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NBA I/12; BC A74

Rogate: 5. S. after Easter (BWV 86, 87)

*James 1:22-27 (Be doers of the word and not hearers only)

*John 16:231-30 (Christ's farewell: Ask anything of the Father in my name)

Librettist: Christiane Mariane von Ziegler

(Libretto greatly modified)

See notes for details.

FP: 6 May 1725 (Leipzig:

St. Thomas)

Instrumentation:

Ob I, II; also Ob d'amore I, II

Ob da caccia

Vln I, II

Vla

SATB

Continuo, Organo

Emotionally complex cantata responding to Jesus' instruction to pray.

The librettist begins with Jesus' exhortation to pray in his name. Because it takes the biblical verse out of context, it sounds like a reproach, which is reinforced in nos. 2 and 3: "despite their obvious guilt, mortals have not prayed to God for forgiveness." See *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, p. 323. The text is repeated 6 times, emphasizing different words from one statement to another. The figura corta is combined with repeated ascending diatonic fourths.

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 87

Bisher habt ihr nichts gebeten in meinem Namen

Fugue-like arioso, which contemplates Christ's statement from varying perspectives (see below). For Eric Chafe's interpretation of the cantata's tonal plan, see note.

1. Aria

• Vox Christi: You have not asked in my name: John 16:24 (87/1).

Ob. II, Viol. II Instrumental exposition of rising subject (one 8va).

Figura corta (see note).

Ob. da caccia, Va

D minor (For possible significance, see note.)

B-flat major

F major (G7)

C major D7

G major (A7)

Ob. I, Viol. I

Ob da caccia Vla

Ascending diatonic fourth (see note).

D minor

D minor

Ob I Vln I

D7

E major A minor

A minor

D minor

Ascending diatonic 4ths in parallel 3rds.

Ob I Vln I

C7

F major

D minor

D minor

F7

B-flat major

C major

F major

The cantatas with Von Ziegler librettos show considerable variety in compositional approach. Some make almost no use of the chorus (BWV 87, 183, 175). Some begin with an aria or recitative (BWV 108, 87, 183/1, 175/1).

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

11 Basso Vox Christi

A

Chromatically ascending line.

Bis - her habt ihr nichts ge - be -

For biblical background, see note.

A7 D minor D minor (C major) F major (G7) C major

Ascending diatonic 4th ending in a double cadence ("cadenza doppia")

1311

ten in meinem Na - - - - men, in meinem Na - - -

Ob. da caccia, Va.

(A7) D minor A7 D minor

16

men, habt ihr nichts, habt ihr nichts ge - be - - - ten, bis - her

Ob. I, Viol. I

Ob. II Viol. II

C# dim.7 A major D major E7 F major A minor A minor

15

habt ihr nichts ge - be - - - ten in mei-nem Na - -

D7 G minor C7 F major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 87

20

men, bis - her habt ihr nichts ge - be - ten in

Obl/Vlnl

F major G7 A minor D7 G(7) A7 G7 A major B half dim.7

A writhing harmonic progression suggests "praying in Jesus" name is hard...

22

mei - nem Na - men, in mei - nem Na - men, bis - her habt ihr nichts ge -

G minor A7 D minor G minor E7

24

be - ten, bis - her habt ihr nichts ge -

B Ascending fourths now in duets of parallel 3rds...

A minor A minor G7

26

be - ten in mei - nem Na - - men, bis - her habt ihr nichts ge -

C major A minor A minor F major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 87

Word painting: Rhetorical emphasis on "gebeten" ("ask/pray") with long coloratura.

25 be - - - - -

30 - - - - - ten in meinem Na - - - - - men.

F major D minor D minor B-flat major B-flat major C major F major A7 D minor D major

87/2. 2. Recitativo • Failure to pray despite deliberate transgressions (87/2).

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 4 mm.

To see what revisions were made to the libretto, see Von Ziegler's original (as published in 1728) in note.

1. Alto E D B G# A C# B-flat

Exclamation (leap) Tritone

O Wort, das Geist und Seel er - schreckt! Ihr Menschen, merkt den

O Word, that spirit and soul alarms! You people take-note of-the

Secco

The alto, often the voice of faith, interprets Jesus' statement as a reproach. Von Ziegler's original libretto is made more urgent by the new words "Zuruf," "Evangelium," and "ungesäumt" (see note for more).

E7 A7 D major

For biblical background, see note.

Text painting: Descending line to depict the meaning underneath the words.

Adding the word "Gospel" to the reproach suggests general spiritual failure.

