

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. See Wolff, "Learned Musician," 269. By contrast, 167 requires fewer resources and is smaller in scale (no opening chorus, for example). See side note for more.

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 167

Ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes Liebe

•Praise to God for sending His Son, our Salvation (167/1). The gigue rhythm reflects the sheer joy characteristic of the story surrounding John the Baptist's conception and birth (see Luke 1:14, 44, 64). The pastorale associations of 12/8 meter may reflect the fact that John's parents lived in "the hill country of

Judah" (see Luke 1:39). The the triplet gestures, which bubble upward sequentially, appear to reflect the offering of praise while the interplay among solo violin, continuo, voice, and tutti strings appear to reflect the interaction of the people ("Menschen") offering the dance of praise. The text is a quasi-paraphrase of the canticle of Zacharias (the Benedictus) recorded in the day's Gospel.

167/1. (Aria.)

(Andante $\text{♩} = 69$.)

1. Unusual meter (brisk tempo)

G major

D major

Ritornello characterized by "call & response" (in parallel 6ths) to depict the text that follows.

Text painting: Frequent descending scales and/or arpeggios probably depict God's love extended down to people; ascending figures depict the praise response.

4.

E minor

D major

7.

D major

A minor

G major

D pedal . . .

10.

G major

13. Tenore.

Rhetorical emphasis on "love."

Ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes Lie - be, ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes

Continuo only

+strings

Continuo only

G major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 167

16.

Lie-be und prei-set sei-ne Gü-tig-keit; ihr Menschen, rühmet Got-tes

Solo Vln I with continuo (Vln marked solo). Frequent descending scales and/or arpeggios probably depict God's love extended down to people.

lower strings tacet

D major
"Call & Response" structure among singer, solo violin, and tutti strings, as if differentiating between individual and group responses to the call to praise God.

19.

Lie-be, ihr Men-schen, rüh-met Gottes Liebe und prei-set sei-ne Gü-tig-

lower strings still tacet

B major E minor

21.

keit, prei-

Vln I marked "tutti ma piano"

other strings enter, marked "p."

D major A pedal . . .

23.

- set sei-ne Gü-tig-keit, ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes Liebe und preiset seine Gü-tig-

Vln II, Vla tacet

Vln I

D major

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26.
 keit.
 Ritornello: All strings, marked "f."
 Vln I
 mf
 D major

29.
 B Section.
 Lobt ihn aus rei_nem Her_zens - trie_be,
 Continuo only
 p
 +strings
 D major
 B7

32.
 lobt ihn aus reinem Herzens - triebe, aus rei - nem Herzens - trie - be, dass er
 Continuo only
 +strings
 E minor

35.
 uns zu bestinmter Zeit, dass er uns zu be_stimm - terZeit das **Horn des Heils**, den Weg zum
 Continuo only
 Rhetorical punctuated chords for "appointed time"
 A7
 D major
 G7
 C major
 B7
 E minor

Referenced in Zechariah's canticle (i.e., the Benedictus, part of the Gospel reading).

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Individual words are given rhetorical emphasis with separating rests & repeated/pulsing Vln II/Vla notes, approximating hunting horns.

37.

Le-ben, das Horn des Heils, den Weg zum Leben an Je - su, seinem

+strings

L.H.

Continuo only

B pedal ...

E minor

40.

Sohn, ge - ge - ben. Lobt ihn aus reinem Herzens - trie - be, dass er

Vln I

+Vla

Vln II

L.H.

E minor

B minor

F#7

43.

uns zu bestimmter Zeit das Horn des Heils, den Weg zum Leben an Je - su, sei - nem

Continuo only

L.H.

F# pedal ...

B minor

46.

Sohn, ge - ge - ben. Ritornello

mf +strings

B minor

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Return of A section is modified so that it can close in the original key of G major.

48.

Ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes Lie - - - be, ihr Menschen, rühmet Gottes

Continuo only

+strings

Continuo only

B minor

G major

51.

Liebe und preiset sei - ne Gü - tigkeit; ihr Menschen, rühmet Got - - tes Liebe,

Solo Vln I

54.

ihr Menschen, rüh - met Gottes Liebe und prei - set sei - ne Gü - tigkeit, prei -

other upper strings tacet

E7

A minor

D7

G major

Text painting: Long, rising melisma for "praise."

57.

- set sei - - - ne Gü - tig -

tutti strings ma piano

D pedal ...

G major

59. 

Continuo alone

+strings

mf

G major **Dal Segno.** §

167/2. **Secco** Beginning text is verbatim from Zechariah's canticle (i.e., the Benedictus, part of the Gospel reading), the rest of the sentence is a paraphrase (applied to the Christian church), yet the statement is given to the Alto, often the voice of the believing soul, instead of Bass, perhaps because Zechariah doubted and was punished with being unable to speak until John's birth (Luke 1:20). See Petzoldt, "Bach-Kommentar," 1:541, 3:125.

