

Johann Sebastian Bach's
St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)
Text, Translation & Notes

Christ Episcopal Church
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Presented by
Bill Duxbury

Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244) A Brief History of Passion Narratives

For anyone who has spent time at Christ Episcopal Church, you know that on Palm Sunday, the Gospel reading is done as a dramatic recitation. The story is always from one of the four Gospel's recounting of Jesus' last week, ending with his crucifixion and entombment. Different people 'play' different roles: someone is Peter, someone Judas, someone the High Priests, another is Pontius Pilate, and someone else is Jesus. The entire congregation 'plays' the angry mob.

What you may not know is that this is an ancient tradition.

The first description of such a dramatic recounting comes from a 4th century Spanish woman, possibly a nun, named Egeria. While on a pilgrimage in the early 380's she wrote back to her circle of friends in Spain in what was essentially a travel blog. In this she describes the practice of doing a dramatic reading of the last week of Christ in the churches of Jerusalem on Good Friday. Of note she also was frustrated that the churches had yet to decide on a definitive date to celebrate the 'nativity of Jesus'.

In the 5th century, Pope Leo The Great, started to codify which Gospels should be read on which days of Holy Week, with the Gospel of John used on Good Friday. By the 9th century, the Passion narratives started to have 'annotations' with specific pitches and rhythms. There was a narrator, called the *Chronista*. The part of Jesus was to be done with someone 'with a deep voice'

By the 13th century, specific melodic structure had been given to various 'parts', and included such notations, as the words of Jesus should be done 'quietly', while the mob should be 'loud and coarse'.

One of the most famous stagings of the Passion Narrative happens in the Bavarian village of Oberammergau. In 1633, with Bubonic plague killing hundreds of thousands in Europe, the residents of the villagers vowed that 'if God would spare them' they would produce a play every 10 years depicting the life and death of Jesus. They were spared the play will be performed again in the year 2020.

Under the Reformation started by Martin Luther, music took on a bigger role in churches. By the late 1600's in Lutheran Germany these Passion narratives were scored as 'Oratorios', using many of the forms from the recently invented genre of Opera. By the time of Bach in the first half of the 18th century, these Passion Oratorios were a regular part of the Good Friday service. Bach mostly likely composed four or five such Passions, based on all four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Sadly, only two, Matthew and John, have survived.

The tradition of a Passion Oratorio waned from the mid 18th Century to the mid 19th Century, but then saw resurgence, mostly because of the composer Felix Mendelssohn.

To this day, musical settings continue to be staged. In 1966, the Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki composed his '*St. Luke's Passion*' to commemorate the 1,000-year anniversary of the Christian conversion of the first Polish Duke. Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's '*Jesus Christ Superstar*' in the 1970s moving the narrative into the Rock and Roll age. Certainly the Estonian composer, Arvo Pärt's 1989 '*Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem*' broke new musical ground.

Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244) A Brief History

Bach's St. Matthew Passion was originally composed around 1725 and was first performed at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, Germany on April 11, 1727 (Good Friday). Bach later revised the work for performances on Good Friday of 1729, 1736 and 1742. The version we now call the 'St. Matthew Passion' is the 1736 version.

In 1723, Bach had been appointed as the 'Kantor' (music director) of the Lutheran churches in Leipzig, the largest of which was the St. Thomas Church. Bach was well suited for the position, being a man of deep Reformation Lutheran faith, a renowned organist, and was considered (at the time) a 'passible' composer (we know better now!)

The St. Thomas Church had a tradition of a 'Passion' performance as part of their Good Friday Vespers service, a tradition that continues to this day. Bach had already composed one such Passion, the 'St. John Passion (BWV-245)' for 1724. We are sure that he composed a St. Mark Passion, and most likely a St. Luke Passion, but these have not survived.

The St. Matthew Passion is by far the most ambitious work that Bach composed. His only work that comes close is the 'Mass in B minor, (BWV-232)' The St. Matthew Passion is massive in scope, diversity of musical styles, and depth of Reformation theology.

The core of the work comes from the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapters 26 and 27. These chapters recount Jesus' last week, including the first Eucharist, his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, his betrayal and arrest, Peter's denial, his trial, crucifixion, death and entombment on Good Friday. In Bach's time, it was 'required' that the words for the narration come directly from Martin Luther's German Translation of the Bible.

To this 'framework' Bach and his librettist, Christian Friedrich Henrici (writing under the pen name of 'Picander') added arias and choral works. Bach also inserted into the work, Chorales (we call them Hymns) from the church hymnal. These arias, choral numbers and chorales allowed for a 'break' in the action to contemplate the meaning and implications of the narrative (much like a Shakespearian soliloquy)

The final work was over three hours in length and required two full orchestras, two organs, three choruses plus soloists to perform. Bach was obviously proud of this work; in his final 1736 'revision', he carefully wrote the entire score out by hand, using rulers, a compass and special red ink for the Gospel text.

After Bach's death in 1750 (from which we mark the end of the 'Baroque' period), the St. Matthew Passion was performed sporadically in Leipzig, the last recorded time in 1800. By this time, Bach, the Baroque style, and Passion works of music had fallen out of favor. The Bach's Passion was all but lost, until 1824 when a 15-year-old Felix Mendelssohn was given a gift from his grandmother. The 'gift' to this musical prodigy was a copy of the score to the St. Matthew Passion. Four years later Mendelssohn staged a performance in Berlin (the first outside of Leipzig). Mendelssohn's interest in Bach started a resurgence of interest in Bach's music that continues to this day. Had it not been for Mendelssohn's grandmother, Bach might be but a footnote in our musical history.

Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244) Major Themes

The major themes that permeate the St. Matthew Passion sprang from Bach's deep Lutheran Reformation faith.

- First: mankind is sinful and is *incapable* of being 'good enough'.
- Second: Jesus, as both God and Man, *was sinless*.
- Third: Jesus *loved* us so much that he *wanted* to die for us.
- Fourth: it was necessary for the sinless Jesus to *shed blood and die* in order to redeem mankind.
- Fifth: we should be *thankful* to Jesus.

Note that there are other Reformation themes that are NOT brought out in the Passion. The theme of the Resurrection and Eternal Life are not part of this work. The role of the Holy Spirit in the redeemed people of God is absent.

This is on purpose. The Passion was meant to 'leave us hanging'. It was to be performed on Good Friday as the Church commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus. There is yet to be an 'Easter'. There has yet to be a 'Pentecost'. There will be time later to address the 'Easter' and 'Pentecost' themes. For now, Bach wants us to come face-to-face with the ugly truth that it was our sins, our wretchedness that brought about Jesus' brutal, bloody death.

Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244) Structure

The work is divided into two parts. The first part (over one hours) was performed before the Good Friday Vespers sermon (the sermon would last at least an hour!). The second part (almost two hours!) was performed after the sermon. (For those math whizzes, YES, the Vespers service was likely to last 4-5 hours!)

Bach did not keep a definitive library of his compositions, much less a record of 'sub-divisions' of his works, but over the years, many have found it convenient to do so.

One such cataloging of his works came about in the mid 20th Century and is known as the 'BWV' system (the 'Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis' or 'Bach Works Catalogue'). This system has become universal for identifying Bach's works; hence the St. Matthew Passion is BWV-244. (Note: if you want 'intellectual snob appeal', causally drop at your next social gather that you "*found yourself re-listening to BWV-244 this past weekend and were taken by Bach's use of the turba's dissonant chord in #54 as a commentary on the state of the human condition.*") (You will win the intellectual 'battle', but will probably not get invited back!)

This BWV system has divided the St. Matthew passion into 78 numbers.

To confuse you even more, to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Bach's death, in 1950 the city of Leipzig commission a group of musicologist to come up with a definitive 'catalogue' of Bach's works. This catalogue is known as the 'Nue Bach-Ausgabe' (NBA) or 'New Bach Edition' (NBE) in English. This catalogue divides the St. Matthew Passion into 68 numbers.

I have chosen to use the BWV system, mostly because it was the first system I learned. I have grouped these 78 numbers into 'Scenes' (not an original idea – I am not sure I have YET to have a truly 'original' thought!). Each of these scenes typically has narrative action from the Gospel, with some form of 'commentary' either from a solo aria, a choral work or a Lutheran Chorale.

Part One	Part Two
Scene One: Prelude	Scene Nine: Prelude
Scene Two: Jesus Predicts His Crucifixion	Scene Ten: Jesus Before the High Priests
Scene Three: The High Priest Conspire to Kill Jesus	Scene Eleven: Peter's Denial & Judas' Suicide
Scene Four: Jesus' Anointing at Bethany	Scene Twelve: Jesus Before Pontius Pilate
Scene Five: Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus	Scene Thirteen: Jesus' Delivery and Flagellation
Scene Six: The Last Supper	Scene Fourteen: The Road to Golgotha and Jesus' Crucifixion
Scene Seven: The Garden of Gethsemane	Scene Fifteen: Jesus' Death and Entombment
Scene Eight: Jesus' Agony, Arrest and the Scattering	Scene Sixteen: Good Friday Lament

Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244) Musical Elements

Bach drew heavily from the traditions of Opera. It is hard to overstate how important Opera was during the Baroque period. One way to understand its impact might be that if Bach's town of Leipzig were to have had 20 radio stations in 1727, 15 of them would be playing Opera.

Bach uses four 'types' of vocal works in this Passion:

- **Recitative.** This is used for narration. It is often written to reflect the 'natural' way we might speak: faster and higher when agitated; slower and lower when relaxed. The majority of the Recitative in this Passion is taken word for word from Martin Luther's German translation of the Bible.
- **Arias:** These are used to comment on the action or to give a human 'reaction' to the action. Much like a soliloquy in a Shakespeare play, we get insight into the human condition. The music of these is more virtuosic and is performed by soloist or occasionally as a duet. Many times Bach will score these where the soloist has a 'dialog' with the Chorus.

It is important to note that none of the characters (Jesus, the Evangelist, Judas, Peter, Pilate, etc.) perform arias. Their words are taken directly from the text of the Bible. This is different than say in Shakespeare where Hamlet is going to tell us what is on his mind. The arias are sung by 'others' who are outside of the action. Bach often scores these arias with a selected instrument from the orchestra 'singing' along with the soloist.

- **Chorus Works:** Like an aria, these are used to comment or react to the narrative. However in this case, it is a 'group' reaction. When all of the priests demand that Jesus should be put to death, it is the Chorus that acts as the priest.
- **Chorales:** Chorales are what we would call Hymns. This is the only element that was not part of Baroque Opera. Bach uses these very familiar Chorales to draw his listeners into the action. They have the impact of saying 'This action didn't just happen some 2,000 years ago!' It could be happening right here and right now!

Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244) Major Characters

The following are the Characters in the St. Matthew Passion:

- **The Evangelist (a tenor).** He serves as the narrator of the story. His words will always be sung in recitative and come directly from the Gospel of St. Matthew. In the performance we will focus on, it will become clear that he serves a much more critical role.
- **Jesus (a bass).** Jesus also will only sing (in recitative) his words as recorded in the Gospel of St. Matthew
- **Peter (a bass).** Peter will perform his words in recitative
- **Pontius Pilate (a bass).** Pilate also sings his words from the Gospel of St. Matthew in recitative.
- **Soprano Soloist.** She will often comment on the more 'uplifting, heaven focused' aspects of the story, with themes of forgiveness, love, and redemption.
- **Alto Soloist.** She is often given the role of the lament, focusing on the themes of our sorrow for our sinful shortcomings.
- **Tenor Soloist.** He will often be react with the themes of the pain and suffering of Jesus
- **Bass Soloist.** He will often comment on the very foundations of our faith
- **Chorus.** They will fulfill many roles. They will be the People of God. They will be the combined Priests and Elders. They will be the angry mob. It will not take long before you will see how much they reflect us as people: capable of great good, mercy, grace and tenderness; yet also capable of being angry and self-righteous (the transformation often coming within on measure of the music!)

**Johann Sebastian Bach's
St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)
Johann Sebastian Bach Biography**

Johann Sebastian Bach was born into a musical family in North Central Germany in 1685. At the age of 10 both his mother and father died within 8 months of each other. His oldest brother took him on. Bach would have been known as 'Sebastian'.

Bach grew up in post Reformation Germany. At the time there were two major 'expressions' of the reformation. There was the Lutheran faith, which believed in a rich musical component to worship. There was the Calvinist who believed in a more spare music worship. Bach (fortunately!) developed a deep Lutheran Reformation faith.

Bach was growing up in what we now call 'the Baroque' period. One of the influences was what we now call 'The Enlightenment'. Figures such as Newton, Hume, Locke and Bacon were expressing an empirical, rational, ordered way of looking at the world. Baroque music, architecture, society structure, etc., all reflect this with its emphasis on an order structure.

By the age of 15 Bach was attending a musical conservatory and was becoming very accomplished on the Organ. At that time in Germany there were only three paths a professional musician could take to make a living. There was writing secular music for a royal court. There was writing operas at some of the major cities. There was working for a city and its churches (the lines between these blurry then). Bach spent about 1/3 of his career working for a royal court and 2/3 working for the church.

In 1707, at that age of 22, Bach married Maria Barbara Bach (yes, her maiden name was Bach!) Over the next 13 years they have seven children, four who live to be adults (which was fairly normal for that time). By all accounts they had a very loving, deep relationship. During most of this time Bach worked for the royal court of Leopold, Prince of Anhalt Köthen. Since this was not a church position, many of Bach's best 'secular' works were composed during this period. Prince Leopold was himself an accomplished musician and had a deep friendship with Bach.

After the death of Maria Barbara, Bach, in 1721, Bach married Anna Magdalena Wilcke, They had thirteen children, six who lived to be adults. Like his relationship with Maria Barbara, Bach's relationship with Anna Magdalena was warm and loving.

In 1723, Bach took the position of the director of music for the churches and city of Leipzig. He would remain in that position until his death in 1750. During this time we have the great output of Bach's sacred music. For example, during his first 5 years he composed a weekly 15-20 minutes cantata to be performed at Sunday worship. This cantata based on the lectionary reading for that week.

It is interesting to note that Bach appears to have never had some moral, or spiritual 'crisis' in his life.

In 1749 Bach's health started to decline. He had eye 'surgery' by a quack doctor that resulted in an infection. He died in 1750 at the age of 65 and was buried in an unmarked grave. We mark the end of the Baroque with Bach's death.

After Bach's death, many of his manuscripts were sold as 'butcher paper' and his wife, Anna Magdalena, died ten years later, homeless.

The Episcopal Church celebrates a 'feast' day in Bach's honor on July 28 each year.

**Johann Sebastian Bach's
St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)
Recommended Recordings**

Many of you may want to purchase a copy of this recording or another to listen to or watch at home.

I can't encourage you more!

At the risk of 'excluding' some truly magnificent recordings, here is a very abbreviated list of my 'favorites'. I have included one where it is sung in English. However, I recommend that you listen to it German with these notes and translation in hand.

1. Berliner Philharmoniker
'St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)' Concert DVD
Conductor: Sir Simon Rattle
Recorded on April 11, 2010 in Berlin, Germany.
Available on the Berliner Philharmoniker web site or Apple iTunes.
This is a full version 'Concert Video' of the work, done in German with English subtitles.
The work as been 'ritualized' by director Peter Sellars.
Unfortunately there is not an audio only version.
2. Monteverdi Orchestra and Choir, with the English Baroque Soloist
'St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)' Audio Recording
Conductor: John Eliot Gardiner
Recorded September 22, 2016 at the Pisa Cathedral, Italy
Available on Apple iTunes, Amazon, and the Monteverdi Orchestra web site
On this recording most of the arias are not done 'de capo' which shortens the overall length of the recording.
3. Ex Cathedral Baroque Orchestra & Choir
'St Matthew Passion (In English)' Audio Recording
Conductor: Jeffrey Skidmore
Recorded on April 10, 2009 in Birmingham, England.
Available on Apple iTunes, Amazon and the Ex Cathedral web site.
This is the best recording I have found sung in English.

