

Introduction & updates at [melvinunger.com](http://melvinunger.com).

NBA I/12; BC A79

Exaudi: 1. S. after Ascension (BWV 44, 183)

\*1 Peter 4:71-11 (Exhortation to serve one another with the gift each has received)

\*John 15:26-16:4 (Farewell address of Jesus: Holy Spirit promised, persecution foretold)

Librettist: Christiane Mariane von Ziegler (Text modified somewhat by someone: J. S. Bach?). See notes.

FP: 13 May 1725 (Leipzig: St. Thomas)

J.S. Bach

## Cantata No. 183

For comments by Alfred Dürr, see note.

## Sie werden euch in den Bann tun II

183/1. **Recitativo.**

•Vox Christi: Persecution is coming: John 16:2 (183/1).

Basso.

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 4 mm.

Sie wer-den euch in den Bann thun, es kömmt a-ber die  
They will you into - excommunication place; (there is) coming, indeed, (a)

Instrumentation:

Oboe d'amore I, II

Oboe da caccia I, II

Vln I, II

Vla

Violoncello piccolo (see notes)

SATB

Continuo, Organo

Ob d'am I  
Ob d'am II  
Ob da caccia I  
Ob da caccia II

Jesus' warning that persecution is coming is taken directly from the day's Gospel. Bach originally planned an arioso movement with fugal ritornello over a chromatic bass. See *Bach Compendium*, Vocal Works Part 1, A 80, p. 324; Robert Marshall, *The Compositional Process of J. S. Bach* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), sketch in vol. 2, no. 116. A year earlier Bach set the text as a duet followed by a chorus (BWV 44/1&2).

Ascending chromatic tetrachord

Ob I climbs chromatically, increasing the tension. Regarding the ascending chromatic 4th, see note.

A minor The haunting timbre of 4 oboes playing sustained chords over a bass pedal (with Ob d'amore I climbing chromatically) colors the bleak warning.

G# dim.

Zeit, dass, wer euch tö-dtet, wird meinen, er thu-e Gott ei-nen Dienst da-ran.  
time, when, whoever you kills, will think he is-doing God a service thereby.

A minor

C# dim.7

A7

D minor

D# dim.7

E minor

E major

Da capo

**Aria.**

179/2. **Molt' adagio.** (♩=92.)

•Persecution & death accepted without fear (183/2).

Form (rhyme: ABABCDGD)

Ritornello (mm. 1-5) Em

A. Line 1 (Devise) (5-6) Em

Rit (6-10) Em

Lines 1-2 (2x: 10-16) Em-Bm

Rit (16-17) Bm

Lines 1-2 (2x: 17-24) Bm-Em

Rit. (24-28) Em [Fine]

B. Lines 3-4 (28-33) Em-F#m

Rit (33-34) F#m-DM

Lines 5-8 (34-41) DM-Am

Rit (41-42) Am

Lines 5-8 (42-46) Am-GM

da capo

Ritornello

Mel. marc.

Violoncello piccolo

E minor

Alfred Dürr notes that the violoncello's motoric obbligato gives the aria a "severe, almost inexorable character" (see note).

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. In this lengthy da capo aria the first two lines constitute the entire A Section.

**Tenore.** Line 1 (motto).

A Section.

Ich fürch - te nicht des To - des Schrecken,

Text painting: A tortured, "shaky" vocal line depicts fear and resigned lament despite the avowal not to fear death.

E minor

The cello piccolo encircles the tenor motorically, as if to represent God's steady, unseen, protecting arm as referenced in the B section despite the singer's fear.

711

E minor

10 Lines 1-2 (2x).

Von Ziegler 1728: gar

ich fürch - te nicht des To - des Schrecken, ich scheu - e ganz kein Un - ge -

On repetition, the line is embellished, emphasizing the fear.

E minor

E minor

12

mach, ich fürch - te nicht des To - des Schrecken, ich scheue ganz kein Un - ge - mach,

A# dim7 F#7 B minor B minor

1411

ganz kein Un - ge - mach, "Shivering" embellishments. Ritornello

B minor B minor

The text alludes to Hebrews 11:24-25: By faith Moses, when refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment (Luther 1545: Ungemach) with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

Lines 1-2 (2x).

17. ich fürch - te nicht des To - des Schrecken, ich scheu - e

19. ganz kein Un - ge - mach, ganz kein Un - ge - mach, ich fürch - te nicht des To - des

21. Schrecken, ich scheu - e ganz kein Un - ge - mach, "Shivering" embellishments. ich scheu - e

23. ganz kein Ungemach, ganz kein Un - gemach.

Ritornello

26.

E minor B minor B minor D7 G major B7 E minor E minor E minor E major A minor E minor

# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 183

Von Ziegler 1728: Drum folg ich gern

B Section. Lines 3-4.

28

Denn Je - sus' Schutz - arm wird mich dek - ken, ich fol - - ge

Bach's change produces an additional "I" statement.

Cello piccolo with continuo on striding 8ths for "ich folge gerne..." ("I follow gladly").

