

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas

Form: Chorus - Recit (T) - Aria (A) - Recit (B) - Duet (T/B) - Chorale.

Introduction & updates at melvinunger.com.

NBA I/18; BC A111

8. S. after Trinity (BWV 136, 178, 45)

*Romans 8:12-17 (All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.)

*Matthew 7:15-23 (Sermon on the Mount: beware of false prophets; you will know them by their fruits.)

Librettist: Unknown

FP: 18 July 1723 (St. Thomas)

In his first year in Leipzig, Bach produced two-part or double cantatas for at least 13 Sundays (before and after the sermon): BWV 75, 76, 21, 24+185, 147, 186, 179+199, 70, 181+18, 31+4, 172+59, 194+165, 22+23. For the eighth Sunday after Trinity (18 July 1723), Bach changed his approach. With BWV 136, he adopted smaller dimensions for newly conceived works. Now they were often only six or seven movements long, with one common pattern being: Biblical passage (usually set for chorus) - Recitative - Aria - Recitative - Aria - Chorale: BWV 136, 105, 46, 179, 69a, 77, 25, 109, 89, and 104. See Christoph W. W. Norton, 2000), 269. For Martin Petzoldt's diagram of BWV 136's symmetrical form, see side note. Bach stresses the symmetrical form of the cantata by employing 12/8 meter in movements 1, 5, and the middle of movement 3.

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 136

Erforsche mich, Gott, und erfahre mein Herz

Bach reused the first movement for the finale ("cum Sancto Spiritu") of his Mass in A, BWV 234. Its fugue form incorporates Italianate concerto features such as a ritornello and running 16ths (especially in Ob I/Vln I).

•Prayer: Search me O God & try my heart: Psalm 139:23 (136/1).

Instrumentation:

Corno
Ob I, also Ob I d'amore
Ob II d'amore
Vln I, II
Via
Continuo, Organo

(Coro.)

136/1. (Lento $\text{♩} = 60$)

The horn introduces the theme as a motto.

Because of its ebullient quality, scholars have suggested that this music may be taken from an earlier

composition. It seems inappropriate for a text that asks God to search the heart for one's true intentions. However, an earlier verse in the same psalm provides some context: "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Psalm 139:7). In this context, the galloping rhythm and the horn's prominence could suggest music of a pastoral hunt, here, a metaphorical hunt for secret sins in the human heart that prevent the fruit of good deeds referenced in the following movements (and the Gospel reading of the day). Such a hunt is reminiscent of Song of Solomon 2:15: "Catch us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom."

Like a "Devisenarie" (a term coined by Hugo Riemann) or "motto aria," the singer presents the first phrase of the text as a kind of motto after the ritornello. This is followed by a short instrumental bridge before the movement proper (here a fugue) begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement. 12/8 meter fits the natural rhythm of the opening words (with "examine" and "heart" emphasized) and was probably chosen for that reason.

A major

Alfred Dürr writes, "The fugue subject in its literal form occurs considerably more often in the outer than in the inner parts, possibly due to the origin of the movement (it suggests an original in fewer parts). Curious, too, are the framing instrumental ritornellos, more concertante than fugal in character, and the prefacing of the vocal section with a motto which is followed by a bar-and-a-half of extra instrumental music before the fugue really begins. Finally, the instruments are assigned very different roles. The two oboes (ordinary oboe and oboe d'amore) lack independent parts, simply doubling the two violins in the ritornellos and the soprano in the vocal passages. Among the strings, the first violin is predominant, with its almost continuous but unthematic, figurative semiquaver motion, whereas the second violin mostly proceeds in calmer quaver motion, as do the viola and continuo almost throughout. A horn presents the main theme...at the start of the ritornello and is also given an independent part thereafter. In form, the movement is constructed in two halves, A and A', which are choral-fugue complexes based on the same theme, surrounded and separated by instrumental passages." See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 455. Martin Petzoldt suggests that fugue form is suitable for depicting an ever-repeating of self-examination (*Bach Kommentar* 1:175). It is also suitable for the depiction of a hunt.

er - for - - sche mich,
ex - a - - mine me,

Fugue Proper. The fugue subject sets the entire text.

A major

11

Gott, und er-fah-re mein Herz, und er-fah-re mein Herz; prüfe mich und er-
God, and in-quire of my heart, and in-quire of my heart; that Thou may-est dis-

Alto.
Er - for - - sche mich, Gott, und er-fah-re mein Herz,
Ex - a - - mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart,

Tenore.
Er - for - - sche mich,
Ex - a - - mine me,

Basso.

A major

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13.