**Johann Sebastian Bach's
St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)
Miscellaneous Notes and References**

Notes:

- The translation here is NOT mine. I do not read German. I do not speak German (beyond the ability to order *another* beer: '*noch ein Bier bitte!*') I came up with this translation from multiple sources that range from the liner notes of CD's to program notes of past performances to the subtitles on this performance. When in doubt, I used the translation from the subtitles to avoid confusion. However, there are times where I found that these did not capture, in English, the true meaning of the text. In these cases, I compared other people's translations and came up with what I think express the text the best. For those fluent in German, I apologize!
- The notes after each scene are mine. They are my 'take' on what Bach was expressing, both with the text and with the music. It has been informed by probably over a hundred listening's to this work, but also by what other's have said about this work. I have tried to give credit to various ideas where credit is due, but there is little doubt that I have missed crediting some influences in my views.

References:

1. First and foremost has to be Professor Robert Greenberg. His music history and music appreciation lectures, recorded for *The Great Courses Company*, have significantly shaped my views of western music. His depth of knowledge, music history and cultural history spans from the ancient Greek 'Seikelos Epitaph' to the 21st century Finnish composer, Kaija Saariaho (look her up!)
2. Tim Smith and Ben Kammin. Their 2013 '*The Chorales of Bach's St. Matthew Passion*' have taught me much about the origins and the usage of Lutheran Chorales in this work.
3. The complete digital score of this work that I received from a long time friend at the McIntire Department of Music at University of Virginia.
4. The Aberdeen Bach Choir '*J.S. Bach St. Matthew Passion; Text, Translation and Musical Notes*' compiled by Peter Parfitt, musical director. This has been an ever-present companion as I have plumbed this work. I first came across this Choir by accident while detached to fly out of Scotland in 1982 with U.S. Navy. A group of young officers and fellow pilots were visiting Aberdeen and 'stumbled' into one of their concerts at St. Andrews Cathedral. Life changed.

**Johann Sebastian Bach's
St. Matthew Passion (BWV-244)
Musical Terms**

Aria	Singing where characters express their emotions or reflections in a more structured melodic style. Vocal duets, trios and other ensembles often occur, and choruses are used to comment on the action.
Aria de Capo	'De Capo' literally means 'to the top' Typically arias will have a form of Phrase 'A' and Phrase 'B'. An Aria de Capo will return to the Phrase A. The sequence might be 'AABA'.
Arioso	A hybrid between Recitative and Aria. It lacks the musical virtuosity of an aria, but moves beyond the simpler recitative. This is often used to 'introduce' a full aria. An arioso rarely has a 'de capo'
Basso Continuo	Often shorten to 'continuo'. This is a small group of musicians that was ubiquitous to Baroque music. It normally consisted of an instrument that could play chords (harpsichord, lute, organ), and a bass instrument (double bass, cello, bassoon)
BWV	Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis or Bach Works Catalogue. The nearly universal numbering system for J. S. Bach's compositions
Canon	A musical form, much like a 'round' (think 'Row, row, row your boat'). However often times the original 'form' (called the leader or the 'dux'), will morph and change with each variation. A popular expression of this is Pachelbel's ' <i>Canon in D minor</i> ', heard at almost every wedding since the mid 1980's
Cantata	Short to medium vocal composition (approximately 15-20 minutes) in multiple movements. Usually contains both solos and choral movements. These were composed around the liturgical readings for each week. During Bach's time at Leipzig he composed at least four annual cycles of 52 Cantatas.
Cantus Firmus	Interspersing a known melody into a new work. Originally used in Gregorian Chants where an existing and familiar tune was sung, normally by the high voice, above a new melody. Today we might call it 'sampling'
Continuo	See Basso Continuo
Contrafactum	Using an existing melody with completely new words.
Dominant	This is the 5 th note of a music scale. It creates musical 'instability' and tension. Our musical ears crave that this note 'resolves' to the tonic.
Evangelist	The 'narrator' of the Passion story. By tradition sung by a tenor. Normally only sings the words from the Gospel
French Overture	A musical style popular in the late Baroque (1700 to 1750). The music has 'dotted' rhythms ('Daaa, duh DUMM, Daaa, duh DUMM')
Fugue	A composition for multiple 'voices' (either instrumental or vocal). Each voice will play/sing the main melody of the fugue (called the subject) in a different pitch. The interplay of these voices gets more and more complex as they musically explore the subject. Bach was a master of the fugue.

Homophonic	A singular melody in use.
Libretto	Literally 'small book'. This is normally the text used for the Oratorio. The composer then sets this to music. The person who writes the libretto is called the 'Librettist'. In Bach's case, he used Christian Friedrich Henrici who wrote under the pen name of 'Picander'
Melisma	The singing of a single syllable of text over multiple notes
Obbligato	A musical line that is absolutely indispensable to work. In modern usage, it might be like trying to listen to Gun's and Roses 'Sweet Child of Mine' with the introductory guitar part. No, the guitar part is 'obbligato'!
Oratorio	A large vocal composition in multiple movements. Contains solos, recitative narrative, choral works, and orchestration. Very similar to Opera, however opera normally dealt with historical and mythological characters, where Oratorio deals with Biblical characters.
Passion	A choral work, accompanied by orchestra, centered on the final week of the life of Christ. Normally these are based on one of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) although some are hybrids. They also end with Jesus' burial and are traditional perform as part of Holy Week prior to Easter.
Polyphonic	Multiple melodies in use at the same time
Recitative	Narrative singing, normally used to tell the story. The singing is composed to imitate the inflections of human speech. Recitative Secco ('dry') Normally has minimal accompaniment, usually only the Basso Continuo. Recitative Accompagnato Accompanied by more orchestration.
Sarabande	A folk like dance in triple meter. The origins of this dance appear to have come from the south of Spain (Andalusia), combining Moorish and Spanish influences.
Tonic	The first note of a musical scale. It is the musical 'center' of scale. Musically our ears want to return, or resolve, to this note.
Turba	Literally 'crowd'. This is when the both choruses are singing together representing the either the Christian faithful or the angry crowd.

Part One

Scene One: Prelude

1. Chorus & Boys Chorus

Chorus

Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen!
Sehet! Wen? Den Bräutigam.
Seht ihn! Wie? Als wie ein Lamm!
Sehet! Was? Seht die Geduld.
Seht! Wohin? Auf unsre Schuld.
Sehet ihn aus Lieb und Huld
Holz zum Kreuze selber tragen!

Boys Chorus

O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig
Am Stamm des Kreuzes geschlachtet,
Allzeit erfunden geduldig,
Wiewohl du warest verachtet.
All Sünd hast du getragen,
Sonst müßten wir verzagen.
Holz zum Kreuze selber tragen!

Erbarm dich unser, o Jesu!

Chorus

Come, you daughters, help me grieve!
Behold! *Whom?* The Bridegroom.
Behold him! *How?* Just like a Lamb!
Behold! *What?* Behold his forbearance!
Behold! *Where?* Behold our guilt.
Behold Him, out of love and grace,
Bear the wood that forms his cross.

Boys Chorus

O Lamb of God, innocently slaughtered,
On the cross's stem,
Always found patient,
Although you were despised,
You bore all sin,
If not, we would have despaired!

Have mercy upon us, O Jesus.

Notes:

- Bach's opening piece uses both orchestras and all three Choruses.
- The words are a dynamic encapsulation of the Christian faith as expressed by the Reformation: the innocent, sinless Jesus has taken it upon himself to be the sacrifice for the sins of all mankind.
- The dirge like feel tells us that this will be a somber work of contemplation.
 - Done in the key of E minor. This key in Baroque times was the key of 'Crucifictus' or 'key of the Cross'
 - E minor, in music notation, is written with one sharp (♯). In German, the word for 'sharp' is 'kreuze', which is also the word for 'Cross'. Bach has infused this Passion with this sort of symbolism.
 - Landry Clark (from "Friday Night Lights") named his heavy metal speed band 'Crucifictorius' (with many of the bands numbers played, appropriately, in the key of E minor)
 - The time signature is 12/8 time giving both a 'triple meter and a double meter' feel
 - The words sung by the Chorus are by Christian Friedrich Henrici (1700-1764) who wrote under the pen name of 'Picander'. He was Bach's 'go-to' librettist. The music was scored by Bach
- Soaring over the top, the Boy's Choir is singing the Lutheran Chorale 'O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig' ('O Lamb of God without guilt')
 - This Chorale was written in 1531 by Nicolaus Decius (1485-1541). Decius

was a monk who worked with Martin Luther.

- This Chorale, as with all the Chorales in the Passion would have been included in the hymnal used by Bach's Leipzig church. The hymnal was called "*Geistreicher Lieder-Schatz, oder Leipziger Gesang-Buch*" ("*Treasury of Spiritual Songs: the Leipzig Hymn Book*")
- This Chorale was frequently used after communion or on Palm Sunday and is a reformation version of the Catholic '*Agnes Dei*' ('*Lamb of God*')
- The style of two intertwined works is called '*Cantus Firmus*' It was originally used when a new Gregorian Chant was composed. An existing 'well known' chant would be played over top of the new one, to encourage the singers to learn the new one.
- In the first performance in 1727, the Boy's Chorale part was played by the Organ. That year appears to have been a brutal year for the flu, so many of the boys might not have been available.
- 1960 example of '*Cantus Firmus*' might be '*Scarborough Fair/Canticle*' by Simon & Garfunkel. Today we might call it 'sampling'.

Scene Two: Jesus Predicts His Crucifixion

2. Recitative - Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Da Jesus diese Rede volendet hatte,
sprach er zu seinen Jüngern:

Jesus

*Ihr wisset, daß nach zweien Tagen
Ostern wird, und des Menschen Sohn
wird überantwortet werden, daß er
gekreuziget werde.*

Evangelist

When Jesus had finished speaking,
He said to his disciples:

Jesus

*You know that in two days it will be
Passover, and the Son of Man will be
handed over to be crucified*

3. Chorale

Herzliebster Jesu,
Was hast du verbrochen,
Daß man ein solch scharf Urteil hat
gesprochen?
Was ist die Schuld?
In was für Missetaten bist du geraten?

Beloved Jesus,
What wrong have you done,
That they have pronounced so harsh a
sentence upon you?
Of what are you guilty?
What misdeeds have you committed?

Notes:

- In #2 we are introduced to ‘Recitative’
 - Recitative is used for the narration and is a manner of singing that replicates the style of human speech. There are two forms of Recitative in this work:
 - Recitative Secco (dry recitative) is used for the Evangelist. In Baroque times he was always a tenor. The Evangelist is accompanied by just the continuo. Normally the Evangelist is a dispassionate ‘reporter’ of the events (with some notable exceptions). All of the words in the Recitatives are taken from Martin Luther’s German Translation of the Bible.
 - Recitative Accompagnato (accompanied by orchestra) is used for Jesus. Jesus will have 22 ‘speaking parts’ in this Passion. Whenever Jesus speaks the strings play a shimmering ‘halo’ of sound, anointing him as the Son of God (with *ONE* very notable exception!)
- In #3 a stunned and bewildered Chorus, here representing all of the faithful, wonder aloud, ‘*Was ist die Schuld?*’ (‘*Of what are you guilty?*’) Bach will return to this theme of Jesus’ sinlessness multiple times.
 - The Chorale words are by Johann Heermann (1585-1657). The words are based on a section of ‘*The Meditation’s of St. Augustine*’ written by an 11th Century Benedictine Monk, John of Fécamp (died 1079).
 - The melody was written by Johann Crüger (1598-1662)
 - This Chorale will return two more times in the Passion as #25 and #55.
 - This is Hymn #158 in the Episcopal Hymnal of 1982

Scene Three: The High Priest Conspire to Kill Jesus

4. Recitative – Evangelist

Evangelist

Da versammelten sich die Hohenpriester
und Schriftgelehrten und
die Ältesten im Volk in dem Palast des
Hohenpriesters, der da hieß Kaiphas,
und hielten Rat, wie sie Jesum mit Listen
griffen und töteten.
Sie sprachen aber:

Evangelist

Then the High Priests and Scribes
And the elders of the people assembled
In the palace of the High Priest, who was
called Caiaphas, and considered ways of
seizing Jesus by stealth and killing him

But they said:

5. Chorus

Ja nicht auf das Fest, auf daß nicht ein
Aufruhr werde im Volk.

Yes, but not at the feast, otherwise there
may be an uprising among the people.

Notes:

- In #5 for the first time we see the Chorus used in their ‘angry side’. They are the Priest and Elders, all agreeing that Jesus must die, but they want to keep it ‘off the radar’.
 - Note the ‘style’ of the orchestral music with its disjointed and angry nature. The vocals, while just as angry, are sung essential in unison, being of one mind.

Scene Four: Jesus' Anointing at Bethany

6. Recitative – Evangelist

Evangelist

Da nun Jesus war zu Bethanien, im Hause Simonis des Aussätzigen, trat zu ihm ein Weib, die hatte ein Glas mit köstlichem Wasser und goß es auf sein Haupt, da er zu Tische saß. Da das seine Jünger sahen wurden sie unwillig und sprachen:

7. Chorus

Wozu dienet dieser Unrat?
Dieses Wasser hätte mögen teuer verkauft und den Armen gegeben werden!

8. Recitative - Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Da das Jesus merket, sprach er zu ihnen:

Jesus

*Was bekümmert ihr das Weib?
Sie hat ein gut Werk an mir getan.
Ihr habet allezeit Armen bei euch, mich
aber habt ihr nicht allezeit.*

*Daß sie dies Wasser hat auf meinen Leib
gegossen, hat sie getan, daß man mich
begraben wird. Wahrlich, ich sage euch:
Wo dies Evangelium geprediget wird in
der ganzen Welt, da wird man auch
sagen zu ihrem Gedächtnis, was sie
getan hat.*

9. Arioso – Alto

Du lieber Heiland du,
Wenn deine Jünger töricht streiten,
Daß dieses fromme Weib
Mit Salben deinen Leib
Zum Grabe will bereiten,
So lasse mir inzwischen zu,
Von meiner Augen Tränenflüssen
Ein Wasser auf dein Haupt zu gießen!

Evangelist

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to see him who had a jar of precious ointment, which she poured over his head as he sat at the table. But when his disciples saw this, they grew indignant and said:

What is the point of such waste?
This ointment could have fetched a high price and been given to the poor!

Evangelist

But when Jesus saw this, he said to them:

Jesus

*Why trouble this woman?
She has done me a good deed.
You will always have the poor people
among you, but you will not always have
me.
By pouring this ointment on my body,
she has prepared me for burial. Truly I
say to you: wherever this gospel is
preached throughout the whole world,
people will remember her and what she
has done.*

You, dear Savior,
When your disciples foolish quarrel,
Because this devout woman
Would anoint your body
And prepare it for burial
Allow me meanwhile
With floods of tears in my eyes,
To pour water on your head.

