

Salvation unto Us Has Come

Es ist das Heil uns kommen her
Paul Speratus, 1523
Tr. composite

8.7.8.7.8.8.7

Es ist das Heil
German melody, 15th c.
Arr. *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The lyrics are written below the notes. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

2 What God did in His Law demand
And none to Him could render
Caused wrath and woe on ev'ry hand
For man, the vile offender.
Our flesh has not those pure desires
The spirit of the Law requires,
And lost is our condition.

3 It was a false, misleading dream
That God His Law had given
That sinners could themselves redeem
And by their works gain heaven.
The Law is but a mirror bright
To bring the inbred sin to light
That lurks within our nature.

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| <p>4 From sin our flesh could not abstain,
Sin held its sway unceasing;
The task was useless and in vain,
Our guilt was e'er increasing.
None can remove sin's poisoned dart
Or purify our guileful heart—
So deep is our corruption.</p> <p>5 Yet as the Law must be fulfilled
Or we must die despairing,
Christ came and hath God's anger stilled,
Our human nature sharing.
He hath for us the Law obeyed
And thus the Father's vengeance stayed
Which over us impended.</p> <p>6 Since Christ hath full atonement made
And brought to us salvation,
Each Christian therefore may be glad
And build on this foundation.
Thy grace alone, dear Lord, I plead,
Thy death is now my life indeed,
For Thou hast paid my ransom.</p> <p>7 Let me not doubt, but trust in Thee,
Thy Word cannot be broken;
Thy call rings out, "Come unto Me!"
No falsehood hast Thou spoken.
Baptized into Thy precious name,
My faith cannot be put to shame,
And I shall never perish.</p> <p>8 The only righteous in God's sight
Are they who are believing,
But faith shines forth with heav'nly light,
Good works in love performing.
Though faith is all that God requires,
Our love the neighbor's good desires,
If we're born of the Spirit.</p> | <p>9 The Law reveals the guilt of sin
And makes men conscience-stricken;
The Gospel then doth enter in
The sinful soul to quicken.
Come to the cross, trust Christ, and live;
The Law no peace can ever give,
No comfort and no blessing.</p> <p>10 Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
Yet faith alone doth justify,
Works serve the neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living.</p> <p>11 Hope waits in patience for that time
When God will come with power.
When to expect this joy sublime,
God sets for us no hour.
He knows full well how best to aid,
Though help may often be delayed.
In this we all must trust Him.</p> <p>12 If His goodwill be hid in night,
Dismiss this fear unbidden.
To those in whom is His delight,
His love is often hidden.
His Word shall take away thy doubt,
And if thy flesh its "No" should shout,
Still cast from thee all terror.</p> <p>13 May glory, laud, with highest praise,
For this, our God's salvation,
To Father, Spirit, Son be raised,
Who'll bring unto completion
The work He hath begun in us
To His majestic gloriousness.
For this His name be hallowed.</p> |
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14 His kingdom come, His will on earth
Be done as 'tis in heaven.
Of daily bread be there no dearth,
And be our sins forgiven,
As we do them who owe us aught.
Into temptation lead us not,
From evil free us. Amen.

One of the truly defining hymns of the Reformation, “Salvation unto Us Has Come” (“*Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*”) was included in the first Lutheran hymnal, the *Achtliederbuch* of early 1524. Before that, it had appeared in broadsheet form. Its author, Paul Speratus (1484–1551), was an early adherent of the Reformation who had been excommunicated in 1522 for preaching Luther’s doctrine and for abandoning his priestly vow of celibacy by taking a wife. He was finally imprisoned and condemned to death by burning. It was under these circumstances that Speratus wrote his hymn. Thankfully, due to the intercessions of some influential friends, he was released, he and his wife making their way to Wittenberg, where he became a colleague of Martin Luther.

No other hymn expresses so completely, with such directness of language and joy of expression, the teaching of the Gospel as brought back into the light through the Reformation. Luther himself is said to have wept upon first hearing it sung by a beggar outside his window. Essential to the hymn’s effectiveness is its tune, which is borrowed from a 15th-century Easter hymn, “Rejoice, Thou Worthy Christendom” (“*Freu dich, du werthe Christenheit*”). The arrangement of the tune provided here is that found in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, #377, and the *Lutheran Service Book*, 2006, #555. The text, too, is taken from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, with the addition of stanzas 8, 11–12, and 14, which have been newly translated for the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book. Stanza 13 has also been retranslated to reflect the original references to the Lord’s Prayer and Philippians 1:6, “He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

The text and music here provided are in the public domain and are offered with the prayer that they may serve for the edification of Christian people everywhere. For more information, visit the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book at:

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presents

Salvation unto Us Has Come

by

Paul Speratus

published in

Davenport, Iowa

2014