

BWV 8

Cantata

Am Jesus-Abend Sonntag nach Trinitatis

„Liebster Gott, wann werd ich sterben.“

In the introduction to the Carus edition of BWV 8, Hans-Joachim Schulze (with translation by David Kosviner) writes, “Among Bach’s chorale cantatas, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben* (O my God, when shall I perish), which was written for the 16th Sunday after Trinity, occupies a special position in that it exists in two versions in two different keys. The first version in E major was composed in September 1724 and thus belongs to the regular sequence of Bach’s annual cycle of chorale cantatas. The second version in D major was written, in all probability, in 1747 and is the result of a late revision...”

“For establishing the text of the cantata, the characteristic procedure used in the annual cycle of chorale cantatas was applied: a hymn, whose opening and closing verses remained unchanged, served as its basis. The remaining verses, however, were more or less freely adapted for the recitative and aria texts. The author of the hymn “*Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben*” was the theologian Caspar Neumann from Wroctaw. It was written in the years around 1690 and is thus one of the most recent hymns Bach took into consideration within the context of the chorale cantatas. As previously mentioned, the first verse appears in its original wording...”

“To create a libretto with six movements, containing two chorale verses, two recitatives and two arias, which was probably in accordance with Bach’s assignment, various elements had to be restructured. This applied already for the first freely written text of the cantata movement which is an aria. For this purpose the beginning of the third chorale verse was drawn upon, especially the question “But God, what will I think / when is it time for me to die?”, as well as the ending of the second verse: “always go here and there / go forth, one after the other, / and already some are lying in the grave, / whom I surely knew.” The garish colors that the author applies here are conspicuous, diverging from the original hymn: *Why must you quake, my soul, with terror. / that my last hour today may strike? / My mortal flesh tends earthward daily / and in that place shall slumber truly / that takes so many thousands back.* The librettist made use of the remaining verses from Neumann’s third stanza for the following recitative: “Where will one lower the body, / and what about the soul? / Ah, what affliction can think of; / what will be my fate; / and where will my loved ones / one after the other be dispersed?” Here is the wordy version of the recitative: *My heart feels in this life / fear, sorrow, grief: / When will my flesh no more endure it? / And who from all my pain / and the oppressive yoke of sin shall free my restless spirit? / My goods will be dispersed, / ah, but where will the ones / cherished / in all their hopelessness / and grief be banished?*

“The fourth stanza of Neumann’s hymn delivers answers to these anxious questions, especially the first four [lines]: “But why all these worries, / am I not going to Jesus? Rather today than tomorrow, / for my flesh will be resurrected.” Using effusive dactylic verses, thus departing from the original model yet again, the resulting aria is formulated as follows: *Give way now, O sorrows and cares unavailing / My Jesus now calls me: who would not be saved? / For nothing I need / is here in this world. / Appear to me, blessed and jubilant morning, / when radiant and joyful with Jesus I stand.* The final part of the hymn’s fourth stanza is also devoted to the rejection of worldly goods, as is the relatively substantial last recitative which is derived from it. Caspar Neumann’s final stanza, in its unchanged form, rounds off the libretto of the cantata...”

“The melody which usually accompanied this poetry was “*Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele*” (O my soul, be thou rejoicing). Bach, however, chose a tune which originated from Daniel Vetter, who came from Wroctaw and had been the organist St. Nicholas’s Church in Leipzig from 1679; he had written the melody in 1695 or even earlier and had published it in 1713 in the collection *Musicalische Kirch-und Haus-Ergötzlichkeit*.”

See *Johann Sebastian Bach. The Sacred Vocal Music Complete Edition. Cantatas and Motets* (Stuttgart: Carus Verlag, 2017), vol. 1, pp. 516–517; taken from H.-J. Schulze, *Die Bach-Kantaten. Einführungen zu sämtlichen Kantaten Johann Sebastian Bachs* (Leipzig and Stuttgart, 2006), translated by David Kosviner.

Bach’s simpler setting of the same hymn tune appeared in a *Musicalisches Gesang-Buch*, a hymnal for voice and continuo published in 1736 by Georg Christian Schemelli. See an image of the hymnal’s title page and Bach’s musical setting at the end of this document.)

For the text of the underlying chorale, see note.



97^a Daniel Vetter. Von ihm mitgetheilt am Schluß des zweiten Theils seiner musikalischen Kirch- und Haus-Gezitzlichkeit, 1713; gesetzt für das 1695 stattgefundene Begräbniß des Cantors Jacob Wilsius an St. Bernhardin zu Breslau.

The image shows a page from a musical score for Daniel Vetter's setting of the chorale 'Liebster Gott, wann werd' ich sterben'. The score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and features a complex, flowing melodic line in the Soprano part. The lyrics are in German, and the music is in E major. The page number 2380 is visible at the bottom.