3 C F# G E-flat F

Zu - ruf, was da - hin - ter steckt! Ihr habt Ge - setz und E - van - ge - li - um vor -

call, what behind-it lies! You have Law and Gospel deliberately

D7 G minor B-flat major

Text painting: Move from minor to major (Law to Gospel).

5

sätzlich übertreten, und diesfalls möcht' ihrungesaumt in Buß und Andacht beten.
transgressed, and therefore (should) you immediately in penitence and devotion pray.

Chromatic progression for "übertreten."

B dim.7 G7 C minor N6 F# dim.7 G minor

87/3. 3. Aria • Prayer of confession; request for advocacy (87/3). This is one of Bach's longest arias.

1. Sighing figure in parallel 6ths.

Ritornello derived from vocal line.

Ob da caccia I

Ob da caccia II

G minor G minor

Ostinato (beseeching) figure (compare m. 34, where singer has it)...

For biblical background, see note.

3II

Sustained note...

F major C minor

6

G minor F minor (subdominant of subdominant) C minor G minor C minor G7

Ob da caccia II

9

C minor C minor F# dim.7 D7

11II Alto A

Quotation from the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:12): "Forgive us our debts."

Ver-gib, o Va-ter, ver-gib uns-re
Forgive, O Father, forgive our re

G minor G minor

Ostinato (beseeching) figure 5

Allusion to Jesus parable of the unforgiving servant who fell at the feet of his master to beg for leniency. See Matthew 18:26: "The servant fell on his knees, imploring [his master], "Lord, have patience (Luther 1545: Geduld) with me..."

Insistently repeated "beseeching" figures exchanged between oboe da caccia I and singer (rising hopefully in the instrumental part but falling back down in the vocal part).

14

Schuld und ha - be noch mit uns Ge -

Ob da caccia I

Text painting: Sustained note depicts "habe Geduld" ("have patience").

G minor

To pray with "Andacht" is reminiscent of the servant in Jesus' parable falling at the feet of his master. The sequential figure in the vocal line and the melisma on "beten" intensify the statement.

16

duld, wenn wir in An - dacht be - ten.

when we in devotion pray.

F major G minor C minor B-flat major B-flat major

19

Ver - gib, o Va - ter, ver - gib uns - re

B-flat major D7

22

Schuld, ver - gib, o Va - ter, ver - gib uns - re

G minor B-flat 7 B dim.7 G7

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24

Schuld und ha - - be noch mit uns Ge - duld, wenn

C minor (D7) G minor

26II.

wir in An - dacht be - - - - - ten, wenn

G minor

29

wir in An - dacht, wenn wir in Andacht be - ten; ver - gib, o Va - ter,

G7 C minor C minor

Cont.

31II

uns - re Schuld und ha - be noch mit uns Ge - duld, wenn wir in An - dacht

D7 G minor G7 C minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 87

31 **C**

be - ten, in An-dacht be - ten

Ob. da caccia I

Ritornello

Ob. da caccia II

D7 Beseeching figure in parallel 6ths between continuo and singer.

G minor G minor

37

G minor F7 F major C minor

40

G minor F minor C minor D major G minor

42II

G7 C minor C minor F# dim.7

45 **D** B Section.

Bach delays the continuation of the prayer until the second part of the aria, thereby excluding it from the da capo, with the result that the aria ends with the initial idea alone (the prayer for mercy). Note: Von Ziegler's printed libretto does not indicate da capo at end.

und sa - gen: Herr, auf

G minor G minor B-flat major

The text alludes to Jesus' words in the Gospel reading, promising to speak plainly instead of figuratively and to Paul's statements that the Holy Spirit and Christ intercede for them (see note).



47

dein Ge-heiß, ach, re - - de nicht mehr

C7 F major D7 G minor

49

sprich - - worts-weis, hilf uns viel - mehr ver - tre - -

Cont. Ob. da caccia I, II

G# dim.7 A(7) D major C# dim.7

51

- - ten, hilf uns - - viel - mehr - - ver - tre - -

A7 D minor

Word painting: Sustained notes (associated with "Geduld" in the A section) now used for "vertreten" ("intercede").

53

- - ten, hilf uns - - viel - mehr ver - tre - -

Cont.

D minor D minor D minor

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56 **E**

ten;

Ob. da caccia I

Ritornello

Ob. da caccia II

D major G minor D minor C minor (F# dim.7) G minor A major

58II

Word painting: "Vertreten" emphasized with sustained notes and animated triplets.

helf uns vielmehr, vielmehr ver - tre -

D minor D minor F(7) B-flat 7 C minor

p Cont.