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne; er -
cov - er all my fail - ings, ex -

und er-fah-re mein Herz; prü-fe mich und er-fah-re, wie ich's
and in-quire of my heart; that Thou may-est dis-cov-er all my

Gott, und er-fah-re mein Herz, und er-fah-re mein
God, and in-quire of my heart, and in-quire of my

Er-for - sche mich, Gott, und er-fah-re mein
Ex - a - mine me, God, and in-quire of my

for - sche mich, Gott, und er-fah-re mein Herz,
a - mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart,

mei - ne; er - for - sche mich, Gott, und er-fah-re mein
fail - ings, ex - a - mine me, God, and in-quire of my

Herz, und er-fah-re mein Herz, und er-fah-re mein
heart, and in-quire of my heart, and in-quire of my

Herz, und er-fah-re mein Herz, er-fah-re mein Herz, er-for-sche mich,
heart, and in-quire of my heart, in-quire of my heart, ex-a-mine me,

A major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 136

16

prüfe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne,
that Thou may-est dis - cov - er all my fail - ings,

Herz; prü - fe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne,
heart; try me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings,

Herz; prüfe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, prü - fe
heart, that Thou may-est dis - cov - er all my fail - ings, that Thou

Gott, und er - fah - re mein Herz; prüfe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, prü - fe
God, and in-quire of my heart, that Thou may-est dis - cov - er all my fail - ings, that Thou

A descending series of 5ths leads ultimately to a Phrygian cadence (often used for questions), as if asking God to inquire deeper and deeper into one's heart.

F#7 B minor A major D major

16

- prüfe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, prü - fe mich und er -
that Thou may-est dis - cov - er all my fail - ings, that Thou may - est dis -

wie ich's mei - ne, wie ich's mei -
all my fail - ings, all my fail -

mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, prü - fe mich und er -
may - est dis - cov - er all my fail - ings, that Thou may - est dis -

mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, prü - fe mich und er -
may - est dis - cov - er all my fail - ings, that Thou may - est dis -

A# dim.7 B minor E7

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20

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, wie ich's mei - ne; er - for -
cov - er all my fail - ings, all my fail - ings, ex - a -

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne; er -
cov - er all my fail - ings, ex -

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, wie ich's mei - ne;
cov - er all my fail - ings, all my fail - ings,

A major C#7 F# minor iv6 Phrygian cadence often used for questions. V

22

- - - - - re; er -
- - - - - ings, ex -

- - - - - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein Herz, er - fah - re mein
- - - - - mine me, God, and in - quire of my heart, in - quire of my

for - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein
a - mine me, God, and in - quire of my

er - for - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein
ex - a - mine me, God, and in - quire of my

F# minor

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2311

for - - - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein Herz, und er - fah - re mein
a - - - mine me, God, and in - quire of my heart, and in - quire of my

Herz; prü - fe mich und er - fah -
heart, that Thou may - est in - quire

Herz, er - fah - re mein Herz, er - fah - re mein
heart, in - quire of my heart, in - quire of my

Herz, er - fah -
heart, in - quire

tr

F# minor

25

Herz; prü - fe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei -
heart; try me and know my thoughts and all my fail -

- re mein Herz; prü - fe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei -
of my heart; that Thou may - est dis - cov - er all my fail -

Herz; prü - fe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei -
heart; that Thou may - est dis - cov - er all my fail -

- re mein Herz; prü - fe mich und er - fah - re, wie ich's mei -
of my heart; that Thou may - est dis - cov - er all my fail -

tr

F# minor

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27

ne.
ings.

ne.
ings.

ne.
ings.

ne.
ings.

Ritornello

Corno an octave up (see full score).

F# minor

F# minor

29

Prü -
Try

Er - for - sche mich,
Ex - a - mine me,

B

F# minor

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"Prüfe mich" (try or test me) is emphasized with elongated notes on "prüfe."

31

fe mich und er fah re, wie ich's mei ne, prü -
me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings, try -

Prü - fe mich und er fah re, wie ich's mei ne.
Try me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings,

Prü - fe mich und er fah re, wie ich's mei ne,
Try me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings,

Gott, und er fah re mein Herz, er for - sche mich,
God, and in-quire of my heart, ex - a - mine me,

F#7 B minor B minor B major E major

33

fe mich und er fah re, wie ich's mei ne:
me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings,

prü - fe mich und er fah re, wie ich's mei ne:
try me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings,

prü - fe mich und er fah re, wie ich's mei ne; er -
try me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings, **Stretto** ex -

Gott, und er fah re mein Herz, er for - sche mich,
God, and in-quire of my heart, ex - a - mine me,