10. Aria – Alto

Buß und Reu

Knirscht das Sündenherz entzwei,

Daß, die Tropfen meiner Zähren

Angenehme Spezerei,

Treuer Jesu, dir geb

Guilt and pain

Break the sinful heart in twain,

So, the teardrops of my weeping

A most soothing precious balm,

Beloved Jesus, I offer to you.

Notes:

- In #7, the choir, representing the self-righteous disciples, are aghast at the waste.
 - Which of us have not said the same? Why has the (church, city, business, etc.) spent soooo much money on (fill in the blank), when there are so many other needs around?
 - The musical texture is almost identical to the Priest and Elders (in #5), disjoined and agitated.
 - However, here the singing is fugal in nature, as if the disciples are searching out a ‘peer group leader’ to take their cue from. By the end however the disciples are in agreement and join in unison that this money should have been ‘*Armen gegeben warden!*’ (‘*given to the poor!*’).
 - Here musically, Bach is painting a picture that ALL people can be self-righteous and capable of a disjoined and agitate life, from the ‘evil people’ (the Priests and Elders) to the ‘good people’ (the very people closest to Jesus.)
- Note in #8 when Jesus sings the phrase ‘*bergaben wird*’ (‘*my burial*’), how the music is moving downward, as if into the earth. This musical word painting will reappear through out the work.
- Note in #9 the descending notes of the flutes, representing the falling tears of the woman or the ointment dripping off of Jesus’ head.
- With #10 we arrive at our first ‘Aria’ in the work
 - Arias were there to suspend the action of the piece and allow us to reflect or respond to the action.
 - Similar to a soliquey in a Shakespeare play.
 - For Bach, the main characters (Jesus, Evangelist, Peter, Judas, etc.) always sing words directly from the Gospels. They do not sing Arias.
 - The arias are there to represent the people of God and the multitudes of their responses: deep faith; remorse; doubt; anger.
- The Alto’s arias in this work are most often a form of lament and penitence, as if she is someone who is VERY much aware of their sin; very much aware of how powerless they are to control their sinful nature; and *very* aware they are in need of grace and forgiveness.

Scene Five: Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

11. Recitative - Evangelist and Judas

Evangelist

Da ging hin der Zwölfen einer, mit
Namen Judas Ischarioth, zu den
Hohenpriestern und sprach:

Judas

Was wollt ihr mir geben? Ich will ihn
euch verraten.

Evangelist

Und sie boten ihm dreißig Silberlinge.
Und von dem an suchte er Gelegenheit,
daß er ihn verriete.

Evangelist

Then one of the twelve, by the name of
Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests
and said:

Judas

What will you give me to betray him to
you?

Evangelist

And they offered him thirty pieces of
silver. And from then on he sought ways
of betraying him.

12. Aria – Soprano

Blute nur, du liebes Herz!
Ach! Ein Kind, das du erzogen,
Das an deiner Brust gesogen,
Droht den Pfleger zu ermorder,
Denn es ist zur Schlange worden.

Bleed on, dear heart.
Ah, a child that you raised,
That sucked at your breast,
Threatens to murder its guardian,
For it has become a serpent.

Notes:

- Note in #11 that when Judas sings the word ‘*berraten*’ (‘*betray*’), Bach has scored this with a high note in the key of C# Major. This key has more ‘sharps’ than any other key. In the Baroque, this key was used to connote betrayal, capture, treason or lies.
- In #12, whom is this aria being sung about?
 - How would *you* feel if you were the mother of Judas?
 - Notice the musical picture that is being painted: the regular beating of the heart, but the undulating nature as if it were a snake slithering through the grass.
 - Note that when she gets to the word ‘*Schlange*’ (‘*serpent*’), that the tune is done in an undulating fashion (known as ‘*melisma*’) that paints a music picture of a snake.
 - This piece musically makes use of multiple augmented 4ths. This note is at the mid-point of a scale and was, in Bach’s time, known as ‘*the devil in music*’. It was used to connote sinister or evil actions or desires. This augmented 4th is a mainstay of Rock & Roll, particularly in its early years. In the late 1950’s many ‘Bible Belt’ preachers railed against this new form of music as ‘*the devil’s music!*’. Somethings never really change
 - One of the most common words in this Passion is ‘*Blute*’ (‘*Blood*’)

Scene Six: The Last Supper

13. Recitative - Evangelist

Evangelist

Aber am ersten Tage der süßen Brot traten die Jünger zu Jesu und sprachen zu ihm:

14. Chorus

Wo willst du, daß wir dir bereiten, das Osterlamm zu essen?

15. Recitative - Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Er sprach:

Jesus

Gehet hin in die Stadt zu einem und sprecht zu ihm:

Der Meister laßt dir sagen: Meine Zeit ist hier, ich will bei dir die Ostern halten mit meinen Jüngern.

Evangelist

Und die Jünger taten, wie ihnen Jesus befohlen hatte, und bereiteten das Osterlamm. Und am Abend setzte er sich zu Tische mit den Zwölfen. Und da sie aßen, sprach er:

Jesus

Wahrlich, ich sage euch: Einer unter euch wird mich verraten.

Evangelist

Und sie wurden sehr betrübt und huben an, ein jeglicher unter ihnen, und sagten zu ihm:

Chorus

Herr, bin ich's?

16. Chorale

Ich bin's! Ich sollte büßen,
An Händen und an Füßen
Gebunden in der Höll.
Die Geißeln und die Banden
Und was du ausgestanden,
Das hat verdienet meine Seel.

Evangelist

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, the disciples went to Jesus and said to him:

Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?

Evangelist

He said:

Jesus

Go into the city to a certain man and say to him:

The Master says, my time has come. I want to keep the Passover at your house with my disciples

Evangelist

And the disciples did as Jesus had asked them, and prepared a Passover meal. And that evening he sat down to table with the twelve. And while they were eating, he said:

Jesus

Truly, I say to you: one of you will betray me.

Evangelist

And they were deeply troubled by this and each began to say to him:

Chorus

Lord, is it I?

It is I! I who should atone,
My hands and feet
Bound in Hell.
The scourges and the shackles,
And all that you have endured,
All this my soul has deserved.

17. Recitative - Evangelist, Jesus, and Judas

Evangelist

Er antwortete und sprach:

Jesus

Der mit der Hand mit mir in die Schüssel tauchet, der wird mich verraten. Des Menschen Sohn gehet zwar dahin, wie von ihm. Geschrieben stehet; doch wehe dem Menschen, durch welchen des Menschen Sohn verraten wird! Es wäre ihm besser, daß derselbige Mensch noch nie geboren wäre.

Evangelist

Da antwortete Judas, der ihn verriet, und sprach:

Judas

Bin ich's, Rabbi?

Evangelist

Er sprach zu ihm:

Jesus

Du sagest's.

Evangelist

Da sie aber aßen, nahm Jesus das Brot, dankete und brach's und gab's den Jüngern und sprach:

Jesus

Nehmet, esset, das ist mein Leib.

Evangelist

Und er nahm den Kelch und dankete, gab ihnen den und sprach:

Jesus

Trinket alle daraus; das ist mein Blut des neuen Testaments, welches vergossen wird für viele zur Vergebung der Sünden.

Ich sage euch: Ich werde von nun an nicht mehr von diesem Gewächs des Weinstocks trinken bis an den Tag, da ich's neu trinken werde mit euch in meines Vaters Reich.

Evangelist

He answered and said:

Jesus

He who dips his hand in the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man shall die, as it is written of him. But woe to the man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would be better if that man had never been born.

Evangelist

Then answered Judas, who betrayed him, and said:

Judas

Is it I, Rabbi?

Evangelist

He said to him:

Jesus

You said it yourself.

Evangelist

Now while they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and handed it to the disciples, saying:

Jesus

Take, eat, this is my Body.

Evangelist

And he took the cup and gave thanks, he handed it to them, saying:

Jesus

Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many in order that their sins many be forgiven.

I say to you: I shall drink no more of this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's Kingdom.

18. Arioso – Soprano

Wiewohl mein Herz in Tränen
schwimmt,
Daß Jesus von mir Abschied nimmt,
So macht mich doch sein Testament
erfreut.
Sein Fleisch und Blut, o Kostbarkeit,
Vermacht er mir in meine Hände.
Wie er es auf der Welt mit denen Seinen
Nicht böse können meinen,
So liebt er sie bis an das Ende.

Although my heart is swimming with
tears
Because Jesus is leaving me,
His testament is yet a source of joy to
me.
His flesh and blood, O precious gift,
He bequeaths into my hands.
Just as he could think no ill
Of his people here on earth
So he loves them to the end.

19. Aria – Soprano

Ich will dir mein Herze schenken,
Senke dich, mein Heil, hinein!
Ich will mich in dir versenken;
Ist dir gleich die Welt zu klein,
Ei, so sollst du mir allein
Mehr als Welt und Himmel sein.

I will give my heart to you;
Sink in it, O my Savior
I will submerge myself in you.
And if the world is too small for you,
Ah, for me alone you shall be more than
earth and heaven.

Notes:

- Note in #14 how this simple question becomes musical confusion. Like a modern family when mom asks the two kids and dad ‘are you ready to leave? Confusion reigns! My family calls this ‘The Accordion’
- Notice in #15 how after Jesus proclaims ‘*Einer unter euch wird mich verraten*’ (‘one of you will betray me’) that the key drops to a more ominous minor
- It may be hard to hear and count, but when the Chorus asks ‘*Herr, bin ich’s?*’ (‘Lord, is it I?’) it is repeat 11 times! Once for each disciple, minus Judas. This is another example of Bach’s use of musical symbolism.
- In #16, the Chorus immediately answers their own question, ‘*Lord, is it I?*’, by proclaiming ‘*Ich bin’s!*’ (‘It is I!’), using a familiar Chorale that would again draw Bach’s listener’s into the action.
 - This Chorale was composed by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) in 1647.
 - The melody comes from a 15th Century Renaissance song by Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517) entitled ‘*Innsbruck, I Must Leave You*’ (a 16th Century version of the American tune ‘*Shenandoah*’). This using a secular melody with sacred words was a common practice and is known as ‘*Contrafactum*’ (Latin for ‘*ripping off*’ – just kidding!)
 - Bach uses the Chorus, now acting as sinful people in need of grace. They stand before Jesus and confess, ‘*Yes, I too would betray you!*’
 - This Chorale will return in #44 later in the work, used in a similar manner.
- In #17 we celebrate the first Eucharist. Note how much grace Jesus extends to Judas, as he is part of the Eucharist. Bach is letting us know that there is no one beyond the grace of Jesus.
- Notice in #18 how the oboes intertwine with each other, emphasizing the phrase ‘*Tränen schwimmt*’ (‘swimming with tears’)

- In this aria, Bach brings into focus here the three of the major themes of this Passion: Jesus' love for mankind; Jesus' physical shedding of blood for our sins; our thankfulness for what he has done for us.
- In #19 Bach moves us from the somber mood (at least temporarily) of the Last Supper. He gives us light and airy dance-like number.
 - The theme of gratitude in #18 is continued to be express by the Soprano.
 - The final phrase resonates the Reformation theme that Jesus' grace is all that is needed.

Scene Seven: The Garden of Gethsemane

20. Recitative - Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Und da sie den Lobgesang gesprochen hatten, gingen sie hinaus an den Ölberg. Da sprach Jesus zu ihnen:

Jesus

In dieser Nacht werdet ihr euch alle ärgern an mir. Denn es steht geschrieben: Ich werde den Hirten schlagen, und die Schafe der Herde werden sich zerstreuen. Wenn ich aber auferstehe, will ich vor euch hingehen in Galiläam.

Evangelist

And when they had sung the hymn They went out to the Mount of Olives There Jesus said to them:

Jesus

In this night you will all have cause to be angry with me. For it is written that you shall strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered. But when I rise again, I shall go before you to Galilee

21. Chorale

Erkenne mich, mein Hüter,
Mein Hirte, nimm mich an!
Von dir, Quell aller Güter,
Ist mir viel Guts getan.
Dein Mund hat mich gelabet
Mit Milch und süßer Kost,
Dein Geist hat mich begabet
Mit mancher Himmelslust.

Acknowledge me, my keeper,
My shepherd, grant me shelter!
From you, the source of all good things
I have received much that is good.
Your mouth has refreshed me,
With milk and honey,
Your Spirit has given me
Many of heaven's delights

22. Recitative - Evangelist, Peter, and Jesus

Evangelist

Petrus aber antwortete und sprach zu ihm:

Peter

Wenn sie auch alle sich an dir ärgerten, so will ich doch mich nimmermehr ärgern.

Evangelist

Jesus sprach zu ihm:

Jesus

Wahrlich, ich sage dir: In dieser Nacht, ehe der Hahn krähet, wirst du mich dreimal verleugnen.

Evangelist

Petrus sprach zu ihm:

Peter

Und wenn ich mit dir sterben müßte, so will ich dich nicht verleugnen.

Evangelist

Desgleichen sagten auch alle Jünger.

Evangelist

But Peter answered and said to him.

Peter

Even though the others may be angry with you, I shall never be angry.

Evangelist

Jesus said to him:

Jesus

Truly, I say to you: this very night, before the cockcrows, you will deny me three times.

Evangelist

Peter said to him:

Peter

Even if I have to die with you, I shall not deny you.

Evangelist

All the disciples said the same

23. Chorale

Ich will hier bei dir stehen;
Verachte mich doch nicht!
Von dir will ich nicht gehen,
Wenn dir dein Herze bricht.
Wenn dein Herz wird erblassen
Im letzten Todesstoß,
Alsdenn will ich dich fassen
In meinen Arm und Schoß.

I mean to stand beside you here;
Do not despise me for it!
I shall not leave you
Even if your heart breaks.
When your heart stops beating
In the last throes of death,
Then I shall hold you,
In my arms and lap.

24. Recitative – Evangelist and Jesus
Evangelist

Da kam Jesus mit ihnen zu einem Hofe,
der hieß Gethsemane, und sprach zu
seinen Jüngern:

Jesus

*Setzet euch hie, bis daß ich dort hingehe
und bete.*

Evangelist

Und nahm zu sich Petrum und die zween
Söhne Zebedäi und fing an zu trauern
und zu zagen. Da sprach Jesus zu ihnen:

Jesus

*Meine Seele ist betrübt bis an den Tod,
bleibet hie und wachet mit mir.*

Evangelist

Then came Jesus with them to a garden,
called Gethsemane, and said to his
disciples:

Jesus

Sit here while I go over there and pray

Evangelist

And he took with him Peter and the two
sons of Zebedee, and began to grieve
and despair. Then said Jesus to them:

Jesus

*My heart is heavy, even unto death. Stay
here and keep watch with me.*

25. Arioso - Tenor and Chorus

Tenor

O Schmerz!
Hier zittert das gequälte Herz;
Wie sinkt es hin, wie bleicht sein
Angesicht!

Chorus

Was ist die Ursach aller solcher Plagen?

Tenor

Der Richter führt ihn vor Gericht.
Da ist kein Trost, kein Helfer nicht.

Chorus

Ach! Meine Sünden habaen dicgh
geschlagen;

Tenor

Er leidet alle Höllenqualen,
Er soll vor fremden Raub bezahlen.

Chorus

Ich, ach Herr Jesu, habe dies
verschuldet, was du erduldet.

Tenor

Ach, könnte meine Liebe dir,
Mein Heil, dein Zittern und dein Zagen
Vermindern oder helfen tragen,
Wie gerne blieb ich hier!

26. Aria - Tenor & Chorus

Tenor

Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen,

Chorus

So schlafen unsre Sünden ein.

