

Bach

Cantata BWV 78

Jesu der du meine seele

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NOTES

1. The contents of this unit are in no way intended to indicate a prescriptive study for the Leaving Certificate. Teachers are invited to adapt any or all parts of the unit for the particular needs of their own students.
2. The five sections of this unit can be used independently and in any order. Teachers may wish to use the analysis notes only, in part or in full. The Analysis Template on page 34 is designed for distribution to students.
3. The complete Cantata, but especially the Chorale (No. 7), contains many examples of the composing requirements of the Leaving Certificate printed on page 7 of the syllabus. Through the usual techniques of analysis students can become familiar with these features, with teachers devising suitable exercises to consolidate their understanding.
4. The selection of student activities in Section Five is a suggestion only. While arranged loosely in order of difficulty, they may be adapted to suit the level of the students. Some of the same student activities are also used to illustrate 'Features of Baroque Music' in Section One. Items 14 to 17 are intended as extension work.
5. The translations of the German text given in Section Three are by Henry S. Drinker, and are from the Eulenberg Edition of the score. An alternative version by J. Michael Diack is available in the Breitkopf Edition.
6. All of the contents of this unit may be copied if required.

SECTION 1: FEATURES OF BAROQUE MUSIC

The following section is divided into eight headings: Melody (shape, word-painting, imitation and sequence, non-chordal notes), Harmony (diatonic and chromatic, figured bass, pedal note), Timbre, Form, Texture, Dynamics, Rhythm, and Tonality. Selected student activities (listed in order of difficulty in Section Five) are included at appropriate places to help in the understanding of the features of Baroque music.

Melody

Shape

Baroque melodies in general tend towards long arches of sound and are elaborately organised. Apart from dance movements, the simple and regular phrase construction expected in the music of, say, Mozart or Schubert is not a feature. The shape and direction of a Baroque melody is very much influenced by harmonic changes, whereas in Classical music it is the melody itself which is the driving force.

In instrumental music, melodies are often ornamented with trills and various decorations. The exception to this is the fugue which is based on a short, concentrated theme called the subject. In vocal music, long florid phrases are also commonly found. Look at this extract from the bass aria (No. 6).

schreit, ja, dei-ne Treu-e wird's er-fül-len, weil mir dein Wort die Hoff-
me; by Thy fi-de-li-ty up-hold me, and let Thy Word my com-
-nung beut, weil mir dein Wort die Hoff-
fort be, and let Thy Word my com-
-nung, die Hoff-nung beut.
fort, my com-fort be;

Example 1: No. 6, bars 20–26

Word-painting

Baroque composers developed to great lengths the concept of music reflecting the meaning of text. Bach particularly employed this approach in his cantatas, using chromatic notes (see below in Harmony), elaborately decorated passages, and melodic shape to echo the meaning of individual words, verbs which suggest motion or lack of motion, or abstract ideas within a section of text.

Many authors have examined the interrelation of sound, word and image (music, poetry and painting) in Bach's music, and suggest that the music evokes an *Affekt* or emotion from the words of the text, together with a visual concept of ideas or motives: steps, waves, tumult, calm, storms and clouds.¹

Die Wun - den, Nä - gel, Kron und Grab, -
The tor - ments, nail scars, thorns; the grave. -

Example 2: No. 5, bars 1–3



Example 3: No. 2, bars 9–10

Student Activity. (See p. 30 for a full list of student activities.) Make a list of different types of word-painting (or general ways that music can reflect the meaning of the words). Keep a diary of examples from Cantata 78.

Imitation and Sequence

Bach's music has many examples of imitation, where one voice copies a figure previously stated by another voice (see examples in Cantata 78, No. 2).

A good example of a sequence, where a figure or phrase is repeated at a higher or lower pitch than the original, is printed here.



Example 4: No. 4, bars 9–10, flute part

Look at the Cello part in No. 1, bars 129–136 for a sequence spanning seven bars.

Non-chordal notes

Devices used by Baroque composers to enhance a melodic line were many and varied. Passing notes add both smoothness and a rhythmic energy to a melodic line, giving it more interest to the listener. When they occur as non-chordal notes, a tension is created by the dissonance between the melody and the implied harmony, adding even more energy and drive to the music, as tension is created and resolved. Examples of passing notes and other techniques of melodic elaboration appear below.

Example 5: No. 2, bars 9–11

Passing note A non-chordal note moving by step between two chordal notes. Example (a) is accented. Passing notes can also be unaccented and chromatic.

Auxiliary note A note which is a step up or down between repeated notes. Example (b) is an upper auxiliary. Auxiliary notes can also be lower.

Changing notes Upper or lower auxiliary notes used successively with a leap in between. In example (c), the notes D and Bb may be described as changing notes.

Turn This is usually a decoration within a melody. The repeated figure in Example 5 resembles the turn as used by Baroque composers.

Suspension A suspended note is an accented non-chordal note in one part which produces a discord in the chord notes of the other parts. Unlike the appoggiatura below, the suspension is prepared by appearing in the same part in the chord before. It usually resolves down a step. Choral music of a slow tempo often includes suspensions, especially at cadence points. Turn to the tenor recitative, No. 3, bar 23, for an example.



Example 6: No. 6, bar 1

Anticipation notes A non-chordal note which anticipates the chordal note to come. It is sounded before the beat. Example (e) shows the note F sounded over the C minor chord.

Appoggiatura An accented non-chordal note which resolves onto a chordal note on a weaker beat, or weaker part of the beat. Example (f).

Trill An ornament consisting of the rapid alteration of the written note and the note above. (Baroque trills began on the upper note and ended on the beat.) Example (g).

Turn to Student Activity 15 for some practice at using Baroque melodic elaboration.

Harmony

Baroque harmony and counterpoint was based on the major-minor key system. (See 'Tonality' above). Bach generally used a richer variety of diatonic and chromatic harmony than other composers of the period. The term 'diatonic' is used to describe the use of chords taken strictly from the key being used. For example, in F major, the diatonic chords are:



Example 7: Diatonic chords in F major

In other words, all these chord notes are found in the scale of F major. Any other chords used in a piece in F major are chromatic and J.S. Bach freely used chromatic chords to enrich his music. Here are two versions of an excerpt from a Lutheran chorale in F major. The first is a plain setting using diatonic harmony almost totally.



Example 8: Simple Lutheran Chorale

In the second version below, harmonised by J.S. Bach, the setting is much richer and creative, and more interesting. He finds surprising modulations, uses chromatic chords, and decorates each of the four parts to bring each line alive.



Example 9: Lutheran chorale arranged by Bach

Chromatic notes are also used throughout Bach's vocal music to add meaning to the text. (See word-painting above under Melody.)

Student Activity. Cadences Learn the chorale tune (soprano part) of No. 7. Practice the following chords (on guitar or keyboard) — G minor, D, F, Bb, C. Use two of these chords to make a suitable cadence at the end of each phrase of the chorale (you have to decide which ones to use). Keep a record of your work by making a chart of the bars and chords.

Figured Bass

Just as guitarists today can read and play chord symbols above a melody, players in Baroque times were expected to understand numbers below the bass line. They would work out, or 'realise', the chords indicated by numbers placed under a note which refer to intervals above that particular note. It would be up to the player to decide the best placement of those notes within the musical context.

The two examples below from the tenor aria, No. 4, show what a Baroque player would see written, and how it might be realised.



Example 10: No. 4, bars 13-14, Figured Bass



Example 11: No. 4, bars 13-14, Figured Bass Realised

Turn to Student Activity 14 for a further discussion about the figured bass.

