











6

Word painting: Long sustained unison for "zufällt" ("support").







J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 178 The "tumult" melismas now appear on the word "oben" ("above"), referring to God's sovereign actions high above the earthly attacks.









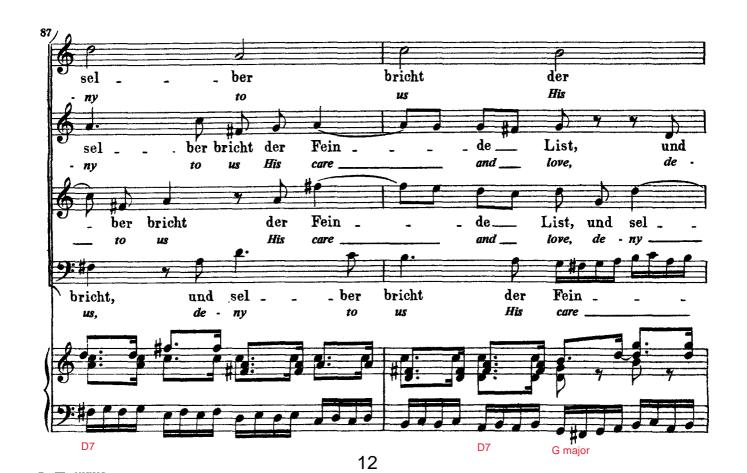






11









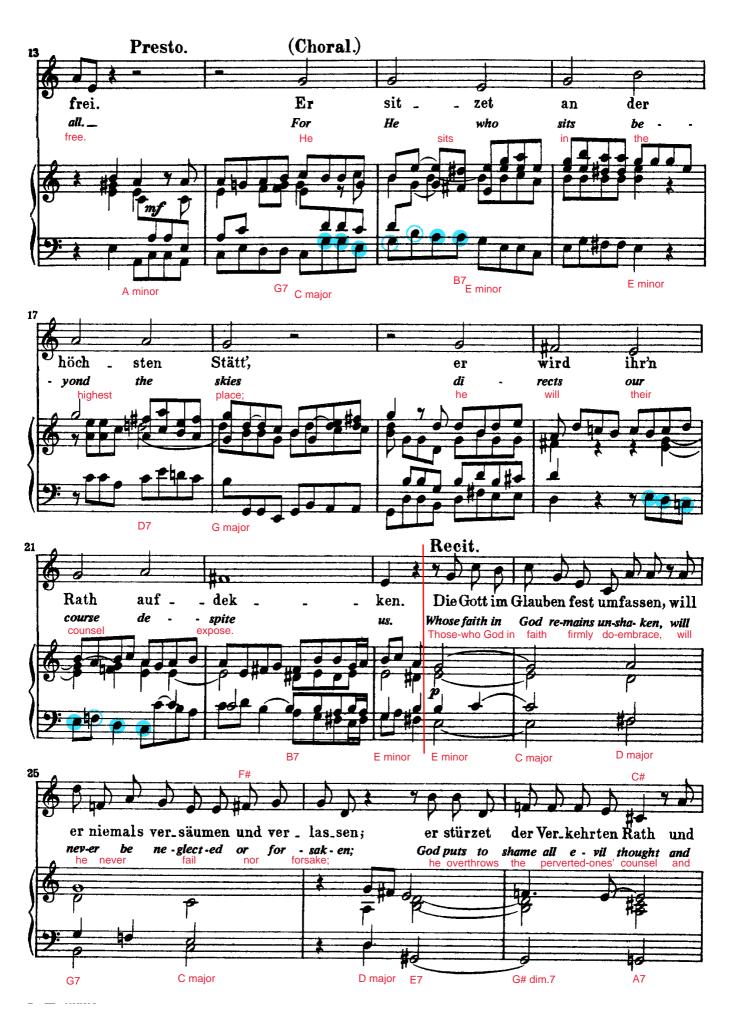


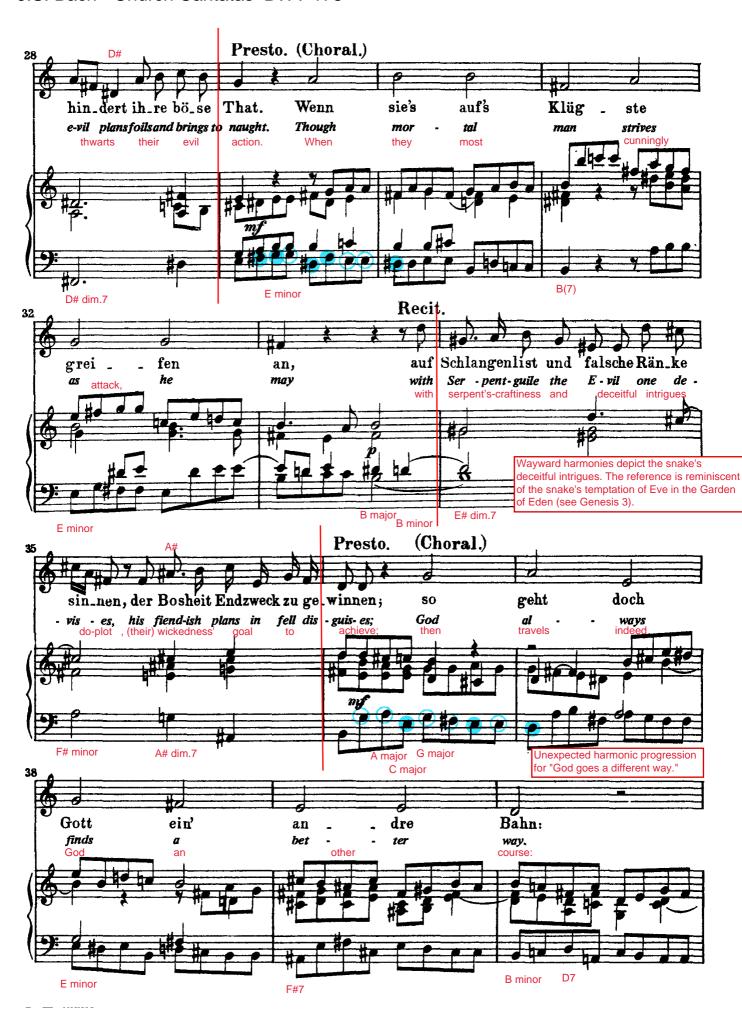




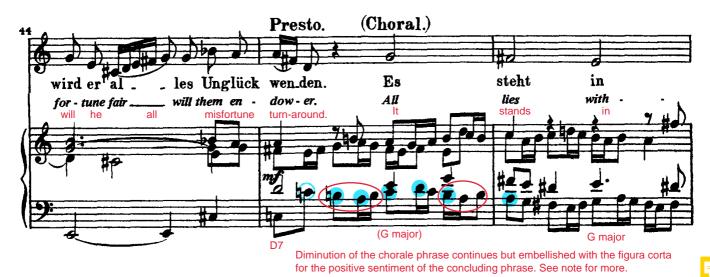


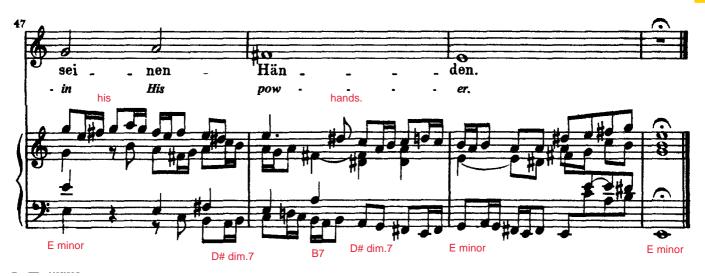






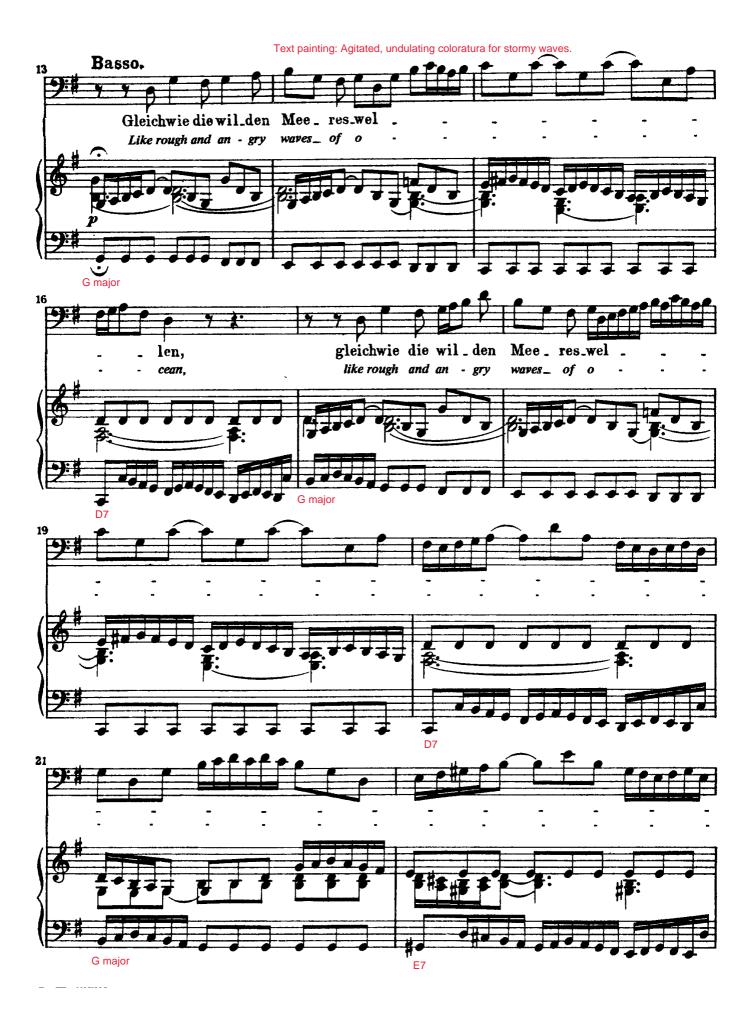






Alfred Dürr writes, "The bass aria, no. 3, is inspired by the image of the 'wild waves of the sea,' whose rising and falling undulations are reflected in the melodic lines of the obbligato string part, a unison of first and second violins, as well as in the voice and continuo. Vast coloraturas are required of the bass on the words 'Meereswellen' ('waves of the sea'), 'erweitern' ('extend'), and in particular 'zerscheitern' ('wreck')." See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, revised and translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 459–460.