A major (A7) D major

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35

er -
ex -

er - for - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein
ex - a - mine me, God, and in - quire of my

for - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein Herz,
a - mine me, God, and in - quire of my heart,

Gott, und er - fah - re mein Herz, und er - fah - re mein Herz, und er - fah - re mein
God, and in - quire of my heart, and in - quire of my heart, and in - quire of my

D major (E7) A major

36II

for - sche mich, Gott, und er - fah - re mein Herz,
a - mine me, God, and in - quire of my heart,

Herz, mein Herz; prü - fe mich und er -
heart, my heart; try me and know my

und er - fah - re, er - fah - re mein
and in - quire of, in - quire of my

Herz, und er - fah - re mein Herz, er - fah -
heart, and in - quire of my heart, in - quire

A major A7

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38

und er-fah-re mein Herz, und er-fah-re mein
and in-quire of my heart, and in-quire of my

fah-re, prü-fe mich und er-fah-re, prü-
fail-ings, try me and know my fail-ings, try

Herz, er-fah-re mein Herz, er-fah-
heart, in-quire of my heart, in-quire

re mein Herz, er-fah-re mein Herz, er-
of my heart, in-quire of my heart, in

D major F#7 B7 E major C#7

39II

Herz; prü-fe, prü-fe mich und er-
heart; try me, try me and know my

fe mich und er-fah-re, wie ich's
me and know my thoughts and all my

re mein Herz; prü-fe mich und er-fah-
of my heart; try me and know my thoughts

fah-re mein Herz, er-
quire of my heart, ex-

F# minor E7

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41

fah - re, wie ich's mei -
thoughts and all my fail -

mei - ne, wie ich's mei -
fail - ings, all my fail -

- re, wie ich's mei -
and all my fail -

for - sche mich, Gott, und er-fahre mein Herz, und er-fahre mein Herz, und er-fah-re mein
a - mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart, and in-quire of my heart, and in-quire of my

A major

13

- ne, prü - fe mich und er-fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne, prü -
- ings, try me and know my thoughts and all my fail - ings, try

- ne, wie ich's mei - ne; er-forschemich, Gott, und er-fah - re mein
- ings, all my fail - ings; ex - a - mine me, God, and in - quire of my

- ne, und er-fah - re, wie ich's mei -
- ings, and in - quire of all my fail -

Herz, und er-fah-re mein Herz, mein Herz, er-for - sche mich,
heart, and in-quire of my heart, my heart, ex - a - mine me,

C#7 F# minor E7 F#7 B major

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45

fe mich und er-fah-re, wie ich's mei-ne,
me and know my thoughts and all my fail-ings,

Herz prü-fe mich und er-fah-re, wie ich's mei-ne, prü-
heart; try me and know my thoughts and all my fail-ings, try

ne, prü-fe mich und er-fah-re; wie ich's mei-ne,
-ings, try me and know my thoughts and all my fail-ings,

Gott, und er-fah-re mein Herz, er-for-sche mich,
God, and in-quire of my heart, ex-a-mine me,

B7 (E major) E(7) A major A7

47

prü-fe mich und er-fah-re, wie
try me and know my thoughts and all

fe mich und er-fah-re, wie
me and know my thoughts and all

prü-fe mich und er-fah-re, wie ich's
try me and know my thoughts and all my

Gott, und er-fahre mein Herz, prüfe mich und er-fah-re, wie ich's mei-ne,
God, and in-quire of my heart, that Thou may-est dis-cov-er all my fail-ings,

(D major) 12 E7 A major

The climax is reached with 3 tutti statements of "prüfe mich" (examine me). Individual words are then consecutively stressed so that all aspects of the prayer are considered: prüfe (try/test), erfahre (know/discover), wie (how), Herz (heart), erforsche (examine/search).

49

C

ich's mei - - ne, prü - - fe mich,
 my fail - - ings, try - - - Thou me,

ich's mei - - ne, prü - - fe mich,
 my fail - - ings, try - - - Thou me,

mei - - - ne, prü - - fe mich,
 fail - - - ings, try - - - Thou me,

wie ich's mei - - ne, prü - - fe mich,
 all my fail - - ings, try - - - Thou me,

C

A major A# dim.7 B minor

50II

prü - - fe mich, prü - -
 try - - - Thou me, try - - -

prü - - fe mich, prü - -
 try - - - Thou me, try - - -

prü - - fe mich, prü - -
 try - - - Thou me, try - - -

prü - - fe mich, prü - -
 try - - - Thou me, try - - -

E7 A major A7

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52

fe mich und er-fah - re, wie ichs mei-ne; er -
 Thou me and dis-cov - er all my fail-ings; ex -

fe mich und er-fah - re, wie ichs mei-ne;
 Thou me and dis-cov - er all my fail-ings;

fe mich und er-fah - re, wie ichs mei-ne;
 Thou me and dis-cov - er all my fail-ings;

fe mich und er-fah - re, wie ichs mei-ne, er -
 Thou me and dis-cov - er all my fail-ings, ex -

