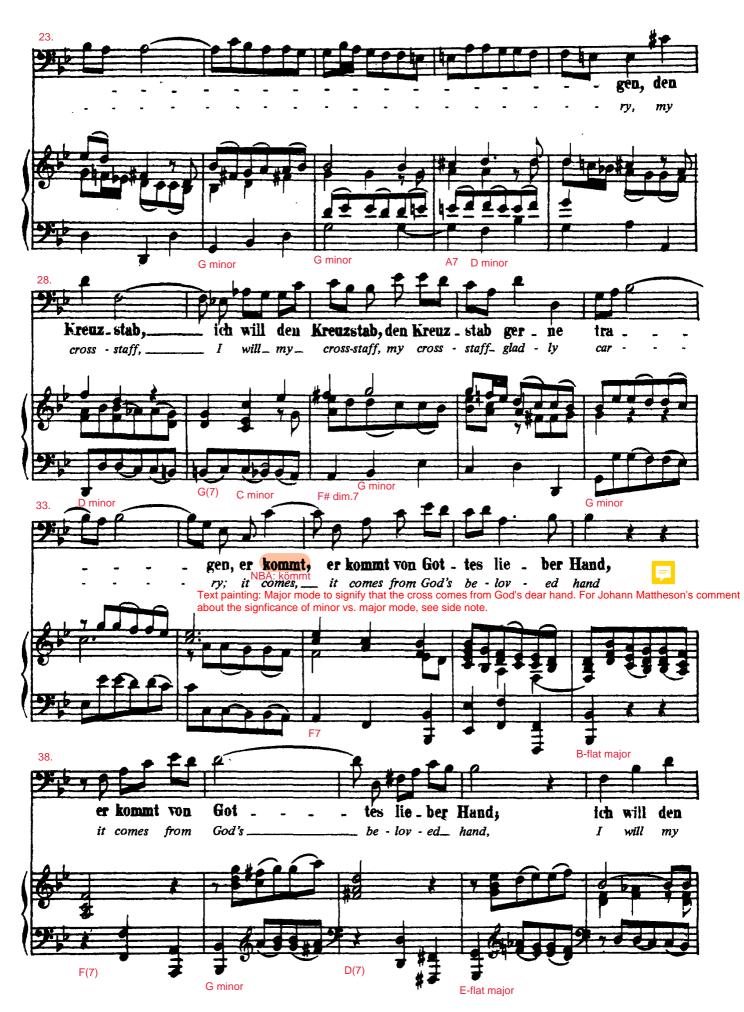
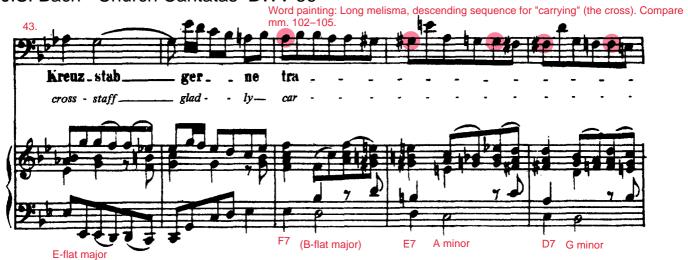
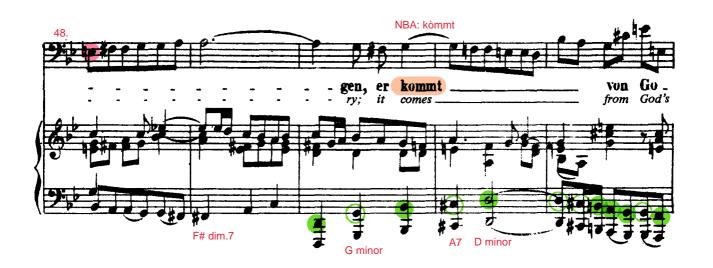


Introduction & updates at melvinunger.com.

