

Cantata About Sickness & Healing of Body & Soul.

NBA I/24; BC A144

19. S. after Trinity (BWV 48, 5, 56)

*Ephesians 4:22–28 (Exhortation to put on the new nature)

*Matthew 9:1–8 (Jesus heals the paralytic)

Librettist: Unknown

FP: 3 October 1723 (St. Thomas)

Instrumentation:

Tromba (trumpet or horn*)

Oboe I, II

Vln I, II

Vla

SATB

Continuo

(*Title page has "Corno," score in no. 1 has "Tromba," part has "Clarino." See note and Dürr/Jones, 576.)

Thematically Independent Ritornello treated in ascending sequence

Bach effectively captures the anguished cry of the text with Violin I and chorus motives in which a pickup beat in triple meter reaches upward followed by sighing resolution.

Regarding the overall structure of the first movement, see note.

See Dürr/Jones, 576 and side note.

For biblical background see note.

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 48

Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen

described here, providing the biblical answer to the sung question with the canonically treated instrumental chorale: "Herr, Jesu Christ."

48/1. (Coro.) •Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me? Romans 7:24 (48/1).

Vln I motive = first 4 notes of "mich armen Sünder" in last chorale line of "Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut," stanza 1," reaching upward sequentially.

(Andante ♩ = 100.)

Vln I

1.

sigh

Strings

Tritone

G minor

C minor

G minor

G7

Ritornello's opening phrase becomes counterpoint to vocal theme.

6.

C minor

A7

D major

G minor

For Alfred Dürr's comments on the cantata's libretto, see note.

Soprano and Alto in Canon = Allusion to the "law of sin" (see above).

(CORO.)

Soprano.

Alto.

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom

Rhetorical emphasis: Leap of 6th for "elender" followed by sighing duples (note the reference to sighing ["Seufzen"] at the end of the next movement). The theme pervades the entire opening movement.

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -

Choral im Canon.

Chorale in Canon = Allusion to the "law of Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (see above)

Instrumental quotation of chorale adds a hermeneutical layer, presumably added by Bach. Most commonly associated words were "Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut," but could also be "Herr Jesu Christ, ich schrei zu dir," used in the final movement.

Chorale Phrase 1 (changed to triple meter)

Trp

Ob

G minor

Implied Text (from closing chorale): Herr Je - - - su Christ, ich schrei zu

C minor

For text and translation of the first chorale stanza, see note.

18.

hemiola

Lei - be - die - ses To - des!

lö - - - sen vom Lei - be - die - ses To - des!

For word-for-word translations, see Unger, Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts.

mf

Ritornello

dir . . .

D7

E-flat major

G minor

1

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24.

G7 C minor D major G minor

29. Tenore.

Basso.

Choral.

Bass and Tenor in canon alluding to the "law of sin" (see above).

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -

Chorale Phrase 2

aus hoch- - - be - trüb- - - ter See- - - - - le.

34. S & A join vocal canon. G minor

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - - - - sen vom

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -

Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - - - - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des,

lö - - - - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des,

40. hemiola

Lei - be die - ses To - - - - des!

lö - - - - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - - - - des!

vom Lei - be die - ses To - - - - des!

vom Lei - be die - ses To - - - - des!

Strings Ritornello

G minor D minor D major

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46.

G minor G7 C minor

52. Tenore.

A Tenor & Bass now lead with canon.

Ich e - len - der

G minor G minor

58.

Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - - - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des!

Basso.

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - - - sen vom

Choral.

Chorale Phrase 3 (=1)

Dein All - - - macht laß er - - - schei - en mir

Strings

Ritornello

C minor D7

64.

Lei - be die - ses Todes!

E-flat major D7 G minor G7 C minor A7

Surprising
move to
E-flat major

71. Soprano.

Alto.

Choral.

Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich -

Chorale Phrase 4 (=2)

und mich nicht al - - so quä - - - le.