D major E7 A major

54

for - sche mich, Gott, und erfahre mein Herz; prü - fe mich und er -
 a - mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart; try Thou me and dis -

er-forsche mich, Gott, und erfahre mein Herz; prü - fe mich und er -
 ex-a-mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart; try Thou me and dis -

er-forsche mich, Gott, und erfahre mein Herz; prü - fe mich und er -
 ex-a-mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart; try Thou me and dis -

for - sche mich, Gott, und erfahre mein Herz, prü - fe mich und er -
 a - mine me, God, and in-quire of my heart; try Thou me and dis -

A major B7 E major A major

56

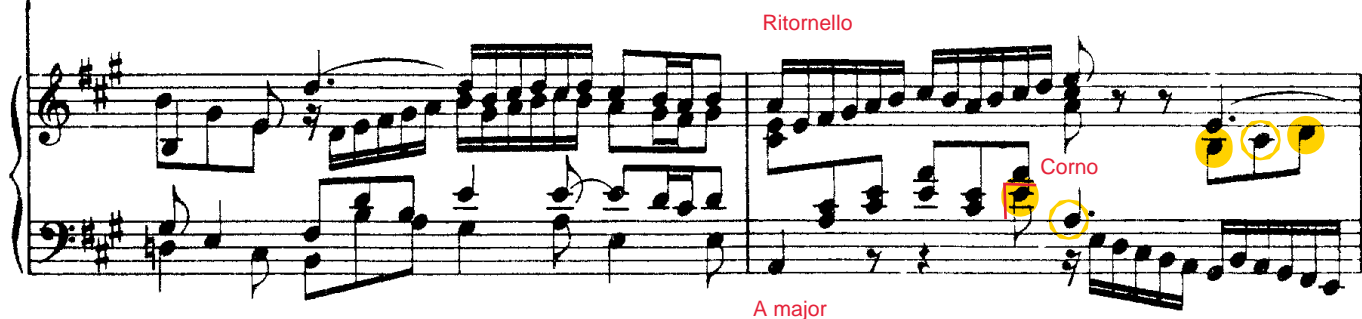


fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne.
cov - er all my fail - ings.

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne.
cov - er all my fail - ings.

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne.
cov - er all my fail - ings.

fah - re, wie ich's mei - ne.
cov - er all my fail - ings.



Ritornello

Corno

A major

58



B7 E major E7 A major

60



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A major

In 136/2, the tenor has the role of Evangelist, the text's references to the curse alluding to biblical passages such as Genesis 3:17–18 and Matthew 7:15–20 (the latter from the day's Gospel reading). The reference to hypocrites is likewise based on the day's Gospel reading. See side note.

136/2. **Recitativo.** •Heart is fallen: it bears thorns & will be judged (136/2).

Chromatic Saturation
in the vocal part in
6 mm.

Secco **Tenore.** F# G C# A# D# B

Ach, dass der Fluch, so dort die Er-de schlägt, auch de-rer
"Cursed, for thy sake, O A-dam, is the ground." Yea, A-dam's

An opening diminished 7th chord followed by chromatic saturation is used to depict the depravity of the human heart...

A# dim.7 F#7 B7

3 B# G# E#

Menschen Herz getroffen! Wer kann auf gu-te Früchte hoffen, da die-ser Fluch bis
curse our hearts has taint-ed. A sor-ry scene for man is paint-ed, he is ac-cursed, as-

G#7 C# minor C#7

6 D A

in die Seele dringet, so dass sie Sündendornen bringet und Lasterdisteln trägt.
sailed by Sa-tan's mis-ses, his soul is pierced by cru-el this-tles, with thorns of sin is bound.

F# minor A# dim.7 B minor C#7 C# major B# dim.7

Biblical Allusions. Matthew 23:15: Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves. 2 Corinthians 11:13–15: Such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness...

9

Doch wol-len sich oft-mals die Kin-der der Höl-len, in En-gel des Licht-es ver-
 But oft-times the chil-dren of Hell, God-for - sak - en, for an - gels of light are mis -

F# minor F# half-dim.7 B7

Allusion to the day's Gospel: Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit.... Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:15–20; also Matthew 12:33–35, Luke 6:43–45, James. 3:11–12).