Tenor

Meinen Tod Bübet seine Seelennot;
Sein Trauren machet mich voll Freuden.

Chorus

Drum muß uns sein verdienstlich Leiden
Recht bitter und doch süße sein.

Tenor

O pain!
Here trembles the tormented heart;
How it sinks, how his face turns pale!

Chorus

What is the cause of these great
torments?

Tenor

The judge leads him before the tribunal
There is no comfort, no one to help him.

Chorus

Alas, my sins, have struck you down.

Tenor

He suffers all the torment of hell.
He must pay for other's depredations

Chorus

Alas, Lord Jesus, it is I who have caused
your suffering

Tenor

Ah, if only my love, my salvation
Could reduce or help you bear
Your trembling and despair
How gladly I would remain here

Tenor

I mean to keep watch with Jesus

Chorus

Then our sins shall fall asleep.

Tenor

His soul's great torment atones for my
death. His grief will bring me joy

Chorus

And so his suffering, which profits us
Must be most bitter, yet sweet to us.

Notes:

- Note in #20 as they ‘climb’ Mount Olives that the cello of the continuo does a 13 note rising scale, painting a musical picture of the climb.
 - As Jesus sings ‘*der Herde werden sich zerstreuen*’ (‘*the flock shall be scattered*’) the violins do a ‘run’ up a scale as if running away and then they quickly move back down as if hiding. We will see a similar ‘motif’ at the end of Part One.
- In #21 we come to the Chorale ‘*O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*’. This is universally known as the ‘*Passion Choral*’.
 - This Chorale is known in English speaking churches as “*O Sacred Head Sore Wounded*” (Hymn 168 in the Episcopal Hymnal of 1982)
 - A more literal translation would be ‘*O Head, full of blood and wounds,*’
 - Bach will use this Chorale five times in the Passion. Each time he will use a different stanza (this version is the 5th stanza). He will also use different keys and/or harmonizations.
 - In this version Bach, has a very simple, almost innocent harmonization, where the music always properly resolves. This musically echoes the disciples resolve that they ‘*Von dir will ich nicht gehen*’ (‘*shall not leave you*’)
 - Later, we will hear versions where Bach will leave us musically unsure and unresolved, reflecting how most lives are often lived.
 - His choice of stanza #5 reminds that God will not only sustain us, but will be our delight.
 - The Chorale was written by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) in 1656. He combined a secular tune with a German translation of Latin poem.
 - The Latin poem was written in the 11th Century by a French Benedictine Abbot, Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1143). His poem meditates on the various parts of Christ’s body hanging on the cross, moving from his feet, his knees, his hands, his pierced side, his breast, his heart and finally his head (from which the Chorale derives its name.) Bernard of Clairvaux was Dante Alighieri’s (1265-1321) final guide in Dante’s ‘*Divine Comedy*’. Bernard also played a role in Dan Brown’s 2013 novel ‘*Inferno*’
 - The tune to this Chorale was a secular love song entitled ‘*My Mind’s Confused Within Me*’ written around 1590 by Hans Leo Haßler (1564-1612). Professor George Faithful of Dominican University of California has described this song as “a 16th Century *All Shook Up!*” His translation reads:

*My mind’s confused within me,
Made thus by a tender gal.
I am utterly astray.
My heart hurts badly.
I have no rest both night and day.
I ever lament.
I keep on sighing, crying,
In sorrow almost spent.*

- Paul Simon used this melody for his 1973 song ‘American Tune’ This was in the midst of Paul Simon’s ‘bad hair/mustache’ stage.
- Note in #22 that the second time that Peter proclaims that he will not deny Jesus, Bach has moved the music up a whole step to a higher key, emphasizing Peter’s determination that he will stand true (which we know, will come crashing down)
- In #23 Bach almost immediately returns to the ‘*Passion Choral*’. This time the Chorus is acting not only as the disciples, but all of God’s people.
 - Bach uses the same harmonization as in #21, but he has dropped it down to a lower key, giving it a more solemn feel.
 - The Chorus sings the first four lines forte (strong) as if with conviction. ‘*I will NEVER leave you!*’ But Bach, knowing the human condition, has the Chorus sing quietly the end of the Chorale, knowing that, in the end, we will all be like Peter and deny and walk away from Jesus.
 - The illusions in the last line to Michelangelo’s *Pietà* in St. Peter’s Basilica are vivid.
- Note in #24 that the dispassionate Evangelist is a thing of the past. From here to the end of Part One he will become more and more emotional. As an example, this is the first time Bach writes in a melisma for the Evangelist to sing. Notice when he sings ‘*fing an zu trauern und zu zagen*’ (‘*began to grieve and despair*’) how his vocals are filled with a descending drama.
- In #25 Bach continues to use soloist (this time a tenor) in dialog with the Chorus.
 - Here the Tenor is boldly stating Jesus’ pain, torment, and suffering.
 - Meanwhile the Chorus is singing from the Chorale first introduced as #3. Bach once again uses a familiar Chorale to ‘draw’ his listeners into the scene. The Chorus sings a quite confession, responding with the more personal ‘*It is MY sins that have struck you down.*’
 - Bach is using the Tenor to teach the theology of Jesus’ suffering and the Chorus to allow us to reflect on our personal role in that suffering. This reinforces one of Bach’s universal themes in this Passion: Jesus suffers for the sake of OUR sins.
 - The allusion of ‘he suffers all the torment of hell’ takes us directly to the Apostle’s Creed, which at the time was translated ‘*he descended to hell*’. Today we make it more palatable, saying ‘*he descended to the dead*’
- In #26, as you have probably already noted, Bach likes to pair up instruments with vocal arias. Here he brings in the Oboe, which acts like the cry of night watchman, keeping watch at the gate of the city.
 - The Tenor’s words bring us back to a major tenant of Bach’s Lutheran reformed faith: Stay with Jesus. Profess him. Jesus forgives our sins.
 - Notice how each time the Tenor sings ‘*Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen,*’ (‘*I mean to keep watch with Jesus*’), he has more and more conviction. This is much like we might be at the beginning of Lent; where we are convince that we WILL keep a holy Lent.
 - The Chorus, echoing the Tenor, starts out as a hushed prayer of hope (‘if we do keep watch, our sins will then fall asleep, never to be seen again’). They move to a bolder and bolder proclamation of this, as if *willing* this to happen through their own self-efforts.

- Bach at the end, returns to the more hesitant singing of the beginning of the aria, the proclamation now more a question: 'I mean to keep watch with Jesus?' with the Chorus echoing again. But Bach's implications are clear: We WILL fall asleep; We WILL be sinful; We NEVER are without the need of the Cross of Good Friday.

Scene Eight: Jesus' Agony, Arrest and the Scattering

27. Recitative - Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Und ging hin ein wenig, fiel nieder auf
sein Angesicht und betete und sprach:

Jesus

*Mein Vater, ist's möglich, so gehe dieser
Kelch von mir; doch nicht wie ich will,
sondern wie du willst.*

Evangelist

He went a little further away, and falling
to the ground on his face, prayed and
said:

Jesus

*My Father, if possible, let this cup pass
from me; not as I want it to, but as you
want it to*

28. Arioso – Bass

Der Heiland fällt vor seinem Vater
nieder;

Dadurch erhebt er sich und alle
Von unserm Falle
Hinauf zu Gottes Gnade wieder.

Er ist bereit,
Den Kelch, des Todes Bitterkeit
Zu trinken,
In welchen Sünden dieser Welt
Gegossen sind und häßlich stinken,
Weil es dem lieben Gott gefällt.

Our Savior falls down before his father;

And in this way he raises me up,
together with all who have fallen
Restoring us to God's grace.

He is ready,
To drink the cup, the bitterness of death
The cup into which the sins of this world
have been poured, with their
Stinking stench,
Because it pleases our dear Lord

29. Aria – Bass

Gerne will ich mich bequemen,
Kreuz und Becher anzunehmen,
Trink ich doch dem Heiland nach.
Denn sein Mund,
Der mit Milch und Honig fließet,
Hat den Grund
Und des Leidens herbe Schmach
Durch den ersten Trunk versüßet.

I will gladly submit myself
To take up cross and cup,
To drink as my Savior did.
For his mouth,
Which flows with milk and honey,
Has made the cause
And the bitter shame of suffering
Sweet through his first drink.

30. Recitative. Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Und er kam zu seinen Jüngern und fand sie schlafend und sprach zu ihnen

Jesus

Könnet ihr denn nicht eine Stunde mit mir wachen? Wachtet und betet, daß ihr nicht in Anfechtung fallet! Der Geist ist willig, aber das Fleisch ist schwach.

Evangelist

Zum andernmal ging er hin, betete und sprach:

Jesus

Mein Vater, ist's nicht möglich, daß dieser Kelch von mir gehe, ich trinke ihn denn, so geschehe dein Wille.

31. Chorale

Was mein Gott will, das g'scheh allzeit,

Sein Will, der ist der beste,
Zu helfen den' er ist bereit,
Die an ihn gläuben feste.
Er hilft aus Not, der fromme Gott,

Und züchtigt mit Maßen.
Wer Gott vertraut, fest auf ihn baut,
Den will er nicht verlassen.

Evangelist

And he came to his disciples and found them asleep and said unto them:

Jesus

Could you not watch with me for an hour? Keep watch and pray that you do not fall into temptation! The spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak.

Evangelist

He went away again, and prayed saying:

Jesus

My Father, if it is not possible, for this cup to pass from me, unless I drink from it, then may your will be done.

May God's will be done, now and always
His will, it is the best,
He is ready to help those
Who steadfastly believe in him.
He helps us in time of need, this God of goodness,
And chastises us in moderation.
He who trusts in God and relies on him,
Will not be abandoned.

32. Recitative – Evangelist, Jesus, and Judas

Evangelist

Und er kam und fand sie aber schlafend,
und ihre Augen waren
voll Schlafs. Und er ließ sie und ging
abermal hin und betete zum
drittenmal und redete dieselbigen Worte.
Da kam er zu seinen Jüngern und sprach
zu ihnen:

Jesus

*Ah! wollt ihr nun schlafen und ruhen?
Siehe, die Stunde ist hie, daß des
Menschen Sohn in der Sünder Hände
überantwortet wird.*

*Stehet auf, lasset uns gehen; siehe, er ist
da, der mich verrät.*

Evangelist

Und als er noch redete, siehe, da kam
Judas, der Zwölfen einer, und
mit ihm eine große Schar mit Schwertern
und mit Stangen von den
Hohenpriestern und Ältesten des Volks.
Und der Verräter hatte
ihnen ein Zeichen gegeben und gesagt:
“Welchen ich küssen
werde, der ists, den greifet!” Und alsbald
trat er zu Jesu und sprach:

Judas

Gegrüßet seist du, Rabbi!

Evangelist

Und küssete ihn.

Jesus aber sprach zu ihm:

Jesus

Mein Freund, warum bist du kommen?

Evangelist

Da traten sie hinzu und legten die Hände
an Jesum und griffen ihn.

Evangelist

And he came back again and found them
asleep, and their eyes were heavy with
sleep. And he left them and went away
again and prayed for a third time
speaking the same words as before.
Then he came back to his disciples and
said to them:

Jesus

*Ah! do you prefer sleep and rest?
See the hour is at hand, when the Son of
Man will be handed over to sinners.*

*Get up, let us go; look, here is the man
who has come to betray me.*

Evangelist

And while he was still speaking, behold,
Judas, one of the twelve came, and with
him came a large crowd armed with
swords and staves, and made up of the
chief priests and the elders of the people.
And the traitor had given them a sign,
saying:

“The man who I kiss is the one you
should seize!” And he went straight up
to Jesus and said:

Judas

Greetings Rabbi!

Evangelist

And he kissed him.

But Jesus said to him:

Jesus

My friend, why have you come?

Evangelist

Then came and laid hands on Jesus and
seized him.

33. Duet. Soprano, Alto, and Chorus

Duet

So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen.

Chorus

Laßt ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!

Duet

Mond und Licht

Ist vor Schmerzen untergangen,

Weil mein Jesus ist gefangen.

Chorus

Laßt ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!

Duet

Sie führen ihn, er ist gebunden.

Chorus

Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken
verschwunden?

Eröffne den feurigen Abgrund, o Hölle,
Zertrümmre, verderbe, verschlinge,
zerschelle

Mit plötzlicher Wut

Den falschen Verräter, das mörderische
Blut!

Duet

So my Jesus is now is captured.

Chorus

Leave him, stop, do not bind him!

Duet

Moon and light

Have sunk through pain,

Because my Jesus is captured.

Chorus

Leave him, stop, do not bind him!

Duet

They lead him away, he is bound.

Chorus

Have Lightning and thunder vanished in
the clouds?

Open your fiery abyss, O hell;

Destroy, ruin and swallow up

With sudden anger

The false betrayer, the murderous blood!

34. Recitative. Evangelist and Jesus

Evangelist

Und siehe, einer aus denen, die mit Jesu waren, reckete die Hand aus und schlug des Hohenpriesters Knecht und hieb ihm ein Ohr ab. Da sprach Jesus zu ihm:

Jesus

Stecke dein Schwert an seinen Ort; denn wer das Schwert nimmt, der soll durchs Schwert umkommen. Oder meinst du, daß ich nicht könnte meinen Vater bitten, daß er mir zuschickte mehr den zwölf Legion Engel? Wie würde aber die Schrift erfüllet? Es muß also gehen.

Evangelist

Zu der Stund sprach Jesus zu den Scharen:

Jesus

Ihr seid ausgegangen als zu einem Mörder, mit Schwerten und mit Stangen, mich zu fahen; bin ich doch täglich bei euch gesessen und habe gelehret im Tempel, und ihr habt mich nicht gegriffen. Aber das ist alles geschehen, daß erfüllet würden die Schriften der Propheten.

Evangelist

Da verließen ihn alle Jünger und flohen.

35. Chorale

O Mensch, beweine dein Sünde groß,
Darum Christus seins Vaters Schoß
Äußert und kam auf Erden;
Von einer Jungfrau rein und zart
Für uns er hie geboren ward,
Er wollt der Mittler werden.
Den Toten er das Leben gab
Und legt darbei all Krankheit ab,
Bis sich die Zeit herdrange,
Daß er für uns geopfert würd,
Trüg unsrer Sünden schwere Bürd
Wohl an dem Kreuze lange.

Evangelist

And behold, one of them who with Jesus stretch out his hand and struck the High Priest's servant cutting off his ear. Then spoke Jesus to him:

Jesus

Put back your sword; for all who take the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I could not ask by Father to send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how, then, would the Scriptures come true? So it must be.

Evangelist

At the same time Jesus said to the crowds:

Jesus

You have come to arrest me with swords and staves as though I was a common murderer, although I sat in the Temple each day, teaching, and you did not seize me. But this has all happened so that the Scriptures of the prophets would come true

Evangelist

Then all of the disciples abandoned him and fled.

O man, lament your great sin,
It was for this, that Christ went forth
from his Father's bosom
And came down to earth
Of a Virgin pure and tender
He was born here for us,
He wanted to be our intercessor
He gave life to the dead
And conquered all sickness
Until the time came
That he would be sacrificed for us,
And bear our sins heavy burden
On the cross itself.

