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Dialogue Cantata for S/B
with Chorale Arrangements.

Cantatas for Christmas and the New Year season 1726–1727 have not survived. This is the only surviving cantata between BWV 36 (for the first Sunday in Advent 1726—a reworking of a previous work) and BWV 82 ("Ich habe genug") for Purification on 2 February 1727. Bach seems to have reduced his efforts and commitment and at this time (and the burden on his musicians): BWV 58 uses reduced forces of S, B, oboes, strings, and continuo. BWV 82 is for B, oboe, strings, and continuo, with no chorale. Cantata 58 is the fourth of 4 dialogue cantatas for S & B in Bach's third cycle. See also BWV 57 (26 December 1725), 32 (13 January 1726), 49 (2 November 1726). Cantatas 49 and 58 are significant because both end with a bass aria (Jesus) that embeds a chorale sung by S (Soul), as does also 58/1. BWV 58 survives only in a revised version of 1733 or 1734; for the later version Bach added 3 oboes in movements 1 & 5 (third oboe as *taille*) and replaced the middle aria, which was originally in 12/8. Bach later assigned this cantata to the chorale cantata cycle (in 1725 there was no "Sunday after New Year"). It is not a true chorale cantata in that the outer movements are not from the same chorale and the inner movements are not chorale text paraphrases. See Dürr/Jones, 168.

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 58

Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid

In this cantata, Mary and Joseph's flight to Egypt with the baby Jesus to escape Herod is seen metaphorically as the Believer's difficult journey to heaven.

Dialogue cantata but not in the usual sense between Vox Christe and Soul.

Aria combined with embedded chorale in opening and closing movements. Aria-ritornello form combined with bar form of the hymn. See also BWV 49/6, 158/2, 156/2, 159/2.

This symmetrical work with movement no. 3 the keystone movement in the arch. See side note for more.

Instrumentation:

Oboe I, II
Taille (tenor oboe)
[Oboes added since 1733/34]
Vln I, II
Vla
SB
Continuo,
Organo

58/1. 1. Duetto

•Dialogue: Way to heaven is hard (58/1). Halting, dotted rhythms in sarabande? meter with chromatic pitches (e.g., lament figure); embedded chorale sung by soprano, suggest a sad journey.

1. Ritornello Lament figure

C major G minor G major C major

For the possible significance of C major, see side note.

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

G major

Inflecting major with minor suggests a mixture of hope and sadness (see note).

D minor C minor F# dim.7 D dim.7 C major G7

Soprano double by *taille*

Soprano (Mel: „Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid“)

Ach Gott, wie man - ches Her - ze - leid

This is the first stanza of 18 in the 1587 chorale by Martin Moller (1547–1606), based on the Latin hymn "Jesus dulcis memoria." See also 3/1 and 44/4.

Basso

Bach's score shows that he first intended the voice to be alto voice but changed it to bass when writing out the parts.

Bass sings sighing/lament figure related to beginning of the ritornello.

Nur Ge - duld, Geduld, mein

Dialogue but more like a dialogue between two people than a believer and Christ; perhaps here representing Mary and Joseph in the Gospel reading (especially since the bass refers to God in the third person in the following recitative).

For biblical background, see note.

(Fine)
C major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

23

Her - ze, Ge - duld, — Geduld, mein Her - ze, — nur Ge - duld, —

28

nur Ge - duld, — nur Ge - duld, Geduld, mein Her - ze, Geduld, —

Vln I: Lament figure

33 **Soprano**

Here the texts are sung together in the manner of a duet. In the first movement, the focus is on "the present evil time"; in the final movement it is on "the joy of that future time."

be - geg - net mir zu die - ser Zeit!

— Ge - duld, mein Her - ze, Ge - duld, — Geduld, mein Her - ze, es ist

Vln II: Lament figure

38

Chromatic inflection for "böse Zeit."

ei - ne bö - - se, ei - ne bö - - se, bö - se Zeit!