Word painting: Chromaticism (augmented 2nd with a sharp ("Kreuz") to depict "Kreuzstab," then sighing motives for "tragen"; both suggest the pain of carrying the

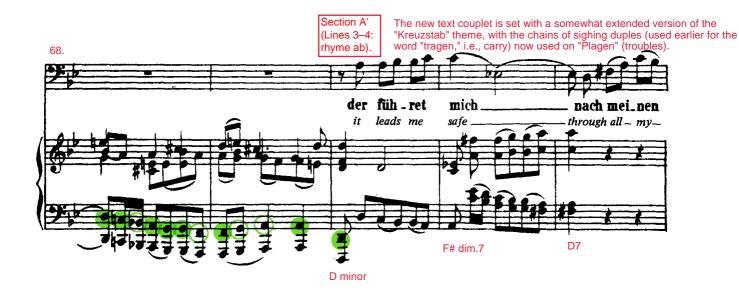




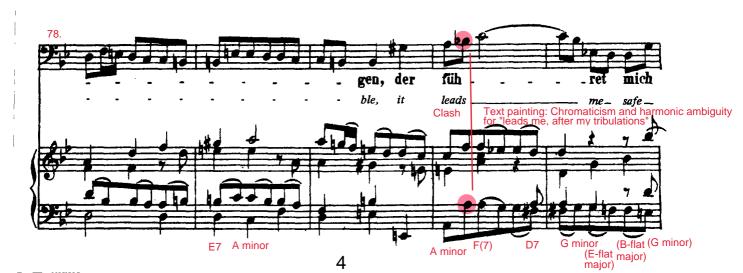




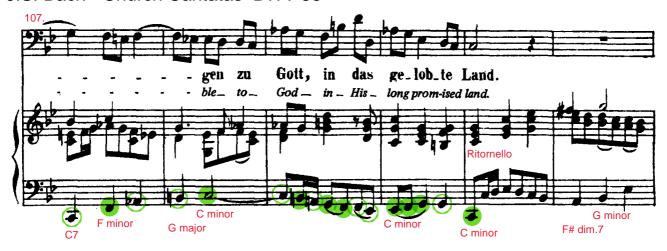


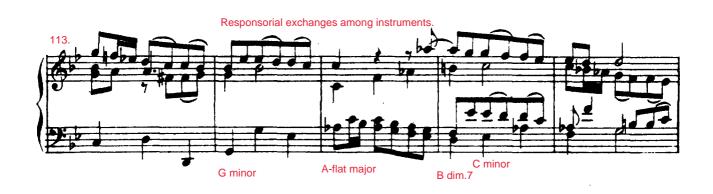


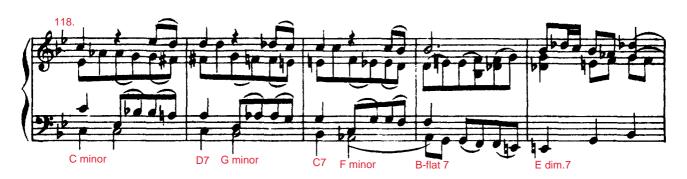










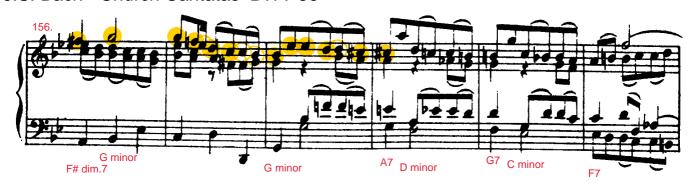




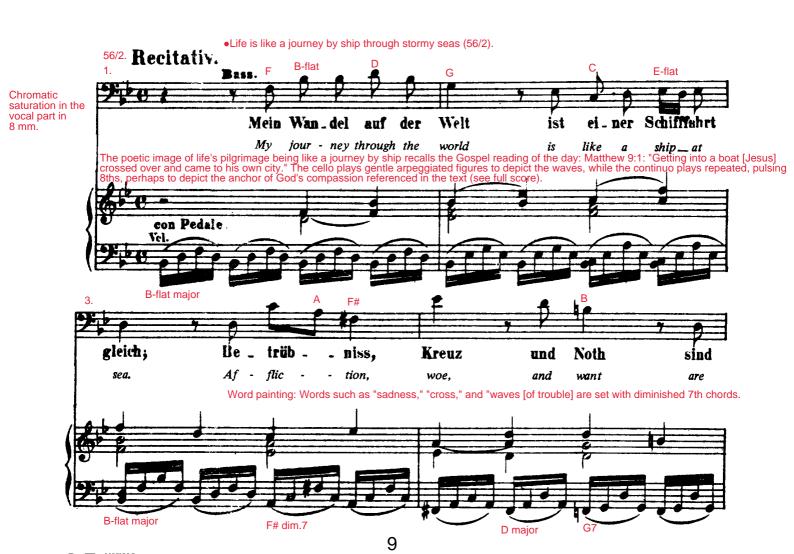
The text alludes to biblical passages such as Revelation 21:3–4. [Then] God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away. (Also Revelation 7:15–17, Isaiah 25:8.) While the skipping rhythm of the vocal line (following the dactylic meter of the poem) and major keys portray the joyous freedom anticipated by the poet, the continuation of sighing duples in the instrumental lines depict the continuing present reality of suffering.