97^b J. S. Bachs. Umrbeitung des vortehenden Tonsatzes. Der Oberstimme schließt sich ein hohes Horn, ein Oboe d'amore, und die erste Geige im Einklänge an; und eine Flöte in der Oberoctave. Dem Altde zweite Geige und das zweite Holog, dem Tenor die Viola.

The image shows a page from a musical score for J.S. Bach's setting of the chorale 'Liebster Gott, wann werd' ich sterben'. The score is written for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and features a more structured, homophonic setting compared to Vetter's. The lyrics are in German, and the music is in E major. The page number 2380 is visible at the bottom.

A comparison of Daniel Vetter's chorale setting with J. S. Bach's setting. Taken from Carl von Winterfeld. *Der evangelische Kirchengesang und sein Verhältniß zur Kunst des Tonsatzes. Dritter Theil: Der evangelische Kirchengesang im achtzehnten Jahrhunderte* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1847), pp. 140–42. For a comprehensive discussion of the chorale's history see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liebster_Gott,_wann_werd_ich_sterben. Accessed 2 December 2021. Changes in Bach's Abgesang are significant, resulting in a setting one measure shorter than the model. See note below for a discussion of Bach's approach to setting contemporary chorales.

Form: Chorus/fantasia - Aria (T) - Recit (A) - Aria (B) - Recit (S) - Chorale
(Each voice gets 1 solo.)
This cantata belongs to Bach's chorale cantata cycle (see notes).

Regarding Bach's tonal plan, Eric Chafe writes, "E major...represents a special choice of key for Bach, one made in full knowledge that the other movements of a cantata in that key will be on the subdominant side of the key...a feature that encourages the idea of descent (flatward motion) followed by ascent (the return to the original key). Cantata 8, "Liebster Gott, wann werd' ich sterben," for example, "descends" from E through C# minor to A major before returning to E. See Eric Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 151–52.) Alfred Dürr writes, "Like all Bach's cantatas for this Sunday, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben* takes the Gospel account of the raising to life of the youth at Nain as an occasion for thoughts about one's own death. Unlike the earlier works discussed above (BWV 161 and 95), however, the cantata begins not with the desire for an early union with Jesus but rather with anxious questioning about death, which for the Christian, as one of 'old Adam's heirs', brings with it a consciousness of sin (nos. 1–3). All cares are dismissed, however, with reference to Jesus (no. 4) and to God's faithfulness, which is 'new every morning' (no. 5), one of many references in Bach's cantatas to Lamentations 3:23.

"The melody, by Daniel Vetter, organist of the Nicolaikirche in Leipzig, had been commissioned for the burial of the Cantor Jakob Wilsius, and was no doubt especially well known in Leipzig... Its expressiveness, which bears witness to the spread of Pietism at that time, distinguishes it clearly from the core hymns of Luther's time and of Orthodox Lutheranism, which are otherwise chiefly used in the chorale cantatas.

"...The four madrigalian middle movements are divided according to textual content and musical affect into two contrasting aria-recitative pairs. The first pair expresses anxious concern over death; the second pair, comfort derived from the certainty of God's faithfulness." See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, revised and translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 551–553.

For John Elliott Gardiner's discussion of funeral bells ("Leichenglocken"), see *Bach: Music in the Castle of Heaven* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), pp. 458–62. References to funeral bells, death knell, and/or striking of the last hour are found in BWV 8/1, 73/4, 95/5, 127/3, 161/4, 198/4 (flutes). Often pizzicato strings are involved. Regarding clock ticking or passage of time, see BWV 8/1, 95/5, 102/6, 105/4, 127/3, 161/4. According to the seventh edition of Frederick James Britten's *Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers* (New York: Bonanza, 1956), "Nearly all bracket clocks before 1675 strike the hour, and sometimes the half hour, indicated by a single stroke on the bell or another bell. Quarter-striking is rare in this early period." (See p. 88.) "By 1675 the bracket clock had become established in all the essential characteristics which were to continue in production for more than a century" (See p. 89.) "The various forms of striking set out in the section on bracket clocks are all found in long-case clocks..." (See p. 110.)

NBA I/23; BC A137a/b
16 S. after Trinity (BWV 161, 95, 8, 27)
*Ephesians 3:13–21 (Paul's prayer for the Ephesians; that they be spiritually strengthened)
*Luke 7:11–17 (Jesus raises young man of Nain from the dead)
Librettist: Unknown
FP: 24 September 1724 (St. Nicholas).
Repeat performances probably 1736/40, 17 September 1747 (reworked, D major).
See Petzoldt, "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 474, Wolff, "Bach's Musical Universe," 148–49.

Flauto traverso.
NBA: Flauto piccolo/Flauto traverso (originally flauto piccolo)

Oboe d'amore I.

Oboe d'amore II.

Bach experienced much death in his family. See side note.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Corno col Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Continuo.

Within the major tonality and lifting rhythm, chromatic inflections provide color to depict the anxiety of the text.