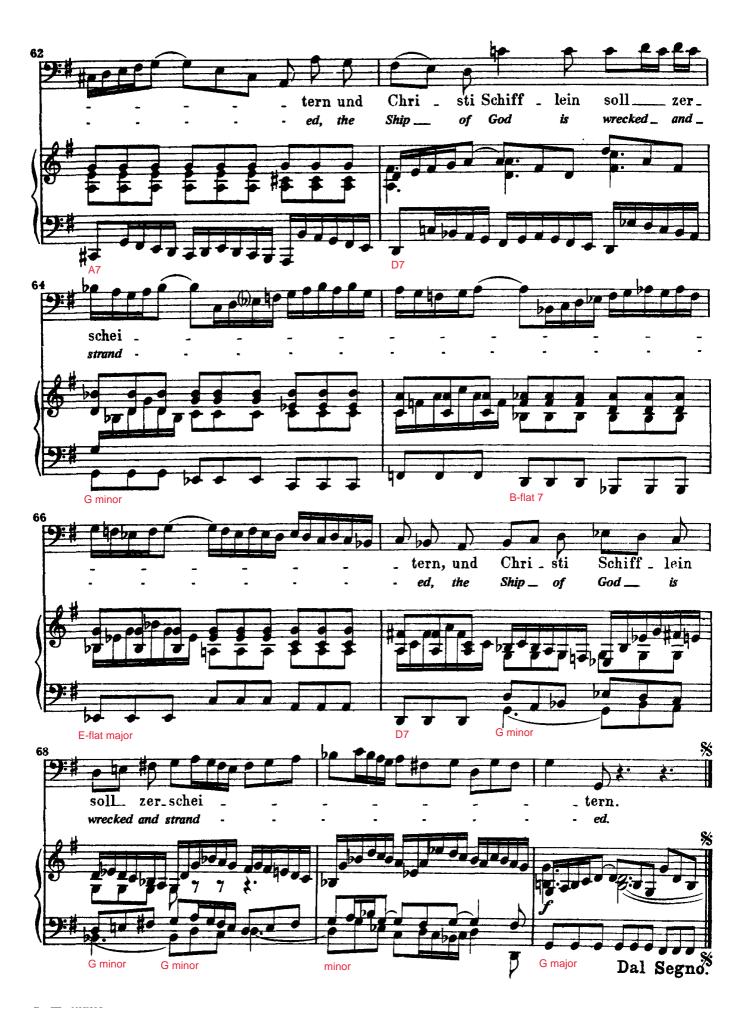




24

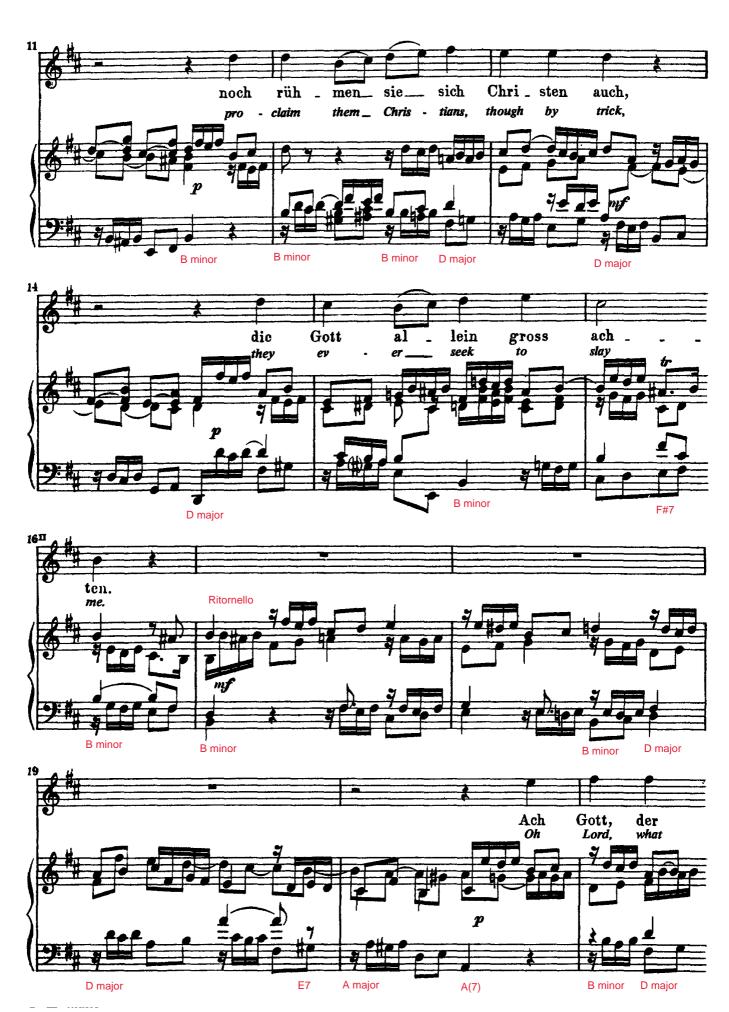
Text painting: Increasingly dramatic coloraturas for "zerscheitern" ("shatter to bits").





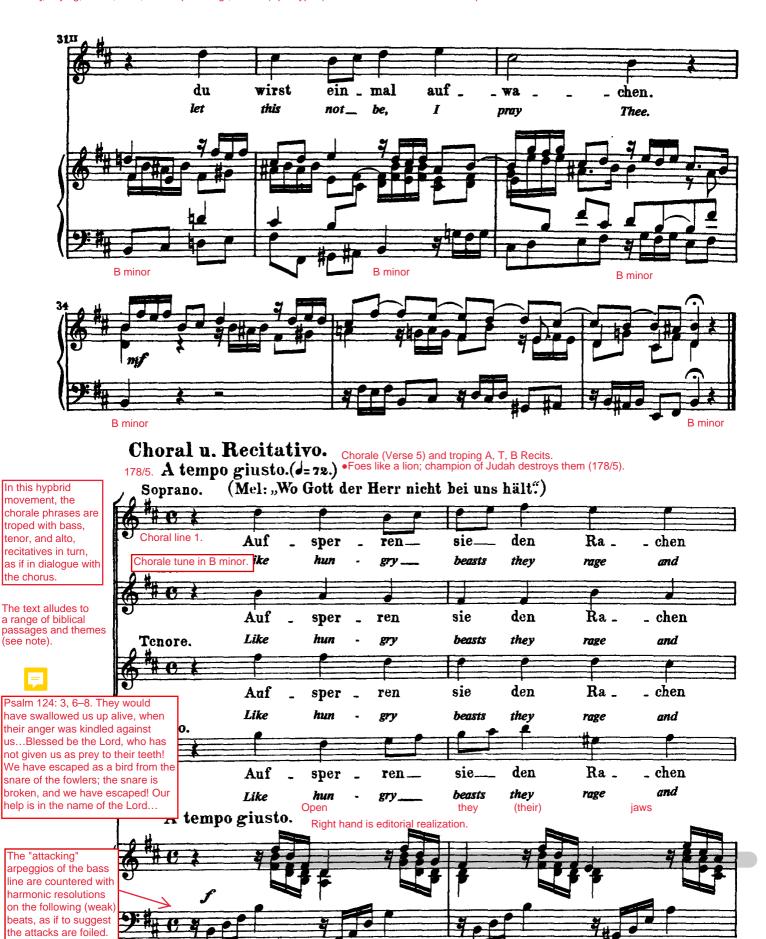
Bach often used chiastic (x-shaped/symmetrical) forms, in which center movements (where the mirror image begins) provide the crux of the matter. There antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text).