Pedal Note

Harmonic tension, created by holding or repeating a bass note over which the harmonies change, was a popular Baroque device. A similar effect is achieved by holding a note in the uppermost part under which the harmonies changed.



Example 12: No. 3, bars 20-21



Example 13: No. 5, bars 1-3

Timbre

Eighteenth-century orchestral writing was not usually too concerned with subtleties of tone colour. It is often hard to tell by looking at a part whether it is meant for voice, flute, oboe, violin or even brass. What changes of tone-colour there are appear between movements when, for instance, trumpets and drums might be used in one movement and omitted from the next. Instruments were frequently doubled at the unison: oboes and violins; flutes, oboes and violins; bassoons and string bass. All share equally in the common texture of a polyphonic movement unless a real solo part is included.

By the time Bach was composing, the four-part string orchestra based on the violin family had become standard: violins 1 and 2, violas, cellos and basses. (Cellos and basses usually played the same part.) In addition, flutes, oboes, and horns were frequently used, as well as bassoons, horns, trumpets and timpani. It is likely that many different timbres were possible due to the availability of 'modern' instruments, as opposed to older instruments from the viol and flute families.

Baroque strings, flutes, and brass were much less powerful than today, producing quite different colours from those heard today, particularly oboe and bassoon. Bach sometimes needed to double his vocal lines with instruments in order to support inefficient singers and unrehearsed soloists and choristers. He did not always have players of the calibre he desired, or the instruments he wanted. Records show that sometimes different instruments were used when a cantata was performed for a second time. If a hornist or oboist were indisposed on the Saturday the parts would have to be rewritten or adapted before Sunday morning, and as the work might not be given again, score and parts would be left as they were.

Bach uses no fewer than 153 different orchestras (ensembles), and it is rare to find the same selection of instruments repeated within a single cantata. In Leipzig, where he had a fairly regularised set of players, with the town musicians to draw upon, he experimented incessantly. The performers for a Sunday cantata were all gathered in the organ gallery, far from the congregation and out of sight, quite different to of the

way cantatas are usually heard today with a choir lined up on a platform, orchestra in front of it and soloists in front of that again, and possibly a remote organ. In Bach's day, players and singers could move about, soloists could stand next to the obbligati players, and performers could advance to the edge of the balcony if need be. Such freedom meant that balance could be obtained by an adjustment of positions, and influenced decisions made regarding timbre of instruments.²

Cantata 78 has specific examples of particular choices of timbre being made by the composer:

No. 6 — bass voice and oboe

No. 4 — tenor voice and flute

No. 2 — soprano and alto voices

Form

Many orchestral and instrumental forms emerged and were developed during the Baroque years. The Suite and Concerto Grosso forms were important, as were the vocal forms mentioned below.

Opera

The early stages of Opera took the form of a plain and simple solo voice part accompanied by an equally plain bass. It was a type of music where the tune followed the free rhythm of prose and it was called **recitative** — a sort of sung speech. The idea of recitative was to carry forward the drama or story as much as possible. The **aria** developed to provide an emotional response to the drama, and to relieve the monotony of too much recitative. It sometimes would even draw some of its material from the last lines of the recitative text, which would be written in an 'arioso' style. The '**da capo**' aria solved the problem of balance — composers simply instructed the performers to return to the beginning of a two-part aria, thus giving a ternary ABA form. (See Cantata 78, No. 2). Alternatively, arias could repeat the instrumental introduction (**ritornello**) only, to achieve the same purpose. (See Cantata 78, No. 6).

Beginning in Italy, opera spread throughout Europe, with a distinctive style emerging in France, where dance movements were commonly included. The **chaconne**, for example, was often included in French opera, and became a popular form in instrumental music as well.

Student Activity. Find out more about the Chaconne as a dance form. Memorise the bars below. Play the whole of No. 1, and count the number of times you hear this phrase.



Example 14: No. 1, bars 21–25

Oratorio

A dramatic production on a large scale, the oratorio usually dealt with a Biblical storyline or sacred subject with named characters, but didn't involve staging, scenery or costumes. Oratorio could involve a narrator, vocal soloists, chorus, and orchestra. Owing a lot to the invention of opera before it, oratorio also included recitative and aria, as well as orchestral overture and different choral ensembles.

² Whittaker, p. 8

Cantata

Similar in ways to the oratorio, the cantata could deal with either secular or religious material, but would be shorter. Cantatas are written for a small number of performers, the earliest form being a musical recitative or short drama, without action, and with a simple accompaniment of one instrument. The secular cantata developed before the sacred cantata and predominated in the seventeenth century, especially in Italy. The church cantata developed later in Germany, and was quite a different thing. Interestingly, Bach did not call his vocal compositions *cantatas* but rather *Stücke* (pieces), *Concerti* or *Motetti*. The reason could be that as an organist and instrument player, he was constantly aware of the importance of the orchestra, so that he regarded voices as other instruments for the performance of his work. The cantatas written by Bach can be placed into three categories:

Free cantata The text is based directly on the Bible or a religious poem, and treated by Bach as he wished for choir and soloists.

Solo cantata These are without chorus but may have a concluding chorale; they are intended for one or more soloists.

Chorale cantata They have the material of a hymn text at the beginning and the end, and possibly within the arias and recitatives.³

Student Activity. Listen to the whole of Cantata 78 and create a diagram showing the form of the overall work. Include the following information — instruments, voices, time signature, key signature, number of bars in each movement (including repeats).

Texture

Cantata 78 has examples of different textures, ranging from bare, almost monophonic recitative (No. 3), through block, chordal homophonic (No. 7), to complex multi-layered polyphonic (No. 1). Baroque music is often concerned with a single idea which drives ahead with a single purpose or mood — it seldom uses strongly contrasting textures within one piece. The texture of a piece is also determined by the combination of instruments, the musical style, the register in which the music is located, and the method of articulation. (See Leaving Certificate Guidelines p. 59.)

Dynamics

In Baroque music it is common to find dynamics (or degrees of volume) ‘terraced’, that is, they move abruptly in steps without crescendos or decrescendos. This is partly due to the timbre of the instruments in use at the time.

The musical score shows a vocal line and a keyboard accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Vivace con ardore' and 'Lente'. The lyrics are: 'Wenn ein er schreck - li - ches Ge - richt den Fluch vor die Ver - damm - ten spricht, so / When sounds the dread - ed Judg - ment Knell, the curse that sends the damned to Hell, tum'. The dynamics are marked p (piano) and f (forte).

Example 15: No. 5, bars 7–10, from Vivace showing terraced dynamics

In general, Baroque dynamic markings are sparingly indicated, many being left for the performers to decide. Bach, however, is the exception, being very particular with dynamic markings in his music.

Student Activity. Look at the bass aria, No. 6. The composer has indicated some dynamic changes in this aria, particularly at places where the oboe and bass voice overlap. Why?

³ Young, p. xiii

Rhythm

Compared with music which had gone before, music in the early Baroque developed the idea of ‘measured’ rhythm; that is, regular strong and weak beats set off by barlines at regular intervals. Later composers, such as Bach, avoided rhythmic monotony by moving the stresses from strong to weak through harmony, syncopation and accents. The use of barlines became merely a grammatical device rather than an indication of accent. (See Example 10.)

Usually a distinctive rhythmic pattern was maintained throughout a movement. Instrumental music has many examples of this:

Handel: *Water Music* (Hornpipe), Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 (First Movement), Vivaldi: ‘Spring’ from the *Four Seasons* (First Movement).