Ob. da caccia I, II

61

- ten, hilf uns viel - mehr ver - tre - ten, uns ver -

F7 B-flat major

63

tre - - - - - ten!

B-flat major

Von Ziegler libretto does not indicate da capo. **Da Capo**

B-flat major

The recitative is not in Von Ziegler's original poem. Bach may have added it for structural reasons (to avoid 3 consecutive arias). From a textual perspective,

it introduces the idea of Jesus' promised comfort, mentioned in the following 2 movements. The text alludes to Ezra 9:6: O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt (Luther 1545: Schuld) has mounted up to the heavens. (See also Revelation 18:5.)

4. Recitativo • Pardon for sin sought since God sees contrite heart (87/4).

87/4. 1. Tenore

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 7 mm.

For biblical background, see note.



Wenn uns-re Schuld bis an den Himmel steigt, du siehst und kennest ja mein Herz, das nichts vor dir ver-schweigt; drum su-che mich, su-chen mich zu trö-sten!

When our guilt up-to - heaven climbs, you see and know indeed my heart, which nothing before you conceals, therefore seek me, seek

A7 C# dim.7 D minor F# dim.7

Animated viola line may suggest God seeing the hidden things of the heart (see Petzoldt, Bach-Kommentar 2:881).

Word painting: Wandering melisma for "suche" ("seek") with chromatic harmonic progression.

Text painting: The chromatically descending Vln I line reinforces the intensity of the harmonic progression.

Strings become animated with chromatic harmony to intensify the prayer.

chen mich zu trö-sten!

me in-order-to comfort (me)! - sten!

N6 B dim.7 G7 F# dim.7 C minor A-flat major C minor

Continuo aria (R.H. is editorial realization).

87/5. 5. Aria • Vox Christi: World of fear overcome: John 16:33 (87/5).

Alfred Dürr describes this movement as "of unexpected severity" (see note).



Ritornello theme (later split between singer and continuo).

The continuo bass is an 8va higher (see full score), so that it sometimes crosses above the singer's line.

Ostinato-like bass...

For the significance of C, see note.

Continuo alone...

In der Welt habt ihr Angst, Ritornello theme split between singer & continuo.

C minor D7 B dim.7 C7 F minor B dim.7 C minor C minor C minor D7 B dim.7

Continuo completes the line (8va up).

The serpentine bass line is reminiscent of descriptions elsewhere of the devil as serpent.

Singer takes over the line...

in der Welt, in der Welt habt ihr Angst,

in der Welt habt ihr Angst,

in der Welt, in der Welt habt ihr Angst, in der Welt habt ihr

Angst, in der Welt habt ihr Angst, habt ihr Angst; aber seid ge-

trost, seid ge-trost, seid ge-trost, seid ge-trost, seid ge-

Theme in major...

Chord progressions and annotations:

- C7
- F minor
- B dim.7
- C minor
- E dim.7
- F(7)
- B-flat 7
- E-flat major
- E-flat 7
- A-flat major
- B-flat 7
- E-flat major
- E-flat major
- C minor
- D7
- G7
- C(7)
- F minor
- B dim.7
- C minor
- C minor
- C minor
- B-flat major
- E-flat major
- E-flat 7
- A-flat major
- B-flat 7

Text painting: Move to the major mode for Jesus' exhortation to be of good cheer.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 87

Word painting: Rising line followed by extended melismas for "I have overcome the world."

42

B

trost, ——— ich ha-be die Welt ü-ber - wun - - - -

E-flat major C minor D7 G minor

48

den, die Welt ü

C# dim.7 D7 G major B dim.7 C minor D7

53

ber - wun - den, seid ge - trost, seid ge - trost, ich ha - be die Welt, die

G minor G7 C minor C minor

Sequential bass figure over G pedal for "seid getrost" ("be of good cheer")...

58

Word painting: Athletic melisma for "überwunden" ("overcome").

The musical score for measures 58-63 of 'Der Schwan' is presented. The vocal line (soprano) is in G major, with lyrics 'Welt ü - ber - wun -'. The piano accompaniment features a complex harmonic structure. The first measure (58) has a C minor chord. The second measure (59) has an F# diminished 7th chord. The third measure (60) has a D7 chord. The fourth measure (61) has a G(7) chord. The fifth measure (62) has a C7 chord. The sixth measure (63) has a C7 chord. The piano part includes a melisma for 'überwunden'.

Welt ü - ber - wun -

C minor F# dim.7 D7 G(7) C7

Word painting: Large leap down for "Welt" ("world" followed by "large leap up for "überwunden" ("overcome").

64

den, die Welt ü - ber - wun - den.