G minor

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78.

Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des,
 lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des,
 Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom
 T & B join in canon.
 Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -

G minor
hemiola

84.

vom Lei - be die - ses To - des! Ich e - len - der
 vom Lei - be die - ses To - des!
 Lei - be die - ses To - des!
 lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des!

G minor

D minor

D minor

90.

Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er - lö - sen vom Lei - be dieses
 Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er -
 Ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -
 Ich e - len - der

G minor

C minor

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96.

To - des, ich e - lender Mensch, wer
lö - sen vom Lei - be dieses To - des, ich
lö - sen, er - lö - sen vom Lei - be dieses To -
Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses

Choral. Chorale Phrase 5

101.

viel grö - ßer ist die Angst und
wird mich er - lö - sen, wer wird mich er -
e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, wer wird mich er -
des, ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er -
To - des, ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er -

F minor C minor S & A in parallel 6ths

107.

lö - sen, ich
lö - sen, ich
lö - sen,
lö - sen,
lö - sen, Choral. Chorale Phrase 6
so an - ficht

Schmerz G minor Ritornello G7 C minor A7 D major G minor

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114,

144

e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, wer wird mich er -

e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er - lö -

T & B in canon ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er -

ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -

This keyboard realization displaces chao notes

Alternate reading:
"anfiicht mein Herz" in *Das privilegierte vollständige und vermehrte Leipziger Gesangbuch*, 1758.

This keyboard realization displaces oboe notes by an octave at times.

und tur - - biert mein Herz

D minor D minor D minor

120.

lö - sen, ich e - len - der
 - sen, T-B-S-A in canon
 lö - sen, ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen, er -
 lö - sen, ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er -

D minor G minor

126.

126.

Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses
ich e - len - der Mensch, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom Lei - be
lö - sen, wer wird mich er - lö - sen vom Lei - be, vom Lei - be die - ses
lö - sen, er - lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des, we

Choral. Chorale Phrase 7

als daß ich's kann er zäh - - - len. Herr Je - su

Choral. Chorale Phrase 1

Trp

Bach repeats
Chorale
Phrases 1 & 2,
presumably to
emphasize the
opening two
phrases of text.

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132.

To - des!
die - ses To - des!
To - des!
wird mich er - lö - sen vom Lei - be die - ses To - des!

Christ, ich schrei zu dir, aus hoch be - trüb - - ter See - - - le.

Chorale Phrase 2.

C minor G major

48/2. Recitativo.

• Sin is a poison that infects body; even more the soul (48/2). Tortured chromaticism is used to depict the poison of sin. Diminished 7th chords used to color anguished words.

Chromatic Saturation in the vocal part in 7 mm., then in 6 mm. This recitativo amplifies the biblical text of the previous movement (Romans 7:24). By comparison, BWV 78/3, which references the same verse, achieves chromatic completion twice (12+12 = 24) in 7+7 mm. It appears both of these movements make a numerical allusion to Romans 7.

1. Alto. B-flat D-flat E F G A-flat B D

O Schmerz, o Elend! so mich trifft, in - dem der Sünden Gift bei mir in

Sustained strings

E-flat major E-flat 7 C7 F minor B dim.7

For biblical background, see note.

4. E-flat C

Brust und Adern wüthet. Die Welt wird mir ein Siech-und Sterbe-haus, der Leib muss sei-ne

C minor E-flat 7 A-flat major

7. G-flat A B-flat F D (F) G-flat A-flat (B-flat)

Plagen bis zu dem Grabe mit sich tragen. Al-lein, die See-le füh-let das stärkste

A dim.7 B-flat minor B-flat 7 B dim.7

Surprising chord progression to "Gift" (poison): from B minor ultimately to E major.

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10. D# C# B E G

Gift, da-mit sie an-ge - stecket; drum, wenn der Schmerz den Leib des To-des

Text painting: Surprising harmonic resolution for "Gift" ("poison").

