little finger will admit the murderous deed the man did among men. There is not a man so cunning that he might lie about something and cover up any deed whatsoever; the king will find out about everything unless the man has made amends though having given alms and having done penance for his crimes by fasting. He who has done penance may be happy when he comes before the judgement. Then the sacred cross upon which Christ was hanged will be carried forth. Then he will look at the wounds which he received as a man, which he suffered out of love for mankind.