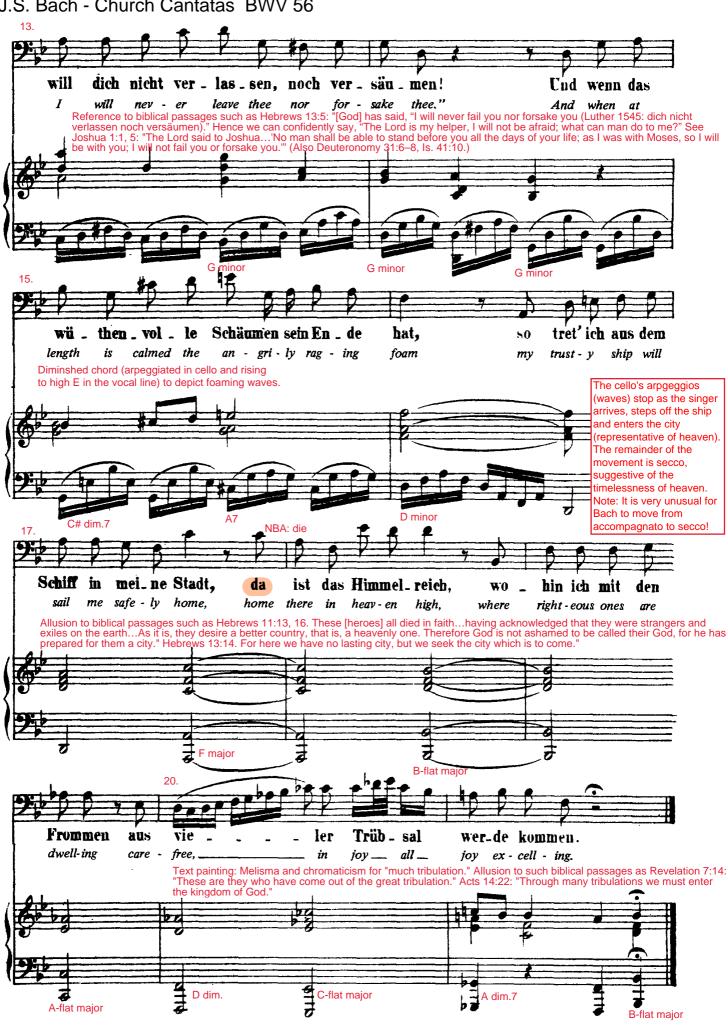




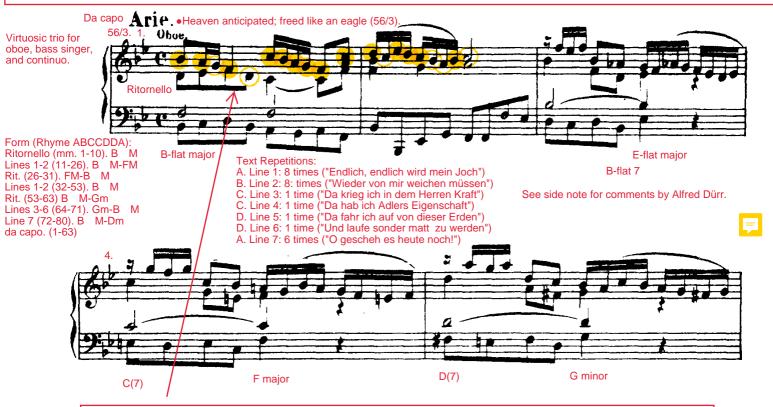




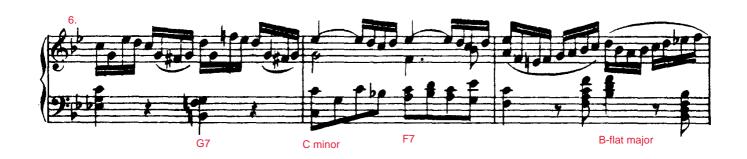
J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56 D-flat Wel leu, welche mich be Tod mich bil - lows ris-ing high to smite me, and which with death each Text painting: "Waves" [that cover me] set with a wave-like melisma. B dim.7 C minor täg " lich schrecken. Mein Anker a_ber, der mich hält, day af - fright me. The an-chor that will hold me fast . The "anchor" reference is a possible allusion to Hebrews 6:19–20 (see side note). Text painting: held note for "hält." F minor ist die Barm-her - zig _ keit, womit mein Gott mich oft freut. is His com - pas - sion vast, where-by He oft de - lights my soul. This figure was introduced and repeated in the first movement, mm. 91-100, on the text "He leads me, after my troubles, to God into the promised land." **C7** B-flat 7 E-flat major Der ich fet Ich bin bei dir, S0 zu mir: He calls thus "I stand by Thee, out to me: and A dim. D7 E-flat major



This is the central movement in the cantata's chiastic form. In Bach's chiastic forms, center movements (where the mirror image begins) often 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). Here the central movment describes the moment when the believer's situation will finally turn. As seen below, Bach devotes most of the aria to the first 2 lines of text.