2nd statement of ritornello

C# dim.7 (D7) G minor (G minor) G major

2

43

48

D major

53

A minor

58

Soprano - Allusion to Matthew 7:14: "The gate is narrow and the way is hard [Luther: "schmal," i.e., "narrow"], that leads to life, and those who find it are few."

Der schma - le Weg - ist trüb - sal - voll,

Basso

Doch der - Gang zur Se - lig -

G major

Lament figure

63

keit, zur Se - - - lig - keit, doch der - Gang

A minor

Word painting: the "narrow path" to salvation (heaven) "limps."

Vln I: Lament figure

Vln II: Lament figure

Two-plus measures bassetto texture (no continuo bass). See note.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

69

Word painting: The path to salvation (heaven) "shoots" up.

zur Se - lig - keit, zur Se - lig - keit, der Gang zur Se - lig - keit führt

A minor

D minor

74

Soprano

Here the texts are sung together in the manner of a duet.

den ich zum Him - mel

zur Freu -

Text painting: Melisma for "joy."

C major

78

wan - dern soll.

de nach dem Schmer - ze, zur Freu - de nach dem

Descending chromatic tetrachord = traditional symbol of lament.

F minor

83

Schmerze. Nur Ge.duld, Geduld, mein Herze, es ist ei - ne bö - se Zeit!

First 2 lines of aria text (Bass voice) are repeated.

Vin I alone

C major

dal segno

• Persecution: God rescues us like Joseph from Herod (58/2).

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

Secco

58/2.

2. Recitativo

Angular melody. Important words often emphasized with high notes

Basso

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 6 mm. Then only 11 different pitch classes in the rest of the vocal line.

For biblical background, see note.

Key of A minor

E major

G# dim.7

D# dim.7

B major

Rhetorical leap for raging King Herod

Allusion to Abraham, whom God called to a new land (like Joseph in the Gospel reading) and who was called a friend of God.

Ver-folgt dich gleich die ar-ge Welt, so hast du den-noch Gott zum

Freunde, der wi-der dei-ne Feinde dir-stets den Rük-ken hält. Und wenn der

wütende He-ro-des das Ur-teil ei-nes schmähen To-des gleich ü-ber un-sern Hei-land

fällt, so kommt ein En-gel in der Nacht, der läs-set Jo-seph träumen, daß er dem

Würgersoll entfliehen und nach Ä-gyp-ten ziehen. Gott hat ein Wort, das

Reminiscent of the avenging angel who killed all the first-born of Egypt before the Exodus.

Allusion to the day's Gospel reading: Matthew 2:13-23, in which King Herod kills all male children 2 years old and under to attempt to kill the child Jesus.

See side note for the relevant passage in the day's Gospel reading.

Octave displacement colors "Nacht" (appoggiatura by Bach).

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

Eric Chafe sees the "flood of waters" as a reference to the Exodus, and he sees the first 2 movements as representing the old year (the time of Israel) and the last 2 movements as the new year (the time of Christ). See "Analyzing Cantatas," 260, note 11; "Tonal Allegory, 154-55.

14

dich vertrauend macht. Er spricht: Wenn Berg und Hügel nieder - sinken, wenn du in Wasser.

Text painting: Leaps for mountain & hill NBA: Wenn dich die Flut des Wassers will ertrinken

Allusion to such biblical passages as Isaiah 54:10 and Matthew 24:35 (see side note).

G minor C7 F major F# dim.(7) A half dim.7

17

fluten willst er trinken, so will ich dich doch nicht ver-las-sen noch versäumen.

Flood of water: Probably an allusion to Isaiah 43:1-2 (see side note), which itself is reminiscent of the Exodus through the Red Sea.

Leap for rhetorical emphasis on "not."

Biblical allusion to Hebrews 13:5-6 (see side note).