11

stellen; man soll bei dem verderbten Wesen von diesen Dornen Trauben le-sen. Ein
 tak - en; per - vert - ed minds not e - ven know-ing that grapes from thorns are nev - er grow-ing. A

E major F#7 A# dim.7 B major E major

14

Wolf will sich mit rei - ner Wol-le dek-ken, doch bricht ein Tag her -
 wolf may well ap - pear in fair - est cloth - ing, but soon there comes a

E7 A major

16

ein, der wird, ihr Heuchler, euch ein Schrecken, ja un-er-träglich sein.
 day when such de - ceiv - ers, viewed with loath - ing, will all be put a - way.

F#(7) B# dim.7 Fx dim.7 G# major C# minor

The aria takes up the afore-mentioned idea of Judgment Day. Instead of a bombastic movement, Bach writes a (largely) lyric aria for alto, oboe d'amore, and continuo, reflecting the attitude of the penitent sinner. As Martin Petzoldt observes, alto is often the voice of the believing soul or church. See *Bach Kommentar* 1:176.

Martin Petzoldt describes the mood of the aria as "the seriousness of the permanent anxiety felt by the hypocrisy that nothing can overcome." See "Bach Kommentar" 1:176.

Aria.

136/3.

(Adagio)

• Day of Judgment will destroy hypocrites (136/3). The aria can be seen as the center of a chiasmic form, in which antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text). Reversal is also seen in the descending contour of the ritornello's theme compared to the vocal theme (ascending).

Ob d'amore

Oboe d'amore theme is unrelated to vocal line.

mf

3 (52)

F# minor

E7

A major

A major

F#7

B minor

B minor

C#(7)

F# minor

5 (54)

Opening motive embellished.

F# minor

E7

A major

7 (56)

C#7

F# minor

F# minor

9 (58)

N6

C#7

F# minor

11 (60)

Alto.

The vocal theme ascends (in contrast to the ritornello theme).

Trio Texture:
Alto,
Oboe da'more,
Continuo.

Es kommt ein Tag, es kommt ein
The day will come, the day will

NBA: kömmt

F# minor

F# minor

E7

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13

Tag, so das Verborg'ne richtet, es kommt ein Tag, es
come, when truth at last prevail - ing, the day will come, the

A major C#7 F# minor F# minor

15II

kommt ein Tag, so das Verborg'ne richtet, vor dem die Heu - che -
day will come. when truth at last prevail - ing, will strike these hyp - o -

F# major B minor E7 A major

18

lei, die Heu - chelei er - zit - tern mag; es
crites, these hyp - o - crites with ter - ror dumb; the

Word painting: Lurching melisma for "quake."

B major G#7 C# minor C# minor

20II

kommt ein Tag, es kommt ein Tag, ein Tag,
day will come, the day will come, will come,

B7 E major C#7 F# minor C# minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 136

Text painting: "Heuchelei" (hypocrisy) is set with a shifting harmonic progression.

23

so das Ver-borg' ne rich-tet, vor dem die Heu-che-lei, die Heu-che-lei er-zit-tern

when truth at last pre-vail-ing, will strike these_hyp-o-

G# major G#7 C# minor B7

Word painting: Lurching melisma for "quake."

25

lei, die Heu-che-lei er-zit-tern

crites, these hyp-o-crites with ter-or

E major C#7 F# minor G#7 C# minor

27

mag. dumb.

mf

C# minor N6 G#7 C# minor

Bach stresses the symmetrical form of the cantata by employing 12/8 meter in movements 1, 5, and the middle of this movement (no. 3). There are a number of factors that suggest this section was added later. See note.

B Section. Presto. (♩ = 72.)

29

Den sei-nes Ei-fers Grimm ver-nich-Be-fore-the wrath of God-will per

C# minor C# major F# minor F# major

Continuo alone (oboe d'more drops out). Right hand here is editorial realization...

Continuo bass in canon...

The middle section provides the expected bombastic music for Judgment Day, describing God's jealous wrath with contrasting 12/8 meter and presto tempo.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 136

31

- - tet, sei - nes Ei - fers Grimm ver - nich -
 - - ish by the wrath of God will per -

B minor B major E major

33

- - tet, was Heu - che - lei und -
 - - ish, all they who thus de -

A major A7 D major

34 II

List er - dich -
 cep tion cher -

Text painting: Shifting harmonies are used to depict "what hypocrisy and cunning contrives".

B7 E major C#7

36

- tet, was Heu - che - lei und List er - dich -
 - ish, all they who base de - cep tion cher -

Chromaticism for "hypocrisy and "cunning"

F# minor (G#7) C# minor

Adagio. (Tempo I.)

37II

tet.
ish.