Notes:

- Note in #27 that at the end of Jesus' recitative, he ends on the unresolved dominant note, leaving his question musically un-answered.
 - Here there is no ambiguity in what the Good Friday message is: our sins are a '*häßlich stinken*' ('*stinking stench*') that has been poured into a cup that Jesus gladly will drink to restore us to God's grace.
 - Note musically that the orchestra is playing falling scales, representing Jesus prostrate on the ground – with one major exception. That is when the soloist sings '*Hinauf zu Gottes Gnade wieder.*' ('*restoring us to God's grace.*'). Here the scale moves upward toward heaven.
- In #29 Bach returns to another theme of his deep Reformation faith: we will all have to take up our own 'cross and cup'. No one is immune from suffering.
- In #30 we have Jesus' second appeal to God, Bach uses the same melodies, but has moved it up a half step. This gives the prayer a greater sense of urgency.
 - As in before, Jesus ends his plea on an unresolved note, with the continuo becoming the musical 'resolution' to the question.
- In #31 Bach brilliantly inserts the Chorale '*What My God Wills Is Always Best*'
 - Bach uses this as a reminder that we too, like Jesus, may well pray for 'this cup to pass', but that in the end, we have to trust that God's will is best.
 - Musically, the wavering, angular, chromatic melody ends each phrase solidly on the tonic. This gives us a musical sense that yes, we also will waver; but in the end, God.Will.Be.Solid.
 - This Chorale melody was written by Claudin de Sermisy (ca.1490-1562). He mostly studied with Josquin des Prez (ca.1450-1521), who was the master of composing Renaissance Masses. The text comes from Albrecht von Pruisen (1490-1568). He based the words on a meditation of Martin Luther (1483-1586) on the Lord's Prayer and set it to Sermisy's melody.
- In #32, the third time Jesus prays is left to the Evangelist to recount, as if it would be too painful to hear Jesus say those words again. His singing ends squarely on the tonic chord, leaving no doubt about the answer. This cup will NOT pass.
 - Note the sense of anger in Jesus when addressing his disciples, but almost tenderness when addressing Judas.
 - Immediately after the arrest, the Evangelist becomes even more agitated, and will remain so to the end of Part One.
- In #33, and #34, Bach depicts the disciple's reaction to Jesus' arrest in three ways, mirroring contemporary psychology: Fight, Flight or Freeze. In this case, the order is Freeze, Fight, Flight.
- In #33 the Soprano/Alto duet has them Frozen. Unable to believe that Jesus is gone, they wonder if the sun and moon will ever rise again. To accentuate how 'the bottom has fallen out', Bach even removes the ever present continuo.
 - Interspersed with this, the Chorus slowly gets angrier with their cries of '*Laßt ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!*' ('*Leave him! Stop! Do not bind him!*')
 - If the final notes of the duet sound vaguely familiar to you rockers, this is the same harmony Duane Allman and Dickie Betts used many times in their guitar work with the Allman Brothers, such as in '*Jessica*' (and is the same harmonic guitar intervals used at the end of '*Hotel California*')

- The Chorus, no longer able to contain its anger, interrupts the duet to jump into the 'Fight' mode! Bach's music violently erupts into a visceral, vocal, and orchestral maelstrom. The Chorus calls upon all of forces of Heaven '*Sind Blitze, sind Donner*' ('have lightning and thunder') and all forces of Hell '*Eröffne den feurigen Abgrund*' ('open your fiery abyss') to destroy the betrayer Judas!
 - The musical tempest that Bach creates is unlike anything ever written in the Baroque and would not be replicate again until late in Beethoven's career.
 - The Chorus' anger is so all consuming that they have to take a long pregnant pause, as if asking themselves, '*Have I vented enough? NO!*' coming back even more angry!
- In #34, the anger moves to violence as one of the disciples draws a sword and cuts off the ear of a servant. Notice how Bach gives the Evangelist an up-and-down melody to sing here, musically representing the cutting off of the ear.
 - As the Evangelist sings the last line '*Da verließen ihn alle Jünger und flohen.*' ('Then all of the disciples abandoned him and fled.') the melody moves slowly up and then back down, creating a musical 'arch' for the disciples to flee through.
- With #35, Bach ends Part One with a very succinct telling of the Gospel message: Jesus' love for mankind; Our great sinfulness; Jesus' sacrifice and shedding of blood for our sins; Our thankfulness for what he has done for us.
 - Like the opening number over an hour ago, this one uses all three Chorus and both orchestras.
 - While this Chorale would be familiar to the Bach' listeners, he has rearranged it into a more fugal, polyphonic work.
 - This Chorale melody was written in 1525 by Matthaias Greitner (1495-1552) with the text by Sebald Heydens (1499-1561).
 - Note the strange juxtaposing of the disciples both abandoning Jesus, yet proclaiming his Gospel message.
 - Bach orchestral arrangement has rapidly moving couplets representing the disciples running for their lives. It is interspersed with more sanguine interludes as if they were momentarily hiding in dark alleyways, or peaking around corners.
 - Part One ends with the organ playing a low E note on the pedal. This is the note that Part One started with. This time, however, the note is all alone, like Jesus.

Part Two

Scene Nine: Prelude

36. Aria. Alto and Chorus

Alto

Ach! nun ist mein Jesus hin!

Chorus

Wo ist denn dein Freund hingegangen,
O du Schönste unter den Weibern?

Alto

Ist es möglich, kann ich schauen?

Chorus

Wo hat sich dein Freund hingewandt?

Alto

Ach! mein Lamm in Tigerklauen,
Ach! wo ist mein Jesus hin?

Chorus

So wollen wir mit dir ihn suchen.

Alto

Ach! was soll ich der Seele sagen,
Wenn sie mich wird ängstlich fragen?
Ach! Wo ist mein Jesus hin?

Alto

Ah! Now my Jesus has gone now.

Chorus

Where has your friend gone,
You fairest of women?

Alto

Is it possible? Can I see it?

Chorus

Where has your friend turned?

Alto

Ah! My lamb in tiger's claws!
Ah! Where has my Jesus gone?

Chorus

Let us look for him together

Alto

Ah! What shall I say to my soul
When, filled with fear, it asks where he
is?
Ah! Where has my Jesus gone?

Notes:

- Part Two starts off with the Orchestra playing in the style of a '*French Overture*' with dotted notes abounding. A good example of a '*French Overture*' is the opening overture of George Frederic Handel's (1685-1759) '*Messiah*'
- The Alto, in a dialog with the Chorus, expresses an eternal concern of believers in difficult times: '*Wo ist mein Jesus hin?*' ('*Where has my Jesus gone?*')
- This question goes un-answered, which Bach accentuates by refusing to let the piece end on the tonic chord. Rather, he musically ends it on the dominant chord – the musical question also left hanging.

Scene Ten: Jesus Before the High Priests

37. Recitative - Evangelist

Die aber Jesum gegriffen hatten,
führten ihn zu dem Hohenpriester
Kaiphäs, dahin die Schriftgelehrten und
Ältesten sich versammelt hatten. Petrus
aber folgte ihm nach von ferne bis in
den Palast des Hohenpriesters und ging
hinein und setzte sich bei die Knechte,
auf daß er sähe, wo es hinaus wollte.
Die Hohenpriester aber und Ältesten und
der ganze Rat suchten falsche Zeugnis
wider Jesum, auf daß sie ihn töteten, und
fanden keines.

38. Chorale

Mir hat die Welt trüglich gericht'
Mit Lügen und mit falschem G'dicht,
Viel Netz und heimlich Stricke.
Herr, nimm mein wahr in dieser G'fahr,
B'hüt mich für falschen Tücken!

39. Recitative. Evangelist, Witnesses, and High Priest

Evangelist

Und wiewohl viel falsche Zeugen
herzutraten, fanden sie doch keins.
Zuletzt traten herzu zweien falsche
Zeugen und sprachen:

First and Second Witnesses

Er hat gesagt: "Ich kann den Tempel
Gottes abbrechen und in dreien Tagen
denselben bauen."

Evangelist

Und der Hohepriester stund auf und
sprach zu ihm:

High Priest

Antwortest du nichts zu dem, das diese
wider dich zeugen?

Evangelist

Aber Jesus schwieg stille.

Now those who had seized Jesus took
him to Caiaphas, the High Priest, where
the Scribes and the Elders were
gathered. But Peter followed him at a
distance, as far as the High Priest's
palace, then went inside and sat with the
servants to see what would happen.

Now the chief priest and elders and
whole council, were looking for false
testimony against Jesus, so that they
could kill him, but they found none.

The world has judged me deceitfully
With lies and with false testimony,
With many traps and secret snares,
Lord, guard me in this danger,
Shield me from false deceits.

Evangelist

Although many false witnesses came
forward, they found none.
At last two false witnesses came forward
saying:

First and Second Witnesses

He said: "I can destroy the temple of
God and rebuild it in three days."

Evangelist

And the High Priest stood up and said to
him:

High Priest

Have you no answer to all that these
people testify against you?

Evangelist

But Jesus said nothing.

40. Arioso - Tenor

Mein Jesus schweigt
 Zu falschen Lügen stille,
 Um uns damit zu zeigen,
 Daß sein Erbarmens voller Wille
 Vor uns zum Leiden sei geneigt,
 Und daß wir in dergleichen Pein
 Ihm sollen ähnlich sein
 Und in Verfolgung stille schweigen

My Jesus says nothing
 In the face of false lies
 In order to show us
 That, full of mercy,
 He is bent on suffering for our sake
 And, that when we suffer such torments,
 We should do as he does
 And say nothing if persecuted.

41. Aria - Tenor

Geduld!
 Wenn mich falsche Zungen stechen.
 Leid ich wider meine Schuld
 Schimpf und Spott,
 Ei, so mag der liebe Gott
 Meines Herzens Unschuld rächen.

Patience!
 Even when false tongues sting me
 If, guiltless, I suffer,
 I suffer disgrace and scorn
 Then may the dear Lord
 Avenge my heart's innocence.

42. Recitative. Evangelist, High Priest, and Jesus**Evangelist**

Und der Hohepriester antwortete und sprach zu ihm:

Evangelist

And the High Priest answered and said to him:

High Priest

Ich beschwöre dich bei dem lebendigen Gott, daß du uns sagest, ob du seiest Christus, der Sohn Gottes?

High Priest

I entreat you by the living God to say whether you are Christ, the Son of God?

Evangelist

Jesus sprach zu ihm:

Evangelist

Jesus said to him:

Jesus

Du sagest's. Doch sage ich euch: Von nun an wird's geschehen, daß ihr sehen werdet des Menschen Sohn sitzen zur Rechten der Kraft und kommen in den Wolken des Himmels.

Jesus

It is you who say so. But I say to you: From now on you shall see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power and come in the clouds of heaven.

Evangelist

Da zerriß der Hohepriester seine Kleider und sprach:

Evangelist

Then the High Priest tore his clothes and said:

High Priest

Er hat Gott gelästert; was dürfen wir weiter Zeugnis? Siehe, itzt habt ihr seine Gotteslästerung gehört. Was dünket euch?

High Priest

He has blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? Look, you have now heard him blaspheme. What do you think?

Evangelist

Sie antworteten und sprachen:

Evangelist

They answered him and said:

Chorus

Er ist des Todes schuldig!

Chorus

He deserves to die!

43. Recitative – Evangelist

Evangelist

Da speieten sie aus in sein Angesicht
und schlugen ihn mit Fäusten. Etliche
aber schlugen ihn ins Angesicht und
sprachen:

Chorus

Weissage uns, Christe, wer ist's, der
dich schlug?

Evangelist

Then they spat in his face and struck him
with their fist, and others stuck him in
the face and said:

Chorus

Tell us, Christ, who has struck you?

44. Chorale

Wer hat dich so geschlagen,
Mein Heil, und dich mit Plagen
So übel zugericht'?
Du bist ja nicht ein Sünder
Wie wir und unsre Kinder;
Von Missetaten weist.

Who struck you, my Savior?
Who tormented you and treated you so
badly?
You are not, after all, a sinner
Like us and our children
You know nothing of misdeeds.

Notes:

- In #37, the previous question of ‘*Where has my Jesus gone?*’ is immediately answered by the Evangelist
 - Note also that the harmonization returns back to the tonic here, musically also answering the question.
- In #38, the Chorus reflects, with anger at first, the lies and deceitfulness of the world, but by the end of this number, they return to a more prayerful mood, realizing that without God’s protection, they will never be able to persevere.
 - Note as the Chorus sings ‘*Mit Lügen und mit falschem G’dicht*’ (‘*With lies and with false testimony*’) the cascading diminished 5ths chords, giving a dissonance to the music. It returns to more ‘soothing’ harmonies for the last two lines of prayer.
 - Like all Chorales, this was one that comes from the Hymnal used in Leipzig. Also like many Chorales it was composed by the famous ‘*Anonymous*’
- Note in #39, that when the false witnesses testify, Bach has them do it in a ‘*Canon*’, singing exactly the same words and notes, with little to no imagination. In this way he shows how ‘rehearsed’ and false is their testimony.
 - Notice how when the witness sing ‘*kann den Tempel*’ (‘*destroy the temple*’) that musically the notes are in a cascading fall. And when the sing ‘*und in dreien Tagen denselben bauen*’ (‘*and rebuild it in three days*’) them music does a stair step upward movement. Coincidence? Not a chance!
- In #40, the sparse arrangement reflects Jesus’ silence.
 - Bach again returns to the theme of Jesus ‘bent’ on suffering for our sins. Jesus silence is not ‘passive’, but rather part of his ‘mission’ to take on the burden of our falsehoods and lies – our very sin.
- In #41, as if to accentuate how utterly alone Jesus is, Bach accompanies this

Tenor aria with only the Viola da Gamba and a 'hint' of the continuo.

- The musical accompaniment moves from long, bowed phrases to short 'hurky-jerky' phrases. The long phrases reflect the 'patience' that is be asked for, longed for, (prayed for?). The 'hurky-jerky' emphasizing the 'No, I will be patient no more!' Bach recognizes a universal human condition.
- Unlike most instruments of the violin family, the Viola da Gamba has frets, allowing for better intonation. Also, instead of having 4 strings, the Viola da Gamba typically has 6 or 7. They are also tune differently, using intervals of a 4th for most strings with a 3rd on one of the middle strings. This is much like a modern guitar. Confused? Don't worry. The takeaway is that between the use of frets, the extra strings, and the tuning, you get many more harmonic overtones from the instrument, giving it a rich luster.
- Note in #42, as Jesus sings, in addition to the 'halo' of strings, the other stringed instruments are playing motifs that sounds like clouds scurrying past.
 - The Chorus, now acting as the assembled elders, sings '*Er ist des Todes schuldig!*' ('*he deserves to die!*') in a quick, polyphonic manner, giving the sense that they have quickly come to judgment without much regard to the facts. They have lost all patience with Jesus.
- Notice in #43 as the Chorus sings '*Weissage uns*' ('*Tell us*'), the emphasis on the 'hissing' notice of the 'S' sound, as if they are serpents!
- In #44, Bach, in what is now 'regular', turns the Chorus on a dime and brings his listeners directly back into the story with a very familiar Chorale.
 - In this Choral, first used in #16 in a similar manner, gives a rhetorical answer of '*wer ist's, der dich schlug?*' ('*who has struck you?*') It is, after all, ALL of us who would be guilty of Christ's torment.

Scene Eleven: Peter's Denial & Judas' Suicide

45. Recitative – Evangelist, Peter, First and Second Maids

Evangelist

Petrus aber saß draußen im Palast; und es trat zu ihm eine Magd und sprach:

First Maid

Und du warest auch mit dem Jesu aus Galiläa.