D7 G minor C7 E dim.7 B-flat 7 E-flat 7 C major F major

This aria is new to the later version, replacing an aria in 12/8 meter, which perhaps had a different text (only the continuo part survives). See Dürr/Jones, 168. Its central (keystone) position in a chiasmic form gives it importance (see earlier note about the significance of chiasmic form in Bach's work).

• Affliction: God is my confidence so I am content (58/3).

3. Aria

Obbligato Vln is very active. "Walking" rhythm suggests the believer's trudging pilgrimage to heaven.

Viol. solo

Modified da capo form.

Solo Vln. *f*

Opening gesture based on vocal opening.

Continuo

For biblical background, see note.

D minor (for significance, see note).

Repeated chromatic inflection suggests ambivalence.

4

7

10

F major

G minor

F major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

A cantabile (resolute?) vocal part is embroidered with a lively (carefree?) violin obbligato.

12 **Soprano**

Ich bin_ ver - gnügt in mei - nem Lei - den,

Sighing duple colors the text.

D minor

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" 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.

15

ich bin_ ver - gnügt, ver -

D minor

18

gnügt in meinem Lei - den, denn Gott ist mei - - ne_ Zu - ver -

D minor

The sequential intensification is chromatically inflected, suggesting ambivalence.

21

sicht; ich bin_ ver - - gnügt, ver - gnügt in meinem Lei - den,

D minor D7 G minor G7 C major G# dim.7 A minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

23

denn Gott ist mei-ne Zu-ver-sicht, denn Gott ist

A minor

26

mei - ne Zu - ver - sicht.

A minor

28

D minor

G7

C major

B Section begins with syncopations in both voice and violin, suggesting casual/carefree certainty.

31

Ich ha - be si - chern Brief - und Sie-gel, - und

A minor

D minor

Repeated 8th notes in continuo reinforce matter-of-fact assertion.

34

die - ses ist - der fe - ste Rie-gel, den bricht die Höl - le

G major

C major

D7 G minor

Chromatic inflection to minor for "Hölle."

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

37 *tr*
sel - ber nicht;
tr
tr
Plodding 8ths in solo violin reinforce the matter-of-fact statement of assurance.
Ritornello
G minor

Text painting: Held note for "sure/secure."

40
ich ha - be si -
G minor

Seal: Allusion to biblical passages such as 2 Timothy 2:19: "But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his" and Revelation 9:4: "The seal of God [was] upon their foreheads." Also Ephesians 1:13-14 ("sealed with the Holy Spirit").

Text painting: Held note for "secure/firm."

43
- chern Brief und Sie - gel, und die - ses ist der fe - ste
B-flat major

46
Rie - gel, den bricht auch selbst die Höl - le nicht, den bricht
G minor

48

auch selbst die Höl - - le nicht, den bricht auch

D minor

51

selbst die Höl - - le nicht. Ich bin ver - gnügt in

D minor

A material returns without intervening ritornello.

53

mei - nem Lei - den, ich

56

bin ver - gnügt, ver - gnügt in meinem Lei - den, denn Gott ist mei -

D minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 58

59

- ne Zu - versicht, ich bin ver - gnügt, ver - gnügt in meinem

62

Lei - den, denn Gott ist mei - ne Zu - ver - sicht; denn

cresc.

G minor

64

Gott ist mei - ne Zu - ver - sicht.

tr *f* Closing ritornello

D minor

67

(tr)

70

F major

73

G minor

75

F major

D minor

Secco Recitative ending with arioso after 4 mm.

• Persecution: God shows me a new land (58/4): Allusion to Gospel reading, in which an angel directs Joseph to take the infant Jesus to Egypt to escape King Herod's wrath.

58/4. **4. Recitativo** Four lines of text are set succinctly in 4 mm., the last 2 in an arioso of 11 mm.

Soprano

Kann es die Welt nicht las-sen, mich zu ver-fol-gen und zu

Continuo

F major

G7

Chromaticism: In first 4 mm. of the entire texture, D# and F# are missing.

