

O Man, Thy Grievous Sin Bemoan

The Passion, or the suffering of Jesus Christ,
drawn from the Four Evangelists.

Sebald Heyden

Translated by the Rev. Christopher J. Neuendorf

The Free Lutheran Chorale-Book
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AD 2020

Man, Thy Grievous Sin Bemoan

O Mensch, beweine dein Sünde groß

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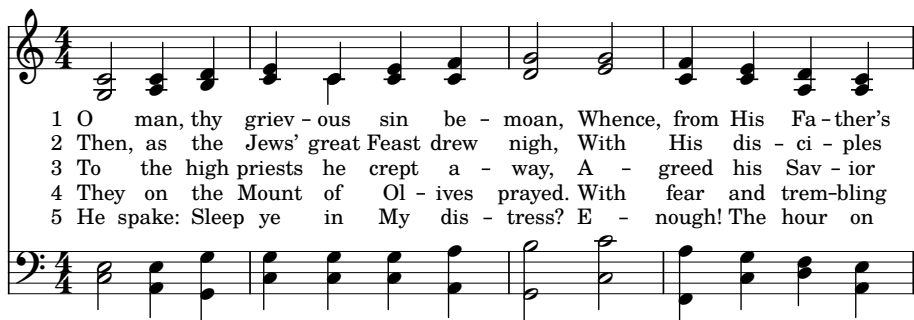
ES SIND DOCH SELIG ALLE, DIE

Schald Heyden, 1530

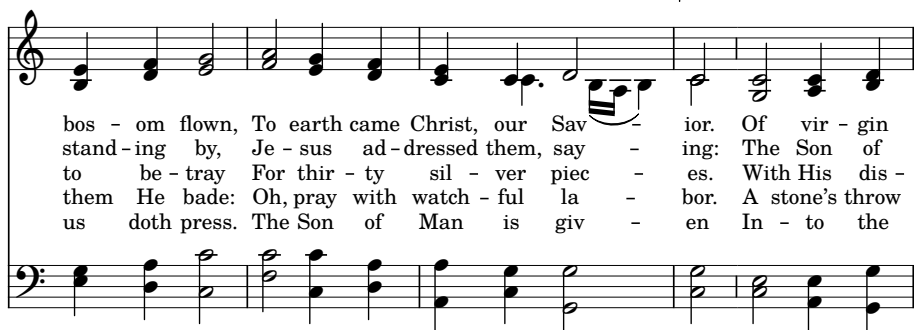
Kirchenamt, Strassburg, 1525

Tr. Christopher J. Neuendorf, 2020

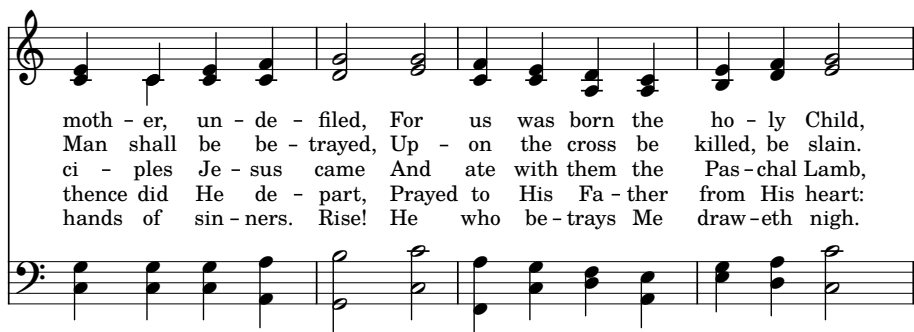
Setting: Melchior Vulpius, adapt.



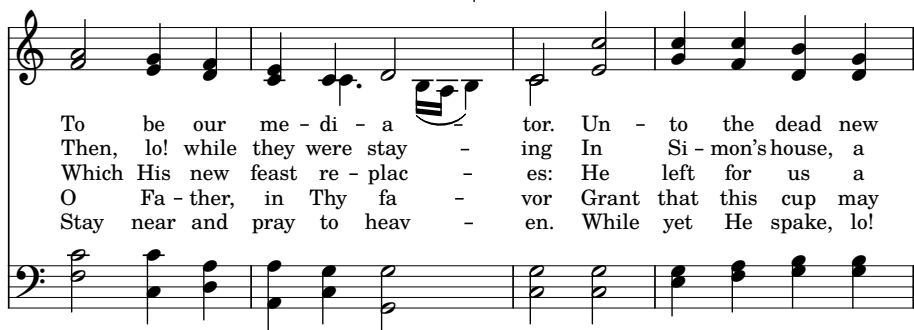
1 O man, thy grievous sin be - moan, Whence, from His Fa - ther's
2 Then, as the Jews' great Feast drew nigh, With His dis - ci - ples
3 To the high priests he crept a - way, A - greed his Sav - ior
4 They on the Mount of Ol - ives prayed. With fear and trem - bling
5 He spake: Sleep ye in My dis - tress? E - nough! The hour on