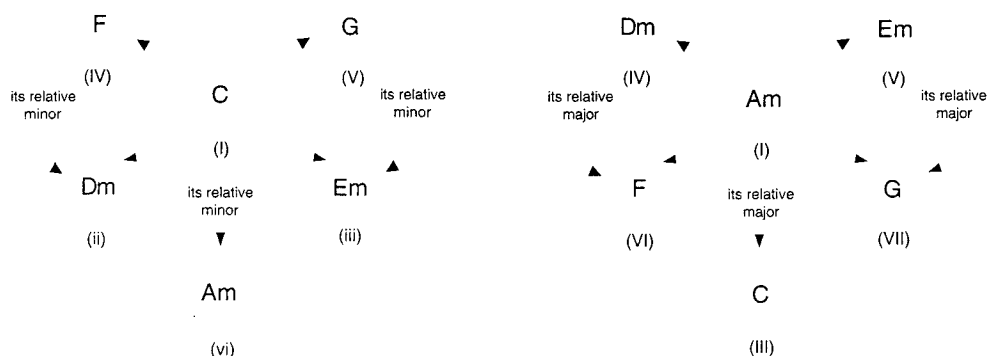
The continuo (bass line) of the duet (No. 2) of Cantata 78 provides a good example:



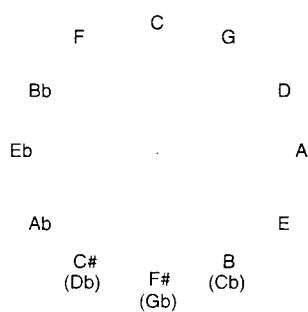
Example 16: No. 2, bars 1–8 (bass line)

Tonality

In the seventeenth century music based on the major and minor scales and centred on a particular key (C major, G minor, or whatever) was a new idea. Composers began to see how the shape and direction of a piece could be reinforced by the way a movement worked its way from key to key. For Baroque composers this key change or modulation was an orderly progression between key centres that were closely related to each other. A closely related key has the same key signature as the tonic or just one sharp or flat more or less than the tonic key.



A chord progression in which each chord functions as the fifth, or dominant, of the chord which follows was a common technique in Baroque music. It is called a Circle of Fifths, and often includes minor sevenths to each chord to make the dominant relationship stronger.



Circle of Fifths

Below is the bass line from Cantata 78, No. 1 (bars 125–129) which moves through a circle of fifths progression.



Example 17: No. 1, bars 125–129

Student Activity. Analyse No. 1, bars 104–107.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND TO CANTATA 78

General

The word *Baroque* was used initially to discredit the arts and architecture of the time, meaning from the original Portuguese ‘something distorted or even grotesque’, (‘an irregularly shaped pearl’). It is now used to describe generally the arts and music of the era spanning the years between about 1600 and 1750.

Broadly speaking, the Baroque period is a time of great emotional feeling — joy, grief, love, hate — a time of drama and disturbance in the arts. It is a time when individual arts like sculpture, painting and architecture all joined forces to make greater impact. This is evident in the ornate cathedrals and church ceilings of the time.

In opera, the arts were joined even more spectacularly, with music, literature, painting, architecture and sculpture all creating a fantastic effect — perhaps similar to the arrival of cinema in the twentieth century.

Behind this artistic upheaval was the Counter Reformation, centred in Italy. Europe had become divided into two hostile camps — Protestants in the North, Roman Catholics in the South. The Thirty Years’ War between these two forces dominated the first half of the seventeenth century.

Other important historical factors include:

- Exploration: sea trade and colonisation spread European civilisation and culture all over the world.
- It was the age of absolute monarchs in the Catholic countries.
- In England, Holland and Germany, the power of the monarchs declined. Power was being spread more widely.
- A new spirit of enquiry, doubt and challenge arose which laid the foundations of modern scientific thought.

The success of scientific examination in fields like mathematics and physics influenced musicians to develop carefully the techniques and materials of music. Rameau’s *Treatise on Harmony* and the new ‘well-tempered’ tuning system are examples. By the mid-seventeenth century, new resources of harmony, colour and form in music had been achieved.

Bach’s Life and Work

1695–1703	Bach underwent an intensive Lutheran Church schooling in Eisanach which would have included Bible History, religious beliefs, Latin, Mathematics and Music. There would also have been organ, violin and harpsichord study.
1703–1707	Church organist appointments at Arnstadt and Muhlhausen.
1707	Married his cousin Maria Barbara Bach.
1708	Appointed organist to Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar. Bach wrote mainly church and organ music at this time.
1717–23	Appointed Director of Music to Prince Leopold of Arnstadt-Cothen. Bach wrote mainly secular (non-religious) music at this time.
1720	Maria Barbara died leaving 4 children.
1721	Married Anna Magdalena Wicken, many more children from this time onward.
1723–50	Appointed Director of Music at St Thomas’ Church, Leipzig.
1747	Visited Berlin. Performed for King Frederick the Great for whom he wrote <i>The Musical Offering</i>
1750	Died, and was buried in Leipzig.

An eighteenth-century composer’s output was largely conditioned by the demands made upon him by patrons, employers and public. Almost everything Bach wrote was related to the position in which he found himself. Apart from the works of his youth and old age, Bach’s output corresponds to the three positions:

1708–1717 Weimar. As court organist, a large amount of his output was written for organ and keyboard. Toccata and Fugue in D minor, ‘little’ fugue in G minor, ‘St Anne’ Prelude and Fugue, Passacaglia in C minor. In 1714, in his role as assistant to the choirmaster, he produced about thirty cantatas.

1717–1723 Cothen. Prince Leopold required mainly chamber and orchestral music, and therefore much secular (non-religious) music comes from this period. The Brandenburg Concertos, English and French Suites for keyboard, 2 violin concertos, double violin concerto, the *Well-Tempered Clavier* Book 1. He also wrote about twelve cantatas for the Prince's birthday and New Year's Day.

1723–1750 Leipzig. As Director of Music (Cantor) at St Thomas' Church he was required to provide new music for the yearly cycle of Sunday services, as well as sacred music for special occasions. The large scale *St Matthew Passion* and the B minor Mass were written here, as were the *St John* and *St Mark* Passions and the Magnificat in D. After 1729, when he took over the role of Director of Music for the City of Leipzig, he composed a large amount of secular music, including *The Well-Tempered Clavier* Book 2, the *Goldberg Variations*, *The Musical Offering*, and *The Art of the Fugue*.

Leipzig

(See also the previous section *Timbre* for information on instruments.)

J.S. Bach gave most of his life and service as a musician to the Lutheran Church to which he was devoted. This helped to account for his obscurity in his own time. Looking at a map of Germany will reveal that he spent most of his lifetime in towns and villages within a radius of 100 miles. This area was a provincial backwater in most ways, in a country that had scarcely begun to recover from the terrible events of the religious wars of 1616–48. These wars were fought mostly on German soil and between one quarter and one half of the country's population died as a result. Bach was born less than 40 years after the wars ceased, into a country where artistic activity had been severely set back.

What did survive the wreckage of the wars in North Germany was the Protestant Lutheran church and the place of music in that church as an aid to worship, and as a source of comfort to the people. Music was regarded as a gift of God capable of 'driving out the devil, making sad ones happy and happy ones sad, the disheartened hopeful, the haughty meek.'