For biblical background, see note.

Unlike most of the chorales in Bach's works, the text and tune of "Liebster Gott" were written by two of Bach's contemporaries: Caspar Neuman (1648–1715) and Daniel Vetter (ca. 1650–1721), respectively. The melody is in a "modern," aria-like style, as was common of chorales written during this time. See side note.

Text painting: Martin Petzoldt suggests that the flute imitates "the unrest of a clock" ("Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, 475). He disagrees with other writers who identify the sound as "funeral bells." See, for example, Dürr/Jones, 552–53 (more above).

Dominica 16 post Trinitatis.

"Liebster Gott, wenn ~~wann~~ werd' ich sterben?"

•Death: Our imminent legacy from Adam (8/1) (Chorale v. 1).

1. Oboes d'amore have running 16ths in imitation, probably signifying the second line of text: "My time runs on continuously."

8/1.

The first system of the musical score for "Liebster Gott" is shown. It includes staves for Flauto traverso, Oboe d'amore I and II, Violino I and II, Viola, Soprano, Corno col Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso, and Continuo. The Flauto traverso part features a running 16th-note melody. The strings are marked "pizzicato sempre". The vocal parts are in E major.

Text painting: Pizzicato strings perhaps depict a ticking clock.

Hans-Joachim Schulze (with translation by David Kosviner) writes, "The melody, divided line by line, appears in a partially reshaped form in the opening movement of the cantata as a cantus firmus in the soprano; the other vocal parts provide a counterpoint and the melody itself is embedded in an independent, motivically homogenous instrumental setting. This instrumental framework takes place on two or, as the case may be, even three levels: Unending downward staccato triads in the muted high strings sound above a sparse bass foundation—in the late version of the cantata even as pizzicatos; these are joined by insistent tone repetitions in the high register of a flute, which only seldom change to arpeggios. Both instrumental registers evoke associations with a death knell. The pastoral character of the movement, with its 12/8 meter symbolizing perfection and calm, acts as a foil to this depressing scenario, as do the two oboes d'amore which—sometimes imitating each other, sometimes coupled to each other—offer, as it were, consolation from both sides and, through their steadfastness and continual presence, ensure safe conduct on the final journey. See *Johann Sebastian Bach. The Sacred Vocal Music Complete Edition. Cantatas and Motets* (Stuttgart: Carus Verlag, 2017), vol. 1, p. 517 (translation by David Kosviner).

3.

The second system of the musical score is shown. It continues the instrumental and vocal parts. The Flauto traverso part has a more complex melody. The strings continue with "pizzicato sempre". The vocal parts are in E major.

A major E major B. W. L. F#7 B# dim. C# minor

6.

[illegible]

9.

9. 10. 11.

A# dim.7 E major B. W. I. E7 A major

12.

Pizz. strings halt briefly to allow soprano to start the phrase.

Chorale Phrase 1. Melody ornamented somewhat, doubled by cornet.

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

This text paraphrases Isaac's statement in Genesis 27:2: "Behold, I am old; I do not know the day of my death."

NBA: wenn

Liebster Gott, wann werd' ich
Liebster Gott, wann
Liebster Gott, wann
Liebster Gott, wann

E7 A major A major E major E7 A major

15.

Chorale Phrase 2.

Text painting: Bach colors "sterben" with chromatic harmonies.

ster ben?
werd' ich ster ben?
werd' ich ster ben?
werd' ich ster ben?

Mein'

B7 E major A# dim.7 B major B7 B.W. 1. E major A# dim.7 B major B7

D# dim. E major A# dim.7 B major B7

18.

Full ritornello

Zeit läuft im mer hin,
 Mei ne Zeit läuft im mer hin,
 Mei ne Zeit läuft im mer hin,
 Mei ne Zeit läuft im mer, im mer hin,

E major F#7 B major B7 E major E7 A major

21.

Zeit läuft im mer hin,
 Mei ne Zeit läuft im mer hin,
 Mei ne Zeit läuft im mer hin,
 Mei ne Zeit läuft im mer, im mer hin,

B7 E major E7 A major B.W. 1. D# dim.7 E major F#7

24.

System 24, measures 24-26. The score is for a piano and a double bass. The piano part consists of a right-hand melody with eighth-note runs and a left-hand accompaniment of eighth notes. The double bass part plays a simple eighth-note line. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 4/4. The system ends with a double bar line.

Chord labels below the system:

- Measure 24: G#7
- Measure 25: C# minor
- Measure 26: C#7

27.

System 27, measures 27-29. The piano part continues with similar eighth-note patterns. The double bass part has some rests in measure 28. The key signature remains two sharps. The system ends with a double bar line.

Chord labels below the system:

- Measure 27: E major
- Measure 28: A# dim.7
- Measure 29: E major

Pizz. strings halt briefly to allow soprano to start the phrase.