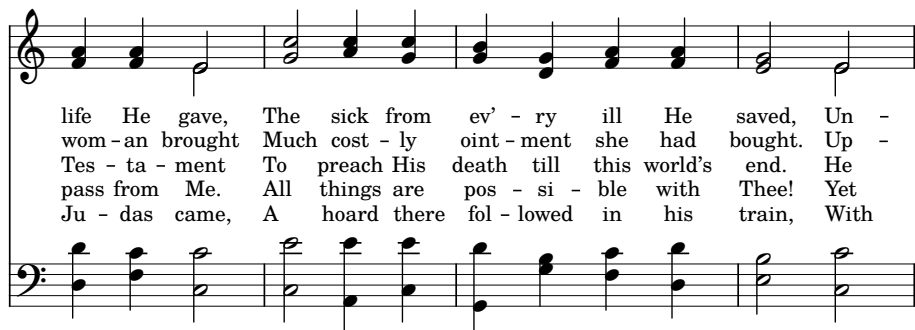
bos - om flown, To earth came Christ, our Sav - ior. Of vir - gin
stand - ing by, Je - sus ad - dressed them, say - ing: The Son of
to be - tray For thir - ty sil - ver piec - es. With His dis -
them He bade: Oh, pray with watch - ful la - bor. A stone's throw
us doth press. The Son of Man is giv - en In - to the



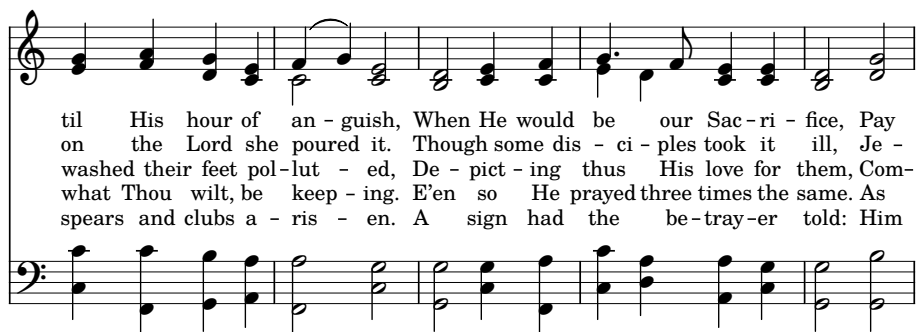
moth - er, un - de - filed, For us was born the ho - ly Child,
Man shall be be - trayed, Up - on the cross be killed, be slain.
ci - ples Je - sus came And ate with them the Pas - chal Lamb,
thence did He de - part, Prayed to His Fa - ther from His heart:
hands of sin - ners. Rise! He who be - trays Me draw - eth nigh.



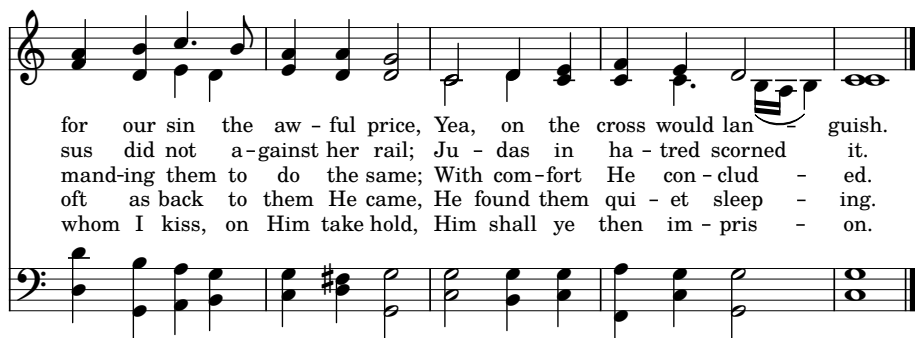
To be our me - di - a - tor. Un - to the dead new
Then, lo! while they were stay - ing In Si - mon's house, a
Which His new feast re - plac - es: He left for us a
O Fa - ther, in Thy fa - vor Grant that this cup may
Stay near and pray to heav - en. While yet He spake, lo!



life He gave, The sick from ev' - ry ill He saved, Un -
 wom - an brought Much cost - ly oint - ment she had bought. Up -
 Tes - ta - ment To preach His death till this world's end. He
 pass from Me. All things are pos - si - ble with Thee! Yet
 Ju - das came, A hoard there fol - lowed in his train, With



til His hour of an - guish, When He would be our Sac - ri - fice, Pay
 on the Lord she poured it. Though some dis - ci - ples took it ill, Je -
 washed their feet pol - lut - ed, De - pict - ing thus His love for them, Com -
 what Thou wilt, be keep - ing. E'en so He prayed three times the same. As
 spears and clubs a - ris - en. A sign had the be - tray - er told: Him



for our sin the aw - ful price, Yea, on the cross would lan - guish.
 sus did not a - gainst her rail; Ju - das in ha - tred scorned it.
 mand - ing them to do the same; With com - fort He con - clud - ed.
 oft as back to them He came, He found them qui - et sleep - ing.
 whom I kiss, on Him take hold, Him shall ye then im - pris - on.