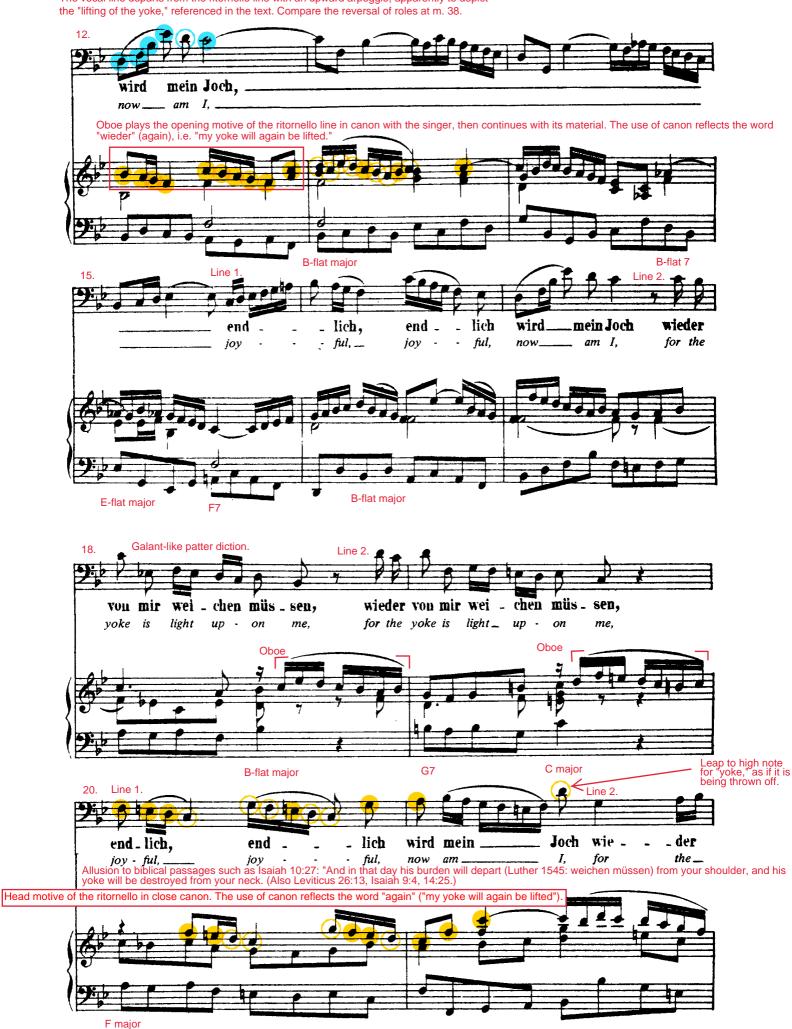


The head motive of the ritornello is associated with the opening line of text ("Finally, finally my yoke [will be lifted]. It appears in both oboe and voice lines throughout the movement as a unifying device.



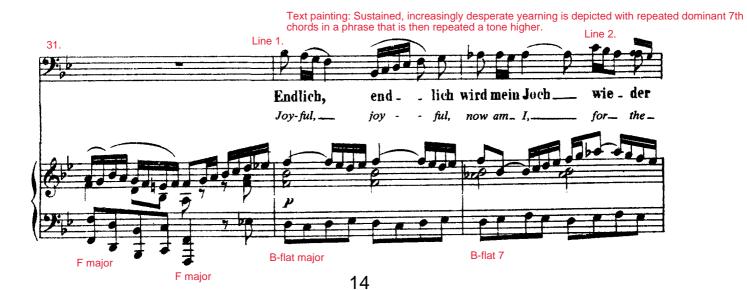


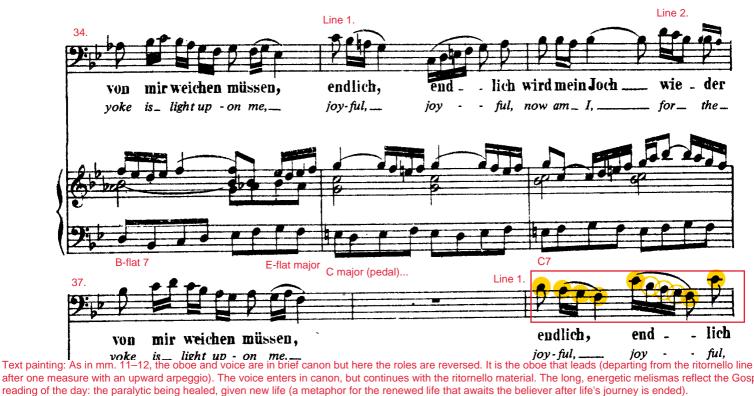
The vocal line departs from the ritornello line with an upward arpeggio, apparently to depict