1. **Alto.** 

B G E C A D# F#

Ge - lo - bet sei der Herr Gott Is - ra - el, der sich in

Blessed/praised be the Lord God (of) Israel, who - in

Secco

E minor

Chromatic Saturation in the vocal part in 10 mm.

For biblical background, see note.



3. 

F D B-flat C#

Gnaden zu uns wendet und seinen Sohn vom hohen Himmels - thron zum Welt - er - lö - ser

mercy to us turns and his Son from the lofty throne-of-heaven as Redeemer-of-the-world

E7 A minor C major C7 A7

Allusion to Epistle of the day: A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isaiah 40:3), applied to John the Baptist in the New Testament (see Matthew 3).

6. 

sen - det. Erst stell - te sich Jo - hannes ein und muss - te Weg und Bahn dem

sends. First appeared - John and must (the) way and path for the

D minor D7

Ascending bass line in long notes & consonant chords describing the coming of Jesus contrasts with the chromatically descending figures & diminished chords for the description of lost humankind. 6

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9. Diminished chords and chromatically descending figures for "poor, lost people/sinners."

Hei-land zu-be-rei-ten. hier-auf kam Je-sus sel-ber an, die armen Menschen.

Savior prepare; thereupon arrived Jesus himself - the poor children-of-men

G major E7 A minor C# dim.7

12. Adagio. (♩ = 50.) Rhetorical swirl for "grace and love."

kin-der und die ver-lor'nen Sünder mit Gnad' und Lie-be, mit

and the lost sinners with grace/mercy and love

E7 G# dim.7 D# dim.7 E minor

15.

Gnad' und Liebe zu er-freu'n und sie zum Himmel-reich, zum Him-mel-

to gladden and them to-the kingdom-of-heaven

E7 A minor E minor A# dim.7 F#7

17. A# B G# A C G F D#

reich in wahr-er Buss', in wahr-er Buss' zu lei-ten.

in true repentance to lead.

E F# D C# F#7 Bm E7 Am D7 GM FM Em A minor E major

All 12 tones in m. 17.

J.S. Bach - Church

4-part texture:
Oboe da caccia,
S, A, Continuo.

167/3.

Duetto.

Andante, (♩ = 66.)

The duet appears to be the voices of Elizabeth & Mary, both of whom received divine promises of coming birth. The oboe da caccia probably represents the "hill country of Judah" where Mary visited Elizabeth (see Luke 1:39).

• God's promises of a Savior have now been fulfilled (167/3). A highly varied movement with striking passages in which the 2 singers (probably Mary and Elizabeth, mothers of Jesus and John, respectively) sing in parallel thirds and sixths about God's promises to them: "Gottes Wort, das trüget nicht." Structurally, outer sections in 3/4 meter frame a middle section in 4/4. For comments by Alfred Dürr and the significance of this central movement, see note.

1. *mf* Ob da caccia

A minor D major

The pulsing continuo bass suggests inevitability.

For biblical background, see note.

4.

7. Soprano.

Paraphrase of Psalm 33:4, 9.

A 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.

Alto.

Got - tes Wort das trü - get nicht,

Got - tes Wort das trü - get nicht,

p

A minor

10.

D minor

A minor

13.

Got - tes Wort das trü - get nicht, es - geschieht,

Got - tes Wort das trü - get nicht, es ge-

p

A minor

C major

16.

was er ver - spricht, es geschieht, was er - verspricht,
schieht, was er verspricht, es geschieht, was er ver -

19.

Got - tes Wort das trü - get nicht, das trü - get nicht,
spricht, Got - tes Wort das trü - get nicht, das trü - get nicht,

C7

F major

22.

das trü - - get nicht, es geschieht, was er - verspricht,
das trü - - get nicht, es geschieht, was er ver -

G7

C major

25.

was er - verspricht, es ge - schieht, was er ver - spricht.
spricht, was er ver - spricht, es geschieht, was er ver - spricht. Ritornello

mf

C major

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28.

Got - tes Wort das trü - get

Got - tes Wort das trü - get

C major D7 G major

32.

nicht, Got - tes Wort das trü - get

nicht, Got - tes Wort das trü - get

A7 D major E7 A minor

35.

nicht, es geschieht, was er verspricht, es geschieht,

nicht, es geschieht, was er verspricht, es ge-

A minor A7 G# dim.7 E7 A minor

39.

was er verspricht, es geschieht, was er ver - spricht, was er ver -

schieht, was er verspricht, es geschieht, was er verspricht, was er verspricht, es ge-

G7 C major C7 A7 D minor

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43.

spricht, es geschieht, was er verspricht, Gottes Wort das trü - get nicht, das trü - get nicht,
schieht, was er verspricht, Gottes Wort das trü - get nicht, das trü - get nicht,

E7 A minor

47.

das trü - get nicht, es geschieht, was er verspricht, was er ver -
das trü - get nicht, es geschieht, was er verspricht, was er verspricht, es ge -

A minor

51.

spricht, es geschieht, was er ver - spricht.
schieht, was er ver - spricht.

mf Ritornello A minor

54.