6 Since Jesus knew all things to be,
 He went to meet them willingly
 And spake unto them mildly:
 Whom seek ye here with such a swell?
 Jesus! They spake, and back they fell,
 Fearful, but raging wildly.
 Judas then kissed Him, as he'd said,
 The dreadful hoard upon Him sped
 And bound Him in their raving.
 Peter drew forth his sword, came near,
 Cleft off the bishop's servant's ear,
 But Jesus answered, saying:

7 Fight not! Thy sword put in its sheath;
 Shall I not drink My cup of grief?
 This said, He healed the servant.
 The hoard to Annas Jesus sped
 And Him to Caiaphas they led,
 With bonds and fetters burdened.
 Peter came to the court within
 Through a disciple known to them,
 Three times the Lord denying.
 The bishop questioned Jesus there,
 False witnesses they brought to bear,
 Him to condemn by lying.

- 8 Christ gave no answer unto them.
Then spake the high priest unto Him:
What sayest Thou? Now hasten:
By God I put Thee under oath,
Say, art Thou Christ, God's Son? he
quoth.
Then without hesitation:
I am, He said, And from now on
The Son of Man you'll see upon
The shining clouds of glory,
Sitting enthroned at God's right hand!
The bishop did his garments rend,
And said, Ye've heard His story,
- 9 How He blasphemes the God we fear!
Spake he: What more need we to hear?
Spake they: To death! With screaming,
They spat upon Him in His face,
His cheeks they struck, Him they
disgraced,
With bitter words blaspheming.
His face they covered, Him to blind,
And struck Him with their fists unkind,
Saying: Tell, who hath struck Thee?
Then in the dark of early morn,
With many threats and bitter scorn
They dragged Him, beaten, bloody,
- 10 And brought Him unto Pilate's throne.
When Judas saw what had been done,
He rued the matter sorely.
The silver to the priests he gave
And spake, I've sinned a sin most grave.
He knew he'd served Him poorly.
Himself he hanged, and burst in twain.
The high priests gathered both again,
The blood-stained silver selling:
A potter's field with it they bought;
Pilgrims for burial there were brought,
The Prophet thus foretelling.
- 11 As before Pilate Jesus stood,
There rose a clamor from the crowd,
Crying with great upheaval:
Much against Caesar hath He done,
Calling Himself God's only Son,
Leading astray the people.
Pilate to Him his questions put,
But Christ to him no answer spoke.
At this was Pilate startled.
He sent Him unto Herod's lair;
Herod rejoiced to see Him there,
Hoping to see some marvel.
- 12 As Jesus not a word would speak,
Herod despised the Savior meek,
And sent Him back to Pilate.
He summoned then the Jews, and spake:
This Man did Herod also take,
In Him saw nothing violent.
You have a custom ev'ry year
That I release a prisoner;
I'll give unto you Jesus!
They shrieked with voices raised on high:
No, Jesus take and crucify,
More doth Barabbas please us!
- 13 So Pilate then had Jesus bound,
To the praetorium driven round.
With purple they bedecked Him.
Of thorns they twisted Him a crown,
Which pressed His head and pierced His
brow,
And with a reed they struck Him.
As king they greeted Him, cruel sport!
Their filth they spat upon the Lord,
His holy head they chastened.
Then Pilate spake: Behold the Man!
I find no violence in His hand,
No cause for condemnation.
- 14 They cried the more with voices loud:
Crucify, crucify Him now,
Else you're no friend of Caesar!
When Pilate heard them this repeat,
He sat upon the judgment seat,
Hands washed, the crowd's appeaser.
He freed Barabbas at their cry,
Jesus he took to crucify,
Gave in to their defiance.
His clothes they put on Him again.
As a loud clamor rose from them,
He bore His cross in silence.
- 15 Then, as they followed Him without,
Simon they forced to leave the crowd,
Helping His cross to carry.
The women wailed and loudly wept,
But Jesus stopped, and round He
stepped,
Briefly with them to tarry:
O weep ye not for Me, He said,
Daughters of Zion, weep instead
For yourselves and your children!
For of the barren ye will say,
Who never nursed: How blest are they!
Such terrors then will fill them.