The last chorale phrase is reminiscent of biblical passages such as Psalm 59:4–5: Rouse thyself, come to my help, and see! Thou, Lord God of hosts, art God of Israel. Awake to punish all the nations; spare none of those who treacherously plot evil; Matthew 8:25: [The disciples] went and woke [Jesus who was asleep in the boat], saying, "Save, Lord; we are perishing"; Sirach (Apocrypha) 17:19: Afterward he shall rise up...



Text painting: Rapid ascending arpeggios in the continuo seem to depict the attacking, open jaws of the enemies, "like lions" as referenced in the text.

A major

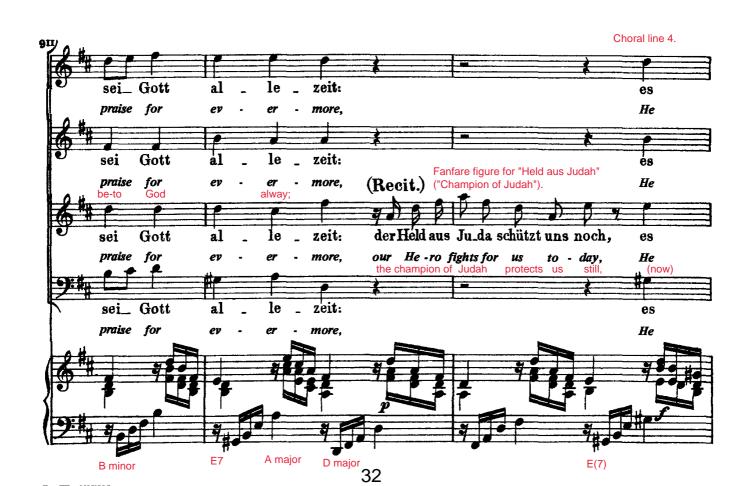
The chorale paraphrases the underlying Psalm 24: 3, 6–7. They would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us...Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth! We have escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped!