For biblical background, see note.

3

has-sen, so weist mir Got-tes Hand ein and-res Land.

Allusion to the day's Gospel reading.

C# dim.7

D minor

G# dim.7

E major

The "new homeland" is identified as the Eden of heaven. Its significance is emphasized with syncopated emphasis on "es" ("it").

5 **Arioso**

Ach! könn't' es heu - - te noch ge-sche-hen, daß ich mein E - - den möchte

Walking bass

A minor

(A7)

D minor

G major

(G7)

C major

8

se - hen, ach! könnt' es könnt' es heute noch, ach! könnt' es heu - te noch ge - sche - hen, daß

E major A minor A minor B-flat major D minor A7 D minor

11

ich mein E - den, daß ich mein E - den möchte se - hen, ach! könnt' es heu - te noch ge -

G major D(7) G major G7 C major D minor

13

sche - hen, daß ich mein E - den. mein E - den möch - te se - - hen!

E(7) A minor A minor (D minor) E major A minor

Opening chorale returns (sung by the Soul) in dialogue with Jesus (the soprano addresses the bass as Jesus). In the opening movement, the chorale is in 3/4 meter. As in the opening movement, 3 oboes were added for the 1733/1734 version. In comparison to movement no. 1, this chorale setting is jubilant.

•Dialogue (Christ & Believer): Way to heaven is worth it (58/5).

58/5. 5. Duetto

Concerto-like writing in which Ob. I, II and Vln I lead with 16th-note figurations.

Ritornello

Concerto-like texture begins with triadic fanfare motive (derived from bass voice's opening), which recurs in the movement.

C major Descending C major scale may represent help of Jesus (The C major triad was considered the most perfect and often used for Jesus).

Continuo has triadic motive in syncopation, reinforcing the carefree mood.

For biblical background, see note.

6

G major

For Alfred Dürr's comments, see note.

11

This is the second stanza of 15 in the 1610 chorale "Herr, Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht" by Martin Bohemus (1557–1622), sung here to the same tune as the chorale in the opening movement.

(Mel: „Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid“)

16 **Soprano**

Ich hab' vor mir

Cantuse firmus doubled by taille.

Vln I

p

G major G7 C major walking bass C7 F major (G7)

21

ein' schwe - - re Reis.

C major D7 G major

Ritornello

26

G major G7

Bass sings the material from the ritornello.

31 **Basso**

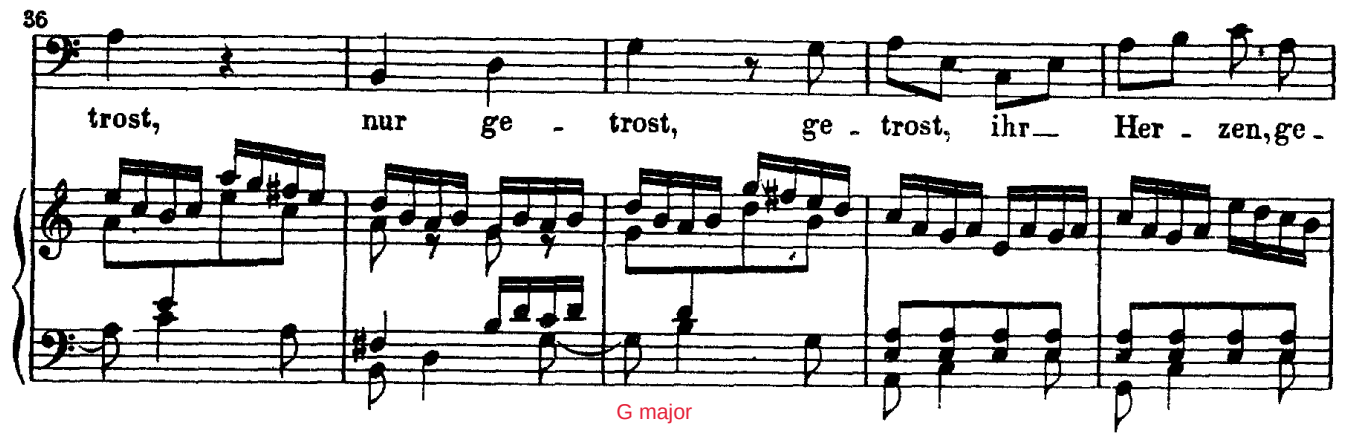
Nur ge - - trost, ge - trost, ihr Her - zen, nur ge - -