D major E7 A7

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Contrasting middle section of the da capo aria is in 2 parts: first a section that is canonic and melismatic in the voices and in a contrasting meter.

Text painting: Extremely long melismas to depict the many years since the divine promise in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:14–15) and later to the Patriarchs.

58. (Moderato ♩ = 80.) Figura corta

Was er in dem Pa-ra-dies und vor so viel hun-dert Jah -

Voices in canon, first 8 notes treated imitatively also in Oboe da caccia & Continuo.

Text painting: God's sure fulfillment of his promises is depicted with strict canon.

Was er in dem Pa-ra - dies und vor so viel hun-dert

Figura corta

Continuo

A minor

D minor

Figura corta

"... besteht aus drey geschwinden Noten, deren eine allein so lang ist, als die übrigen beyde"
Johann Gottfried Walther "Musicalisches Lexicon..." [Leipzig, 1732]
["...consists of 3 fast notes, of which one has the same value as the other two taken together."]

61.

Jah -

Oboe da caccia

Ob da caccia

A minor

A7

D minor

64.

Ob da caccia

D7

G major

G7

C major

C7

67.

- ren denen Vä - tern, denen Vä - tern schon verhiess,

Ob da caccia

F7 B-flat major G minor C7 C# dim.7 A7 D minor

The second part of the middle section of this da capo form returns to triple meter as the singers (Mary and Elizabeth?) return to parallel 3rds and 6ths, though not to the earlier thematic material of the movement. Instead, the voices sing long, parallel vocal melismas accompanied by a repeated figura corta figure in the bass.

70.

Text painting: Long melismas for the experience of God's fulfilled promise.

haben wir gott.lob! er - fah -

mf figura corta

D minor

73.

- ren, haben wir gott - lob! er -

G minor G minor

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76.

fah - - - - - ren,

fah - - - - - ren,

G minor C7 F major

79.

ha-ben wir gott lob! er - fah - - - - -

ha-ben wir gott lob! er - fah - - - - -

D minor

82.

ren, ha-ben wir gott lob! er - fah - - - - -

ren, ha-ben wir gott lob! er - fah - - - - -

D minor

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85.

E7 A minor A7

"Gottlob" appears 7 times at the end (sung imitatively), perhaps in recognition of the biblical usage of "7" to represent perfection and completeness.

88.

D minor E7 A minor

91.

B7 E minor E minor E7 Dal Segno.

A7

Secco

167/4.

Recitativo.

•Canticle of Zechariah: God's promises now fulfilled (167/4).

For biblical background, see note.



1. **Basso.**

Des Wei-bes Sa-men kam, nach dem die Zeit er-fül-let; der

The woman's seed came, after the time had-been-fulfilled; the

Continuo alone

C major

4.

Se-gen, den Gott A-bra-ham, dem Glaubensheld, ver-sprochen, ist wie der Glanz der

blessing, which God (to) Abraham, that hero-of-faith, had-promised, has like the radiance of-the

D7

G major

The idea of sin's "Kummer" originates in God's words to Adam at the Fall: "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil ("Kummer") you shall eat of it all the days of your life (Genesis 3:17). "Creation was subjected to futility..." (Romans 8:20).

6.

Sonne an-ge-brochen, und un-ser Kummer ist gestil-let. Ein stummer Zacha-

sun dawned, and our sorrow is (now) stilled. A mute Zacharias

Neapolitan 6th chord colors "our sorrow"

A minor

N6

E7

A minor

9.

ri-aspreist mit lau-ter Stim-me Gott (für) vor sei-ne Wunder-that, die er dem Volk er-

praises with loud voice God for his miracle, which he to-the people

A7

D major

D# dim.

E minor

NBA: erzeugt

12. Application:

.zeu-get hat. Bedenkt, ihr Chri-sten, auch, was Gott an euch ge-

manifested has. Consider, ye Christians, too, what God for you

E7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas

The following chorale is foreshadowed in voice.

This chorale line with the opening continuo counterpoint (first 4 notes) reappears in BWV 28/2 ("Nun lob,' mein' Seel,' den Herren." See Petzoldt, *Bach-Kommentar* vol. 3, p. 129.

Zacharias's call to sing a song of praise meets its response in the final movement where all forces join together for the first time.

14. **a tempo** (♩ = 84.)

than, und stimmet ihm ein Lob-lied an, und stim-met ihm ein Loblied an.

has-dōnē, and strike-up to-him a song-of-praise -!