Chorale Phrase 3.

und des

33. E7 A major E7 A major A major E major

Text painting: Bach colors "Adam's heirs" harmonically.

al - ten A - - dams Er - - ben,

und des al - - ten A - dams Er - - ben,

und des al - - ten A - - dams Er - - ben,

und des al - - ten A - - dams Er - - ben,

E major E7 A major B7 B.W. 1. E major A# dim.7 B major B7 E major

36.

Chorale Phrase 4. un - ter de - nen ich auch bin,

un - ter de - nen ich auch bin,

un - ter de - nen ich auch bin,

un - ter de - nen, un - ter de - nen ich auch bin,

$A^{\#} \dim.7$ B major B7 E major F#7 B major

39.

Full-length ritornello, (modified), which interrupts the flow of the text.

E major F#7 B major B7 E major A# dim.7 B major

System 42, measures 42-46. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The top staff features a complex rhythmic pattern of sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The middle staves contain various melodic and harmonic lines. The bottom staff shows a bass line with some rests. Chord labels are placed below the bottom staff: C#7 (measure 42), Fx dim. (measure 43), G# minor (measure 44), G#7 (measure 45), C# minor (measure 46), and C#7 (measure 47).

C#7 Fx dim. G# minor G#7 C# minor C#7

System 45, measures 45-49. The score continues with similar complex rhythmic patterns in the top staff. The middle staves show melodic development. The bottom staff has a bass line with some rests. Chord labels are placed below the bottom staff: F#7 (measure 45), B major (measure 46), B major (measure 47), B.W. I. (measure 48), E# dim.7 (measure 49), and B major (measure 50).

F#7 B major B major B.W. I. E# dim.7 B major

48.

51.

F#7

B7

E major

B7

E major

3

Pizz. strings halt briefly to allow
singers to highlight the phrase.

Chorale Phrase 5 (Abgesang of bar form).

Chorale Phrase 6.

In the Abgesang, the
instrumental interludes
are shorter.

C# minor

B.W.

G#7

G#7

C# minor

Text painting: Pairing voices depicts the common bond
with Adam's descendents: all must die (see Genesis
3:19). Bach departs here from Vetter in the distribution
of voices. See Petzoldt, *Bach-Kommentar*, vol. 1, pp.
478-79.

ei - ne klei - ne Weil

dass sie ei - ne klei - ne Weil

dass sie ei - ne klei - ne Weil

dass sie ei - ne klei - ne Weil

Chorale Phrase 7. arm und

F#7 G# minor B major E major A# dim.7 B7

57.

e - lend sein auf Er - den,

arm und e - lend sein auf Er - den,

arm und e - lend sein auf Er - den,

arm und e - lend sein auf Er - den,

E major E major B# dim.7 B.A.V. I. G#7 C# minor

Chorale Phrase 8. und dann

NBA:
denn

63. G#7 C# minor C#7 F# minor B# dim.7 C# minor E7

sel - ber Er de wer - den.

und dann sel - ber Er de wer - den.

und dann sel - ber Er de wer - den.

und dann sel - ber Er de wer - den.

A major B major E(7) B.W. U. B7 E major E major E7

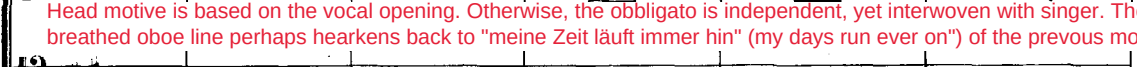
The songlike melody and sweet harmonic language of the last phrase sound like Mendelssohn.

Pizz. strings halt briefly at end as if the clock has stopped.

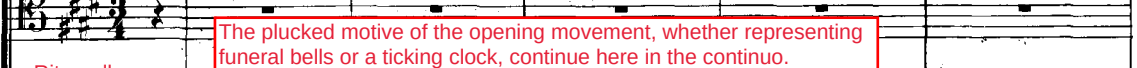
8/2. **ARIA.** Tenor Aria (Based on Chorale vv. 2 & 3).
 •Death: The body even now bends toward
 contrasting aria-recitative pairs in this car

- **Death:** The body even now bends toward the dust (8/2). See above note for a description of the contrasting aria-recitative pairs in this cantata.

Oboe d'amore.  Head motive is based on the vocal opening. Otherwise, the obbligato is independent, yet interwoven with singer. The long-breathed oboe line perhaps hearkens back to "meine Zeit läuft immer hin" (my days run ever on) of the previous movement.

Tenore.  The plucked motive of the opening movement, whether representing funeral bells or a ticking clock, continue here in the continuo.

Ritornello

Continuo.  *pizzicato.*

biblical : C# minor B7

Text painting: The pizzicato continuo perhaps depicts a ticking clock (as in first movement). Its persistence and aggressiveness, with staccato articulation appearing also in the vocal line, suggests the agitation mentioned in the text..