Strings, oboes tacet.

p

C major

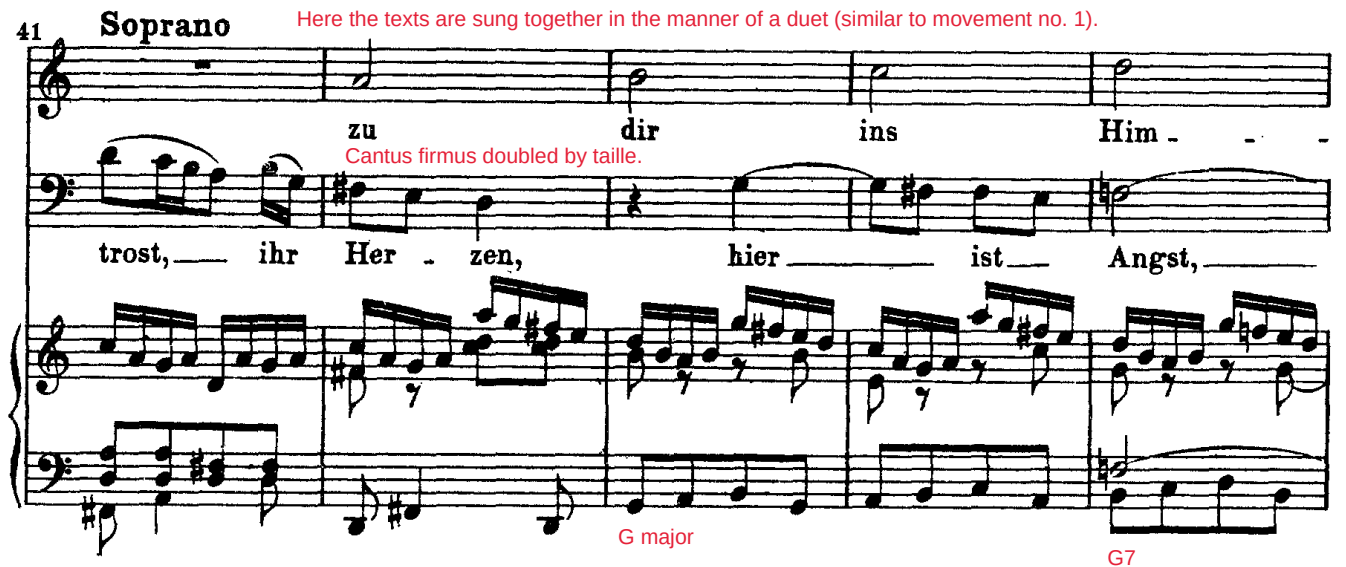
36



trost, nur ge - trost, ge - trost, ihr Her - zen, ge -

G major

41 **Soprano** Here the texts are sung together in the manner of a duet (similar to movement no. 1).



