

An early chamber cantata for soprano; a dramatic soliloquy tracing the progression from remorse to reconciliation.

Form (All Soprano): Recit - Aria - Recit - Chorale - Recit - Aria. The cantata is in chiastic form. Bach often used chiastic (x-shaped/symmetrical) forms, in which center movements (where the mirror image begins) provide the crux of the matter. There antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text).

Introduction & updates at melvinunger.com.

NBA I/20; BC A120a-c

11. S. after Trinity (BWV 199, 179, 113)

*1 Corinthians 15:1-10 (Paul writes of his apostleship and lists post-resurrection appearances of Jesus)

*Luke 18:9-14 (Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector in the temple to pray)

Librettist: Georg Christian Lehms (see note).

•Depravity of my heart makes me utterly wretched (199/1).

FP: 12 August 1714 (Weimar

palace chapel). Performed

again several times (see

notes).

Soprano

J.S. Bach (Weimar version) Cantata No. 199

Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut

199/1. 1. Recitativo

- 4. Aria. Deeply bowed and full of remorse
- 5. Recit./6. Chorale. On this painful remorse
- 3. Recit. But God must to me
- 7. Recitative. I lay myself in these wounds.
- 2. Aria and Recit. Silent sighs, quiet lamentations
- 8. Aria. How joyful is my heart.
- 1. Recit. My heart swims in blood.

See note for more.

My heart swims in blood, because me (my)

Concerning the relationship between recitative and aria in this cantata, see note.

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

C minor
(Leipzig version is notated in D minor.)

The theme of remorse over sin in the face of God's holiness (recognizing that the origin of sin lies in Adam's fall) recalls a range of biblical passages.

For biblical background, see note.

sin's brood in God's holy eyes into-a monster makes; and my

Sünden Brut in Gottes heiligen Augen zum Un-ge-heu-er macht. Und mein Ge-

D7 G minor A7 D major

conscience feels pain, because to-me (my) sins nought but hell's-hangmen

wis-sen füh-let Pein, weil mir die Sün-den nichts als Höl-len-hen-ker

F# dim.7 G(7) G minor

are. (O) hated night-of-depravity! Thou, thou alone hast me into such distress

sein. Ver-haß-te Lasternacht! Du, du al-lein hast mich in sol-che Not ge-

G minor E-flat 7 A-flat major A-flat 7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

11

bracht! Und Du, du bö-ser A-dams-sa-men raubst mei-ner
brought! And thou, thou wicked seed-of-Adam, dost-rob my

F major A dim.7 B-flat minor

13

See-len al-le Ruh, und schlie-Best ihr denHimmel zu! Ach!
soul of-all rest and dost-lock-up to-it - heaven - ! Ah!

E-flat minor F(7) B-flat minor C major

16

Un-er-hör-terSchmerz! Mein aus-ge-dorr-tes Herz will fer-ner
Unheard-of pain! My dried-up heart will furthermore

E dim.7 F# dim.7 G minor

18

mehr kein Trost be-feuch-ten; und ich muß mich vor dem ver-
no consolation moisten; and I must myself from him

D7

20

stecken, vordemdie En-gelselfst ihr An-gesicht ver-dek-ken.
hide, before whom the angels themselves their face(s) cover.

C7 F major C minor C major

changing direction, the hopelessness felt by the soul in its awareness of sin. From a technical, compositional viewpoint, it is interesting to note Bach's attempt to fill large expanses of the aria with the ritornello theme stated at the outset on the oboe: hardly a bar is to be found in the whole movement in which it does not occur. It is also worth noting a certain formal idiosyncrasy: following the librettist's intention, Bach inserts a few recitative bars with continuo accompaniment before the start of the usual da capo." See *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, revised and translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 492.

The soprano's expression of remorse recalls a range of biblical passages.

199/2. 2. Aria • Sighs & tears show my unspoken remorse (199/2).

Adagio

For biblical background, see note.



Ritornello related to vocal theme: Italianate melody reminiscent of Handel's.

1. Oboe

3 (48)

5 (50)

8 (53) Soprano

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" (a term coined by Hugo Riemann) or "motto aria." After the ritornello, the singer presents the first phrase of the aria as a kind of motto. This is followed by a short instrumental bridge before the aria proper begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement.

Stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen,

Withdrawal of the oboe, pauses in the continuo, and sighing motives in the vocal line depict "stumme Seufzer" ("mute sighs").

11 (56)

stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen, stumme Seufzer, stille Klagen

Vocal insertion ("Vokaleinbau")

p *sempre*

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

13
(58)

Kla - gen, ihr mögt mei - ne Schmerzen sa - gen, weil der Mund ge - schlos -

E-flat major F7 E-flat major

15
(60)

sen ist; stum - me Seuf - zer, stil - le

E-flat major E-flat 7 A-flat major F7

17
(62)

Kla - gen, ihr mögt mei - ne Schmerzen sa - gen, weil der Mund ge - schlos - sen

B-flat major G7 C minor B-flat major

19
(64)

ist, weil der Mund ge - schlos - sen ist.

Silence depicts "Mund geschlossen."

più p *f*

C minor C minor C minor C minor

22 (67)

6 6 6 5 4 6 5^b 6 5 6

F minor B-flat 7 E-flat major

24 (69)

6 5 6 5 6 4 6 4 6 7 5 4 3 6 4 2

E dim.7 E-flat major E-flat 7

26 (71)

Und ihr

6 6 4 2 6 7 6 5 8 4 7 6 5 6 4 4

A-flat major F7 B-flat major G7 C minor C minor

B Section. (Fine)

29

nassen Trä.nen.quellen könnt ein sich.res Zeug.nis stel.len, wie mein

6 4 2^b 6 4^b 3 7 7 7^b 7 4 6

(E-flat 7) A-flat major F(7)

piano

31

sünd.lich Herz ge.büßt. Und ihr

6 6 5^b 4 5 6 6 5^b 6 4 6 5^b

B-flat minor B-flat minor B-flat 7

p

33

nas-sen Trä-nen-quellen könnt ein sich-res Zeug-nis stellen, wie mein

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

35

sünd-lich Herz ge-büßt, mein sünd-lich Herz ge-büßt, wie mein

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

37

sünd-lich Herz ge-büßt, _____ meinsündlichHerzge-

G minor

39

Recitativo

büßt. Mein Herz ist itzt ein Trä-nen-brunn, die Au-gen

My heart is now a well-of-tears, (my) eyes

The momentum stops as the singer ponders weepingly how reconciliation with God can be accomplished.

Continuo

Continuo alone...

See note for more.

G minor
E-flat major
E-flat 7
E dim.7
C7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

42
 hei-ße Quellen. Ach Gott! Wer wird dich doch zu frie-den stellen? Pregnant, apprehensive pause.
 hot springs. Ah God! Who will thee indeed satisfy?
 Phrygian cadence often used for questions.
 6/4 2
 6 F major 6b D-flat major B dim.7 G major da capo

199/3. 3. Recitativo • Mercy will be shown to me by God for I repent (199/3).
 Soprano
 Doch Gott muß mir ge-nä-dig sein, weil ich das Haupt mit Asche,
 Yet God must to-me merciful be, for I (my) head with ashes,
 "Halo" of strings p
 F major F7 B-flat major B dim.7

For biblical background, see note.



4
 das An-ge-sicht mit Trä-nen wasche, mein Herz in Reu und Leid zer-schla-ge und
 (My) face with tears do-bathe, my heart in remorse and sorrow do-batter and
 G7 C minor D7 G minor

7
 vol-ler Weh-mut sa-ge: Gott sei mir Sün-der gnä-dig!
 full-of melancholy (I) say: God be to-me, (a) sinner, merciful!
 Verbatim quotation from the Sunday's Gospel (Luke 18:13), set quasi-arioso.
 B dim.7 G7 C minor C minor G minor

10
 dig! Dramatic pause. Ach ja! Sein Herz bricht, und mei-ne See-le spricht:
 Ah, yes! His heart breaks, and my soul Says:
 Here the text alludes to Jeremiah 31:20 (see note).
 G major B-flat major E-flat major F7 B-flat major



The recitativo sets up the following aria, just as no. 5 sets up the following chorale setting.

199/4. **Andante** • Confession: I confess my guilt; have patience! (199/4).

1. Italianate melody, reminiscent of Handel.

Strings

E-flat major

E-flat major

Ritornello derived from vocal theme, its beginning derived from the chorale.

