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Martynas Mažvydas

The little book Itself Speaks to the High Lithuanians and Low Lithuanians

1 Brothers, sisters, take me and read me,
2 And reading, consider this:
3 Your fathers fervently desired to have this doctrine
4 But were not able to obtain it in any way.
5 They wanted to see it with their eyes
6 And also to hear it with their ears.
7 Now what your fathers ever saw
8 Now all this has come to you.
9 All men, look and pay attention,
10 Look the word of the kingdom of heaven is coming to you.
11 Receive this word graciously and with joy
12 And teach the family in your homes.
13 Your sons and daughters should know this
14 And love this word of God with all their heart.
15 If your brothers and sisters will not scorn these words,
16 You will make God the Father and the Son dear to you.
17 And you will be blessed under the eyes of God.
18 You will have blessing in all things.
19 With this doctrine you will truly know God
20 And will come near to the kingdom of heaven.
21 Brothers and sisters, do not delay to read me
22 If you wish to live according to the will of God.
23 If anyone wishes to sing a holy song,
24 He should have me under his eyes.
25 Hold me before yourself day and night
26 And never cast me from you.
27 If anyone will cast me from himself,
28 He will not receive any benefit from me.
29 I say that such a one must always go astray
30 And must not know anything about his salvation.
31 Whoever should not wish to know and learn this doctrine
32 Must be in eternal darkness.
33 Therefore, you people come near to me
34 And live according to this holy doctrine.
35 You will drive away the old darkness from you
36 You will rescue your sons and daughters from it
37 If you will know this small doctrine of the Christians

38 And will guide yourself according to it.
39 Give up sprites, gnomes, and gnomes guarding the fields
40 Abandon all diabolic goddesses.
41 These goddesses cannot give you any good
42 But must destroy all eternally.
43 You have salvation and all things from this God
44 Whose commandments you see here in me.
45 This God created heaven and earth with one word
46 And made men and all things in this way.
47 He alone can help every man
48 He can give salvation and blessing.
49 This God wishes to love all men greatly.
50 He wishes to give the kingdom of heaven as a gift.
51 The flying goblin and goddesses cannot do this
52 But rather can push people into the fire of hell.
53 Give up these goddesses, join the great God.
54 All of you receive this doctrine joyfully.
55 This doctrine should correctly teach you
56 How you should get to know God and also praise him.
57 This doctrine shows the true way to the Son of God,
58 Our Savior Jesus Christ.
59 You will truly know this Son and Father
60 If you will know and understand this doctrine well.
61 You see people without this doctrine erring
62 And having a hundred goddesses (if this is large).
63 I know and dare to say this here
64 That I would know one word of the commandment of God
65 And would remember at least two words of the Lord's Prayer.
66 If you ask a man, Do you know how to say the Lord's Prayer?
67 Or whether he could remember the commandments of God,
68 Or can you read the articles of the Creed of Christian?
69 Or can you know anything about the salvation of the soul?
70 The man must immediately reply to you
71 That he knows better how to plow than to say the Lord's Prayer.
72 I have never heard the Ten Commandments of God, he says,
73 Nor have I read the articles of the Creed of the Christians.
74 I have not been in a church for ten years
75 I have only looked at witchcraft with a soothsayer.
76 It is better to eat a rooster with a holy soothsayer
77 Than to listen to the singing of disciples of the church.
78 Oh, lords, listen and consider
79 Hear these voices of your people.
80 God will desire to have their souls from you
81 Which he put into your hands to guide.
82 O lords, all of you have a mercy on people.
83 Send people to pastors and disciples.
84 Order them to go to church every Sunday.
85 Urge pastors to teach the people.
86 Ask preachers and pastors with one voice.
87 Bet very much that they not hide this doctrine.

88 If pastors should be too lazy to preach this doctrine themselves,
89 You will be able to teach people in their homes.
90 But it is the duty of pastors to teach people
91 For all are appointed for this.
92 O you pastors, according to your old duty
93 Teach people this: everyone has gone astray.
94 Here you have a short doctrine of Christendom
95 According to the custom of the old church.
96 Read it and put it into the hands of every child
97 Both Low Lithuanian and High Lithuanian.
98 Urge people to learn this short doctrine
99 Without which a broader doctrine cannot stand.
100 If you delay to teach this short doctrine,
101 You will eternally destroy your sheep.
102 Therefore, O Pastors, have mercy on the sheep.
103 Fear the strict judgment and anger of God.
104 It is better to teach people the words of God here
105 Than to have the strict judgment or anger of God.
106 Therefore, take this short doctrine into your hands
107 And feed your sheep with this small doctrine of God.
108 In addition, await a broader doctrine every day
109 And live long in the world with the will of God.
110 See the word of God fervently day and night
111 And accept my work as good.

Translation by Gordon B. Ford, Jr. in *The Old Lithuanian Catechism of Martynas Mažvydas*.
Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V., 1971, pp. 14-21.