 A'. Lines 3-4 (70-111). Dm-Cm Rit (111-127). Cm 5 (127-151). Cm-Gm

Instrum
Ob I, II Taille The "Kreuzstab" theme may also Vla 1 II depict the crutch with which the Vla Violoncello SATB Continuo

## Woodwinds

 double the string lines, adding their color to the line.paralytic of the Gospel reading pulls himself up (see more in note at m. 17).

## Ritornell



Ich $\overline{\text { xu }}$ ill den Kreuzstab gerne tragen

While the libretto's emphasis on "the way of the cross" might seem depressing at first glance, each movement ends with comfort and hope.


The same singer presumably performed the following week's bass solo cantata, BWV 49.


In the score, Bach writes "Kreuzestab" with a
"chi/cross"
figure, signifying Christ.

Allusion to Jesus' words that his disciples must be willing to deny themselves and take up their cross; see side note for other possible allusions for "Kreuzstab."


[^0]
J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56


J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56
 through all my_ trou - - . . . . . . . . . ble to God,__ to God in His_

go - lub - le Land,
long prom - ised land,
der füh_ret mich $\qquad$ pach meinen
Pla
trou

Ascending sequence, rising a diatonic fourth. This figure is repeated in the next movement, m. 9, on the words "is die Barmherzigkeit" (is the compassion [of God]).

 Word painting: Long melsima, descending sequence with sighing duples, falling chromatically, for "troubles" (compare


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Section B
(Lines 5-6:
rhyme cc).

The final couplet (in dactylic poetic meter as opposed to the previous iambic meter), with rhyme scheme CC, is like a quasi-coda.

"The third section, the 'Abgesang' of the Bar form, brings with it an entirely new and highly declamatory vocal theme in "skipping" triplets to the words 'There I lay my sorrows all at once in the grave.' Only the instruments refer to the A-sections by quoting the sigh figures mentioned above in the caesuras of the voice part, and this also establishes a connection with the

Daleg'ich den Kummer auf
There will $I$ en-tomb all my concluding ritornello statement." Alfred Dürr, "The Cantatas of J. S. Bach," trans. Richard Jones, 583.


The text alludes to biblical passages such as Revelation 21:3-4. [Then] God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away. (Also Revelation $7: 15-17$, Isaiah $25: 8$. .) While the skipping rhythm of the vocal line (following the dactylic meter of the poem) and major keys portray the joyous freedom anticipated by the poet, the continuation of sighing duples in the instrumental lines depict the continuing present reality of suffering.

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G minor
G7 C minor

mir die Thrä - - - - - - - nen mein Heiland selbst iour will wipe__ all the tears from $m y$ Word painting: Chromaticism for "tears."

ab.
eyes.

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Chromatic saturation in
vocal part in

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56

tagg - lich schrecten.
day af-fright me.

The an-chor that will hold me fast
The "anchor" reference is a possible allusion to Hebrews 6:19-20 (see side note).


[^1]J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56
length is calmed the an - gri-ly rag - ing foam
my trust - $y$ ship will

Diminshed chord (arpeggiated in cello and rising
to high $E$ in the vocal line) to depict foaming waves.
The cello's arpgeggios (waves) stop as the singer arrives, steps off the ship and enters the city (representative of heaven) The remainder of the movement is secco, suggestive of the timelessness of heaven. Note: It is very unusual for accompagnato to secco!



This is the central movement in the cantata's chiastic form. In Bach's chiastic forms, center movements (where the mirror image begins) often provide the crux of the
matter. There antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text). Here the central movmer describes the moment when the believer's situation will finally turn. As seen below, Bach devotes most of the aria to the first 2 lines of text.

Da capo Arif. $\bullet$ Heaven anticipated; freed like an eagle (56/3),


The head motive of the ritornello is associated with the opening line of text ("Finally, finally my yoke [will be lifted]. It appears in both oboe and voice lines throughout the movement as a unifying device.


Vocal line begins with the head motive of the


B-flat major

The vocal line departs from the ritornello line with an upward arpeggio, apparently to depict
the "lifting of the yoke," referenced in the text. Compare the reversal of roles at m. 38.


Oboe plays the opening motive of the ritornello line in canon with the singer, then continues with its material. The use of canon reflects the word "wieder" (again), i.e. "my yoke will again be lifted."


[^2]J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56


Text painting: Sustained, increasingly desperate yearning is depicted with repeated dominant 7th


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Text-painting: Long melisma for "weichen" (withdraw, i.e., finally the yoke will be lifted).


B-flat major

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Allusion to Isaiah 40:28-31. "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.


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J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56

reit, das Erbe meiner Selig - keit mit Sehnen ond Ver - langen von Je_su Händen zu em stand to take the boon from Je-sus'hand, the boon for which $I$ yeam, and hope that one day $I$ may Word painting: Diminished 7th NBA: Jesus chord for "yearning."

8. Adagio.


The "skipping" triplet material (with allusion to Revelation 21:3-4, 7:17) from movement no. 1 (see m. 127ff.) reappears (now about half as long). Whether this was a decision made by the librettist of by Bach is unknown. Moving from an accompagnato to an arioso suggests reaching a definitive, final goal. See Martin Petzoldt,
"Bach Kommentar," 558. For other cantata movements that repeat material from a previous movement, see side note.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56

-Yearning for death: it brings me to port of rest (56/5). Bach's title (The cantata's designation as "Cantata à Voce Sola" suggests
${ }^{56 / 5}$ Choral. (nat the chorale may have been sung with one singer per part] © $\mathbf{6}$ des Liedes: „Du, $\mathbf{o}$ ochones Weitrebiude")

The closing chorale functions as a catechismal response.

Konm, o Tod, du Schlafes Bru - der, komm, und rinh - remich nuin rort; lö - se mei-nes Schiffleins Ru - der, brin-ge mich un si-chern Porc. Come, $O$ death, and end my voy - age, make my jour - ney smooth and short, furl my sails and drop my an - chor, bring me safe - ly in - to port. The reference to death as the brother to sleep originates in Greek mythology. Thanatos (god of death) and Hypnos (god of sleep) are twin brothers, sons of the Nyx (goddess of the night) and Erebos (god of darkenss). Many biblical passages also refer to death as sleep (see side note). The second Stollen's reference to bringing life's ship safely to harbor connects to the day's Gospel reading: "Getting into a boat [Jesus] crossed over and came to his own city" (Matthew 9:1).


Alfred Dürr writes, "Despite its plain four-part style, the concluding chorale is an exceptional masterpiece. The choice of text is itself felicitous, since the wish to be united with Jesus through death is associated with the image of the ship moored in a 'secure harbour,' a return to the metaphor of life as a voyage in the second movement. In Bach's setting, the alteration of the opening of Cruger's melody (Leipzig, 1649) from [two half notes to a half note on beat two], with its emphatic syncopation on the word 'Komm,' is truly inspired. So, too, is the setting of the penultimate line where, in the resolution of a diminished seventh onto a G major chord, we seem able to perceive directly the soul passing through the pain of death into glory." See "The Cantatas of J. S. Bach," trans. Richard Jones, p. 583.



E-flat major



[^0]:    G minor

[^1]:    E-flat major

[^2]:    F major