In light of the syntactical construction (colon at the end of the previous movement), the lengthy ritornello at the beginning of the aria is rhetorically significant—the soprano appears to have been rendered speechless. Intended perhaps as a biblical allusion (Romans 8:26: "sighs too deep for words"), the effect is strengthened by unison trills toward end of the ritornello.

6 (150)

C7 F major F7 B-flat major

12 (156) hemiola

B-flat major E-flat major E-flat major B-flat pedal...

18 (162) Simultaneous trills for violins and viola. hemiola

E-flat major E-flat major

Martin Petzold argues that the music of the A section of the aria depicts the comfort of forgiveness, even if it is absent in Lehms' text. "What Lehms' text does not achieve, Bach achieves through his music." See *Bach-Kommentar* 1:270, translated from the German original.

24 (168) **Soprano** The opening motive is derived from the chorale, no. 6, and is related to it theologically.

The text alludes to a range of biblical passages, including the Gospel reading and Jesus parable about the unrepentant servant (see note).

Tief ge - bückt und vol - ler Reu - - - -
 In the - - - - - dust, bowed down with weep - - - - -
 Deeply bowed, and filled with remorse,

Viol. I

tr Cont. p Cont. p sempre

E-flat major 6 6 6 7 6 4 3 6
 5 4 5 3 E-flat major

For biblical background, see note.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

(174) 30.

- e, und voll-er Reu - - - e lieg- ich, -

4 3 9 7 3 6 5 4 6 6 6 F7 9 7 5 B-flat major 7 6

35
(179)

lieb-ster Gott, vor- Dir. Tief ge- bückt und voll-er

hemiola tr tutti p sempre

4 3 9 7 5 4 4 B-flat major 6 4 7 6 4

40
(184)

Reu - e, und voll-er Reu - - -

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

46
(190)

- e, tief ge- bückt und voll-er Reu.e- lieg

Cont. tutti tr

B-flat 7 E-flat major 6 6 5 E-flat major E-flat major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

52
(196)

— ich, lieg — ich lieb - ster Gott vor Dir. Tief ge.

E-flat major
B-flat pedal...

58
(202)

bückt, tief gebückt und voll er Reu - e lieg — ich, liebster

Simultaneous trills for violins and viola.

E-flat major

64
(208)

Gott, lieg ich, lieb - ster Gott, — vor — Dir.

hemiola

Ritornello

forte

E-flat major

E-flat major

69
(213)

Gott, lieg ich, lieb - ster Gott, — vor — Dir.

E-flat major

E-flat major

74
(218)

Gott, lieg ich, lieb - ster Gott, — vor — Dir.

hemiola

F major

F7

B-flat major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

79
(223)

B-flat major E-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major
B-flat pedal...

84
(228)

Simultaneous trills for violins and viola.
E-flat major

89
(233)

B Section.
Ich be - ken - ne mei - ne
hemiola tr Cont.
Continuo alone...
E-flat major C minor G(7) 7/4 C minor
(Fine) E-flat major

94

C minor F# dim.7 G minor

99

Ritornello Vln I Vln II
G minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

104

G minor F7 B-flat major G minor
D major
D pedal...

109

Simultaneous trills
for violins and viola.

G minor

114

Ich be - ken - ne

hemiola

Cont.

Continuo alone...

G minor G minor 6 6/5 6/4

119

mei - ne - Schuld; a - ber - ha - be doch - Ge -

tutti

Cont.

Continuo alone...

B-flat 7 E-flat major 6 6/5 7 6 6 6/4 5/b 6

124

duld, ha - be doch - Geduld mit mir, Ge - duld,

tutti

Cont.

p sempre

G major C minor C minor C minor B-flat 7

129

habe doch Ge-duld! Ich be-ken-ne mei-ne Schuld;

B dim.7 G major C minor
G pedal...

134 **Adagio**

a-ber ha-be doch Ge-duld, Ge-duld, Ge-duld!

"Patience" is depicted with a dramatic pause, then repetition in a slow tempo.

C minor G7

140

Ha-be doch Ge-duld mit mir!

Strings interject a double statement of "tief gebückt" as if to remind God of the singer's remorse.

hemiola

più piano

E-flat 7 A-flat major *da capo*
A-flat major

199/5. **5. Recitativo** • Repentance brings God's word of comfort (199/5).

