

"Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen" BWV 51

1. Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!
Was der Himmel und die Welt
An Geschöpfen in sich hält,
Müssen dessen Ruhm erhöhen,
Und wir wollen unserm Gott
Gleichfalls itzt ein Opfer bringen,
Dass er uns in Kreuz und Not
Allezeit hat beigestanden.

1. Raise a shout to God in all lands.¹
All created things that heaven
And earth contains
Must exalt his glory;
And we want, now,
Likewise to bring an offering to our God,
Because he has stood with us
In cross-bearing² and need at all times.

2. Wir beten zu dem Tempel an,
Da Gottes Ehre wohnt,
Da dessen Treu,
So täglich neu,
Mit lauter Segen lohnet.
Wir preisen, was er an uns hat getan.
Muss gleich mein schwacher Mund³ von seinen
Wundern lallen,
So kann ein schlechtes Lob ihm dennoch
wohlgefallen.

2. We worship at the temple
Where God's honor dwells,
Where his faithfulness,
Thus daily new,⁴
Rewards with pure blessing.
We praise what he has done for us.
Even though my feeble mouth must babble about his
wonders,
A simple⁵ acclamation can nonetheless please him
well.

3. Höchster, mache deine Güte
Ferner alle Morgen neu.
So soll vor die⁶ Vätertreu

3. Most High,⁷ render your goodness
Henceforth new every morning.⁸
Thus, for the faithfulness of [God] the Father,

¹"Landen" is plural. The more common plural for "Land" is "Länder," but an additional, older German plural is "Lande." The (dative) plural here in line 1 derives from Luther's rendering of Psalm 66:1, "Jauchzet Gott, alle Lande!" ("Raise a shout to God, all [you] lands").

²"Kreuz" here means the suffering of metaphorically bearing/enduring the cross, as Jesus did literally. In the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, Jesus says in Luke 14:27, "Wer nicht sein Kreuz trägt und mir nachfolget, der kann nicht mein Jünger sein" ("Whoever does not bear his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple").

³In mm. 9–10 of the original materials Bach wrote "der schwache Mund" ("the feeble mouth"), but in mm. 16–18 he wrote "mein schwacher Mund" ("my feeble mouth").

⁴Lines 3–4 of this movement and lines 1–2 of movement 3 take much of their language from Lamentations 3:22–23, as rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, "Die Güte des HERRN ists, dass wir nicht gar aus sind; seine Barmherzigkeit hat noch kein Ende, sondern sie ist alle Morgen neu, und deine Treue ist gross." ("It is [through] the goodness of the Lord [God] that we are not completely done for; his mercifulness, if anything, has no end; but it is new every morning, and great is your [i.e., God's] faithfulness").

⁵"Schlecht" is apparently used here in the older German sense of "schlicht" ("plain and simple," "artless").

⁶In m. 18 of his original performing part, Bach wrote "So soll deine Vätertreu" ("Thus your [God the] Fatherly faithfulness"), which ends up being ungrammatical with respect to the rest of the line; in m. 26 he started writing "So soll deine" but immediately covered "deine" with "vor" and continued with "die Vätertreu." In his score Bach wrote "vor die" in both places.

⁷"Most High" is a name used frequently in the Hebrew Bible for the Lord God of Israel. In the New Testament, God the Father (but not Jesus, the Son) is called "Most High."

Auch ein dankbares Gemüte
Durch ein frommes Leben weisen,
Dass wir deine Kinder heissen.

A thankful disposition, too,
Should show, through a pious life,
That we are called your children.⁹

**4. Sei Lob und Preis mit Ehren
Gott Vater, Sohn, Heiligem Geist!
Der woll in uns vermehren,
Was er uns aus Gnaden verheisst,
Dass wir ihm fest vertrauen,
Gänzlich uns lass'n¹⁰ auf ihn,
Von Herzen auf ihn bauen,
Dass uns'r Herz, Mut und Sinn
Ihm festiglich anhangen;¹¹
Drauf singen wir zur Stund:
Amen, wir werdn's erlangen,
Glaub'n wir zu aller Stund.¹²**

**4. Acclamation and praise with honor¹³ be
To God Father, Son, Holy Spirit,
Who would increase in us
What he, out of mercy, promises us;
That we may trust him steadfastly,
Wholly leave ourselves over to him,
Rely on him from the heart,
That our heart, courage, and mind
May adhere steadfastly to him;
Thus we sing at this hour:
Amen, we will obtain it,
If we believe at every hour.¹⁴**

5. Alleluja!

5. Hallelujah.

(transl. Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed)



Scan or go to <http://www.bachcantatatexts.org/BWV51> for an annotated translation

⁸Regarding the adaptation of biblical language here, see the note on lines 3–4 of movement 2, above.

⁹The word “God” does not appear in this movement, but God is mentioned in the A section as “Most High,” and the B section clearly takes its language from 1 John 3:1, as rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach’s day, “Sehet, welch eine Liebe hat uns der Vater erzeiget, dass wir Gottes Kinder sollen heissen” (“Look, what a [great] love has [God] the Father shown us, that we should be called God’s children”).

¹⁰Some editions of this cantata read “verlass'n auf ihn” (“depend on him”) here, but Bach’s own score and performing part clearly read “uns lass'n auf ihn” (“leave ourselves over to him”). This hymn stanza is also used in Bach’s Cantatas 29 and 167, both of which read “verlassen auf ihn.”

¹¹“Anhangen” is an older spelling for “anhängen.”

¹²The final stanza of “Nun lob, mein Seel, den Herren.”

¹³The “n” in “mit Ehren” here, in older German, is a singular (not plural) dative ending.

¹⁴Bach’s performing part clearly reads “Glaub'n wir zu aller Stund” for the last line of this hymn stanza, making for clumsy poetry (“Stund” rhyming with “Stund”) but unassailable Lutheran theology. His score gives that same reading, but at some point he evidently changed “zu aller Stund” to “aus Herzensgrund” (“from the bottom of our heart”), the standard reading for this hymn (found in Bach’s Cantatas 29 and 167). This revision is not reflected in the autograph performing part, which was used multiple times in his lifetime with the text “zu aller Stund.” Thus, both readings are attested in sources in Bach’s hand.