The preponderance of sharps symbolizes "Kreuz" ("cross").

13. B7 A C E major A# dim.7

trifft, wenn ihr der Kreuzkelch bitter schmecket, so treibt er ihr ein brünstig Seufzen aus.

D7 F# dim.7 G minor B-flat 7 E dim.7 B-flat major

This is stanza 4 of 10 in the 1604 chorale "Ach Gott und Herr" by Martine Rutilius (1550–1618). (In the Dresden hymnal of 1725/36, no. 238, p. 175f; Johann Goedelius, a 17th-century Silesian author, is given as the author.) This stanza relates directly to the sentiments of the preceding aria. For that reason, Martin Petzoldt argues that it should not be considered a separate movement, revealing a more balanced architecture for the work as a whole (see *Bach-Kommentar* 1, p. 538, 541).

For biblical background, see note.



Instruments double the voices.



48/3. **Choral.** (Mel.: „Ach Gott und Herr.“)

Soprano. 1. Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf **Sünden** fol - gen müs - sen: so

Alto. Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf **Sünden** fol - gen müs - sen: so

Tenore. Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf **Sünden** fol - gen müs - sen: so

Basso. Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf **Sünden** fol - gen müs - sen: so

Soll's ja so sein, dass Straf' und Pein auf **Sünden** fol - gen müs - sen: so

+Tromba Ob I, II
+Vin I
+Vin II
+Vla

• Sin's wage is suffering: I would rather suffer now (48/3). Chromatic voice leading depicts painful effects of sin and the struggle to repent. NBA: Sünde

5. B-flat major F major F# dim.7 G minor F major

NBA: hie fahr' **hier** fort und scho - ne dort, und lass mich **hier** wohl bü - - ssen.

fahr' hier fort und scho - ne dort, und lass mich hier wohl bü - - ssen.

fahr' hier fort und scho - ne dort, und lass mich hier wohl bü - - ssen.

fahr' hier fort und scho - ne dort, und lass mich hier wohl bü - - ssen.

A-flat major

Melody is drawn out so bass can color the sentiment with chromaticism.

cross relation

Extreme chromaticism for "repentance"

E-flat 7 F7 G7 A7 B-flat major F# dim.7 C major B-flat 7 B-flat 7 A-flat major G minor F minor E-flat minor B-flat major

Alfred Dürr writes, "The following aria, no. 4, takes us aback with its melodic charm. No threatening sentence of punishment, no contrition is uttered here, but

rather a childlike meekness in the prayer: the obligato oboe melody, with its almost dance-like swing, is also taken over by the voice, so that alto and oboe form a homogeneous duet over an unthematic continuo part." See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, revised and translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 576.

48/4. **Aria.** •Prayer: Destroy my sinful flesh but spare my soul (a continuation of the sentiment that ended the chorale just sung (48/4).

(Moderato $\text{♩} = 120$.)

Solo oboe and voice in duet with continuo. Minuet rhythm with harmonically adventurous circumlocutions suggests an ambivalence between joyful acceptance and discomforting spiritual purification (destroying ("zerstören") the sinful flesh). See Petzoldt, *Bach-Kommentar* 1:541. The sentiments here reflect the Epistle (put off the old nature) and Gospel (Jesus' healing of the paralytic after stating his sins were forgiven).

Ob solo 1.

Ritornello derived from vocal line.

E-flat major E-flat 7 A-flat major

For biblical background, see note.

7.

E-flat major B-flat major C minor

14. **Alto.** Alto is often the voice of the believing soul. See Petzoldt, "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 541.

Here the antithetical Sodom and Zion meet in a process of spiritual purification.

Ach, lo - ge das So-dom der sünd-li - chen Gli-eder, wo-
Text painting: Solo oboe has sustained note for "laying down one's earthly members."