This is the world in which Bach was born and schooled, and it would appear that he loved religious study almost as much as music. Time and again, his music comes back to his own deep personal commitment to his religion. It was an upbringing that placed God and the Church first and also encouraged hard work, and sober and frugal habits.

'In Leipzig, the cantatas were sung on alternative Sundays at St Thomas' and St Nicholas, the latter being given preference as its pastor was also the superintendent of St Thomas's School. Bach rehearsed his choir on Saturday afternoons. Out of the fifty-four singers in 1730, seventeen formed the cantata choir, twenty the motet choir. Bach described the rest as 'no musicians at all', but presumably they could at least manage to take part in simple four-part chorales. For the twenty instrumental players needed to augment his meagre resources he drew on a body of professionals who served the Leipzig churches, and on the University students.'⁴

'Performances may have been erratic, under-rehearsed, and casual, manuscripts were hurriedly copied and were often crowded with errors, but conditions were more plastic (flexible) than those imposed by modern conditions. Works were written for all sorts of occasions and then forgotten; no one was sufficiently interested in them to perpetuate any record of manner and method. Bach's church music fell into disuse; no tradition remained . . .

Bach was not an ideal diplomat with his fellow workers, his disputes were legion, his shortness of temper and his innate stubbornness would not pour oil on the troubled waters. Engrossed in his life-work of composition he would have little patience with the detailed duties of a producer. When Bach's grandson, who had been in the choir, was asked what the cantatas were like under the composer's direction, he replied: "Oh, he cuffed us a lot and they sounded awful." . . .

Works were hurriedly prepared just in time for performance, with parts speedily copied out by Bach himself, his wife, his family (some of them just learning to write and so prone to error), and his pupils. Copies were probably shared by two or more singers or players.'⁵

4. Robertson, p. xi

5. Whittaker, p. 8

It was in Leipzig that Bach wrote a good deal of his most memorable music, yet he was at times not happy there, and found the conditions not much to his liking. He wrote to a friend, in the hope of finding employment elsewhere:

'It has pleased God that I should be called to Leipzig as Director of Music and Cantor of St Thomas' School . . . and here I have remained until now. But I have discovered that

1. The position I hold is not as good as it was represented to be
2. Various fees in connection with my work are no longer paid
3. The place is very expensive to live in, and
4. My employers are very odd sort of people who don't seem to care much about music. As a result I have to put up with continual annoyance and persecution.'⁶

Nothing came of this enquiry, and Bach stayed in Leipzig until his death. It is clear from the records that the Church authorities really did not want to be bothered either with Bach's exacting musical standards or with his vision of what Church music could be. They found his music difficult, complicated and obscure, and they found Bach a stubborn and troublesome defender of his musical rights as he saw them.

The Cantata

In his 'German Mass and Order of Divine Service', the founder of the Lutheran church, Martin Luther, reduced the number of Sunday church services to three.

CATHOLIC	Matins	Lauds	Prime	Terce	Sext	None	Vespers	Compline
LUTHERAN	Fruhgottdienst Morning			Hauptgottdienst Principal			Nachsmittagsgottdienst Evening	

'The *Hauptgottdienst*, the principal Lutheran service on Sundays and Feast Days, was, up to the Administration of Holy Communion, primarily centred on the Gospel for the day. It dictated the choice of the simple motet sung at the start, the hymns (chorales), and the libretto of the *Hauptmusik*, or cantata, sung before the hour-long sermon . . .

The service began at seven in the morning and lasted until about 11:00am, and at about 7.30am the ill-fed and badly-housed boys and young men of the choir took their parts in the cantata. They also provided the soloists, unless a visiting tenor or bass was able to assist for the arias. The sermon, which came shortly after, began at about 8.00am and lasted an hour, so the cantata, usually about twenty to twenty-five minutes in length, must have started some time between 7.30 and 7.40am. On cold mornings, the boys were allowed to leave the choir loft after the cantata, but they would have to remain if a second part, or a second cantata, were sung later in the service. Cantatas for the winter months are on the whole shorter than those for the other seasons.'⁷

'Bach's choruses, usually at the beginning of a cantata, and arias which sometimes begin or lie within the piece, take their texts usually from the Old or New Testament, while the chorales, customarily at the end, are based on Lutheran hymns of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus, Bach was able to integrate the Gospel word with the words of the Lutheran service to create a total effect in each cantata . . .

Bach modified many chorale tunes to suit himself, and although the congregation of his time could recognise the melody of the hymn, the words sung might or might not be heard as expected.'⁸

A study of Cantata 78 will reveal many of these features.

⁶ Whittaker, p. 6

⁷ Robertson, pp. ix-xi

⁸ Young, p. xiv

SECTION 3: ANALYSIS OF CANTATA 78

Cantata 78 was written for the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity (Pentecost) in 1724 with the gospel for that Sunday telling the story of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17, 11–19). The Epistle reading is from Galatians 5, 16–24.

Bach uses a hymn by Johann Rist (1641) as the basis for the whole work. Stanzas one and twelve are set in the original text for Nos. 1 and 7, while two lines of stanza three begin the tenor recitative, and four lines of stanza ten are placed at the end of the bass recitative. The remaining stanzas are paraphrased by the unknown librettist for the other movements. In the following pages, original text is indicated by italics.

Instruments

Four solo voices: soprano, alto, tenor and bass

Chorus

Flute

Horn

Oboe (1&2)

Organ

Violin (1&2)

Viola

Cello

Bass (Violone)

Continuo

The work consists of seven movements:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TYPE	Chorus	Aria	Recitative	Aria	Recitative	Aria	Chorale
VOICE	SATB Choir	Soprano and Alto	Tenor	Tenor	Bass	Bass	SATB Choir
KEY SIG.	Gm	Bb		Gm		Cm	Gm
TIME SIG.	3/4	4/4	(4/4)	6/8	(4/4)	4/4	4/4
INSTRUMENTS	Flute Oboes Strings	Cello Organ Violine	Continuo	Flute Continuo	Strings Continuo	Oboe Strings	Tutti
TEXT	Original Hymn (Verse 1)	Paraphrase	Paraphrase and Original Hymn	Paraphrase	Paraphrase and Original Hymn	Paraphrase	Original Hymn (Verse 12)

1 CHORUS

Jesu, der du meine Seele
Hast durch deinen bitteren Tod
Aus des Teufels finsterner Hölle
Und der schweren Seelennot
Kraftig herausgerissen
Und mich solches lassen wissen
Durch dein angenehmes Wort,
Sei doch jetzt, o Gott, mein Hort!

Jesus, by Thy Cross and Passion
by the bitter pain Thou bore,
when the evil one would hold me
deep in Hell to suffer sore,
mightily away Thou bore me
with a haven safe before me
through Thy Word contentment sweet,
Thou art still my sure retreat.

(see note 5, page 2)

Overview

The most remarkable feature of this opening movement is the way in which Bach has crafted this chorus to the strict form of a *chaconne*, a technique where a bass figure is used repeatedly as the foundation of the movement. This technique, seen in the works of other Baroque composers, e.g. Purcell, 'When I am laid' from *Dido and Aeneas*, (1689), uses a short figure as an ostinato. In this case the recurring theme consists of four bars, descends chromatically over the interval of a fourth, and ends with a perfect cadence, see theme 1(b) below. It is a similar figure to that used in the *Crucifixus* of the B minor Mass and may be described as a typical lamento theme, used here to reflect the sufferings of Christ referred to in the text.

