

Lutheran Service Book 332

# Savior of the Nations, Come

Sunday, December 22 at 8:00 &amp; 10:45

Fourth Sunday in Advent – 2013

Christmas Eve at 6 PM; Christmas Day at 10 AM; 12/29 at 10 AM

**Introduction:** Dear friends, on this *fourth* and *final* Sunday in Advent, *as we draw near to the celebration of our Savior's birth*, we focus on the words of this hymn: "**Savior of the Nations, Come.**"<sup>1</sup> As we proceed, notice how the words are closely connected to *God's Word* and *our lives in Christ*.

## 1. Stanzas 1-2:

- a. **Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home! Marvel now, O heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.** // Who is coming? *The Savior of the nations!* Since all have sinned, *all need the benefits of His work – forgiveness!* **He is the son of a virgin; apart from God's almighty power,** we might call that an **oxymoron** – *a seemingly self-contradictory statement, but it is true!* Mary and Jesus are the fulfillment of these words: "**Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son...**" (Mat 1:23 ESV) Also, He entered our world *very low* in order to lift us up *very high!* The Bible says that Jesus "**...emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant...**" (Phi 2:7 ESV) *He came to serve us!*

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Text: Attributed to Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; German version, Martin Luther, 1483-1546.

- b. **Not by human flesh and blood, By the Spirit of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh— Woman's offspring, pure and fresh.** // The angel Gabriel explained Jesus' conception with these words: "**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you...**" (Luke 1:28 ESV) In John 1:1 the Son of God is called the Word; then, in v. 14, the Bible says that "**the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...**" (John 1:14 ESV) So, indeed, He is "**Immanuel**" – "**God with us,**" *to save us!*
2. **Stanzas 3-4:**
    - a. **Here a maid was found with child, Yet remained a virgin mild. In her womb this truth was shown: God was there upon His throne.** // So who would believe such a story; *pregnant and yet still a virgin!* Yet **+**God planned it, **+**God moved Isaiah to write it down, and **+**God brought it about – *all for us and our salvation!*
    - b. **Then stepped forth the Lord of all, From His pure and kingly hall; God of God, yet fully man, His heroic course began.** // In the Nicene Creed we confess that He is "**God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God...**" Also, Paul wrote these famous words, which tell us the **when**, **who**, and **why**: "**...when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.**" (Gal 4:4-5 ESV) Therefore, in response, *let us honor Him as our Hero!*

3. **Stanzas 5-6:**

- a. **God the Father was His source, Back to God He ran His course. Into hell His road went down, Back then to His throne and crown.** // These words describe Jesus' source: "the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds..." (Nicene Creed) Jesus said this about the Father: "I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me." (John 7:29 ESV) Peter told us what Jesus did: "For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust, in order that He might bring us to God..." (1 Peter 3:18 NAS) Then, *having finished His work* (John 19:30), He passed thru hell (1 Pet. 3:18-20) on His way to the Father!
- b. **For You are the Father's Son, Who in flesh the vict'ry won.** // Since the *first Adam* fell, Jesus came as the *second Adam* to fix our mess: "Since...the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil..." (Heb 2:14)
- c. **By Your mighty pow'r make whole, All our ill's of flesh and soul.** // Peter wrote of Jesus' healing power with these words: "...and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." (1Pe 2:24 NAS)

4. **Stanzas 7-8:**

- a. **From the manger newborn light, Shines in glory through the night. Darkness there no more resides; In this light faith now abides.** // John

described the Savior's coming: <sup>4</sup> "In him was life, and the life was the light of men...." <sup>9</sup> The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. [Okay, He came, *but how did the world respond?*] <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.... <sup>12</sup> But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God..." (John 1 ESV) So what about us; are we fully receiving Jesus as our Savior? The Bible says: "...the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does wicked things hates the light..." (John 3:19 ESV) But *by God's grace* may we be different: *Sorry for our sins and loving the Light of the World!* Jesus said: "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." (John 12:36 ESV)

- b. **Glory to the Father sing, Glory to the Son, our king, Glory to the Spirit be, Now and through eternity.** // As the holy angels sang "Glory to God in the highest" (Luke 2:14 ESV) on that first Christmas Eve, so let us also glorify the Triune the God for → who He is (the Almighty God), → what He has done (create, provide, redeem, sanctify, etc.), and → who He has made us to be through Jesus (forgiven and righteous in His sight)!

**Conclusion:** And all God's people said: **Amen!**

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