Oboe d'amore

mf

C# minor N6 (G#7) C# minor

40

Es kommt ein Tag, es kommt ein Tag, es kommt ein
The day will come, the day will come, the day will

p

C# minor F#7 B minor E7 A major

42II

Tag, so das Ver - borg' - ne rich - tet, vor dem die Heu - chelei, die Heu - che -
come when truth, at last pre - vail - ing, will strike these hyp - o-crites, these hyp - o -

tr

C#7 F# minor F# minor B7 E major C#7

45

lei, die Heu - chelei er - zit crites, these hyp - o-crites with ter

Word painting: Convoluted, chromatic melisma for "erzittern" (quake).

F# major D#7 G#(7) C#(7) F# minor C#7 F# minor N6

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47 *tr*

- - - tern mag, vor dem die Heu -
- - - rot dumb, will strike these hyp -

F# minor F#7 B minor E# dim.7 C#7

49

- - - che-lei er-zit-tern mag.
- - - o-crites with ter-ror dumb.

F# minor F# minor F# minor Dal Segno.

Recitativo. • Righteousness & purity found only in Christ's blood (136/4).
136/4. **Basso.**

"Diesem Richter" ("this judge" is emphasized with a longer note and the highest note, respectively.

Die Himmel selber sind nicht rein, wie soll es nun ein Mensch vor die - sem Richter

When Heav-en is it-self not pure, how then can mor-tal stand be-fore the Judge se-

The text alludes to Job 15:15-16: Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not clean in his sight; how much less one who is abominable and corrupt, a man who drinks iniquity like water!"

F# major A# dim.7 F#7 B minor

iv6 E minor
Phrygian cadence
often used for
questions.

1

sein! Doch wer, durch Je-su Blut ge-reinigt, im Glauben sich mit ihm ge-einigt, weiss,
cure? Yet, he who sins the Sav-iour right-ed, with Him in faith is fast u-nit-ed, nor

V
F# major (B-flat 7) G#7 C# minor

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Chromaticism for "Kränkt ihn die Sünde noch" (If he is still vexed by sin).

7

dass er ihm kein hartes Urtheil spricht. Kränkt ihn die Sünde noch, der Mangel seiner
 need he fear a judgment too severe. Al-though a soul has erred and sin-ful-ly de-

E7 A major (F#7) B minor D7

Allusion to Isaiah 45:24. Only in the Lord...are righteousness and strength (Luther 1545: Gerechtigkeit und stercke).

10

Wer-ke, er hat in Chri - sto doch Ge - rech - tig - keit und
 fault - ed, by Christ may it be stirred to right - eous - ness ex -

Arioso. Incorporating the closing chorale tune "Wo soll ich fliehen hin" (Where shall I flee?) in the continuo realization is an appropriate hermeneutical addition but it was done by the editor.
 (Choral.)

B(7) E minor F#7 B minor

Word painting: Disjunct melisma for "strength": The recitative moves from contrition to confidence.

12

Stär - ke.
 alt - ed.

B minor B minor B minor B minor

Note: Bach stresses the symmetrical form of the cantata by employing 12/8 meter in movements 1, 5, and the middle of movement 3.

Duetto.

136/5. (Allegro moderato ♩ = 50.)

• Sin came through Adam; cleansing through Christ (136/5).
 The spatter of Adam's sin is compared to Christ's stream of blood.
 Allusion to 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5. See side note.

Vln I, II unison

Ritornello

B minor

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3 (56)

B minor A7 D major F#(7)

Sequentially descending 5ths.

5 (58)

B minor A major D major

7 (60)

F#(7) B minor B minor

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" (a term coined by Hugo Riemann) or "motto aria." After the ritornello, the singer presents the first phrase of the aria as a kind of motto. This is followed by a short instrumental bridge before the aria proper begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement; here it is the doctrine of sin inherited from Adam. The image of Christ as the second Adam is based on biblical passages such as 1 Corinthians 15:21–22, 45 and Romans 5:12, 15–17. See side note.

9

Tenore.

Uns tref - fen zwar der Sün - den Flek -
We suf - fer sore by sin be - spot

Basso.

Uns tref - fen zwar der Sün - den Flek -
We suf - fer sore by sin be - spot

Canon is used to symbolize the transference of a sinful nature from Adam to his progeny. The jabbing 8ths and descending 16ths of the ritornello theme apparently symbolizes the spattering of Adam's sin descending on all of his descendants.

Text painting: The spatter of sin is set with a long, convoluted melisma, the syncopations suggesting an oppositional attitude.