Movements 1 & 2 both begin with questions, the first addressed to God, the second to the speaker him/herself ("I"). Martin Petzoldt notes that the movements thus correspond to movements 5 & 6: in movement 5 the speaker addresses the world with an imperative, in movement 6, the speaker addressed God. See *Bach-Kommentar*, vol. 1, p. 476.

6.

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

Text painting: Sharp intake of breath like an emotional snuffle.

11.

Was willst du dich mein Geist ent set zen,

C# minor C# minor

16.

was willst du dich ent set zen, was willst du dich mein Geist ent set zen, was

C# minor

20.

willst du dich mein Geist ent set zen, wenn meine letzte Stunde schlägt? Was

C# minor

25.

willst du dich mein Geist ent set zen, wenn meine letzte Stunde

C# minor F#7 B major B7 E major

Text painting: Singer's separated 8th notes depict the striking of the hour; the oboe d'amore plays corresponding staccato notes on downbeats while filling in the texture.

29. schlägt? Was willst du dich mein

B7 E major B7 E major

33. Geist ent - set - zen, wenn mei - ne letz - te Stun - de schlägt? Ritornello

F#7 B major B7 E major E7 A major

37. Mein Leib neigt läg -

B7 E major B7 E major B# dim.7

"Dying daily" is perhaps an allusion to 1 Cor. 15:31b.

Text painting: Declining health is depicted with drooping, sighing figures.

42. lich sich zur Er - den, und da muss sei - ne Ruh' statt wer - den, wohin

C# minor D#7... B7 E major

Text painting: Parallel 16ths & vocal melisma (taken from the ritornello) depict thousands who have died.

47. man so viel tau -

G#7 G# minor C# minor B major B7

51.

Melisma for "thousands."

send trägt, wo hin man so viel tau

E major G#7 C# minor Fx dim.7 D#7 G# minor

55.

Ritornello

send, viel tau - send trägt.

G# minor Fx dim.7 D#7

59.

Mein Leib neigt täg - lich sich zur Er - den, mein

G# minor G# minor E# dim.7 C#7 F# minor

Text painting:
Declining
health is
depicted with
drooping,
sighing
figures.

64.

Leib neigt täg - lich sich zur Er - den, und da muss sei - ne Ruh' statt

B7 E major G#7 C# minor

69.

Text painting: Sustained note for "place of rest." Oboe & singer exchange material briefly.

werden, sei - ne Ruh' statt, und da - muss sei -

C# minor C# minor C#7 F# minor

B. W. I.

74.

Text painting: Melisma to depict "thousands."

ne Ruß statt wer den, wo hin, wo hin man so viel tau

F# minor F#7 B major B7 E major E7

78.

send trägt, wo hin man so viel tau

A major C#7 F# minor B7 B# dim. G#7 C# minor

Melisma for "thousands."

82.

Ritornello

send, viel tausend trägt.

C# minor C# minor

87.

B7 E7 A major C#7 F# minor

91.

B# dim.7 G#7 C# minor B.W. L. C# minor

Hans-Joachim Schulze writes, "In the first recitative, which is accompanied by the strings, strange modulations characterize the searching question concerning the fate of those left behind in this world." See *Johann Sebastian Bach. The Sacred Vocal Music Complete Edition. Cantatas and Motets* (Stuttgart: Carus Verlag, 2017), vol. 1, p. 517; from H.-J. Schulze, *Die Bach-Kantaten. Einführungen zu sämtlichen Kantaten Johann Sebastian Bachs*, Leipzig and Stuttgart, 2006 (translation by David Kosviner).

Chromatic Saturation in the vocal part in 8 mm.

8/3. **RECITATIVO**. Alto Recit. (Based on Chorale v. 3.) •Anxiety concerning death (8/3). No explicit connection to the widow in the Gospel reading except expressions of fear, worry, and pain in the face of death and its consequences for the family.

For biblical background, see note.



Violino I. *p*

Violino II. *p*

Viola. *p*

Alto.

Continuo. *col arco.*

col arco.

Zwar fühlt mein schwaches Herz Furcht, **Sorgen**, Schmerz: wo wird mein Leib die Ruhe

Indeed feels my weak heart fear, worry, (and) pain: Where will my body (its) rest

D# major D#7 Fx dim.7 D#7

4.

finden? wer wird die Seele doch vom auf-ge- legten Sünden Joch be- frei-en und ent- binden? Das

find? Who will (my) soul indeed from (its) (oppressing) yoke-of-sin set-free and unbind? What's

G# minor E# dim.7 C#7 F# minor B minor C# major

Phrygian cadence for question about sin.

7.

Meine wird zerstreut, und wo hin werden meine Lieben in ih-rer Trau- rigkeit **zerstreut** ver- trieben?

mine will-be scattered, and whereto will my loved-ones in their sorrow be-separated, dispersed?

NBA: zertrennt Tritone

G# dim.7 B, W, 1. C# dim.7 D minor E major

Phrygian cadence for question about fate of family.

Bach often uses phrygian cadences for questions.

