

Happy the Man Who Feareth God

Wohl dem der in Gottes Furcht steht
Martin Luther, 1524
Tr. Richard Massie, 1854

8.8. 8.8.

Wo Gott zum Haus
Joseph Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1533
Setting: Johann Hermann Schein, 1627, alt.

1 Hap - py the man who fear - eth God, Whose feet His
2 Thy wife shall, like a fruit - ful vine, Fill all thy
3 Lo! to the man these bless - ings cleave Who in God's
4 Out of Mount Zi - on God shall send, And crown with
5 He shall be with thee in thy ways, And give thee

ho - ly ways have trod; Thine own good hand shall nour - ish
house with clus - ters fine; Thy child - ren all be fresh and
ho - ly fear doth live; From him the an - cient curse hath
joy thy lat - ter end, That thou Je - ru - sa - lem mayst
health and length of days; Yea, thou shalt child - ren's child - ren

thee, And well and hap - py shalt thou be.
sound, Like o - live shoots thy ta - ble round.
fled By A - dam's race in - her - it - ed.
see In fa - vor and pros - per - i - ty.
see, And peace on Is - ra - el shall be.

Happy the Man Who Feareth God

BASED ON PSALM 128, “Happy the Man Who Feareth God” (*Wohl dem der in Gottes Furcht steht*) is one of Luther’s metrical psalm settings of 1524, which also include such texts as “From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee” and “O Lord, Look Down from Heaven, Behold.” Unlike the sober and austere quality of the other hymns, however, “Happy the Man Who Feareth God,” like the Psalm on which it is based, expresses an exuberant spirit of rejoicing in the good gifts of God. The text first appeared in print in the Erfurt Enchiridion, and from there entered into virtually all the Lutheran hymn-books.

The Erfurt Enchiridion assigned the tune “Jesus Christus, unser Heiland” (the earlier tune, not to be confused with the later tune that goes by that name in modern hymnals), which, however, did not fit well with the tone of the hymn. Johann Walter provided a more fitting tune later the same year in his *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn*, Wittenberg, 1524, No. 26, but the tune was difficult and would be replaced in Joseph Klug’s *Geistliche Lieder auff’s new gebessert*, Wittenberg, 1533, with the tune now known as “Wo Gott zum Haus,” which would come to be the standard tune for this text. The setting here provided is slightly altered from that by Johann Hermann Schein, 1627.

The translation is by Richard Massie, *Martin Luther’s Spiritual Songs*, London, 1854. It was included in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book*, but is not found in *The Lutheran Hymnal* or the *Lutheran Service Book*. The text and music here provided may be freely used and reproduced for any purpose whatever, and are offered with the prayer that they may serve for the edification of Christian people everywhere.