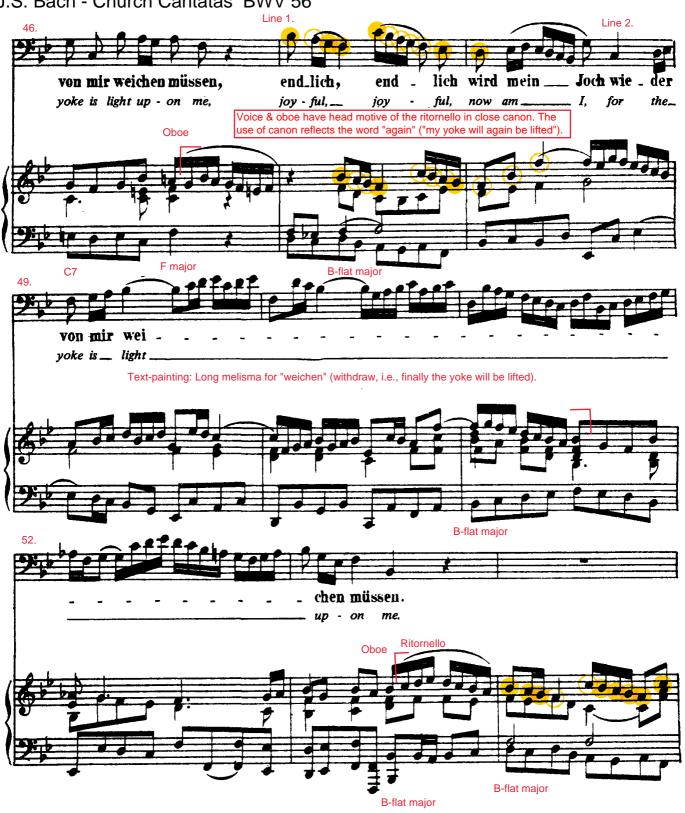


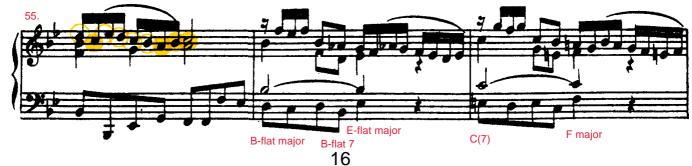




after one measure with an upward arpeggio). The voice enters in canon, but continues with the ritornello material. The long, energetic melismas reflect the Gospel reading of the day: the paralytic being healed, given new life (a metaphor for the renewed life that awaits the believer after life's journey is ended).





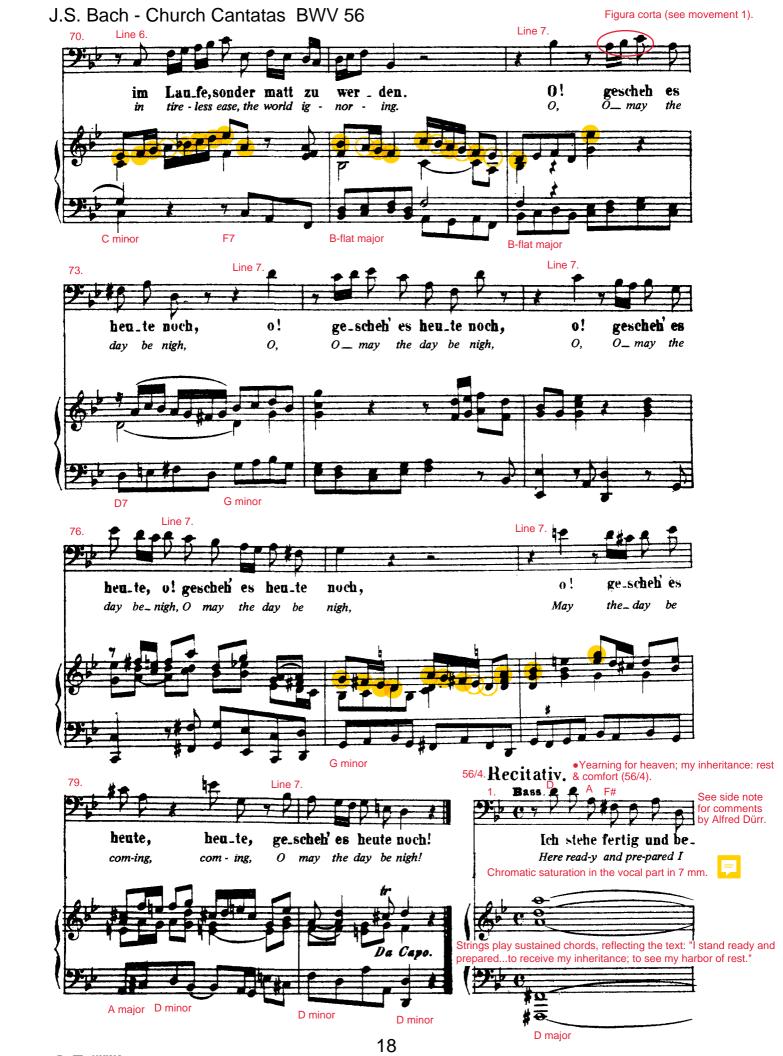






Allusion to Isaiah 40:28–31. "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."