The soprano part has been given the chorale tune (later heard in No. 7 but here in triple time), which is doubled by horn and flute an octave higher. In each of the six episodes, the lower three voices enter before the soprano, in different ways based on imitation. When the soprano enters with the chorale melody a new layer is added to the existing choral texture. The orchestra plays a *ritornello* between each episode, giving an overall effect of a full-scale choral movement.

To avoid monotony, Bach skilfully uses inversions of the theme, gives it to other voices, and varies the texture by juxtaposing strong countersubjects. By the end of the movement, the 'grief' motif has turned into a 'joy' motif — 'through Thy Word contentment sweet, Thou art still my sure retreat.' (Neuman)

'This fantasia is an outstanding example of the magical power of Bach's art to bring out all the nuances of the hymn-text in sound and feeling.'⁹

Form/Tonality

1	17	37	49	69	73	86	89	100	107	122	129	141
Rit	choir lines 1 & 2	Rit	choir lines 3 & 4	Rit	choir line 5	Rit	choir line 6	Rit	choir line 7	Rit	choir line 8	Rit
g	g	g	g----	D	D	F	F	Bb	Bb	g	g	g

Notes

- 1–16 **Ritornello** The ostinato bass, theme (1b), on which the movement is built, is heard first in the continuo. Strings play a strong and confident theme (1a), the 'grief' motif. In bars 9–16, oboes take up the ostinato theme, while strings play a free part built on stepwise quavers. This quaver idea is used freely throughout the whole movement.



Example 18: No. 1, bars 1–8

- 17–24 **First line of the text** The alto, tenor and bass voices enter with the ostinato theme in imitation. The continuo and strings are given new material, Theme (1c), a 'joy' motif to contrast the 'grief' motif above (1a).



Example 19: No. 1, bars 17–18

⁹ Young, p. 209

- (21) The soprano, flute and horn enter with the first phrase of the chorale tune which sounds for only five bars.
- 25–36 **Second line of the text** The alto and tenor enter with the ostinato in inversion, followed by bass in original form. The continuo part is given a running quaver pattern which is passed on to the oboes. (33) The soprano, flute and horn enter with the second phrase of the chorale tune which sounds for only four bars.
- 37–48 **Ritornello** repeating bars 5–16. The lighter texture is achieved in bars 41–48 by using only violins and oboes.
- 49–68 Similar musical treatment is applied to the **third and fourth lines of the text**. A change in instrumental colour is achieved by interchanging the violin and oboe parts.
- 69–73 **Ritornello** First violin has the ostinato theme over a bass pedal D.
- 73–85 **Fifth line of the text** begins with intricate counterpoint between the oboes and continuo. This forms the basis of similar treatment in the lower three voices, using new material based mainly on ascending quaver and semiquaver figures. The original themes (1a) and (1b) are heard woven into different parts. (81) The soprano, flute and horn enter with the fifth phrase of the chorale tune, arriving at F major in bar 85.
- 86–88 **Ritornello** The main ostinato theme is heard in its original form, played softly.
- 89–99 **Sixth line of the text** The alto, tenor and bass enter again in imitation, with a new independent idea based on a rising fourth, theme (1d).

Theme (1d)

und mich sol-ches las-sen wis-sen, mich sol - - - ches las-sen wis - sen, mich sol -
with a ha-ven safe be-fore me, a ha - - - ven safe be-fore me, a ha -

und mich sol-ches las-sen wis-sen, mich sol - - - ches las-sen
with a ha-ven safe be-fore me, a ha - - - ven safe be-

und mich sol-ches las-sen wis-sen, mich sol - - -
with a ha-ven safe be-fore me, a ha - - -

Example 20: No. 1, bars 89–92

- (95) The soprano, flute and horn enter with the sixth phrase of the chorale tune, arriving at B flat major by bar 99.
- 100–107 **Ritornello** First the main ostinato theme is heard. At bar 103 a fragment of theme (1c), together with a fragment based on theme (1d), are interwoven between string and woodwind parts. This results in an antiphonal effect, with the two groupings of instruments engaging in ‘dialogue’, within a circle of fifths harmonic idea.
- 107–121 **Seventh line of the text** Theme (1b) in lower voices, introduced in imitation, tenor, then alto, then bass. Theme (1c) in continuo, oboes and first violin. At bar 111 theme (1a) appears in strings, and at bar 115 the oboe joins the alto to resound theme (1b) both at a forte marking. (118) The soprano, flute and horn enter with the seventh phrase of the chorale tune, arriving at D major by bar 121.
- 122–128 **Ritornello** First, theme (1a) appears in woodwind, and theme (1c) on strings over pedal D in cello. At bar 125 there is a repeat of the antiphonal passage heard at bar 103, with different instrumental groupings.
- 129–140 **Eighth line of the text** has a more hopeful idea, reflected in a new melodic motive introduced again in imitation. While this is heard violins and oboes engage in a dialogue, using theme (1a) as a basis for the material, and viola and cello take a fragment of theme (1c) in a descending sequence spanning seven bars. At bar 136 the orchestra (and bass) plays the main themes (1a) and (1b). This is layered on top of the vocal parts which continue with their own material, now in G minor again. (137) The soprano, flute and horn enter with the eighth phrase of the chorale tune, achieving a rich and glorious texture for the climax of the hymn. All instruments are playing at a forte marking.
- 141–end **Ritornello** The final statement of the main themes, not triumphant, but resigned at the completeness of the musical and religious statement.

2 ARIA DUET

Wir eilen mit schwafen, doch emsigen Schritten O Jesu, o Meister, zu helfen zu dir. Du suchest die Kranken und Irrenden treulich Ach hore, wie wir Die Stimmen erheben, um Hilfe zu bitten! Es sei uns dein gnadiges Antlitz erfreulich!	We hasten with eager yet faltering footsteps, O Jesus, O Master, for help unto Thee Thou Faithfully seek the ill and the erring. Ah hear us, we pray Our voices exalt Thee, for succour we pray Thee! Now grant us Thy gracious and merciful favours!
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Overview

In contrast to the severity of the first movement, the duet for soprano and alto includes light-hearted imitations, buoyant rhythms, clarity of declamation, and joyful parallel figures. This aria provides a good example of the standard 'da capo' aria form, consisting of three sections, ABA. 'Organ, cello, and violone (double bass) accompany this movement with a light-hearted, skipping theme. The voices sing the first two lines in canon, uniting at the end in happy repetitions of "zu dir"; they then continue with the brilliant joy-motif of the rest of the aria, culminating with runs in the last word "erfreulich". The melody of the first two lines represents the hastening of eager feet towards Jesus.'¹⁰

Form/Tonality

A			B							A		
1	9	43	53	61	65	69	80	83	91			
Rit	Duet	Rit							Final Section	Rit	Duet	Rit
Bb	Bb	Bb	g----c	c	c		d		F	Bb	Bb	Bb

Notes

SECTION A

- 1-43 Cello, supported by double bass (violone) pizzicato, plays a rocking quaver pattern which forms the foundation of this movement, theme (2a).

Example 21: No. 2, bars 1-7

¹⁰ Young, p. 209

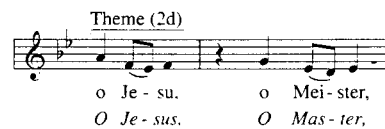
(9) The soprano enters with rising semiquaver pattern, theme (2b), followed in bar 11 in the alto part.

(12) The soprano introduces a short, declamatory idea, theme (2c), based on the rising fourth.



Example 22: No. 2, bars 12–13

(16) A third idea, theme (2d) is introduced, passed lightly between the voices.