Evangelist

Er leugnete aber vor ihnen allen und sprach:

Peter

Ich weiß nicht, was du sagest.

Evangelist

Als er aber zur Tür hinausging, sahe ihn eine andere und sprach zu denen, die da waren:

Second Maid

Dieser war auch mit dem Jesu von Nazareth.

Evangelist

Und er leugnete abermal und schwur dazu:

Peter

Ich kenne des Menschen nicht!

Evangelist

Und über eine kleine Weile traten hinzu, die da stunden, und sprachen zu Petro:

Evangelist

Now Peter was sitting outside the palace, and a maidservant went over to him and said:

First Maid

You too were with Jesus of Galilee

Evangelist

But he denied it before all of them and said:

Peter

I do not know what you are talking about!

Evangelist

But as he was leaving, another maidservant saw him, and said to those who were there:

Second Maid

This man too was with Jesus of Nazareth.

Evangelist

And he again denied it and swore and oath:

Peter

I do not know the man!

Evangelist

And shortly afterwards, some bystanders came up and said to Peter:

46. Chorus, Evangelist and Peter

Chorus

Wahrlich, du bist auch einer von denen;
denn deine Sprache verrät dich.

Evangelist

Da hub er an, sich zu verfluchen und zu
schwören:

Peter

Ich kenne des Menschen nicht!

Evangelist

Und alsbald krähete der Hahn.

Da dachte Petrus an die Worte Jesu, da
er zu ihm sagte: Ehe der Hahn krähen
wird, wirst du mich dreimal verleugnen.

Und ging heraus und weinete bitterlich.

47. Aria - Alto

Erbarme dich,
Mein Gott, um meiner Zähren willen!
Schaue hier,
Herz und Auge weint vor dir
Bitterlich.

48. Chorale

Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen,
Stell ich mich doch wieder ein;
Hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen
Durch sein' Angst und Todespein.
Ich verleugne nicht die Schuld;
Aber deine Gnad und Huld
Ist viel größer als die Sünde,
Die ich stets in mir befinde.

Chorus

Surely you too are one of them, for your
accent betrays you.

Evangelist

Then he began to curse and swear:

Peter

I do not know the man!

Evangelist

And at that moment the cock crowed.

Then Peter remembered Jesus words,
when he said to him: "Before the
cockcrows, you will deny me three
times.

And he went out and wept bitterly.

Have mercy,
My God, for the sake of my tears.
Look at me,
Heart and eyes are weeping before you
Bitterly.

Although I strayed from you,
I have returned again;
Your Son has reconciled us
Through his agony and mortal pain.
I do not deny my guilt,
But your grace and mercy
Are far greater than the sin
That I always find within myself.

49. Recitative. Evangelist and Judas

Evangelist

Des Morgens aber hielten alle
Hohepriester und die Ältesten des Volks
einen Rat über Jesum, daß sie ihn
töteten. Und bunden ihn, führten ihn
hin und überantworteten ihn dem
Landpfleger Pontio Pilato. Da das sahe
Judas, der ihn verraten hatte, daß er
verdammt war zum Tode, gereuete es
ihn und brachte herwieder die dreißig
Silberlinge den Hohenpriestern und
Ältesten und sprach:

Judas

Ich habe übel getan, daß ich unschuldig
Blut verraten habe.

Evangelist

Sie sprachen:

Chorus

Was gehet uns das an? Da siehe du zu!

Evangelist

But in the morning all the chief priests
And the elders of the people meet to
consider ways to have Jesus killed.
They bound him, led him away and
handed him over to the governor Pontius
Pilate. When Judas, who had betrayed
him, saw that he was condemned to
death, he repented, and brought back the
thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests
and elders and said:

Judas

I have done wrong by betraying innocent
blood.

Evangelist

They said:

Evangelist

What is that to us? See to it yourself.

50. Recitative. Evangelist, First and Second High Priests

Evangelist

Und er warf die Silberlinge in den
Tempel, hub sich davon, ging hin und
erhängete sich selbst.

Aber die Hohenpriester nahmen die
Silberlinge und sprachen:

First and Second High Priests

Es taugt nicht, daß wir sie in den
Gotteskasten legen, denn es ist Blutgeld.

Evangelist

And he threw the pieces of silver into the
temple, and went away and hanged
himself.

But the chief priests took the pieces of
silver and said:

First and Second High Priests

It is not right that we should put them in
the treasury, as they are blood money.

51. Aria - Bass

Gebt mir meinen Jesum wieder!
Seht, das Geld, den Mörderlohn,
Wirft euch der verlorne Sohn
Zu den Füßen nieder!

Give me back my Jesus!
See, the money, the murderer's reward
Is thrown back at your feet
By the prodigal son.

Notes:

- In #45 Bach uses the music to emphasis certain words. Note how on key words, such 'deny', and 'swore', that the recitative uses very high notes, underscoring the tension of what is about to happen.
- Note in #46, when the Evangelist sings '*Und ging heraus*' ('*And he went out*') he moves to a high B note, at the very extreme of a tenor's range. This is the only time the Evangelist uses this note, as if Bach is emphasizing how isolated Peter feels at this time.

- The last phrase *‘und weinete bitterlich’* (*‘and wept bitterly’*) is a tortured and twisted melisma, reflecting the absolute depth of angst that Peter is feeling right now. The final word *‘bitterlich’* (*‘bitterly’*) musically drops down to its knees in despair.
- In #47 we have one of the most achingly haunting arias of the entire work, Bach gives it to the Alto, as if Peter (a Bass) is so overcome with his moral failure that he cannot even speak.
 - The violin is scored obbligato with a plucked cello. The sparseness of the arrangement gives the sense of Peter’s utter aloneness as he contemplates how he has denied Jesus.
 - While the Alto is giving voice to Peter, she is also singing for all of God’s people. Which of us has NOT had to face our own moral failures.
 - Both the Evangelist’s last word and the aria’s last word are the same, as if to strike home Peter’s mindset: *‘bitterlich’*
- Bach, in #48, after giving us a front row seat to Peter’s (and our own) moral failure, immediately returns us back to God’s grace and mercy.
 - By using a Chorale that was familiar to his listeners, he draws them into the scene, allowing them to say *‘Yes, I too have denied you Jesus. And yes, I too have received your grace, mercy and forgiveness’*.
 - As if to emphasize this, Bach has the orchestra and Chorus crescendo as they sing *‘Aber deine Gnad und Huld’* (*‘But your grace and mercy’*)
 - The Chorale tune was written by Johann Schop (1590-1667), who most famously wrote the Chorale *‘Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring’*. The text is by Johann von Rist (1607-1667).
- Having watched Peter’s denial, in #49 we now move to the other disciple who ‘failed’ Jesus: Judas.
 - The entire section is made up of terse, short phrases. The music shows how Judas, having fulfilled his betrayal, is no longer needed by the chief priests and elders. While he asks for forgiveness, they turn their back on him, the Chorus declaring *‘Was gehet uns das an?’* (*‘What is that to us?’*)
- In #50, as the Evangelist sings *‘hub sich davon, ging hin und erhängete sich selbst’* (*‘and went away and hanged himself’*), the music coils around itself, creating a noose, with a precipitous drop on the word *‘erhängete’* (*‘hanged’*).
 - As the Priest decided what to do with the money, Bach returns to a Canon, much like with the false witnesses, signifying that the Priests are simply going through the motions of doing the right things.
- With both #47 and #51 Bach has scored both arias dealing with the two disciples that have betrayed Jesus with solo violins. While #47 had an aching melody, the violin in #51 is playing a rolling melody, as if it were the thirty coins, rolling around the floor of the temple after Judas has tossed them there.
 - Note that the scene ending phrase is *‘Füßen nieder’* (*‘Prodigal son’*). The Prodigal son, who went astray, eventually returned to find grace and forgiveness from his father. This gives us (and Judas) hope.

Scene Twelve: Jesus Before Pontius Pilate

52. Recitative. Evangelist, Pilate, and Jesus

Evangelist

Sie hielten aber einen Rat und kauften einen Töpfersacker darum zum Begräbnis der Pilger. Daher ist derselbige Acker genennet der Blutacker bis auf den heutigen Tag. Da ist erfüllet, das gesagt ist durch den Propheten Jeremias, da er spricht: "Sie haben genommen dreißig Silberlinge, damit bezahlet ward der Verkaufte, welchen sie kauften von den Kindern Israel, und haben sie gegeben um einen Töpfersacker, als mir der Herr befohlen hat."

Jesus aber stund vor dem Landpfleger; und der Landpfleger fragte ihn und sprach:

Pilate

Bist du der Jüden König?

Evangelist

Jesus aber sprach zu ihm:

Jesus

Du sagest's.

Evangelist

Und da er verklagt war von den Hohenpriestern und Ältesten, antwortete er nichts. Da sprach Pilatus zu ihm:

Pilate

Hörest du nicht, wie hart sie dich verklagen?

Evangelist

Und er antwortete ihm nicht auf ein Wort, also, daß sich auch der Landpfleger sehr verwunderte.

Evangelist

But they again conferred, and bought a potter's field that was used to bury pilgrims. As a result, this field is still known today as the Field of Blood. In this way the prophet Jeremiah was proved right, since he say: They took thirty pieces of silver with which they paid for the man whom the bought the children of Israel, and gave them in return for a potter's field, as the Lord ordered me.

Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned him, saying:

Pilate

Are you the King of the Jews?

Evangelist

But Jesus said to him:

Jesus

It is you who say so.

Evangelist

But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not reply. Then Pilate said to him:

Pilate

Do you not hear how grave their accusations are?

Evangelist

But he said not a word in reply, so the governor was much amazed.

53. Chorale

Befiehl du deine Wege
Und was dein Herze kränkt
Der allertreusten Pflege
Des, der den Himmel lenkt.
Der Wolken, Luft und Winden
Gibt Wege, Lauf und Bahn,
Der wird auch Wege finden,
Da dein Fuß gehen kann.

Commend your ways,
And all that weighs heavy on your heart
To the truest care
Of him who rules the heavens.
He who gives the clouds, air and winds
Their courses, path and orbit
Will also find ways
Where your feet can walk.

54. Recitative – Evangelist, Pilate, Pilate’s Wife, and Chorus

Evangelist

Auf das Fest aber hatte der Landpfleger
Gewohnheit, dem Volk einen
Gefangenen loszugeben, welchen sie
wollten. Er hatte aber zu der Zeit einen
Gefangenen, einen sonderlichen vor
andern, der hieß Barrabas. Und da sie
versammelt waren, sprach Pilatus zu
ihnen:

Pilate

Welchen wollet ihr, daß ich euch
losgebe? Barrabam oder Jesum, von dem
gesaget wird, er sei Christus?

Evangelist

Denn er wußte wohl, daß sie ihn aus
Neid überantwortet hatten. Und da er auf
dem Richtstuhl saß, schickete sein Weib
zu ihm und ließ ihm sagen:

Pilate’s Wife

Habe du nichts zu schaffen mit diesem
Gerechten; ich habe heute viel erlitten
im Traum von seinetwegen!

Evangelist

Aber die Hohenpriester und die Ältesten
überredeten das Volk, daß sie um
Barrabam bitten sollten und Jesum
umbrächten. Da antwortete nun der
Landpfleger und sprach zu ihnen:

Pilate

Welchen wollt ihr unter diesen zweien,
den ich euch soll losgeben?

Evangelist

Sie sprachen:

Chorus

Barrabam!

Evangelist

Pilatus sprach zu ihnen:

Pilate

Was soll ich denn machen mit Jesu, von
dem gesagt wird, er sei Christus?

Evangelist

Sie sprachen alle:

Chorus

Laß ihn kreuzigen!

Evangelist

At this feast the governor was in the
habit of handing over to the people
whichever prisoner they wanted. At that
time he had one particular prisoner who
stood out from the others and who was
called Barabbas. And when they were
assembled, Pilate said to them:

Pilate

Whom do you want me to hand over to
you? Barabbas or Jesus, who is said to
be Christ?

Evangelist

He knew very well that they had turned
him in out of spite. And as he was sitting
in judgment, his wife sent word to him,
saying:

Pilate’s Wife

Do not have anything to do with that
innocent man! I have suffered much as a
result of a dream I had about him today.

Evangelist

But the chief priest and elders persuaded
the people to ask for Barabbas and to
have Jesus killed.

Now the governor replied and said to
them:

Pilate

Which of these two do you want me to
hand over to you?

Evangelist

They said:

Chorus

Barabbas!

Evangelist

Pilate said to them:

Pilate

Then what shall I do with Jesus, who is
said to be Christ?

Evangelist

They all said:

Chorus

Let him be crucified!

55. Chorale

Wie wunderbarlich ist doch diese Strafe!
Der gute Hirte leidet für die Schafe,

Die Schuld bezahlt der Herre, der
Gerechte,
Für seine Knechte.

How astonishing is this sentence indeed!
The Good Shepherd suffers for the
sheep;

The Lord, the just man, pays

For his servant's guilt.

56. Recitative – Evangelist and Pilate

Evangelist

Der Landpfleger sagte:

Pilate

Was hat er denn Übels getan?

Evangelist

The governor said:

Pilate

What wrong has he done?

57. Arioso – Soprano

Er hat uns allen wohlgetan,
Den Blinden gab er das Gesicht,
Die Lahmen macht er gehend,
Er sagt uns seines Vaters Wort,
Er trieb die Teufel fort,
Betrübte hat er aufgerichtet',
Er nahm die Sünder auf und an.
Sonst hat mein Jesus nichts getan.

He has done good to us all.
He restored sight to the blind,
The lame he has made to walk,
He has told us his Father's words,
He has driven out devils
The afflicted he has raised up,
He has received and sheltered sinners,
Otherwise, my Jesus has done nothing.

58. Aria - Soprano

Aus Liebe will mein Heiland sterben,
Von einer Sünde weiß er nichts.
Daß das ewige Verderben
Und die Strafe des Gerichts

Nicht auf meiner Seele bliebe.

For love, my Savior wants to die
He knows nothing of any sin
So that eternal perdition
And the punishment of the Last
Judgment
May not weigh upon my soul.

Notes:

- In #52 we get to the last words that Jesus will say until he is on the Cross.
 - As this section progresses, the accompaniment gets more and more sparse, as if to emphasize that Jesus is more and more isolated.
 - Note the high note the Evangelist sings on 'Wort' ('Word') in the last phrase. This is used as a foreshadowing Christ, the Word, being lifted up on the Cross.
- In #53 Bach returns to the Passion Chorale for the third time.
 - Jesus, has been betrayed, denied, had false witness testify against him and is now before the most powerful official in the region who controls his fate. From all appearances, there seems to be no good way 'out'. Instead, Bach reminds us, through the very familiar Chorale, that the God of '*Der Wolken, Luft und Winden*' ('the clouds, air and winds') will prepare a path '*Da dein Fuß gehen kann*' ('where your feet can walk'). A great comfort

in times of trial.