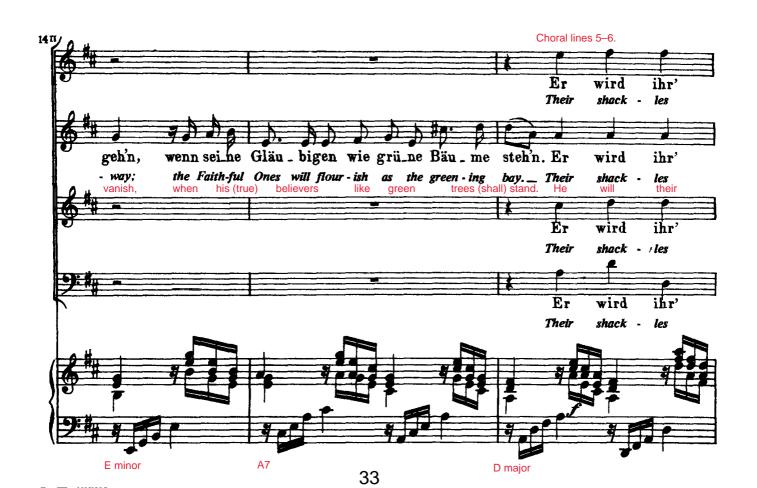


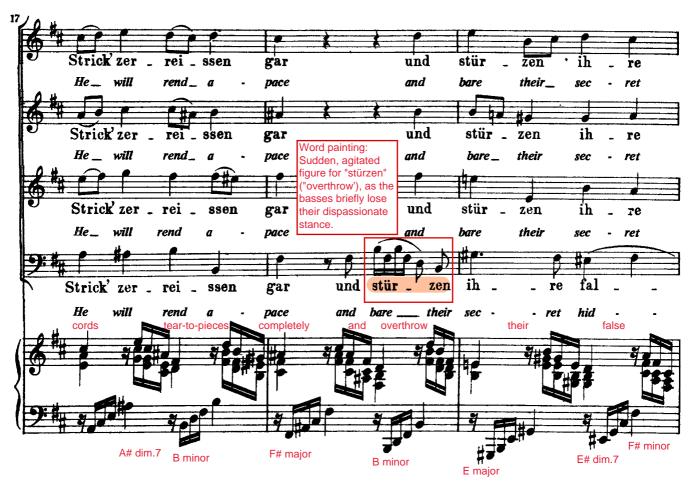
31











Text painting: Irregular harmonic progression depicts the foes' heretical teaching, which the Champion of Judah will overthrow. Martin Petzoldt observes that Lutheran late orthodoxy saw the liaison between Pietism and the Enlightenment as sinister heresy. See *Bach-Kommentar* 1:184.





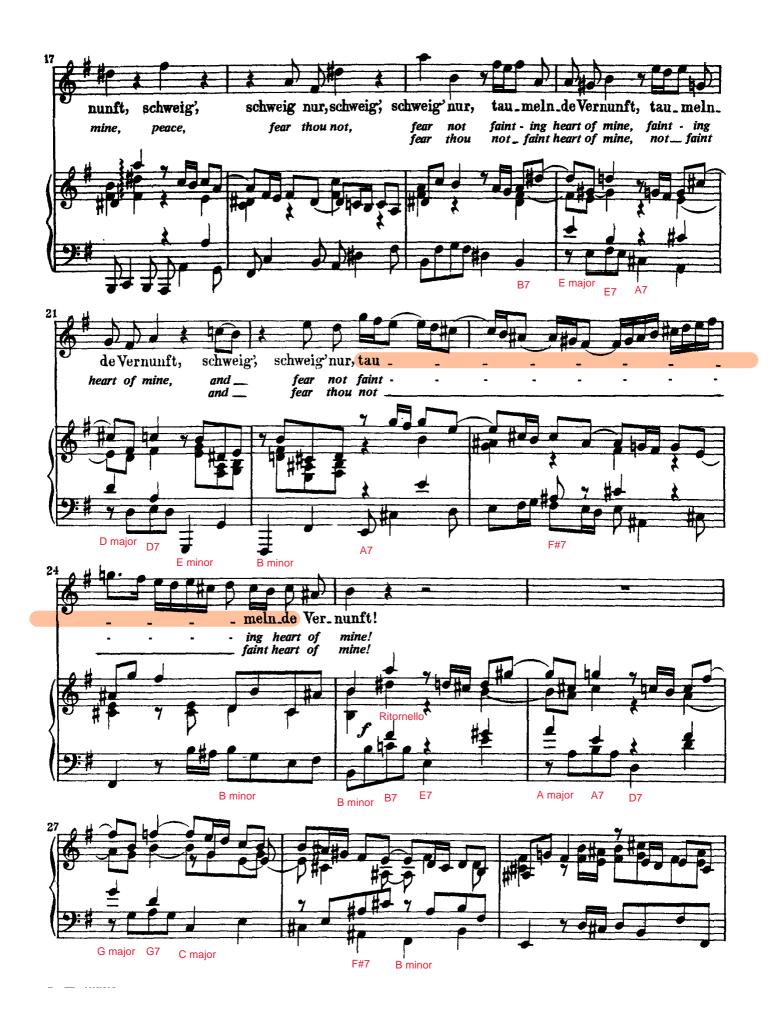


Alfred Dürr writes, "For the century of the Enlightenment, the apologetics against rationalism were a major concern. Hence not only does Bach's librettist command reason to be silent at the opening of the aria, but Bach himself designs the string ritornello, with its syncopations and shaking figures, to reflect the image of the 'tottering' of reason." (See *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, rev. and trans. by Richard Jones [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005], p. 460.) Eric Chafe discusses reason versus faith in Bach's works in *Tonal Allegory in the Vocal Music of J. S. Bach* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), chapter 8. He writes, "Within Bach's church cantatas the word "Vernunft" appears some ten times in nine cantatas. In addition, it crops up in two secular cantatas, in which it is treated somewhat differently" (p. 225). He then analyzes the portrayal of reason in BWV 152/5, 186/3, 76/5, 2/2, 178/6 & 178/7, 180/4, 175/5, 35/3, 197/2, 197/2, 201/14, and 213/2.