B-flat major E-flat major A-flat major

21. Lowered 3rd inflects the word.

fern es dein Wille, Oboe wo-fern es dein Wille, zer - stö - ret dar -

F minor E-flat major A dim.7 F7

28.

nie - der! Ach, le - ge das So - dom der sünd - li - chen

B-flat major E-flat major

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Minor inflection colors the text: "Destroy the Sodom of my sinful members, to the extent that it be necessary!"

34. Glieder, wo fern es dein Willen, zerstört dar nicht der!

members, to-the-extent it (be) thy will, destroyed down!

B-flat minor B-flat major

Ritornello

40. Nur scho-ne der See-le, und ma-che sie rein, um

B-flat 7 E-flat major B-flat major

Spiritual purification

46. Nur scho-ne der See-le, und ma-che sie rein, um

B-flat major G7 C minor E-flat major

53. vor dir ein hei-li-ges Zi-on zu sein!

A-flat major A-flat major A-flat major

59. Nur scho-ne der See-le, und ma-che sie rein, nur-schöne

F minor E-flat major

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66.

der See-le, und ma-che sie rein, um vor dir ein hei-li-ges

F minor

72.

Zi-on zu sein, um vor dir ein hei-li-ges

E-flat 7 F minor A-flat major F7 B-flat major B-flat 7

78.

Zi-on zu sein!

Ritornello

E-flat major E-flat 7 A-flat major

84.

E-flat major B-flat major

90.

C minor F7 B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 48

Secco

48/5. Recitativo.

1. Tenore. Tenor may be seen here in his traditional role of Evangelist.

The sentiments here reflect the Gospel reading, where Jesus heals the paralytic after stating his sins were forgiven, i.e., he heals body and soul, as referenced at the end of this recitative.

Hier a-ber thut des Heilands Hand auch unter de-nen Todten Wunder. Scheint deine

Secco

F major F7 D7 G7

Text painting: Surprising harmonic resolution for "Wunder."

For biblical background, see note.



4.

See-le gleich er-storben, der Leib geschwächt und ganz ver-dorben, doch wird uns Je-su Kraft be-

C minor E dim.7 C7

6.

kannt: Er weiss im geistlich Schwachen den Leib gesund, die Seele stark zu machen.

Harmonies change to consonant major chords to depict healing.

F major F7 B-flat major B-flat major

Allusion to Gospel reading of the day.

Minuet rhythm with constant hemiolas suggests comfort, joy, and the health referenced in the text. Oboes double Vln I. Tonal transformations are suggestive of the spiritual and physical transformation mentioned in the text.

• Jesus heals our body and soul by faith, as Jesus did for the paralytic in the Gospel reading (48/6). The rhyme scheme is ABCBBA. 48/6. Aria. Bach divides the text into 2+4, then concludes by repeating the first 2 lines. Alto and top instrumental line (2 Ob + Vln I) move together (the rhythm derived from the ritornello), often parallel to each other, except for certain important words, where the voice becomes immobile.

Ob. I, II, Vln I 1. = 12. hemiola

Ritornello *mf* G minor

For comments by Alfred Dürr, see note.



The ritornello theme (dance-like triple with pervading hemiolas suggesting a disguised 3/2 meter) is later adopted by the voice. Even when the voice departs from this material, the instruments continue with it. The resulting structure goes beyond "Choreinbau" (choral part embedded in an instrumental fabric). See Petzoldt 1:542, quoting Konrad Küster, "Bach-Handbuch," 214

6.

B-flat major C minor

For biblical background, see note.



12.

D minor D minor

Contrast between soft voice dynamic and louder string response reflects the contrast between human weakness and Jesus' strength.

19. **Tenore.**

Ver-giebt mir Je - sus mei-ne Sünden, so wird mir Leib und Seel' ge-sund.

D major G minor G minor B-flat major

26.