- Bach will return to this Chorale shortly, after Jesus has been sentence to die, as if framing this scene.
- In #54, as Pilate asks ‘*Welchen wollt ihr unter diesen zweien, den ich euch soll losgeben?*’ (‘*which of these two do you want me to hand over to you?*’) the music wants to resolve to the tonic chord of D. Instead, Bach jars us with the crowd screaming ‘Barabbas’ in the dissonant chord of F#dim7.
 - When the crowd acts as an angry mob, it is known as a ‘Turba’
 - To our modern ears, this chord is the discordant opening (in a different key) of Jimi Hendrix’s ‘*Purple Haze*’
 - Note when asked ‘*Was soll ich denn machen mit Jesu?*’ ‘*What shall I do with Jesus?*’, the Chorus, singing in a fugal mode that increases in intensity and anger with each measure, demands ‘*Laß ihn kreuzigen!*’ (‘*Let him be crucified!*’).
 - As we recited the Passion narrative on Palm Sunday, the congregation is asked to use these same words. Perhaps we should sing them like this.
- In #55 Bach returns to this Chorale first introduced in #3 and then in #25. Here, he uses it to remind us: that just like, the guilty Barabbas is set free, we too who are guilty, are also set free.
 - The words and tunes of this were meant to be a great comfort to the people of Bach’s congregation, and to us.
- In #56, Pilate, knowing that he is being forced to condemn an innocent man tries to ask the crowd ‘*Was hat er denn Übels getan?*’ (‘*What wrong has he done?*’) It is often the same question that we have – Why must Jesus die?
- In #57, Pilate’s answer to his question of ‘What wrong has he done?’ comes. But the Soprano, much like Jesus through out his ministry, turns the question around, with a listing of the good that Jesus has done. Here she is almost like a ‘character witness’ in Jesus’ defense.
- In #58 Bach uses but four performers in this aria: two oboes, a flute and the Soprano.
 - This sparse arrangement emphasizes Jesus’ abandonment by everyone.
 - Bach, never more than an arm’s length away from his deep faith, also uses this sparse arrangement to emphasis the true answer to the question ‘*Why must Jesus die?*’ It is for Love. He Loves us. He *wants* to die for us.
 - Interspersed into the arrangement are long pauses, to allow the listener the chance to contemplate the Love that Jesus has shown by taking on our sin.

Scene Thirteen: Jesus' Delivery and Flagellation

59. Recitative. Evangelist

Evangelist

Sie schrieen aber noch mehr und sprachen:

Chorus

Laß ihn kreuzigen!

Evangelist

Da aber Pilatus sahe, daß er nichts schaffete, sondern daß ein viel großer Getümmel ward, nahm er Wasser und wusch die Hände vor dem Volk und sprach:

Pilate

Ich bin unschuldig an dem Blut dieses Gerechten, sehet ihr zu.

Evangelist

Da antwortete das ganze Volk und sprach:

Chorus

Sein Blut komme über uns und unsre Kinder!

Evangelist

Da gab er ihnen Barrabam los; aber Jesum ließ er geißeln und überantwortete ihn, daß er gekreuziget würde.

60. Arioso - Alto

Erbarm es Gott!

Hier steht der Heiland angebunden.

O Geißelung, o Schläg, o Wunden!

Ihr Henker, haltet ein!

Erweicht euch

Der Seelen Schmerz,

Der Anblick solches Jammers nicht?

Ach ja! ihr habt ein Herz,

Das muß der Martersäule gleich

Und noch viel härter sein.

Erbarmt euch, haltet ein!

Evangelist

But they cried out the more and said:

Chorus

Let him be crucified!

Evangelist

Now when Pilate saw that he had achieved nothing, but that the tumult was becoming far worse, he took some water and washed his hands in the presence of the people, saying:

Pilate

I am innocent of the blood of this just man. See to it yourself.

Evangelist

Then all the people answered and said:

Chorus

Let his blood be on us and on our children!

Evangelist

Then he gave them Barabbas. But he had Jesus flogged, and then handed him over to be crucified.

Have mercy, God!

Here stands our Savior bound.

O scourging, O blows, O wounds!

You tortures, stop!

Do your hearts not melt

At his soul's anguish?

At the sight of such distress?

Ah, yes you have a heart;

It must be like the whipping post,

But even harder.

Have mercy! Stop!

61. Aria - Alto

Können Tränen meiner Wangen
Nichts erlangen,
O, so nehmt mein Herz hinein!
Aber laßt es bei den Fluten,
Wenn die Wunden milde bluten,
Auch die Opferschale sein!

If the tears on my cheeks can
Achieve nothing,
Oh, then take my heart!
But for the streams that flow
When your wounds gently bleed
Let it also be a sacrificial cup!

62. Recitative - Evangelist

Evangelist

Da nahmen die Kriegsknechte des
Landpflegers Jesum zu sich in das
Richthaus und sammelten über ihn die
ganze Schar und zogen ihn aus und
legeten ihm einen Purpurmantel an und
flochten eine dornene Krone und setzten
sie auf sein Haupt und ein Rohr in seine
rechte Hand und beugeten die Knie vor
ihm und spotteten ihn und sprachen:

Chorus

Gegrüßet seist du, Jüdenkönig!

Evangelist

Und speieten ihn an und nahmen das
Rohr und schlugen damit sein Haupt.

Evangelist

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus
into the common hall, and gathered
around him the whole band of soldiers
and stripped him and placed a scarlet
cloak about him and wove a crown of
thorns and put it on his head with a reed
in his right hand, and knelt before him
and mocked him, saying:

Chorus

Hail, King of the Jews!

Evangelist

And they spat on him and took the reed
and struck his head with it.

63. Chorale

O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden,
Voll Schmerz und voller Hohn,
O Haupt, zu Spott gebunden
Mit einer Dornenkron,
O Haupt, sonst schön gezieret
Mit höchster Ehr und Zier,
Jetzt aber hoch schimpfieret,
Gegrüßet seist du mir!

O head, full of blood and wounds,
Full of pain and full of scorn,
O head, wreathed in mockery
With a crown of thorns!
O head, once beautifully adorned
With highest grace and honor
But now so basely reviled,
Let me hail you!

Du edles Angesichte,
Dafür sonst schrickt und scheut
Das große Weltgerichte,
Wie bist du so bespeit;
Wie bist du so erbleichet!
Wer hat dein Augenlicht,
Dem sonst kein Licht nicht gleichet,
So schändlich zugericht'?

O noble countenance,
Before which the great world
Would otherwise be timid and afraid
How have you been spat on;
How pale you have grown!
Who has so shamefully misused
The light of your eyes
A light that no other can match.

Notes:

- The quite contemplations of God's love in #58 are shattered by the crowd in #59. Once again they are demanding '*Laß ihn kreuzigen!*' ('*Let him be crucified!*')
 - While the scoring is the same as in #54, Bach has written it a whole tone higher and with more intensity.
 - Pilate, realizing that he can get nowhere, literally and figuratively washes his hands of the entire affair, knowing that Jesus is innocent.
 - The entire Chorus proclaims '*Sein Blut komme über uns und unsre Kinder!*' ('*Let his blood be on us and on our children!*'). Bach scores so that it comes across as both a damning declaration *and* an urgent prayer, which is as it is meant. Bach is reminding his listeners that, yes, we are guilty of the blood of Jesus. That guilt will extend for generations. But, it is that same blood that covers our sins and our children's.
 - The cry of God's people is accentuated as the entire Chorus moves ever upward, to the very top of sopranos range.
- In #60 we have the flagellation of Jesus.
 - Stunningly, the strings play a lashing, dotted rhythm here, acting as the whips, thrashing the back of Jesus.
 - The music is very unstable, going through ten keys in 12 bars of music. Bach uses this to emphasize that at this point all sense of 'normalcy' is gone. The theoretical *talk* of pain, suffering and shed blood is in the past; for Jesus, that pain, suffering and shed blood is a *reality*.
 - Andrew Lloyd Webber, in his 1970 rock opera *Passion*, '*Jesus Christ Superstar*' might have taken a cue from Bach, as he too goes through 10 different keys during his rendition of Pilate's trial and flogging of Jesus.
- In the aria of #61, the music continues the same dotted rhythm, but now slowed down.
 - Musically this ties this piece to the previous one.
 - The slowly descending notes give the impression of the blood flowing down the back of Jesus.
 - As the Alto sings '*Auch die Opferschale sein!*' ('*Let it also be a sacrificial cup!*'), one is reminded of the words from the Book of Common Prayer during Eucharist when the cup is passed; '*The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee.*'
- In #62 notice as the Chorus, now acting as the soldiers, sings '*Gegrüßet seist du, Jüdenkönig!*' ('*Hail, King of the Jews!*') with a mocking ceremonial pomp and gravitas.
 - Note how when the Evangelist sings '*speieten*' ('*spat*') and '*schlugen*' ('*struck*') Bach has written the recitative to emphasize these words. Much of the Baroque has some really mediocre writing of recitative. Bach has elevated the recitative into new levels of excellence.
- With #63 we have the fourth appearance of the '*Passion Chorale*', this time giving it two full verses. This allows Bach's listeners time to contemplate the very real wounds and blood of Jesus' suffering.
 - This time Bach uses the first, and most familiar stanza of this Chorale, '*O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*'.

- Our 'Anglican' version of this Chorale sanitizes the words, saying '*O sacred head sore wounded*', making it sound more like Jesus is suffering a headache. A more literal translation would be '*O Head, full of blood and wounds*' The German version lays it right out there: There is blood; There are bloody wounds; IT.IS.NOT.PRETTY!
- This Chorale brings Bach's listeners face-to-face with not only the physical pain, suffering and blood of Jesus, but how he is mocked, scorn, spat up. Jesus has lost all dignity, honor and position in society.
- In successive renditions of this Chorale since the start, Bach has follow a pattern of key signatures that has gone:
 - Version #1: # # # # (key of C# minor)
 - Version #2 ♭ ♭ ♭ (key of C minor)
 - Version #3 # # (key of B minor)
 - Version #4 ♭ (key of D minor)
 - Can you guess the key of last one?

Scene Fourteen: The Road to Golgotha and Jesus' Crucifixion

64. Recitative - Evangelist

Und da sie ihn verspottet hatten, zogen sie ihm den Mantel aus und zogen ihm seine Kleider an und führten ihn hin, daß sie ihn kreuzigten. Und indem sie hinausgingen, funden sie einen Menschen von Kyrene mit Namen Simon; den zwungen sie, daß er ihm sein Kreuz trug.

And after they had mocked him, they removed his cloak and dressed him in his own clothes again, then lead him away to be crucified. And as they were going out, they came upon a man from Cyrene by the name of Simon, and made him carry his cross for him.

65. Arioso - Bass

Ja freilich will in uns das Fleisch und Blut
Zum Kreuz gezwungen sein;
Je mehr es unsrer Seele gut,
Je herber geht es ein.

Yes, the flesh and blood in us would freely
Be compelled to bear this cross
The deeper the marks that it leaves,
The better it is for our souls.

66. Aria - Bass

Komm, süßes Kreuz, so will ich sagen,
Mein Jesu, gib es immer her!
Wird mir mein Leiden einst zu schwer,
So hilfst du mir es selber tragen.

Come, sweet cross, I shall say
My Jesus, give it always to me.
If my sufferings ever become too great,
You yourself will help me to bear them.

67. Recitative - Evangelist

Evangelist

Und da sie an die Stätte kamen mit Namen Golgatha, das ist verdeutschet Schädelstätt, gaben sie ihm Essig zu trinken mit Gallen vermischet; und da er's schmeckete, wollte er's nicht trinken.

Da sie ihn aber gekreuziget hatten, teilten sie seine Kleider und wurfen das Los darum, auf daß erfüllet würde, das gesagt ist durch den Propheten: "Sie haben meine Kleider unter sich geteilet, und über mein Gewand haben sie das Los geworfen."

Und sie saßen allda und hüteten sein. Und oben zu seinen Häupten hefteten sie die Ursach seines Todes beschrieben, nämlich: "Dies ist Jesus, der Jüden König." Und da wurden zween Mörder mit ihm gekreuziget, einer zur Rechten und einer zur Linken. Die aber vorübergingen, lästerten ihn und schüttelten ihre Köpfe und sprachen:

Chorus

Der du den Tempel Gottes zerbrichst und bauest ihn in dreien Tagen, hilf dir selber! Bist du Gottes Sohn, so steig herab vom Kreuz!

Evangelist

Desgleichen auch die Hohenpriester spotteten sein samt den Schriftgelehrten und Ältesten und sprachen:

Chorus

Andern hat er geholfen und kann ihm selber nicht helfen. Ist er der König Israel, so steige er nun vom Kreuz, so wollen wir ihm glauben. Er hat Gott vertrauet, der erlöse ihn nun, lüset's ihn; den er hat gesagt: "Ich bin Gottes Sohn."

68. Recitative - Evangelist

Evangelist

Desgleichen schmäheten ihn auch die Mörder, die mit ihm gekreuziget waren.

Evangelist

And when they came unto a place called Golgotha, which in translation means, The Place of a Skull, they gave him vinegar to drink mixed with gall, and when he tasted it he refused to drink it.

Now when they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots in order that the words of the prophet might come true: "They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my clothing."

And they sat there and kept watch over him. And above his head they placed a note giving the reason for his death: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews" And two murderers were crucified with him, one on his right hand and one on his left. Now those who walked past reviled him, shaking their heads and saying:

Chorus

You, who could destroy the temple of God and build it in three days, save yourself. If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Evangelist

In the same way the chief priest mocked him, as did the scribes and elders, saying:

Chorus

He saved others, but he cannot save himself. If he is the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and then we shall believe him. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he desires it, for he said: "I am the Son of God"

Evangelist

In the same way he was reviled by the murderers who were crucified with him.

69. Arioso - Alto

Ach Golgotha, unselges Golgotha!
Der Herr der Herrlichkeit muß
schimpflich hier verderben,
Der Segen und das Heil der Welt
Wird als ein Fluch ans Kreuz gestellt.
Der Schöpfer Himmels und der Erden
Soll Erd und Luft entzogen werden.
Die Unschuld muß hier schuldig sterben,
Das gehet meiner Seele nah;
Ach Golgotha, unselges Golgotha!

Ah, Golgotha, wretched Golgotha!
The Lord of Glory must perish
shamefully here.
The blessing and salvation of the world
Are nailed to the cross like a curse.
The Creator of heaven and earth,
Shall be robbed of earth and air
Guiltless must die here, guilty
This cuts my to the quick
Ah, Golgotha, wretched Golgotha!

70. Aria - Alto and Chorus

Alto

Sehet, Jesus hat die Hand,
Uns zu fassen, ausgespannt. Kommt!

Chorus

Wohin?

Alto

In Jesu Armen Sucht Erlösung, nehmt
Erbarmen. Suchet!

Chorus

Wo?

Alto

In Jesu Armen.
Lebet, sterbet, ruhet hier,
Ihr verlass'nen Küchlein ihr. Bleibet!

Chorus

Wo?

Alto

In Jesu Armen.

Alto

See, Jesus has stretched out his hand to
grasp us. Come!

Chorus

Where?

Alto

In Jesus' arms seek redemption, find
mercy. Seek!

Chorus

Where?

Alto

In Jesus' arms!
Live, die, rest here,
You abandoned chicks. Stay here!

Chorus

Where?

Alto

In Jesus' arms.

Notes:

- In #64, note the aching, falling *melisma* as the Evangelist sings '*kreuzigten*' ('*crucified*')
- In #65, Bach gives this recitative a light and airy sense. Bach knows that many of us, when asked to '*take up our cross and carry it daily*' do so at first very gladly. We are ready to prove to God that we are 'up to the task'. It is only later that we wither and shrink from the true burden of that cross.
- In #66, the Viola da Gamba and bass, play a continuing series of upward motifs, in a plodding pattern, painting a picture of Simon carrying the cross upward to Golgotha. Every now and then, almost at random, you can hear in the music a stumble, or a fall under the weight of the cross.
 - The oxymoron of '*süßes Kreuz*' ('*sweet cross*') is contrasted even more with the less than sweet music.
- In #67, the Chorus, mocks Jesus, both as the crowd and the chief priest.