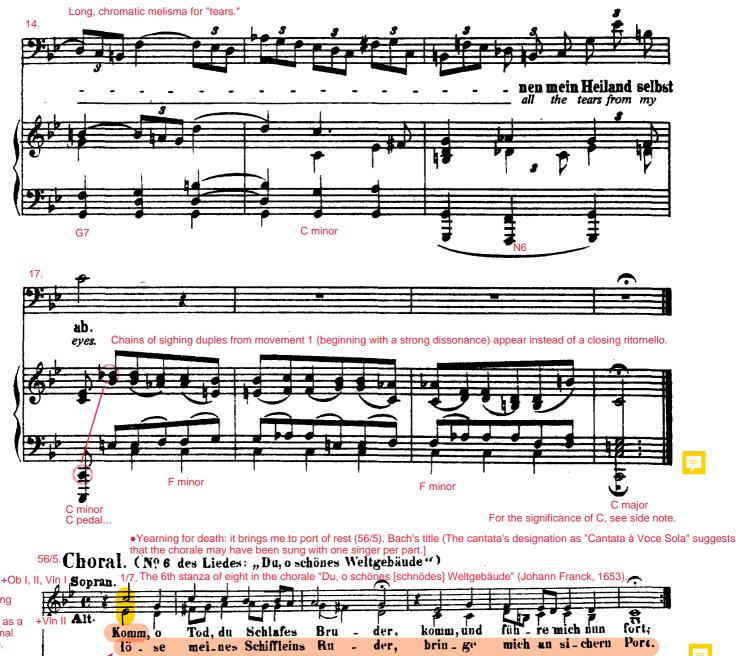


J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 56 B-flat reit, das Erbe meiner Selig - keit mit Sehnen und Ver langen von Je-su Händen zu em stand to take the boon from Je-sus'hand, the boon for which I yearn, and hope that one day I may Word painting: Diminished 7th NBA: Jesus chord for "yearning." F# dim.7 B dim.7 D-flat Wie wohl wird mir geschehn wenn ich den Port der Rahe werde how will I be blest when at last shall find my port of E dim.7 7 E-flat 7 A-flat major G minor Adagio. Da leg ich den Kummer auf einmal in's Grab da wischt sehn. The "skipping" triplet material (with allusion to Revelation 21:3-4, 7:17) from movement no. 1 (see m. 127ff.) reappears (now about half as long). Whether this was a decision made by the librettist of by Bach is unknown. Moving from an accompagnato to an arioso suggests reaching a definitive, final goal. See Martin Petzoldt, "Bach Kommentar," 558. For other cantata movements that repeat material from a previous movement, see side note. F minor D-flat major mir die Thränen mein Heiland selbst ab, da wischt mir die Thrä. - iour will wipe all the tears from eyes, my Sav - iour will wipe_ The chains of sighing duples from movement 1 reappear

F minor

19

C minor



The closing chorale functions as a catechismal response.

jour - ney smooth and short, make my Come. O death, and end my voy sails and drop my chor, bring furl my

safe - ly in - to port.

The reference to death as the brother to sleep originates in Greek mythology. Thanatos (god of death) and Hypnos (god of sleep) are twin brothers, sons of the Nyx (goddess of the night) and Erebos (god of darkenss). Many biblical passages also refer to death as sleep (see side note). The second Stollen's reference to bringing life's ship safely to harbor connects to the day's Gospel reading: "Getting into a boat [Jesus] crossed over and came to his own city" (Matthew 9:1).



Alfred Dürr writes, "Despite its plain four-part style, the concluding chorale is an exceptional masterpiece. The choice of text is itself felicitous, since the wish to be united with Jesus through death is associated with the image of the ship moored in a 'secure harbour,' a return to the metaphor of life as a voyage in the second movement. In Bach's setting, the alteration of the opening of Cruger's melody (Leipzig, 1649) from [two half notes to a half note on beat two], with its emphatic syncopation on the word 'Komm,' is truly inspired. So, too, is the setting of the penultimate line where, in the resolution of a diminished seventh onto a G major chord, we seem able to perceive directly the soul passing through the pain of death into glory." See "The Cantatas of J. S. Bach," trans. Richard Jones, p. 583