Ver-giebt mir Je - sus mei-ne Sün-den, so

C minor

32.

wird mir Leib und Seel' ge-sund, so wird mir Leib und Seel, Leib und Seel' ge-

D minor

38.

sund. Er

Ritornello

D minor D minor F major

Stephen Crist writes, "More surprising, however, is the sequence of tonalities in the B section. The first vocal passage (bars 45–57) modulates to the super-tonic minor (A minor), a move outside the normal range of tonal relationships in Bach's arias. But the medial ritornello (bars 58–63) then confounds all expectations by abruptly modulating a semitone upwards to the mediant, B-flat major. This remarkable passage is nothing less than a musical representation of resurrection, suggested by the words 'Er kann die Toten lebend machen' ('He can raise the dead')." See J. S. Bach. *Oxford Composer Companions*, ed. Malcolm Boyd (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 228.

B Section.

45. Martin Petzoldt suggests 4 successive biblical allusions: Romans 4:17, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Deuteronomy 7:9, Psalm 3:9 (3:8 in English bible). See "Bach-Kommentar" 1:537, 542.

kann die To - dten le-bend-machen und zeigt sich kräf - tig in den-Schwa-chen; er

G minor G minor

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The voice pauses, then departs from the ritornello-derived material while the instruments continue with it.

51. hält den längst geschlossnen Bund: dass wir im Glauben Hil - fe fin -

A minor

57. den. Ritornello Er

A minor A minor D7 G7 A7 B-flat major B-flat major

64. kann die To - den le - bend ma - chen Ritornello und zeigt sich kräf -

C minor E-flat major G7

Voice pauses, phrase is extended, departing from the ritornello-derived material while the instruments continue with it.

71. -tig in den Schwa - - chen; er hält den längstgeschlossnen Bund: dass wir

C minor D7 G minor

The voice pauses twice, departing from the ritornello-derived material while the instruments continue with it (except for m. 77).

78. - im Glau - ben Hil - fe, dass wir im Glauben Hil - fe fin - den. Modified da capo

G minor E-flat major Ritornello

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85.

Ver - giebt mir Je - sus mei-ne Sün-den, so wird mir Leib -

C minor

91.

— und Seel'gesund. Vergiebt mir Je - sus meine Sün-den, so

Ritornello

E-flat major

F minor

99.

The voice pauses, then departs from the ritornello-derived material while the instruments continue with it.

wird mir Leib und Seel'ge-sund, — so wird mir Leib und Seel, Leib und Seel' ge - sund.

F# dim.7

G minor

G minor

106.

Ritornello

G minor

B-flat major

112.

B-flat major

C minor

118.

G minor

G minor

48/7. **Choral.** (Mel.: Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut:*) • Prayer: I turn to Jesus for relief in my heartache (48/7).

The return of the chorale tune from the opening movement provides cyclical unity and provides the answer to the question raised in the first movement as if in catechismal response. See Petzoldt, *Bach-Kommentar* 1:543. (In the first movement, the answer was suggested by the instrumentally played chorale.) The reference to Christ as "Trost" may allude to Haggai 2:8.

For biblical background, see note.



Soprano.
Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich wen - den;
mein Herzleid ist dir wohl bewusst, du kannst und willst es en - den.

Alto.
Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich wen - den;
mein Herzleid ist dir wohl bewusst, du kannst und willst es en - den.

Tenore.
Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich wen - den;
mein Herzleid ist dir wohl bewusst, du kannst und willst es en - den.

Basso.
Herr Je - su Christ, ei - ni - ger Trost, zu dir will ich mich wen - den;
mein Herzleid ist dir wohl bewusst, du kannst und willst es en - den.

+ Tromba
Ob. I, II
Vin I

+ Vin II

+ Vla

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie

In dei - nen Wil - len sei's ge - stellt, mach's, lie - ber Gott, wie

G minor 5. G minor B-flat major B-flat major

8. dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich blei - ben.

dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich blei - ben.

dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich blei - ben.

dir's ge - fällt: dein bin und will ich blei - ben.

B-flat major G minor G major