Flute parts of technical challenge are prevalent in cantatas written from July to November 1724. Striking examples (in chronological order) include BWV 113/5, 99/3, 8/4, 130/5, and 26/2. See side note for a more complete list.



Bass Aria (Based on Chorale v. 4.) •Away anxieties! Jesus calls me to a glorious future! (8/4). Complete change of mood; the speech is in the imperative mood (as opposed to the indicative mood of movements 1–3), addressing cares/anxieties & the morning.

8/4.

ARIA.

Flauto traverso.

Italianate ritornello movement with gigue-like rhythm, homophonic texture with soloistic (concertante) flute. Martin Petzoldt notes the similarity of the flute's role (in relation to strings and singer) to that of the oboe in BWV 78 two weeks earlier. See "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 477. With its fast patter-like diction, the movement approaches the style of comic opera (compare BWV 181/1), perhaps intended to convey the futile/vain nature of earthly concerns. Bach's reference to "lovely Dresden ditties" may be in this same vein. See Forkel's biography of Bach in "New Bach Reader," p. 461.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Basso.

Continuo.

1.

Ritornello

A major 4 7 6 6 5 (B7)



4.

7.

E major

2.

E major

E major

B.A.V. I.

E major

10.

E major E major B7

13.

G-naturals provides chromatic inflections in this movement.

E7 A major B7 E major A# dim.7 B7

16.

Doch wei - chet ihr tol - len ver - geb - - lichen Sor - gen,

E major A major B7



22. 3: D# 4: D# 5: D# 6: D# 7: D# 8: D# 9: D# 10: D# 11: D# 12: D# 13: D# 14: D# 15: D# 16: D# 17: D# 18: D# 19: D# 20: D# 21: D# 22: D# 23: D# 24: D# 25: D# 26: D# 27: D# 28: D# 29: D# 30: D# 31: D# 32: D# 33: D# 34: D# 35: D# 36: D# 37: D# 38: D# 39: D# 40: D# 41: D# 42: D# 43: D# 44: D# 45: D# 46: D# 47: D# 48: D# 49: D# 50: D# 51: D# 52: D# 53: D# 54: D# 55: D# 56: D# 57: D# 58: D# 59: D# 60: D# 61: D# 62: D# 63: D# 64: D# 65: D# 66: D# 67: D# 68: D# 69: D# 70: D# 71: D# 72: D# 73: D# 74: D# 75: D# 76: D# 77: D# 78: D# 79: D# 80: D# 81: D# 82: D# 83: D# 84: D# 85: D# 86: D# 87: D# 88: D# 89: D# 90: D# 91: D# 92: D# 93: D# 94: D# 95: D# 96: D# 97: D# 98: D# 99: D# 100: D# 101: D# 102: D# 103: D# 104: D# 105: D# 106: D# 107: D# 108: D# 109: D# 110: D# 111: D# 112: D# 113: D# 114: D# 115: D# 116: D# 117: D# 118: D# 119: D# 120: D# 121: D# 122: D# 123: D# 124: D# 125: D# 126: D# 127: D# 128: D# 129: D# 130: D# 131: D# 132: D# 133: D# 134: D# 135: D# 136: D# 137: D# 138: D# 139: D# 140: D# 141: D# 142: D# 143: D# 144: D# 145: D# 146: D# 147: D# 148: D# 149: D# 150: D# 151: D# 152: D# 153: D# 154: D# 155: D# 156: D# 157: D# 158: D# 159: D# 160: D# 161: D# 162: D# 163: D# 164: D# 165: D# 166: D# 167: D# 168: D# 169: D# 170: D# 171: D# 172: D# 173: D# 174: D# 175: D# 176: D# 177: D# 178: D# 179: D# 180: D# 181: D# 182: D# 183: D# 184: D# 185: D# 186: D# 187: D# 188: D# 189: D# 190: D# 191: D# 192: D# 193: D# 194: D# 195: D# 196: D# 197: D# 198: D# 199: D# 200: D# 201: D# 202: D# 203: D# 204: D# 205: D# 206: D# 207: D# 208: D# 209: D# 210: D# 211: D# 212: D# 213: D# 214: D# 215: D# 216: D# 217: D# 218: D# 219: D# 220: D# 221: D# 222: D# 223: D# 224: D# 225: D# 226: D# 227: D# 228: D# 229: D# 230: D# 231: D# 232: D# 233: D# 234: D# 235: D# 236: D# 237: D# 238: D# 239: D# 240: D# 241: D# 242: D# 243: D# 244: D# 245: D# 246: D# 247: D# 248: D# 249: D

25.

Sor gen, vergeb-lichen Sor

B7

B.W. 1.

E major

Alfred Dürr notes, "The words 'My Jesus calls me, who would not go?' in the fourth movement—in place of Neumann's 'Should I not go to Jesus?' ('Sollt ich nicht zu Jesu gehn?')—may be regarded as a reference to Jesus's words in the Gospel reading for the day, 'I say to you, arise' (Luke 7:14)." See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, revised and translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 552.