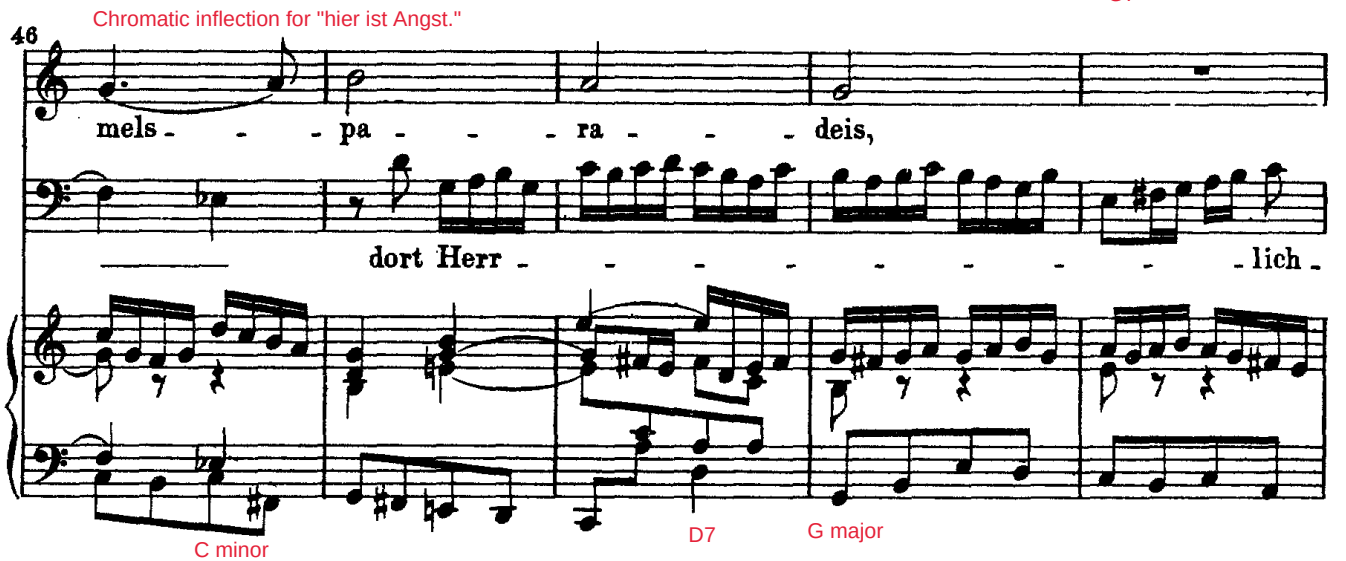
zu dir ins Him -

Cantus firmus doubled by taille.

trost, ihr Her - zen, hier ist Angst,

G major

46 Chromatic inflection for "hier ist Angst."



mels - pa - ra - deis,

dort Herr - lich -

C minor

D7

G major

51 Chromatic inflection for "hier ist Angst."



keit, hier ist Angst, dort Herr -

keit, hier ist Angst, dort Herr -

56

- lich-keit, dort Herr - lich-keit!

+Ob I

Ritornello

G major

61

tr

66

B Section.

Soprano

Basso

da ist mein rech - tes

Und die Freu -

-Ob I & II (Taille doubles cantus firmus).

-Vln I & II

Text painting: Long melisma for "joy."

G major G7 C major C7 F major

71

Harmonic wandering for "yonder Fatherland."

Va - ter - land,

de je - ner - Zeit.

In the first movement, the focus was on "the present evil time"; here it is on "the joy of that future time."

E major

76

und die Freu - - - de je - ner Zeit ü - - ber -

+Vln II & III (up 8va)

A minor A7 D minor

80

wie - get al - le Schmer - - - -

G# dim.7 A minor

84 **Soprano**

dar - - - an du

- zen, al - le Schmer - zen, und die

A minor

88

dein Blut hast ge - - -

Freu - - - - de je - -

G7 C major

92 wandt.
- - - - - ner Zeit ü - - - - - ber - wie - - - - - get al - le

Ritornello returns

Tutti

C7 F major

98

Opening line of the bass aria text is repeated for emphasis.

Schmer - zen. Nur ge - - - trost, nur ge -

F major (G7) (E minor)

100

trost, hier ist Angst,

C major B dim.7

104

dort Herr - lich - keit, dort Herr - lich - keit!

G7 C major C major