F minor G7 (C minor) C minor D7

70

B dim.7 C7 F minor B dim.7 C minor C minor

87/6. 6. Aria

1.

Viol. I

•Suffering accepted; Christ will help & comfort (87/6). For Alfred Dürr's characterization of this movement, see note.

Strings
Viol. I, II
Va.
Continuo

Ritornello derived from vocal line.

B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major F7 B-flat major G7

4.

C minor B-flat 7 E-flat major F7 F major F pedal...

The siciliano metrical rhythm suggests a pastoral character, yet the athleticism of the melody suggests pathos—a determination to return to Jesus as shepherd.

For biblical background, see note.

The text quotes Psalm 39:10: I am dumb, I do not open my mouth (Luther 1545: Ich will schweigen)...

9 (46)

Tenore

Ich will lei - den, ich will schwei - gen,

Rests illustrate the text: I would suffer, I would keep silent.

Dynamic indications are original.

B-flat major
B-flat pedal...

B-flat 7

E-flat major

F7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 87

11
 ich will lei - den, ich will schwei -
 B-flat major G7 C minor B-flat (7)

13
 - - gen, Je - sus wird mir Hilf er - zei - gen; ich will
 E-flat major F7

15 *tr*
 lei - den, ich will schwei - gen, Je - sus wird mir Hilf er -
 B-flat F pedal.. C7 F major D7

17
 zei - gen, Je - sus wird mir Hilf er - zei - gen, denn er tröst' mich nach dem
 G minor F7 B-flat major C7

19
 Schmerz, denn er tröst' mich nach dem Schmerz,
 Chromatic inflection for "Schmerz" ("pain/suffering").
 C pedal...

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 87

21

denn er tröst' mich nach dem Schmerz.

Upwardly sweeping, chromatic line anticipates the call for sorrows to depart.

Ritornello

F minor F major (see NBA) F minor

23

Weicht, ihr

Word painting: Quick, upwardly sweeping melisma for "weicht" ("depart").

C# dim.7 D minor C major F major F# dim.7 D7

25

Von Ziegler 1728: Weicht ihr Sorgen! Flieht ihr Klagen! Seele, du darst nicht verzagen (Away you sorrows! Flee you lamentations! Soul, you must not despair).

Sor - gen, Trau - - - er, Kla - gen, denn wa - rum sollt' ich ver -

Bach added this word (mourning)—see above note about Bach's personal losses.

piano

G minor B dim.7 C minor D7

27

za - gen, wa - rum sollt' ich ver - za -

Chromatic inflection for "verzagen" (to "despair").

D major D pedal... G major D(7)

The last line is reminiscent of Psalm 42:5–6. Why are you cast down (Luther 1545: betrübst du dich), O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?...Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God...

29

- gen? Fasse dich, be-trübtes Herz!
Compose thyself, troubled heart!

Strings

G minor G minor G minor



32 **C** To compare the text with Von Ziegler's original, see note.

Weicht, ihr Sor-gen, Trau-er,
Word painting: The upwardly sweeping melisma for "weicht" is now accompanied by staccato string interjections.

G minor G7 C minor (B-flat 7)

34

Kla-gen, denn wa-rum sollt' ich ver-za-gen, wa-rum sollt' ich ver-

E-flat major F7 F pedal...

36 **D**

za-gen? Fas-se dich, be-trübtes Herz!
Chromatic inflection for "verzagen" (to "despair").

Ritornello

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

Dal Segno

87/7. **7. Choral** (Mel. „Jesu, meine Freude“) •Suffering turned into joy if Jesus loves me (87/7).

Soprano
+Ob I
Vln I

Alto
+Ob da caccia I
Vln II

Tenore
+Ob da caccia II
Vla

Basso

For biblical background, see note.

See NBA for text to second line.

Muß ich sein be - trü - bet? So mich Je - sus lie - bet, ist mir al - ler Schmerz!
~~nichts als lau - ter Won - ne, sei - ner Lie - be Son - ne fül - let mir das Herz.~~

7

D minor D minor D minor A major D minor D minor

Wenn die Pein sich stel - let ein, sei - ne Lie - be

Wenn die Pein sich stel - let ein, sei - ne Lie - be

Wenn die Pein sich stel - let ein, sei - ne Lie - be

Wenn die Pein sich stel - let ein, sei - ne Lie - be

10

D minor C7 F major F major A7

macht zur Freu - den auch das bitt - re Lei - den.

macht zur Freu - den auch das bitt - re Lei - den.

macht zur Freu - den auch das bitt - re Lei - den.

macht zur Freu - den auch das bitt - re Lei - den.

D major A minor E7 A major D minor D major