B minor B7 A major D major
E minor

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11

ken, der Sün-den
ed, by sin-be-

A major A7 (D major) F#7 B minor (A7) D major

13

Flek spot ken, der Sün-den Flek ken;
ed, by sin-be-spot ted;

ken, der Sün-den Flek ken;
ted, by sin-be-spot ted;

Ritornello

F#7 B minor

15

uns we
uns we

B minor A7 D major F#(7)

17

tref - fen zwar der Sün - den Flecken, so A - dams Fall auf uns gebracht, so
suf - fer sore by sin be-spot-ted, through A - dam's fall de - filed and stained, through

B minor E minor E7 A major A7 D major

Text painting: Adam's fall is depicted with descending lines.

19

A - dams Fall auf uns gebracht; uns tref - fen zwar der
A - dam's fall de - filed and stained, we suf - fer sore by

so A - dams Fall auf uns gebracht; uns tref - fen zwar
through A - dam's fall de - filed and stained; we suf - fer sore

D major E7 A major

21

Sün - den Flecken, so A - dams Fall auf uns gebracht, auf uns
sin be-spot-ted, through A - dam's fall de - filed and stained, de - filed

der Sün - den Flecken, so A - dams Fall auf uns gebracht, auf
by sin be-spot-ted, through A - dam's fall de - filed and stained, de -

F#7 B minor C#7

23

ge-bracht so A - dams Fall auf
and stained, through A - dam's fall de -

uns gebracht, so A - dams Fall auf uns,
filed and stained, through A - dam's fall de - filed,

F# minor

25

uns. auf uns ge-bracht;
filed, de - filed and stained,

uns tref - fen zwar d r Sün - den
we suf - fer sore by sin - be -

auf uns ge-bracht, uns tref - fen zwar der Sün - den Flek -
de - filed and stained, we suf - fer sore by sin - be - spot

F# minor F# minor F#7 B minor

Section 1 ends homorhythmically with the second half of the first sentence.

27

Flek - - - - - ken, so A - dams
spot - - - - - ed, through A - dam's

- - - - - ken, so A - dams
- - - - - ted, through A - dam's

(B7) E(7) (A major) F# minor

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29

Fall auf uns gebracht.
fall de - filed and stained.

Fall auf uns gebracht.
fall de - filed and stained.

mf Ritornello

F# minor

E major

Sequentially descending fifths "flatward" in the circle of fifths.

31

The second section presents the alternative to Adam's sin, cleansing through Jesus' blood. The section begins with an interjection "Allein" (But/Yet), which is emphasized by having the voices sing the word together, set apart as if followed by a colon. "Allein" also means "alone", so the word's isolation (and its sole use here) is perhaps a musical pun.

B Section.

Al -
A -

Al -
A -

A major

C#(7)

F# minor

33

lein, wer sich zu Je - su Wun - den, zu Je - su
lone may Je - sus' blood re - store us, His blood re -

lein, As in the A section, canon is used to suggest transference: here transference of Jesus' merit to the sinner. Later, imitative passages alternate with homorhythmic ones. al - lein, wer sich zu Je - su
lone, a - lone may Je - sus' blood re -

F# minor

F#7

B minor

B7

Text painting: Ascending chromaticism for "finding one's way to Jesus' wounds."

Text painting: A sequential progression resulting in a decreasing number of sharps (German: *Kreuze*) portrays God's amelioration of sin through Jesus' death.

35

Wun - - - den, zu Je - su Wunden, dem Gna - den. strom -
store - - - us, His blood re - store us, a stream of mer -

In contrast to the syncopations of "sin's spatter" in section A, Jesus' stream of blood flows freely in section B (see Petzoldt 1:176).

Wun - - - den, zu Je - - su Wun - - - - den, zu Je - - su
store - - - us, His blood re - store - - - us, His blood re -

"Bach devised a bass pattern of arpeggio ascent through an octave followed by descent...then passed this through a circle-of-fifths sequence...as if to indicate the positive meaning of the idea of descent." See Eric Chafe, *Tonal Allegory in the Vocal Music of J. S. Bach* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 208.

See full score.

E minor E7 A minor (no sharps ("Kreuze")) A7

37

voll Blut, - - - ge - funden, wird da - durch wie - der rein ge -
cy flow - - - ing o'er us, to wash us clean and pure - a -

Wunden, dem Gna - den. strom - - - - - voll Blut, - - - ge -
store us, a stream of mer - - - - - cy flow - - - ing

D minor (1 flat) D7 G major B(7)

39

macht, da - durch - - - wieder rein ge - macht; wer
gain, wash us - - - clean and pure - a gain, may

The vocal texture changes to homorhythm.

funden, wird da - durch wie - der rein ge - macht; wer
o'er us, to wash us clean and pure - a gain may

Ritornello

E minor E minor

30

Text painting:
Descending streams
of 16th notes for
"stream of grace."