E minor E minor A7 D major

30

gern und wil - lig nach, ich fol - ge gern und wil - lig nach, ich fol - -

C# major F# minor

32

-ge gern und wil - lig nach:

Word-painting: An extravagant scalar melisma for "folge" ("follow") suggests the path of discipleship may be arduous and frightening.

Ritornello

Cello piccolo

F# minor D major

Jesus' words from the opening movement are now used to address the persecutors directly.

34

Lines 5-8.

wollt ihr nicht mei - - nes Le - bens schonen und glaubt, Gott ei - - nen Dienst zu

D major Cello piccolo resumes striding 8ths... D7 G major



# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 183

Von Ziegler 1728: So wird er euch dafür belohnen

36 thun: Er soll euch sel - ber noch be - loh - nen, wohlan, es mag da - bei be -

G major G major G7 C major

38 ruh'n, er soll euch sel - ber noch be -

Text painting: Sustained note for "ruh'n" ("rest") illustrates the believer's willingness to leave "reward" of the persecutors with God, as stated in the text.

C major C major

40 loh - nen, wohlan, es mag da - bei be - ruh'n;

G# dim.7 E7 A minor A minor

Ritornello

42 Lines 5-8. wollt ihr nicht mei - nes Le - bens schonen und glaubt, Gott ei - nen Dienst zu

A minor B7 E minor A7 D major

# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 183

44 thun: Er soll euch sel - bernoch be - loh - - nen, wohlan, es mag da bei beruh'n.

183/3.  $\text{♩} = 60.$  **Recitativo.** **Alto.** • Giving up life for Christ (183/3). Frequent pauses suggest halting lament.

F#7 B minor G major G major Da Capo.

The da capo of the previous movement ("I do not fear death's terror") creates a bridge to the recitative ("I am prepared to give up my life").

The oboes d'amore and oboes da caccia alternate with the "ich bin bereit" motive, creating a motivically imprinted movement. The oboes have the motive first, the singer then identifies its meaning. Martin Petzoldt sees further symbolic meaning in the regularity of the oboes' motive and the enharmonic turn in m. 9 (see note).

The text is reminiscent of Paul's statement at the end of his life: "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13. For additional biblical allusions, see note.)

Ob d'am I Ich bin bereit, mein Blut und armes Le - ben vor  
Ob d'am II I am prepared, my blood and poor life for (für)

Ob da caccia I Ob da caccia II (Ich bin bereit) "Halo" of strings

G major Alto is often the voice of faith. B7 D# dim.7

Von Ziegler 1728: soll dir allein

3 dich, mein Heiland, hinzu - ge - ben, mein gan - zer Mensch soll dir ge - wid - met  
thee, my Savior, to-give-up; my entire person shall to-thee dedicated

D# dim.7 E minor Von Ziegler 1728: Diß ist mein Trost Increasing sharps (see note). G7

511 sein; ich trö - ste mich, dein Geist wird bei mir ste - hen, ge -  
be: I comfort myself, thy Spirit will by me stand, supposing

E7 A7 D major (E7)

8 Von Ziegler 1728: Und sollt es mir auch noch so schlimm ergehen.

setzt, es soll - te mir viel leicht zu viel gesche - hen.  
it should for-me perhaps too much (be).

Enharmonic change

C#7 F# minor D# dim.7 F# dim.7 C major C major  
6 (for significance, see note).

Alfred Dürr writes, The aria "requires not only strings but two unison oboes da caccia, which extend their obligato part over lengthy stretches of music, accompanied by short, often motivic interjections from the strings. This unusual scoring is all the more remarkable in that both arias in this cantata involve obligato instruments in the middle register (tenor or alto pitch). The triple time and the motivic repetition within the opening phrase create a relaxed, almost dance-like impression, in marked contrast to the severity of the first aria." See *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, trans. Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 345.

183/4. **Aria.** The courtly minuet style in C major with light embellishments represents the vitality, enlivening comfort, and aid of the Holy Spirit.

(Moderato ♩ = 104.)

•Prayer for Spirit's guidance and intercession (183/4).

Note: The oboes' phrases leave little room for breath, reminding listeners of the biblical metaphor of the Spirit as life-giving and renewing breath.

Ob da caccia I, II  
Vln I

Ritornello derived from vocal theme.

Minuet-like, with the opening ritornello in binary form.

-Vln I (Obs up 8va, see full score).

-Strings

+Strings

C major

D7

+Strings

Vln I

-Strings

m. 13

= m. 12

M. 13 missing

= m. 14.

G major

G7

C major

C major

15.

Vln I

Vln I

Vln I

Vln I

C major

18

19.

hemiola

C major

C major

22

23.

C major

C7

F major

C major

C7

F major

C major

C major

C major

The opening words are reminiscent of the opening words of the 4th stanza of Luther's chorale "Nun bitten wir den Heil'gen Geist," which reads "Du höchster Tröster

Soprano is often the voice of the soul.