Example 23: No. 2, bars 16–17

This, together with theme (2c), acts as a contrast to the busy, semiquaver theme (2b), balancing the vitality and length of the main motive with something shorter and with less movement.

At bar 23 the main theme is heard in the soprano, while the alto sings what is in effect a pedal F with auxiliary notes included to maintain the vitality of the line. From bar 25 the movement continues using the three ideas in various ways, with the voices singing at times in thirds and sixths, at times in imitative dialogue.

43–50 **Ritornello** A repeat of the opening eight bars.

SECTION B

50–98 The rocking quaver idea continues in the accompaniment. The soprano begins with an idea based rhythmically on the countersubject heard first in bar 13. At bar 52, the alto imitates at the fifth lower. The soprano countersubject at this point introduces dotted minims as a contrast. At bar 60 there is a short ritornello, followed at bar 64 with voices in thirds, 'Ah, hear us we pray'. Bar 69 is similar to bars 50–60, with the alto voice entering first this time, and taking the dotted minim countersubject. At bar 80 there is another episode using material from the themes already heard, including the dotted minim. This section moves easily from D minor into F major. Bars 90–98, the final section, use previous material and confirm the tonal centre of F major.

As a da capo aria, the movement returns immediately to B flat major with an exact repeat of Section A.

3 RECITATIVE

<i>Ach! Ich bin ein Kind der Sunden Ach! Ich irre weit und breit Der Sunden Aussatz, so an mir zu finden verlast mich nicht in dieser Sterblichkeit Mein Wille trachtet nur nach Bosen. Der Geist zwar spricht: ach! 'Wer wird mich er losen?' Aber Fleisch und Blut zu zwingen und das Gute zu vollbringen ist uber alle meine Kraft Will ich den Schaden nicht verhehlen, so kann ich nicht wie oft ich fehle zahlen. Drum nehm ich nunder Sunden Schmerz und Pein und meiner Sorgen Burde, so mir einst unertraglich wurde, ich liefre sie dir, Jesu, seufzend ein. Rechne nicht die Missetat, die dich, Herr, er zurnet hat!</i>	<i>Ah! My failings sorely grieve me Yea! My sins are very great The curse of Adam never more will leave me So long as I exist in man's estate. My inclinations lead to evil; Though oft my soul cries; 'Who is there to save me?' Ah me!: to resist temptation And attain thereby salvation is far beyond my feeble strength. Though I admit my every failing, I find, alas, The bad in me prevailing. And so I carry To Thy mercy seat My heavy load of sorrow, With all my sins and derelictions, And lay them penitently at Thy feet. Do Thou, Lord, forgive them me, Nor let them yet anger Thee.</i>
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Overview

After the gentle nature of the preceding duet, this recitative deliberately shocks the listener, referring not to 'lambs searching for Jesus' as in the previous aria, but to 'children of Sin'. Bach uses wide intervals and chromatic notes to emphasise the anguish of the words. As the text becomes more repentant, with the singer praying that he be forgiven, and 'begging the Lord not to count his misconduct which has angered Him', the harshness of the setting yields to a more gentle and pleading nature. The whole recitative, placed as it is between two easily flowing and gentle arias, serves as a contrast to both and brings each into relief.

This is in the main an example of recitative secco (dry). This type of recitative is more closely related in pitch and rhythm to dramatic speech than to singing. It is usually associated with narrative and less lyrical sections, and uses a syllabic word setting, with one note per syllable or word (except for bars 22–23).

Form/Tonality

Continuo (cello & organ) play throughout				
1 diminished and seventh chords, fragmented text	12	15	20	repeated rhythmical accompaniment, lyrical vocal line
no tonal centre	c	f	f	C

Notes

- 1 A series of diminished and seventh chords reflects the tone of uncertainty and repentance in the text.
- 8 Reference to a tonal centre of A major
- 12 Continuo cadences in C minor — note the style of recitative, where the vocal part usually ends a phrase unaccompanied.
- 15 A tonal centre of F minor is referred to, whereafter the narrative becomes more metrical.
- 20 A new tempo is imposed, with pedal note in the continuo. From this point until the end, the vocal part is more lyrical, using melisma (many notes to a syllable or word), leading into the aria to follow.
- 22–23 There is a long cadenza-like phrase, with wide leaps, chromatic notes and suspensions.
- 24 The vocal part ends on beat one (chord Ic), with the continuo left to complete the phrase and the movement with a perfect cadence.

4 ARIA

Das Blut, so meine Schuld durchstreicht,
Macht mir das Herze wieder leicht
Und spricht mich frei.
Ruft mich der Holle Heer zum Streite,
So stehet Jesus mir zur Seite,
Dass ich beherzt und sieghaft sei.

Thy sacrifice has cleansed the stain,
Making my heart all pure again
Happy and free.
Should now the Fiend of Hell assail me,
Then Thou my Saviour will not fail me,
But will support and succour me.

Overview

Essentially a duet between tenor and flute, this is by contrast to the preceding recitative, light-hearted and lyrical in nature. The flute and continuo keep returning throughout as a ritornello, and are especially important in the final bars where they act as a kind of recapitulation.

This aria is interesting as an example of Bach experimenting with the *da capo* structure, which was limited due to the repetition and the emphasis on the tonic key. In a conventional treatment, the first three lines of the aria would end with a tonic cadence, and then be repeated after the B section, resulting in an overall Ternary ABA form. What Bach does though, is to reach the **relative major** with line 3 and then to set the B section twice, making an extended Binary form: A-B-B2.

Form/Tonality

A				B1		B2		
1	13	15	19	27	30	43	45	61
Rit	Voice	Rit	Voice	Rit	Voice	Rit	Voice	Rit
g	g			Bb	Bb	Eb	c	g

Notes

SECTION A

1–11 **Ritornello** Wide leaps in the flute part with running semiquavers playing in sequences (5–7) and (9–10), exploiting the features natural to the flute.

12–14 Theme (4a), heard already in the flute part, sung now by the tenor.

Theme (4a)

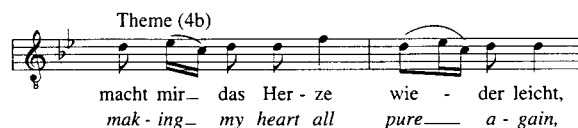
Das Blut, so mei - ne Schuld durch - streicht.
Thy sac - ri - fice has cleansed the stain,

6 4 2 6 5 6 7 5

Example 24: No. 4, bars 13–14

15–18 **Ritornello** using the same material as bars 9–12.

19–26 The tenor repeats theme (4a). At bar 21, a short motif is played in sequence, theme (4b), directing the tonality to F major.



Example 25: No. 4, bars 21–22

In bar 25–26, the melody modulates to the relative major, B flat. Note the range of the tenor part, on the words 'happy and free'.

SECTION B1

27–30 **Ritornello** Material from the opening compressed into four bars.

30–42 This section leads towards E flat major, again using semiquaver runs (35–36) and wide leaps (33–34). Note the large confident leaps on the word 'beherzt', a small-scale melodic feature which contrasts well with the general style of the movement. (It is heard again later in bar 59.) Note also the descending bass against the ascending melody in these bars.

SECTION B2

43–44 **Ritornello** Theme (4a), in E flat major.

45–61 The same text as Section B1 is given a similar, but not identical, treatment — extra material is included. Note the dominant pedal on D (53–56), while the continuo plays theme (4b).

62–73 The piece ends with a repeat of the opening ritornello.