Soprano

1. Auf die-se Schmerzens-reu fällt mir alsdann dies Trostwort bei:
Upon this pain-of-remorse occurs to-me then this word-of-consolation - :

The opening phrase recalls the opening of the cantata, "Mein Herze schwimmt im Blut."

For biblical background, see note.

Cont.

6 5 5 6 6 6 7 5 # G minor
G(7) C minor G minor D7

This is stanza 3 of 11 in the chorale "Wo soll ich fliehen hin" by Johann Heermann (1585–1647). In the chorale, the chorale was often called a "Trostwort" ("word of consolation"). For example, the title in the Dresden hymnal is "Trost=Gesängelein, darinnen ein betrübtes Hertz all seine Sünde mit wahrem Glauben auf Christum leget: aus Taulero" ["Little song of comfort, in which a sorrowful heart lays all its sins on Christ with true faith: from Taulero"]. See *Bach-Kommentar* 1:270.

199/6. **6. Choral** • Christ's wounds provide salvation for sinners (199/6).

For Alfred Dürr's comments, see note.

6. Choral
Andante

Vla

Italianate writing, the obbligato derived from the chorale.

For biblical background, see note.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

15

und mich so hef - tig schrek - ken,

D minor C major F major E-flat major B-flat major F7

18

in dei - ne tie - fen

Allusion to 1 Peter 2:24: "By his wounds you have been healed (Luther 1545: durch welches Wunden ihr seid heil worden)."

G minor C7 D minor F major

20

Wun - - - den, da ich stets Heil ge -

G7 C major C major F7 D7 G minor C7 D minor F major

23

fun - den.

F major F7 B-flat major C7 F major

199/7. **7. Recitativo** •Christ's wounds become my resting place by faith (199/7).

Soprano

1.

Ich le-gemich in die-se Wunden, als in den rechten Fel-senstein; die
I lay myself into these wounds, as into the (one) true rock; they

Strings
piano

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

For biblical background, see note.



4.

sol-len mei-ne Ruh-statt sein. In die-se will ich
shall my resting-place be. Into these would I

Text painting: Soaring, ascending line to for "schwingen."

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

7.

mich im Glau-ben schwingen und drauf ver-gnügt und fröh-lich
- in faith soar and thus contentedly and fröh- joyously

Word painting: Soaring melisma for "joyously" (accompanied by Violin I in parallel 3rds, suggesting sweetness) anticipates the extrovert joy of the final movement..

F7 B-flat major

9.

lich sin-gen:
sng:

Vln I

attacca

B-flat major B-flat major

199/8. 8. Aria

Allegro (Vivace)

•Reconciliation with God brings this song of joy (199/8).

Ob. 1.
Ob and Vln I in canon for 5 mm.
Vln I
Vln II Vla
Bass begins canon.

Gigue

B-flat major

Bass begins canon.

3
(32)
tr

6
(35)
tr

B-flat major

Soprano
For biblical background, see note.
Wie freu dig ist mein Herz, wie
tr
p Ob.
p Viol.
Vln I

B-flat major

B-flat major

11
(40)
freu dig ist mein Herz, wie freu dig, wie
l.H.
Ob.



13
(42)

freu - dig ist mein Herz, da Gott ver - söh - net ist; wie

Viol. forte

F7 B-flat major

15
(44)

freu - dig ist mein Herz, da Gott ver - söh - - - - - net, da

Viol. l.H.

17
(46)

Gott ver - söh - net ist, da Gott, da Gott ver - söh - net ist. Und

B Section.

tr Va.

The movement (and cantata) ends abruptly without closings ritornello.

B-flat major (Fine) B-flat major

19

mir nach Reu und Leid nicht mehr die Se - lig - keit noch

Vln I tutti Va. Ob.

E-flat major F major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 199

21

auch sein Herz ver-schließt, — noch auch sein Herz verschließt; und

Viol. *tutti* *tr* *Ob*

A7 D minor G major

23

mir nach Reu und Leid nicht mehr die Se - lig-keit — noch

Ob *Cont.*

C minor C minor F major B-flat major B-flat major B-flat 7

25

auch sein Herz ver-schließt: — und mir nach Reu und

Ob *tutti* *tr* *Cont.* *Continuo alone...*

E-flat major E-flat major (D7) G minor

27

Leid nicht mehr die Se - lig-keit noch auch sein Herz — verschließt.

G minor G minor G minor *da capo*