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Text painting: Long melismas for "stream of grace" sung in parallel 3rds and 6ths (for sweetness) with ensuing homorhythmic texture suggest mystic union of the believer and Jesus.

41

sich zu Je - su Wun - - den, dem Gna - den - strom
Je - sus' blood - re - store us, a stream of mer

sich zu Je - su Wun - - - - den, dem Gna - den - strom
Je - sus' blood re - store us, a stream of mer

E minor A7 D major

43

voll Blut, ge -
cy flow - ing

voll Blut, ge -
cy flow - ing

Unison violins play descending "stream of grace" figures.

F#7 B minor F#7

45

fun - - - den, wird da - durch wie - der rein, rein, rein ge -
o'er us, to wash us clean and pure, pure, pure a -

fun - - den, wird da - durch wie - der rein, wird da - durch wie - der rein ge -
o'er us, to wash us clean and pure, to wash us clean and pure a -

B minor A major D major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 136

47

macht;
gain;

wer
may

sich zu Je - su Wun -
Je - sus' blood_ re - store_

den, dem
us, a

D major

A# dim.7

F#7

19

den, dem Gna - den - strom -
us, a stream - of mer

Gna - den - strom -
stream_ of mer

Long melismas in parallel 6ths and 3rds for "stream of grace."

B minor

B7 E minor

D major

F#7

51.

voll Blut, ge - fun - den. wird da - durch
cy flow - ing o'er us, to wash - us

voll Blut, ge - fun - den, wird da - durch wie - der
cy flow - ing o'er us, to wash_ us clean_ and

F# major

B minor

B minor

E# dim.7

B minor

53.

wie - der rein, rein, rein ge - macht.
clean - and pure, pure, pure - a - gain.

rein, wird da - durch wie - der rein ge - macht.
pure, to wash - us clean - and pure - a - gain.

Ritornello

B minor

Dal Segno.

136/6. Choral. (Mel: „Wo soll ich fliehen hin“)

•Blood of Christ cleanses & frees entire world (136/6). Stanza 9 of 11 in the 1630 hymn "Wo soll ich fliehen hin" by Johann Heerman (1585-1647).

Catechismal response.

Soprano.

+Corno
Ob I
Ob II d'amore

Dein Blut, der ed - le Saft, hat sol - che Stärk' und Kraft, dass
Thy blood, e - lix - ir pure, con - tains a po - tion sure to

Alto.

+Vln II

Dein Blut, der ed - le Saft, hat sol - che Stärk' und Kraft, dass
Thy blood, e - lix - ir pure, con - tains a po - tion sure to

Tenore.

+Vla

Dein Blut, der ed - le Saft, hat sol - che Stärk' und Kraft, dass
Thy blood, e - lix - ir pure, con - tains a po - tion sure to

Basso.

Dein Blut, der ed - le Saft, hat sol - che Stärk' und Kraft, dass
Thy blood, e - lix - ir pure, con - tains a po - tion sure to

B minor

B minor

Bach expands the texture to 5 parts with a Vln I descant, emphasizing the elevational character of the catechismal text (which completes the Christological ideas in movements 4 and 5).

5

auch ein Tröpflein klei - ne die gan - ze Welt kann rei - ne, ja,
 cleanse, though Sa - tan rag - es, the sins of all the ag - es; re -

auch ein Tröpflein klei - ne die gan - ze Welt kann rei - ne, ja,
 cleanse, though Sa - tan rag - es, the sins of all the ag - es; re -

auch ein Tröpflein klei - ne die gan - ze Welt kann rei - ne, ja,
 cleanse, though Sa - tan rag - es, the sins of all the ag - es; re -

auch ein Tröpflein klei - ne die gan - ze Welt kann rei - ne, ja,
 cleanse, though Sa - tan rag - es, the sins of all the ag - es; re -

9

B minor D major F# major B minor D major D major

gar aus Teu - fels Ra - chen frei, los und le - dig ma - chen.
 leased from sin's sub - jec - tion, we live by Thy di - rec - tion.

gar aus Teu - fels Ra - chen frei, los und le - dig ma - chen.
 leased from sin's sub - jec - tion, we live by Thy di - rec - tion.

gar aus Teu - fels Ra - chen frei, los und le - dig ma - chen.
 leased from sin's sub - jec - tion, we live by Thy di - rec - tion.

gar aus Teu - fels Ra - chen frei, los und le - dig ma - chen.
 leased from sin's sub - jec - tion, we live by Thy di - rec - tion.

Final Vin I embellishment suggests total freedom as referenced in the text.

F#7 B minor E7 E minor F#(7) B minor

Psalm 139, V. 23
B major