5 RECITATIVE

Die Wunden, Nagel, Kron und Grab die Schläge, so man dort dem Heiland gab sind ihm nunmehr Siegeszeichen und können mir verneute Kräfte reichen. Wenn ein erschreckliches Gericht den Fluch vor die Verdammten spricht, so kehrst du ihn in Segen. Mich kann kein Schmerz und keine Pein bewegen, weil sie mein Heiland kennt; und da dein Herz vor mich in Liebe brennt, so lege ich hinwieder das meine vor dich nieder. <i>Dies mein Herz, mit leid vermengt, so dein teures Blut be sprengest, so am Kreuz vergossen ist, geb ich dir, Herr Jesu Christ.</i>	The torments, nail scars, thorns; the grave the scourge marks that our Lord and Saviour bore, become the tokens of salvation, to which the Faithful look for inspiration. When sounds the dreaded Judgement Knell, the curse that sends the damned to Hell, turn Thou it into blessing. Then neither pain nor torment will remain; all this my Saviour knows, and thus Thy heart with deep affection glows; so Master, I adore Thee and lay my all before Thee. <i>This, my heart, with grief commingled, by Thy precious blood besprinkled on the Cross poured out for me, give I now, O Lord, to Thee.</i>
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Overview

Within one recitative many widely differing emotions are presented. The main difference between this and the tenor recitative (No. 3) is that strings accompany the bass declamation throughout. The text in the first half (bars 1–16) reflects on the singers' own contrite emotions, as he remembers the Lord's sacrifice for his sins'.

The tempo changes briefly at bar 7 to Vivace, for the Judgement that the damned will hear pronounced, with loud, repeated chords on the strings. It returns then to an Adagio section before the Arioso at bar 17. This Andante section, uses text taken directly from stanza ten of the original hymn. The singer 'offers a heart full of sorrow for the precious blood shed on the Cross.'

Form/Tonality

Continuo (cello and organ) and strings play throughout			
1 sustained chords played softly	8 repeated chords forte	10 sustained chords	17 melodic and expressive accompaniment
Eb	Eb ————— g	—Eb —————	Ab ————— f

Notes

- 1–7 E flat major held chord on strings, sets the tonality for this section. Vocal part has wide leaps, emphasising the passionate emotions of the text - e.g., 'the grave'.
- 7–9 Strings accompany this short but highly charged passage with loud, repeated chords, in complete contrast to the serene string sounds heard before and after. The vocal part is declamatory in style, with rests used to heighten the tension. There is a reference to G minor.
- 10–17 The tonality returns through sustained chords, marked Adagio, on strings and organ to E flat major by bar 13, and to the sub-dominant at bar 17. The vocal part is marked Lento.
- 17–27 (Andante). The vocal part has been syllabic to this point, but from here the solo becomes more melodic and uses melismatic setting in the arioso style. The accompaniment becomes more supportive with flowing quavers and definite melodic direction. The text for this section is taken directly from the original hymn (instead of from the librettist responsible for bars 1–17), and there is a reference to the last two lines of the chorale melody in the final bars. (At bar 25 the bass vocal part modulates to F minor, ending with a strongly shaped descending phrase to the note F, implying a perfect cadence. The accompaniment interrupts this close, delaying the cadence for two more bars.)

6 ARIA

Nun du wirst mein Gewissen stillen
So wider mich um Rache schreit;
Ja, deine Treue wird's erfüllen,
Weil mir dein Wort die Hoffnung beut,
Wenn Christen an dich glauben,
Wird sie kein Feind in Ewigkeit
Aus deinen Händen rauben

Do Thou, O Lord, appease my conscience
which grievously has troubled me;
by Thy fidelity uphold me,
and let Thy Word my comfort be,
by Thy divine direction
from enemies forever free,
secure in Thy protection.

Overview

The use of the oboe with an elaborate solo line against a recurring orchestral theme on strings, based mainly on repetitions of the opening tutti, suggests more a concerto style than the aria style familiar in No. 4. The manner in which Bach contrasts the two, and seems to have added the bass part later, would suggest this. A striking feature is the overlap of the two parts, with the main theme (6a) returning throughout as a recurring motif, at times when the bass is completing a different musical phrase.

Both this aria and the tenor aria, No. 4, have a similar feature of the 'false start'. After the first phrase of the solo part is heard, the accompaniment returns with an interlude, after which the vocal part sings the first phrase again and then continues. As well as establishing the melodic material, this repetition serves to confirm the tonal centre of the movement.

Form/Tonality

	A			B		A1		
1 Rit	9 Voice	12 Rit	16 Voice	26 Rit	33 Voice	43	44 Voice	54 Rit
c				g	g—(f)—	c	c	c

Notes

SECTION A

- 1–8 **Ritornello** The simple melodic phrase, theme (6a), with a range of only five notes, is heard on the oboe and first violin. Perhaps taken from an idea heard in the preceding recitative (No. 5, bar 17), it is used throughout this aria as the main melodic idea.



Example 26: No. 6, bars 1–2, oboe theme

- 9–12 The bass solo, sounding for only three bars, uses a theme which is similar in rhythm only to the oboe theme (6a). Compare this to the aria (No. 4) where the tenor solo is identical to the opening (flute) theme.



Example 27: No. 6, bars 9–10

- 16–26 Both bass and oboe develop the material with long, florid runs of semiquavers. Note in bar 20, the oboe part has a variation of the opening theme, later given to the bass in bar 33.



Example 28: No. 6, bars 20–21, oboe part

SECTION B

- 26–32 **Ritornello** from oboe, strings and continuo, with the bass solo overlapping with one bar.
- 33–42 The bass sings a variation of the opening theme (6a), used already by the oboe in bar 20. The ritornello theme is heard twice during this section, each time in the key of F minor.

SECTION A1

- 43–53 The **Ritornello** theme returns to the original key, and is compressed slightly to accommodate the bass solo which joins with his original theme (6b), this time after only six beats. Stepping quavers and a run of semiquavers, under which is heard the oboe theme (6a), lead to a long held pedal on the dominant. At bar 52 an interrupted cadence allows a cadenza-like passage before the final full cadence.
- 54–61 An exact repeat of the opening section.

7 CHORALE

Herr, ich glaube, hilf mir Schwachen, las mich ja verzagen nicht; du kannst mich starker machen, wenn mich Sund und Tod anficht. Deiner Gute will ich trauen, bis ich frohlich werde schauen dich, Herr Jesu, nach dem Streit in der sussen Ewigkeit.	Lord, I trust Thee, I adore Thee, Help my weakness, my despair; Thou canst strengthen and restore me, When misdeeds my faith impair. On Thy loving Grace relying, God Almighty glorifying; by Thy side I hope to be, ever through eternity.
---	---

Overview

All voices and instruments join in a joyous affirmation of faith in God, as stated in this twelfth verse of the hymn. The choir asks God's help to strengthen them against sin and death, so that they will not despair. They will trust in Him until they meet Him in eternity after their earthly strife — a fitting concluding thought.¹¹

Form/Tonality

1	3	5	7	9	11	13	15
g	——(D)	g	——(D)	——F	——Bb	——(D)	g

Notes

Of interest are the different settings of the same phrases within the chorale. The alto and the bass parts in bars 1–2 and 5–6 vary slightly, while the soprano and tenor are the same.

Although the text provides examples of word-painting and chromatic treatment, the setting is remarkably simple. Perhaps after the wide range of compositional devices exploited in the earlier movements, and the elaborate treatment of the texts therein, Bach decided that a simple and straightforward statement was all that was required to complete the cantata.