28. 233

Text painting: Fast, syllabic declamation for reference to Jesus' utterance.

gen! Mich ru - fet mein Je - sus: wer soll - te nicht gehn? wer

E major

30.

soll - te nicht gehn? mich ru - fet mein Je - sus: wer soll - te nicht gehn? wer soll - te nicht

E major

32.

gehn? wer soll - te nicht, wer soll - te nicht? mich ru - fet mein Je - sus: wer soll - te nicht

B7

B.W. 1. E major

34.

gehu? wer soll - te nicht gehu? mich ru - fet mein Je - sus: wer soll - te nicht gehu? wer

E major

36.

soll - te nicht gehu? Nichts

Ritornello

E major A# dim. 7 B7 E major

39.

was mir gefällt, besitzt die Welt, nichts was mir gefällt, besitzt die Welt, be - sit - zet die Welt,

A major F# major B. w. l. B minor C#7 F# minor

42.

235

Text painting: Rests to depict "nothing."

nichts, nichts, nichts, nichts, was mir ge - fällt, be - sit - zet die Welt! Er -

F# minor C#7 F# minor C#7

44.

scheine mir se - li - ger fröh - li - cher Mor - - - gen, er - scheine mir se - li - ger

F#7 B minor F# minor G#7

46.

fröh - li - cher Mor - - - gen, ver - klä -

C#7 B.A.V. L. F# minor

ret und herrlich vor Je-su zu stehn, vor Je-su zu stehn, vor Je-su zu stehn, verklä

F# minor F# minor B7 E7 B minor C#7 F# minor

51.

ret und herr-lich vor Je-su, vor Je-su zu stehn.

Ritornello

F# minor

54.

A major A major

B.W. 1.

B7

57.

57 58 59

60.

E major B7

60 61 62

63.

E major B.W. I.

63 64 65

66.

Chord symbols: E7, A major, E major, B7, E major, A# dim.7, B7

69.

Opening material returns

Chord symbols: E major, A major, E major

72.

Chord symbols: D# dim.7, E7, A major, A major

75.

geb - lichen Sor - gen, doch wei - chet, weicht ihr tol -

A major 6 6 A major 6 6 5

78.

Ich hab' mich vergeblich um dich bemüht, vergeblich um dich bemüht, vergeblich um dich bemüht.

len vergeblichen Sor - - - - - gen, vergeblichen Sor - - - - -

6 5 5 4 2 6 5 E7 7 A major 6

81. E7

gen! Mich ru-fet mein Je-sus: wer sollte nicht gehn? wer sollte nicht gehn? mich

ruft mein Jesus: wer sollte nicht gehn? wer sollte nicht gehn? wer sollte nicht gehn? mich ruft mein

7 A major 7 A major E7 7 A major

87.

Jesus: wer sollte nicht gehn? wer sollte nicht gehn? mich ruft mein Jesus: wer sollte nicht gehn? wer sollte nicht gehn?

6 4 7 7 A major 7 6 5 6 4 2

90.

gehn? wer sollte nicht gehn?

6 4 5 7 A major D# dim.7 B.W. I. E7 A major A major

Singer ends on the 3rd of chord to imitate the inflection of the question.

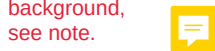
The soprano is often the voice of the Soul.

8/5. **RECITATIVO.** Soprano Recit. (Based on Chorale v. 4.) •Rejecting the world; looking to blessings hereafter (8/5). The speech is in the imperative mood (as opposed to the indicative mood of movements 1–3), addressing the world.

Soprano. 1. **Behalte nur o Welt das Meine! Du nimmst ja selbst mein Fleisch und mein Gebeine, so**
Keep then, O world, what's mine! You take, after-all, even my flesh and my bones, so

Continuo.

For biblical background, see note.



4. **nimm auch mei-ne Ar-muth hin; ge-nug, dass mir aus Gottes Über-fluss das höchste Gut noch werden**
take also my poverty away! Enough, that to-me out-of God's abundance the highest good yet happen

B# dim.7 C# minor F#7 B minor A major



7. **muss, genug, dass ich dort reich und se-lig bin. Was a-ber ist von mir zu er-ben, als meines**
must; enough, that I there rich and blessed (shall) be. What, however, is (there) from me to inherit, other-than my

A major B7 E major F# major

10. **Gottes Va-ter-treu? Die wird ja al-le Mor-gen neu, und kann nicht ster-die-ben.**
God's paternal-faithfulness? It becomes indeed all mornings new and can not die.

F#7 D# major D#7 G# minor N6 (A-C#-E-Fx) Cx dim.7 D#7 G# minor

Allusion to Lamentations 3:22–23.