- Bach uses a polyphonic development in both of these, finally coming into unison at the final, mocking words of '*Ich bin Gottes Sohn!*' ('*I am the Son of God!*').
- In #68, as if not wanting to 'pile on', Bach allows the Evangelist to tell us that the two murders also mocked Jesus, rather than allowing the Chorus to again jump again into the fray.
- In #69, as is fitting for the crucifixion, Bach gives this piece a very somber mood. The bass is played 'pizzicato' (plucked rather than bowed), and the oboes have a mournful melody.
 - Bach had originally scored this work to be played with an old style of Oboe, called the 'Oboe da caccia'. It was shaped more like a ram's horn and had a very 'hollow sound', much like you might get when knocking on the top of a skull. Very fitting for an aria about Golgotha, the Place of the Skull.
- In #70, Bach shows his knack for giving us visions of both our sinfulness and yet the great hope we have in the grace and mercy of God. After the Alto has sung about the wretchedness of Golgotha in #69, she then exhorts us '*In Jesu Armen Sucht Erlösung, nehmt Erbarmen!*' ('*In Jesus' arms seek redemption, find mercy!*') Even in the darkest hour, there is hope.

Scene Fifteen: Jesus' Death and Entombment

71. Recitative – Evangelist, Jesus, and Chorus

Evangelist

Und von der sechsten Stunde an war eine Finsternis über das ganze Land bis zu der neunten Stunde. Und um die neunte Stunde schrie. Jesus laut und sprach:

Jesus

Eli, Eli, lama asabthani?

Evangelist

Das ist: "Mein Gott, mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen?"

Etliche aber, die da stunden, da sie das höreten, sprachen sie:

Chorus

Der rufet dem Elias!

Evangelist

Und bald lief einer unter ihnen, nahm einen Schwamm und füllte ihn mit Essig und steckte ihn auf ein Rohr und tränkte ihn. Die andern aber sprachen:

Chorus

Halt! Laß sehen, ob Elias komme und ihm helfe?

Evangelist

Aber Jesus schrie abermal laut und verschied.

72. Chorale

Wenn ich einmal soll scheiden,
So scheid nicht von mir,
Wenn ich den Tod soll leiden,
So tritt du denn herfür!
Wenn mir am allerbängsten
Wird um das Herze sein,
So reiß mich aus den Ängsten
Kraft deiner Angst und Pein!

Evangelist

And from the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour. And around the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, saying

Jesus

Eli, Eli, lama asabthani?

Evangelist

That is to say: "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

When they heard this, some of those who were standing there said:

Chorus

He is calling for Elijah!

Evangelist

At once one of them ran and took a sponge and filled it with vinegar and put it on a stick and gave it to him to drink. But others said:

Chorus

Wait! Let us see if Elijah will come and save him.

Evangelist

But Jesus cried again in a loud voice, departed this life.

When I too depart this life,
Do not depart from me,
When I have to suffer death,
Stand by me!
When my heart is beset
By the greatest of terrors
Rid me of these fears
Through your own grief and pain!

73. Recitative - Evangelist

Evangelist

Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel zerriß in zwei Stück von oben an bis unten aus. Und die Erde erbebete, und die Felsen zerrissen, und die Gräber täten sich auf, und stunden auf viel Leiber der Heiligen, die da schiefen, und gingen aus den Gräbern nach seiner Auferstehung und kamen in die heilige Stadt und erschienen vielen.

Aber der Hauptmann und die bei ihm waren und bewahreten Jesum, da sie sahen das Erdbeben und was da geschah, erschraken sie sehr und sprachen:

Chorus

Wahrlich, dieser ist Gottes Sohn gewesen.

Evangelist

Und es waren viel Weiber da, die von ferne zusahen, die da waren nachgefolget aus Galiläa und hatten ihm gedienet, unter welchen war Maria Magdalena und Maria, die Mutter Jacobi und Joses, und die Mutter der Kinder Zebedäi.

Am Abend aber kam ein reicher Mann von Arimathia, der hieß Joseph, welcher auch ein Jünger Jesu war, der ging zu Pilato und bat ihn um den Leichnam Jesu. Da befahl Pilatus, man sollte ihm ihn geben.

Evangelist

And behold, the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And the earth shook and the rocks were split and the graves were opened and the bodies of many of the saints rose up who had been sleeping. And following his resurrection, they emerged from their graves and came to the holy city and appeared to many.

But when the captain and the men who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified and said:

Chorus

Truly, this was the Son of God.

Evangelist

And there were many women present, who looked on from a distance, and who had followed Jesus from Galilee and served him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the children of Zebedee.

Now in the evening there came a rich man from Arimathea who was called Joseph and who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked him for Jesus' body. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.

74. Arioso - Bass

Am Abend, da es kühle war,
Ward Adams Fallen offenbar;
Am Abend drücket ihn der Heiland
nieder.
Am Abend kam die Taube wieder
Und trug ein Ölblatt in dem Munde.
O schöne Zeit! O Abendstunde!

Der Friedensschluß ist nun mit Gott
gemacht,
Denn Jesus hat sein Kreuz vollbracht.
Sein Leichnam kömmt zur Ruh,
Ach! liebe Seele, bitte du,
Geh, lasse dir den toten Jesum schenken,
O heilsames, o köstlichs Angedenken!

75. Aria - Bass

Mache dich, mein Herze, rein,
Ich will Jesum selbst begraben.
Denn er soll nunmehr in mir
Für und für
Seine süße Ruhe haben.
Welt, geh aus, laß Jesum ein!

In the evening, when it was cool,
Adam's fall became clear.
In the evening our Savior casts him
down.
In the evening the dove returned
And bore an olive branch in its mouth
Oh beautiful time! O evening hour!

We now make our peace with God
For Jesus has endured the cross.
His body finds rest
Ah, dear soul, ask,
Go, ask them to give you the dead Jesus.
O welcome, precious keepsake!

Make yourself pure, my heart,
I want to bury Jesus myself
From now on he shall find sweet rest in
me forever and ever.
World, be gone!
Let Jesus in!

76. Recitative - Evangelist

Evangelist

Und Joseph nahm den Leib und wickelte ihn in ein rein Leinwand und legte ihn in sein eigen neu Grab, welches er hatte lassen in einen Fels hauen, und wälzete einen großen Stein vor die Tür des Grabes und ging davon.

Es war aber allda Maria Magdalena und die andere Maria, die satzten sich gegen das Grab. Des andern Tages, der da folget nach dem Rüsttage, kamen die Hohenpriester und Pharisäer sämtlich zu Pilato und sprachen:

Chorus

Herr, wir haben gedacht, daß dieser Verführer sprach, da er noch lebete: "Ich will nach dreien Tagen wieder auferstehen." Darum befiehl, daß man das Grab verwahre bis an den dritten Tag, auf daß nicht seine Jünger kommen und stehlen ihn und sagen zu dem Volk: Er ist auferstanden von den Toten, und werde der letzte Betrug ärger denn der erste!

Evangelist

Pilatus sprach zu ihnen:

Pilate

Da habt ihr die Hüter; gehet hin und verwahret's, wie ihr's wisset!

Evangelist

Sie gingen hin und verwahreten das Grab mit Hütern und versiegelten den Stein.

Evangelist

And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock, and rolled a large stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and left.

And Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, were sitting opposite the tomb. The next day, that is the day after the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate and said:

Chorus

Sir, we remember that while he was still alive this seducer said: "After three days I shall rise again." So you should give orders for the tomb to be guarded until the third day, so that his disciples do not come and steal him and say to the people:

He has risen from the dead, otherwise the last deception will be worse than the first.

Evangelist

Pilate said to them:

Pilate

Here are your guards. Go and make it as secure as you can.

Evangelist

And they went out and secured the tomb with guards and sealed the stone.

77. Arioso: Bass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano, and Chorus

Bass

Nun ist der Herr zur Ruh gebracht.

Chorus

Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!

Tenor

Die Müh ist aus, die unsre Sünden ihm gemacht.

Chorus

Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!

Alto

O selige Gebeine, Seht, wie ich euch mit Buß und Reu beweine, Daß euch mein Fall in solche Not gebracht!

Chorus

Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!

Soprano

Habt lebenslang Vor euer Leiden tausend Dank, Daß ihr mein Seelenheil so wert geacht'.

Chorus

Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!

Bass

Now the Lord is laid to rest.

Chorus

My Jesus, goodnight!

Tenor

The toils that our sins have caused him are over.

Chorus

My Jesus, goodnight!

Alto

O blessed remains, see how I weep for you in penance and remorse, because my lapse brought you such suffering!

Chorus

My Jesus, goodnight!

Soprano

All life long accept a thousand thanks for your suffering, because you thought my soul's salvation so important.

Chorus

My Jesus, goodnight!

Notes:

- With #71 we move to the very heart of the Passion: Jesus' death.
 - The orchestral voicing is sparse, to emphasis how much Jesus has been abandoned.
 - As Jesus speaks his last words of '*Eli, Eli, lama asabthani?*', Bach's '*halo of strings*' has disappeared. Bach's musical reminder to us is that Jesus is now truly a man: left alone; abandoned; hanging on a cross, dying. He is no longer the 'teacher', 'healer', 'miracle worker'. He is a man, left to die under the weight of the entire sinful world.
 - When the Evangelist translates these words, he uses the exact same musical structure that Jesus sang, but at a higher pitch, to give them emphasis.
 - These last words of Christ '*Eli, Eli, lama asabthani*' are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. They are Aramaic.
 - The Evangelist, with understated simplicity, announces Jesus' death.
 - As is traditional, a long silence is kept to let the impact sink in.
- With #72 we come to the last Chorale of the Passion and fittingly, Bach returns to the '*Passion Chorale*'.
 - As if wanting to not break the quiet reflection on Jesus' death, Bach scores this quietly, in the key of A minor, with no flats or sharps, as if to say, '*it is finished*'.
 - The words of this Chorale bring answers to some of mankind's greatest fears: '*Will I be alone upon my death? Will there be a 'tomorrow'? What*

will it look like? While Bach does not answer the specifics of all the questions, the Chorale leaves us with great hope, that YES, Jesus will stand by us at our moment of greatest fear.

- As if to underscore this uncertainty, Bach harmonizes this final version of the *Passion Chorale* to emphasize this questioning. Note the unstable harmonies, particularly in the basses, as the choir sings ‘*Wenn mir am allerbängsten Wird um das Herze sein*’ (‘*When my heart is beset by the greatest of terrors*’). This harmonic quavering and uncertainty reflects every person’s fears. Yet by the time the Chorus sings ‘*Kraft deiner Angst und Pein!*’ (‘*Through your own grief and pain!*’), Bach has harmonically put that fear to rest by returning to a more stable harmonization.
- In #73, the continuo, which has mostly been in a background supportive role, erupts with the tearing of the curtain and the earthquake.
 - Note the ripping downward scales of the cello as the curtain is torn.
 - Note with the earthquake, that the cello starts a chromatic rise from its very lowest note (a deep C) upward, pushing the saints out of the grave.
 - The Chorus intervenes, now as the Roman guards, sounding more angelic than fierce. Bach allows these ‘heathens’ to return us to one of his central themes: ‘*Wahrlich, dieser ist Gottes Sohn gewesen.*’ (‘*Truly, this was the Son of God.*’)
- In #74, having witnessed Jesus’ death, the curtain of the Temple torn, the rocks split and the dead raised, Bach gives us a moment of peace: the calm of the evening.
 - The music evokes the calm and quiet of the evening with falling scales in the strings, as if the sun were setting.
 - Nothing now is able to ‘change’ the outcome. The betrayal is behind us. The false witnesses are gone. The denial is in the mirror. The sham of a trial is old news. The bloody, painful flogging can hurt no more. The nails of the crucifixion, driven through the hands and feet of Jesus, are now left to rust. Jesus is dead.
 - The Bass succinctly recounts mankind’s story with a focus on the evening.
 - It was in the evening that God walked through the Garden of Eden to find that mankind, through Adam, had taken a great fall.
 - It was in the evening, that Noah saw the dove return with an olive branch, symbolical of God saying ‘*I will never leave you!*’
 - And so it is in the evening, Bach has his listener huddled under the cross that still holds the dead body of Jesus.
- In #75, we come of the final aria of the Passion
 - Having witnessed Jesus’ painful death, the curtain of the Temple torn, the rocks split and the dead raised – Bach gives us: a Dance? What was Bach thinking?
 - This lilting and airy dance-like number is in the form of ‘*sarabande*’. It has its purpose. While the Passion will leave us on Good Friday with Jesus dead and in the grave, Bach uses this aria to foreshadow the joy that will be coming in three days, on Easter.
 - The words bring us face-to-face again with a tenant of Bach’s

Reformation faith: to have a pure heart, we must 'die' with Jesus, 'buried' with Jesus, and be 'born' anew with Jesus.

- With #76, the Evangelist, now once again returns to a passive 'reporter' filling in the details of Jesus' entombment.
 - Meanwhile, the Chorus, comes in one more time as an angry mob of priests, demanding of Pilate that Jesus' tomb be guarded unless there is a further '*Betrug*' ('*deception*')
 - The Evangelist sings his last words. Appropriately for Good Friday, he '*versiegeln den Stein*' ('*seals the stone*') of the tomb leaving us waiting for . . .
- With #77, St. Matthew's narrative is complete (through Good Friday!) Jesus is dead and sealed in his tomb.
 - Each soloist now reflects on the story. Bach moves us from the Bass (the earth) to the Soprano (the Heavens). The Bass, reminds us that Jesus' is dead and buried; the Tenor reflects that Jesus' suffers no more; the Alto, reminds us that 'it is for our sins that Jesus died'; while the Soprano, ever hopeful and heavenward, reminds us that Jesus love was come complete and that '*mein Seelenheil so wert geacht*' ('*my soul's salvation so important*') that he *wanted* to die to redeem it.
 - After each soloist sings their last words, the Chorus, in almost a child-like lullaby, sings Jesus to sleep with the words '*Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!*' ('*My Jesus, goodnight!*')

Scene Sixteen: Good Friday Lament

78. Chorus

Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder
Und rufen dir im Grabe zu:
Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!

We sit down in tears
And call to you in the tomb:
Rest gently, gently rest!

Ruht, ihr ausgesognen Glieder!
Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!

Rest, exhausted limbs!
Rest gently, gently rest!

Euer Grab und Leichenstein
Soll dem ängstlichen Gewissen
Ein bequemes Ruhekkissen
Und der Seelen Ruhstatt sein.
Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!
Höchst vergnügt schlummern da die
Augen ein.
Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!

Your grave and tombstone
Shall be a soft pillow for the uneasy
conscience
And a place for the soul to rest.
Rest gently, gently rest!
In utmost bliss our eyes shall then fall
asleep.
Rest gently, gently rest!

Notes:

- For #78, Bach's brings together both orchestras and all three Choruses for the final number. They are joined as the entire Christian community.
 - Bach returns to the somber 'dirge' like quality of the opening of the work.
 - Where he opened the work in the key of E minor, foreshadowing the crucifixion, he finishes the Passion in the key of A minor.
 - The final word of the Passion, almost as a prayer, is '*ruh*' ('rest')
 - Just like Good Friday leaves the story un-resolved, note how Bach ends the works on an un-resolved major 7th chord, musically also leaving us hanging - until Easter Sunday!