¹¹ Young, p. 209

'The art of the Bach cantata is an exposition of the foundations and principles of the Christian faith, and none more searching or more inexorable, deeper or more precise, has ever been. The temporal life and the eternal, works and faith, mortality and death, sin and repentance, suffering and salvation - all the emotions and inspirations of the Christian soul exalted this, the greatest of preachers since Luther, not to theological abstractions but to a passionate presentation by symbolic means of an incomparably vivid musical imagination.'

Alfred Einstein, *A Short History of Music*, Cassell, 1936

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SOURCES ON THE INTERNET RELATED TO THIS TOPIC

www.iol.ie/~musicnet

The site for music teachers in Ireland.

www.unpronounceable.com/bcs/

Bach Central Station — links to 128 different websites.

www.jsbachexperience.com/

The site for rock musicians.

www.jsbach.org/web.html

Bach Home Page — Festivals and Organisations, Newsgroups, Educational and Commercial Sources, Analyses of Bach and his work.

www.jsbach.org/websites.html

Links to 15 sites containing music (MIDI files).

www.voicenet.com/~hohmann/bach/

A site maintained by Alexandre H. Hohmann, containing, among other information, pictures, documents and libretti.

www.classical.net/~music/comp.lst/works/bachjs/cantatas.html

A site maintained by Simon Crouch, with general information, an index of the cantatas, and a personal rating for each.

www.let.rug.nl/Linguistics/diversion/bach/intro.html

A comprehensive site including a bibliography with over 1000 titles, a Bach travel guide, seven pictures, and a biography.

www.let.rug.nl/Linguistics/diversion/bach/cantatas/introduction.html

An index of the Cantatas by BWV number, by alphabet, and according to the Church year. Also general literature on the Cantatas.

akihabara.basistech.com/bach/

A site full of Frequently Asked Questions, covering such topics as Bach's music, his place in history, his legacy, keyboard instruments, sacred music, and 'technical stuff'.

akihabara.basistech.com/bach/bachtest.htm

A twenty-question, multiple-choice test with answers, on Bach and his music.

SECTION 5: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The following selection of activities for students is loosely arranged in order of difficulty. As well as appearing in the form of a list below, some of them can be found in Section One as activities to illustrate features of Baroque music in general. Activities 14–17 may be considered as extension work.

Student Activity 1

Listen to the whole of Cantata 78 and create a diagram showing the form of the overall work. Include the following information: instruments, voices, time signature, key signature, number of bars in each (including repeats).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Title							
Voice(s)							
Key Sign.							
Time Sign.							
No. of bars							
Instruments							

Student Activity 2

Create diagrams for each of the movements showing extra details such as dynamics and modulations. Use the analysis template.

Student Activity 3

Make a list of the number of lines of text in each movement. Now do the same for the number of bars. What does the ratio tell you about each movement?

Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lines of text	8						
No. of Bars	144						

Student Activity 4

Transcribe the soprano part of No. 1, with no rests, as a chorale tune.

Student Activity 5

Learn the chorale tune (soprano part) of No. 7. Practice the following chords (on guitar or keyboard) — G minor, D, F, B flat, C. Use two of these chords to make a suitable cadence at the end of each phrase of the chorale (you have to decide which ones to use). Keep a record of your work by making a chart of the bars and chords.

Phrase	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Chords	D Gm							

Student Activity 6

Identify the instruments used in the final chorale.

Student Activity 7

Find these examples of word-painting, and describe each. 'the grave', 'when sounds the dreaded judgement knell', 'Be strong'. Make a list of other types of word-painting (or general ways that music can reflect the meaning of the words). Keep a diary of examples.

Student Activity 8

Listen to the main theme of each of the three arias (Nos. 2, 4, and 6). As an aural exercise, make a record of the number of times the main theme is heard, and in which part.

	Sop & Alto Duet	Tenor Aria	Bass Aria
No of times main theme is heard			

Student Activity 9

Find out more about the Chaconne as a dance form. Memorise the first four bars of the continuo (cello) in number one, or use the excerpt below. Play the whole of No. 1, and count the number of times you hear this phrase.



Je - su der du mei - ne See - le
Je - sus, by Thy Cross and Pas - sion,

Example 29: No. 1, bars 21–25

Student Activity 10

Analyse No. 1, bars 129–136 noting the circle of fifths concept.

Student Activity 11

Turn to No. 3, bar 22–24. Study these bars for examples of melodic elaboration. (See notes in section 1.)

Student Activity 12

Compare the two recitatives, Nos. 3 and 5. Include the following headings: form, harmony, rhythm, melody.

	Form	Harmony	Rhythm	Melody
Tenor No. 3				
Bass No. 5				

Student Activity 13

Look at the bass aria, No. 6. The composer has indicated some dynamic changes in this Aria, particularly at places where the oboe and bass voice overlap. Why?

EXTENSION WORK

FIGURED BASS ¹²

(See Section One, Harmony)

Student Activity 14

Turn to No. 2, bars 9–11. Write out the chords indicated by the figured bass.

General

- The numbers under the cello part show the intervals which sound above it.
- The numbers are arranged vertically for the notes of a chord, with the largest number placed on the top.
- It is then up to the player to decide the best placement of the chord in the musical context.
- The resulting melody in the right hand should have a good shape and contour.
- Doubling should occur as in four-part harmony; consecutive fifths and octaves should be avoided, leading notes and seventh notes should resolve correctly.
- Not all the numbers were used to represent some of the chords.
- Abbreviations were common, as well as signs to show alterations to chord notes.

Examples

In the examples below, the complete figures are given beneath the first note of each bar. The more common abbreviation appears beneath the second note. The actual chord is written above the second note.

Notes

1. If there are no numbers under a note, or if all the numbers are odd, then the chord is in root position. See (a) and (d).
2. If there are even numbers under a note, then the lowest of even number refers to the root of the chord. Sometimes an even number will indicate suspension, in which case the even number will resolve onto an odd number. See (h).
3. The numbers $\frac{6}{5}$, $\frac{4}{3}$, $\frac{4}{2}$, 7 all indicate seventh chords (d)–(g).
4. Accidentals placed in front of numbers indicate that the notes of the chord have been raised or lowered accordingly (c).
5. An accidental standing by itself without a number affects the third above the bass note.
6. A number followed by a line shows that the chord is to be held while the bass moves (j).

¹² Allan & Dorricott, pp. 74–75

NON-CHORDAL NOTES ¹³

(See Section One, Melody)

Student Activity 15

Study these examples of melodic elaboration which have already been described in Section One. Each one is based on the following three chords:



Auxiliary notes



Passing notes



Anticipation notes



Changing notes



Suspensions



Appoggiaturas



Now add the six melodic elaborations to the following three chords:



Student Activity 16

Listen to another piece of music from the Baroque period with which you are already familiar. Comparing it with Cantata 78, make a list of features which the pieces have in common and where they are different. (Use the headings in Section One.)

Student Activity 17

Listen to different performances of one movement of Cantata 78. Evaluate the two interpretations, using at least three of the following headings: tempo, instruments, mood, style, special features.

¹³ Allan & Dorricott, pp. 69-70

ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

TITLE _____

VOICE(S)

INSTRUMENTS

TEXT (mood, special effects, word-painting, etc.)

STRUCTURE/FORM (create a chart showing the form of the music)

--

COMPOSING TECHNIQUES (identify any special features - sequence, syncopation, imitation, ostinato, etc)

Special Feature	Bar Number

NOTES