8/6. **CHORAL.** 1. Chorale (v. 5; largely following the setting by Vetter; see note at movement 1 for a comparison). •Prayer: Lord of life and death, let me die well (8/6). The speech is again in the imperative mood, addressing God in prayer.

Soprano.
Violino I. Flauto traverso in 8^a.
Oboe d'amore I. Corno col Soprano.

Alto.
Violino II. Oboe d'amore II. col'Alto.

Tenore.
Viola col Tenore.

Basso.

Continuo.

1. **Herrscher ü-ber Tod und Le-ben, mach' ein-mal mein En-**
hemiola

Herrscher ü-ber Tod und Leben, mach' ein-mal mein

Herrscher ü-ber Tod und Leben, mach' ein-mal mein

Herrscher ü-ber Tod und Leben, mach' ein-mal mein

E major B.W. 1. E major F#7

For biblical background, see note.



Bach's setting emphasizes the "modern" aria-like style of chorales written in Bach's time, with each phrase beginning after the continuo plays the downbeat. For more about Bach's approach to setting contemporary chorales, see side note above at movement 1.

5.

de gut, lehre mich den Geist auf-ge-ben mit recht wohl-ge-fass-

En-de gut, lehre mich den Geist auf-geben mit recht wohl-ge-

En-de gut, lehre mich den Geist auf-geben mit recht wohl-ge-

En-de gut, lehre mich den Geist auf-geben mit recht wohl-ge-

B major E major E major F#7

Bach departs from Vetter's setting, which had T/B followed by S/A. Changes in the Abgesang are significant, resulting in a setting that is one measure shorter than the model. See the two versions compared above & "Bach Kommentar," vol. 1, 478-79.

10.

Abgesang of bar form

tem Muth. Hilf, dass ich ein ehr-lich Grab neben frommen Christen hab' und auch

fasstem Muth. Hilf, dass ich ein ehr-lich Grab neben frommen Christen hab'

fasstem Muth. Hilf, dass ich ein ehrlich Grab neben frommen Christen hab'

fasstem Muth. Hilf, dass ich ein ehrlich Grab neben frommen Christen hab'

B major G# major C# minor F#7 B major

Bach's changes to Vetter's setting here allow the bass to depict "going down into the grave" as referenced in the text.

15.

Text painting: Bach colors the last couplet with chromatic harmonies.

end-lich in der Er-de nimmermehr zu Schan-den wer-de.

und auch endlich in der Er-de nimmermehr zu Schan-den wer-de.

und auch endlich in der Er-de nimmermehr zu Schan-den wer-de.

und auch endlich in der Er-de nimmermehr zu Schan-den wer-de.

B7 E major B# dim.7 G# major A major A major B major B7 E major A# dim.7 E major

Musicalisches
Gesang-Buch,

Darinnen

954 geistreiche, sowohl alte als neue
Lieder und Arien, mit wohlgesetzten
Melodien, in Discant und Bass,
befindlich sind;

Vornemlich denen Evangelischen Gemeinen
im Stifte Naumburg-Zeitz gewidmet,
und

mit einer Vorrede Sr. Hochehrw.

Herrn Friedrich Schulzens,

Schloßpredigers, Stifts-Superint. und des
Stifts-Consistorii Assessors zu Zeitz,

herausgegeben von

George Christian Schemelli,

Schloß-Cantore daselbst.

Mit Allergnädigster Freyheit,

weder mit, noch ohne Noten nachzudrucken.

Leipzig, 1736.

Verlegt Bernhard Christoph Breitkopf, Buchdr.

ja sterbe, so nimm du meinen geist | so gilt mirs gleich, und geht mir
zu dir, den ich mit Christi blute fär: | wohl, wenn, wo, und wie ich ster-
be, und hab ich den im grabe hier, | ben soll, **Schm.**

873.



Liebster Gott, wann werd ich sterben? meine zeit läuft immer hin, und des alten adams erben, unter denen ich auch bin, haben das zum vatertheil, daß sie eine kleine weil arm und elend seyn auf erden, und denn selber erde werden.

2. Ich zwar will mich auch nicht wiedern zu beschliessen meine zeit, trag ich doch in allen gliedern samen von der sterblichkeit; geht doch immer da und dort einer nach dem andern fort, und schon mancher liegt im grabe, den ich wohl gekennet habe.

3. Aber Gott, was werd ich den-

ken, wenn es wird ans sterben gehn? Wo wird man den leib hinsenken, wie wirds um die seele stehn? Ach! was Kummer fällt mir ein! wessen wird mein vor-rath seyn, und wo werden meine lieben nach dem tode hin verstie-ben?

4. Doch entweicht, ihr schnöden sorgen, soll ich nicht zu Jesu gehn? lieber heute noch, als morgen, denn mein fleisch wird auferstehn. Ich verzeih es gern der welt, daß sie alles hier behält, und bescheide meinen erben einen Gott, der nicht kan sterben.

5. Herrscher über tod und leben,

P p 2

mach