which supposes that Christians are "verloren" ("doomed/lost")

Disorienting, constantly modulating harmonies depict unreliabilty of "Vernunft" ("reason"),



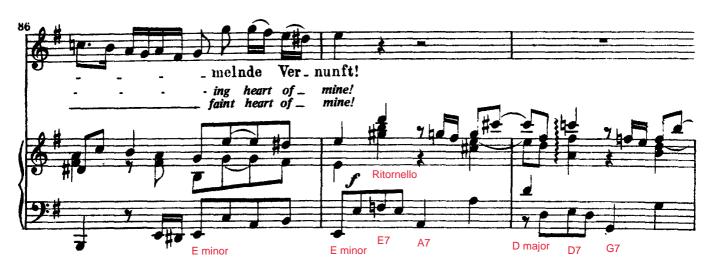


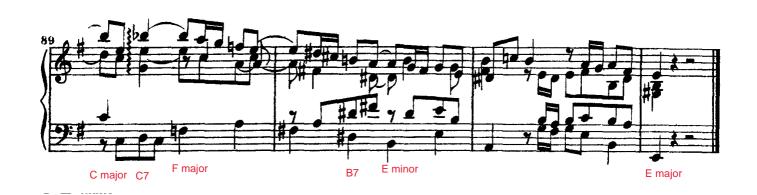




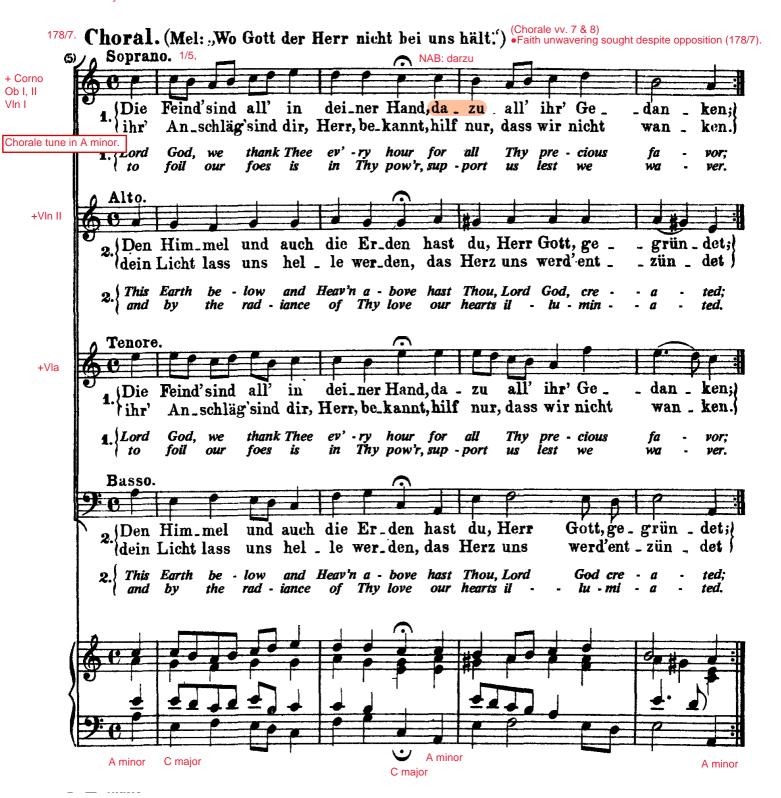








The chorale melody is also used in BWV 114.



Martin Petzoldt notes that the chorale's criticism of faith had renewed relevance in the arguments about Enlightenment philosophy in Bach's day, as it related to anti-terminists of the time. In his *Table Talk*, Luther had identified himself as a terminist. He wrote, "Terminists was the name of a sect in the upper schools, among which I was also. They were opposed to the Thomists, Scotists and Albertists and were also called Occamists from Occam, their first founder, and are the most recent sect and the most powerful in Paris. The controversy was whether *humanitas* and similar words meant a common humanity residing in all men, as Thomas and the others held. The Occamists or Terminists say it is not a common humanity, but the term *homo* or humanity means all men in particular, just as a painted picture of a man signifies all men. Translated from Luther, *Tischreden* (Weimar edition of the collected works), vol. 5, no. 6419 (p. 653). The seventh chorale stanza suggests that reason's attack on faith is encountered individually. See Martin Petzoldt, *Bach-Kommentar* 1:184.