27. **Soprano.**

28. Höch - - ster Trö - - ster, heil - - ger Geist,

Ob da caccia I, II

Ritornello *mf*

*p*

C major

30. 31. + Strings + Strings

C major C7 F major G7

34. 35. + Strings

C major C major

After the motto statement, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 3 times in succession, a possible trinitarian reference (see note).

38. 39. *tr*

höch - - ster Trö - - ster, heil' - - ger Geist,

*p*

C major

42. 43. *tr*

höch - - ster Trö - - ster, heil' - - ger Geist.

Strings Strings Strings

G minor A7 D minor



# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 183

46 47.

höch - - ster Trö - - ster, heil' - ger Geist.

D minor G7 C major

51.

Striding scale for "who shows me the path." Vln I

der du mir die We - - ge weis'st da -

C major D7

55.

Word painting: Sustained note for "darauf" ("on:[the path]).

rauf ich wan - deln soll, Ritornello + Strings

B minor D7 G major G major

59.

Word painting: Long, winding melisma suggests the path may be circuitous. Ob da caccia I, II

darauf ich wan -

G major G major

63.

Ob da caccia I, II Vln I

G major G7 C major

# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 183

66 67. Tutti

Vln I Vln I Vln I

mf Ritornello

D7 G major G major G7 C major

*deln, da - rauf ich wan - deln soll,*

70 71.

C major (D7) G major G major D7 G major

74 75.

G major G major G7

**B Section.** Paraphrase of Romans 8:26-27: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

78 79.

Vln I Vln I Vln I

p

E7 G# dim.7 (A minor) A minor A7

*helf mei - ne Schwach - heit mit ver - tre - ten, denn vor mir*  
(für mich)

*Text painting: Vacillating pitches, syncopation, and minor keys for "my weakness."*

83 84.

Vln I

(D minor) D minor

*sel - ber kann ich nicht be - ten, ich weiss, ich weiss:*

# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 183

87 88. *hemiola*

Vln I du sor - - gest vor mein Wohl;  
(für) Vln I Ob da caccia I, II

*mf* Ritornello

D minor G minor C7

91 92. Vln I *hemiola*

F major A7

95 96. *p* Ob da caccia I, II

D minor G minor G minor

helf mei - ne Schwach - heit mit ver - tre - - ten,

101. 100. NBA: Denn von mir selbst D7

denn vor mir selbst kann ich nicht be - - ten, ich

Vln I Vln I

G(7) C minor G7 C minor C minor

Von Ziegler 1728: denn vor mich selbst (für mich)

104 105. *hemiola*

weiss, ich weiss: du sor - - gest vor mein Wohl.  
(für) Vln I

Ob da caccia I, II Ritornello

C7 F major G7 C major Da Capo.

his is the 5th stanza of verse 5 of 12 in the 1653 Protestant hymn "Zeuch ein zu denen Toren" by Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676). Bach's setting is characterized by flowing eighth notes and embellishments (often in parallel motion), in accordance with the traditional representation of the Spirit as the life-giving force. In this way, it differs markedly from Bach's setting of the same tune in BWV 16/6 and BWV 28/6 and stands in stark contrast to the static bleakness of the opening movement.

183/5.

# **Choral.** (Mel: „Helft mir Gott's Güte preisen.“)

•Spirit teaches us how to pray effectively (183/5).

+Ob d'amore I, II  
Vln I

+Ob da caccia I  
Vln II

+Ob da caccia II  
Vla

**Soprano. 1.**  
Du bist ein Geist, der leh- - ret, wie man recht be - ten soll; dein

**Alto.**  
Du bist ein Geist, der leh- - ret, wie man recht be - ten soll; dein

**Tenore.**  
Du bist ein Geist, der leh- - ret, wie man recht be - ten soll; dein

**Basso.**  
Du bist ein Geist, der leh- - ret, wie man recht be - ten soll; dein

5  
Be - ten wird er - hö - ret, dein Sin - gen klin - get wohl; es steigt zum Himmel an, es

Be - ten wird er - hö - ret, dein Sin - gen klinget wohl; es steigt zum Himmel an, es

Be - ten wird er - hö - ret, dein Sin - gen klin - get wohl; es steigt zum Himmel an, es

Be - ten wird er - hö - ret, dein Singen klinget wohl; es steigt zum Himmel an, es

11  
steigt und lässt nicht a - - be, bis der ge - holfen ha - - be, der al - lein hel - fen kann.

steigt und lässt nicht a - - be, bis der ge - holfen ha - - be, der al - lein hel - fen kann.

steigt und lässt nicht a - - be, bis der ge - holfen ha - - be, der al - lein hel - fen kann.

steigt und lässt nicht a - - be, bis der ge - holfen ha - - be, der al - lein hel - fen kann.

Contemporary hymnals have "allen" ("all"). In her libretto, Von Ziegler changed this to "allein" ("alone"). Martin Petzoldt suggests that the change aligns with the Reformation *solus solus Christus, sola gratia, sola fide* (Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone.) See Bach-Kommentar 2:957.