Choral.

mf Still Continuo only

A minor C major D7 G major G major

Arioso phrase repeats the line of text for emphasis.

This is the 5th and final (supplementary) stanza in the 1548 chorale by Johann Gra[u]mann (1487–1541), a paraphrase of Psalm 103 (also 29/8, 51/4).

167/5. **Choral.** (Met.: „Nun lob,' mein Seel,' den Herren“). •Prayer of praise and dedication to Trinity (167/5).

Text painting: Continuous 16ths in Ob/Vln I to express joy.

Voice of the church, singing the "Loblied" referenced at the end of the previous movement. In setting the 12-line chorale, Bach combines phrases that belong together, while separating 4 lines that / have individual concepts (lines 7 to 10). See Petzoldt, *Bach-Kommentar* 3:129. Bach changes the meter to 3/4, giving the setting a joyous lilt. Echoing Zechariah's canticle in the Gospel reading ("Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people"), the chorale functions like a catechismal response.

1. (♩ = 84.) Ob/Vln I

mf Ritornello (thematically independent)

G major

4.

G major

For biblical background, see note.

Chorale Phrases 1 & 2. Clarino doubling chorale tune (only appearance of the clarino in the cantata).



7. **Soprano.** Sei Lob und Preis mit Eh.

Alto. Sei Lob und Preis mit Eh.

Tenore. Sei Lob und Preis mit Eh.

Basso. Sei Lob und Preis mit Eh.

G major G major

11.

ren Gott Va - - - ter, Sohn, (hei - li - gem) hei - li - ger

ren Gott Va - - - ter, Sohn, (hei - li - gem) hei - li - ger

ren Gott Va - - - ter, Sohn, (hei - li - gem) hei - li - ger

ren Gott Va - - - ter, Sohn, (hei - li - gem) hei - li - ger

15. G major

Geist.

Geist.

Geist.

Geist.

Ritornello

19. G major

Der woll' in

Der woll' in

Der woll' in

Der woll' in

Chorale Phrases 3 & 4.

A

23.

uns ver - meh - - ren, was er uns
 uns ver - meh - - ren, was er uns
 uns ver - meh - - ren, was er uns
 uns ver - meh - - ren, was er uns

27. NBA: Genaden (as 2 syllables: "Genad'n") G major B Chorale Phrases 5 & 6.

aus Ge - nad' ver - heisst. Dass
 aus Ge - nad' verheisst. Dass
 aus Ge - nad' ver - heisst. Dass
 aus Ge - nad' ver - heisst. Dass

(Ritornello)

31.

wir ihm fest ver - trau - en, ganz -
 wir ihm fest ver - trau - en, ganz -
 wir ihm fest ver - trau - en, ganz -
 wir ihm fest ver - trau - en, ganz -

A minor E minor E minor

35. Chorale Phrase 7.

lich ver - las - sen auf ihn, von

lich ver - las - sen auf ihn, von

lich ver - las - sen auf ihn, von

lich ver - las - sen auf ihn, von

16th-note accompaniment stops briefly.

(Ritornello)

39. A7 D major G major D major B minor

Her - zen auf ihn bau - en;

Her - zen auf ihn bau - en;

Her - zen auf ihn bau - en;

Her - zen auf ihn bau - en;

16th-note accompaniment stops briefly.

(Ritornello)

43. Chorale Phrase 8. E minor

dass un - ser Herz, Muth und Sinn

dass un - ser Herz, Muth und Sinn

dass un - ser Herz, Muth und Sinn

dass un - ser Herz, Muth und Sinn

(Ritornello)

A minor

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47. Chorale Phrase 9.

ihm fe - stig - lich an - han -

ihm fe - stig - lich an - han -

ihm fe - stig - lich an - han -

ihm fe - stig - lich an - han -

16th-note accompaniment stops briefly.

51. A minor D

Chorale Phrase 10.

gen: da - rauf singen

gen: da - rauf

gen: da - rauf

gen: da - rauf sing'n

16th-note accompaniment stops briefly.

(Ritornello)

C major

55. Chorale Phrases 11 & 12. B7

wir zur Stund'. A - men, wir

sing'en wir zur Stund'. A - men, wir

sin - gen wir zur Stund'. A - men, wir

wir zur Stund'. A - men, wir

(Ritornello)

E minor F#7 B minor G major

59.

wer - den's er - lan - - - gen, gläub'n wir aus

wer - den's er - lan - - - gen, gläub'n wir

wer - den's er - lan - - - gen, gläub'n wir aus

wer - den's er - lan - - - gen, gläub'n wir aus

63.

Her - zens - grund.

aus - Her - zens - grund.

Her - zens - grund.

Her - zens - grund.

Complete Ritornello

G major

67.

Octave displacements of bass in full score. See NBA.

G major