

Heyr, himna smiður

Here, Heaven's Maker

Heyr, himna smiður,
hvers skáldið biður,
komi mjúk til mín
miskunnin þín.
Því heit eg á þig,
þú hefur skaptan mig,
eg er þrællinn þinn,
þú ert Drottinn minn.

Guð, heit eg á þig,
að græðir mig,
minnst, mildingur, mín,
mest þurfum þín.
Ryð þú, röðla gramur,
ríklyndur og framur,
hölds hverri sorg
úr hjartaborg.

Gæt, mildingur, mín,
mest þurfum þín
helst hverja stund
á hölda grund.
Set, meýjar mögur,
máls efni fögur,
öll er hjálp af þér,
í hjarta mér.

Hear, heaven's maker
what the poet bids,
bring soft to me
your mercy.
I beg of you,
for you created me,
I am your servant,
You are my Lord.

God, I beg of you,
heal me,
remember how great
our need of thee.
Almighty God,
Heaven's king,
clear away human sorrow,
take it from our hearts.

Let your grace protect me
in my sore need
every moment
on this earth.
Sweet Jesus, Mary's son,
put in my heart,
beautiful thoughts,
for all help comes from thee.

*NB: the above English version is a rough
translation only, and is not designed
to be sung*

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Below is a pronunciation guide to assist in your preparation of *Heyr, himna smiður*.
(Please note that it only relates to this piece, and is not a comprehensive guide to Icelandic pronunciation as a whole.)

The Icelandic language contains 3 characters not in use in modern English:

þ (called 'Thorn'), and pronounced 'th' (as in 'thin').

ð (called 'Eth'), and pronounced 'th' (as in 'the'). The upper case version is Ð.

æ (called 'Aye'), and pronounced 'i' (as in 'might').

Vowels

There are seven vowels in Icelandic, a, e, i, o, u, y and æ.

Some of these can have an acute accent added (´),

which changes the pronunciation, and 'o' can also have an umlaut (¨) over it.

a as in 'mat' (a hard 'a' sound)

á 'ow' as in 'fowl'

e as in 'met'

i as in 'bit'

í 'ee' as in 'peel'

o as in 'hot'

ö 'uh' sound as in 'murder'

u does not have an accurate equivalent in English, but virtually identical to a French 'u' (as in 'tu'), or a German 'ü' (as in 'über')

ú as in 'cool'

æ 'i' as in 'might'

N.B. 'e' is always pronounced, even when placed at the end of a word.

Consonants

The basic pronunciation of the individual letters, when not being used in a special combination:

b, d, f, k, l, m, n, p, t, v as in English

g Usually always a hard 'g' as in 'get'.
Here, it applies to guð, gæt, græðir, grund, gramur, sorg, hjartaborg
A soft 'g' is sometimes required, and is pronounced in a similar (though softer and gentler) way to the German word "milch".
Applies to mig, þig, eg, og, mögur, fögur

h sounds as a separate letter, even coming after 'p'.

j 'y' sound as in 'yellow'

r slightly trilled (as in Scottish or Irish)

s as in 'sit', not a 'z' sound as in 'bears'

þ 'th' as in 'thin'

Ð ð 'th' as in 'the'

There are a few combinations of letters with special pronunciations:

hv as 'kv'

fn as 'p'

ll as 'tl'

ng as 'nk' occurring at the end of a word, and as 'ngk' when placed in the middle, as in 'mildingur'

ey as 'a' in bale

ei as 'a' in tale