- 16 To Golgotha at last they came.
Two evildoers there in shame
Were nailed upon their crosses,
One at His right, one at His left,
As Scripture long ago had said.
Spake Christ, as was His office:
Father, forgive them, every one,
For they know not what they have done!
Pilate a sign had written
In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongue:
To Jesus, king of Jews, 'tis done,
Much to the priests' vexation.
- 17 As Jesus there they crucified,
His clothing then did they divide,
And lots they cast thereover.
As Jesus saw His mother there,
And John, this word with them He
shared:
Woman, you'll be his mother.
Behold thy son! To John He spake:
Behold thy mother—ne'er forsake!
Henceforth he gave her shelter.
Then the high priests the Savior mocked,
And all the rest blasphemed their God:
Is God in truth Thy helper?
- 18 If Thou art God's beloved Son,
Leave Thou Thy cross, come down
therefrom!
So said the thief, His neighbor.
Yet did the other thief confess,
Told him of Jesus' innocence,
And said: Lord, me remember
When Thou Thy kingdom dost receive!
Spake Jesus: Truly thou shalt be
In paradise beside Me!
At the sixth hour the darkness fell,
And at the ninth from Jesus swelled
A great voice, loudly crying:
- 19 My God, My God! Why leavest Me?
Sour wine they brought in mockery
And for a drink they offered.
As Jesus tasted then the gall,
Spake He: 'Tis finished, I've done all!
And finally, as He suffered:
O Father, into Thy dear hand
My spirit now do I commend!
Then with a loud voice crying
Gave up the ghost. Then tore the veil
Within the temple; earth did quail
And tremble at His dying.
- 20 The ground beneath did also shake,
The graves were opened as it quaked.
The captain and his servants
Said: Yea, this Man was good indeed,
Truly the Son of God was He!
They beat their breasts in earnest.
To break their legs the thieves they
sought,
Jesus was dead; they brake Him not,
Him with a spear they piercèd:
Water and blood poured from His side.
He who hath seen hath testified,
The Scripture further bears it.
- 21 Then, with the ev'ning drawing nigh,
Joseph, the righteous man, came by,
Him from the cross to carry.
Good Nicodemus also came,
Aloes and myrrh with him to bring;
Jesus he helped to bury,
Wrapped in a pure and linen shroud;
Within the rock a grave was found
Where none had lain reposing.
There they laid Jesus, holy one,
And o'er the grave they rolled a stone,
His body there enclosing.
- 22 The Jews a guard nearby had set,
But on the third day, from the dead
Jesus arose in power,
That we in Him might righteous be,
Within His kingdom now made free,
Nor sin within us flower.
O therefore let us all rejoice,
Unto our Savior raise our voice,
For Christ did truly conquer
For us sin's pow'r and deep distress,
And us redeemed from hell and death;
The devil rules no longer.
- 23 So let us thank Him evermore
That for our sakes such pain He bore,
After His will now living.
Yea, let us be the foes of sin,
Since God's Word brightly shines within
And daily aids our striving.
Let us show love to ev'ryone
As Christ Himself to us hath done
By His own suff'ring, dying.
O child of man, reflect aright
How God's dread wrath our sin did
smite,
Thou from transgression flying!

THE PASSION HYMN “O Man, Thy Grievous Sin Bemoan” (“O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß”) was written by Sebald Heyden and was first published as a standalone booklet in Nürnberg, 1530, under the title, “The passion, or the suffering of Jesus Christ, rendered in hymnic form, in the melody of the 119th Psalm, ‘Es sind doch selig alle die,’” with the superscription, “The passion, from the four Evangelists: Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 18.” It is a hymn of unusually great length, with 23 stanzas of 12 lines each. In recent German hymnals it appears with only the first and last stanzas.

The melody first appeared in the 1525 Strassburg *Kirchenamt*, where it accompanied the text “*Es sind doch selig alle, die,*” a metrical paraphrase of the first two octaves of Psalm 119. From its first publication, “O Man, Thy Grievous Sin Bemoan” was intended to be sung to this tune. The setting is by Melchior Vulpius, adapted to fit the original form of the melody.

As of the time of this publication, there has been no English translation of the full hymn made publicly available. Translations of the first stanza have appeared in English editions of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, the most well known of which, by Ivor Atkins (though it is frequently misattributed to Catherine Winkworth), follows:

O man thy grievous sin bemoan,
For which Christ left His Father’s throne,
From highest heaven descending.
Of virgin pure and undefiled,
He here was born, our Savior mild,
For sin to make atonement.
The dead He raised to life again,
The sick He freed from grief and pain,
Until the time appointed,
That He for us should give His Blood,
Should bear our sins’ o’erwhelming load,
The shameful Cross enduring.

The translation for the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book, with the exception of the opening line, is altogether new and may be freely used and reproduced for any purpose whatever.