

1. Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten
Und hoffet auf ihn allezeit,
Den wird er wunderbarlich erhalten
In allem Kreuz und Traurigkeit.
Wer Gott, dem Allerhöchsten, traut,
Der hat auf keinen Sand gebaut.

2. Was helfen uns die schweren Sorgen?
Sie drücken nur das Herz
Mit Zentnerpein, mit tausend Angst und Schmerz.
Was hilft uns unser Weh und Ach?
Es bringt nur bittres Ungemach.
Was hilft es, dass wir alle Morgen
Mit Seufzen von dem Schlaf aufstehn,
Und mit betrübtem Angesicht des Nachts zu Bette
gehn?
Wir machen unser Kreuz und Leid
Durch bange Traurigkeit nur grösser.
Drum tut ein Christ viel besser,
Er trägt sein Kreuz mit christlicher Gelassenheit.

3. Man halte nur ein wenig stille,
Wenn sich die Kreuzesstunde naht,
Denn **unsres Gottes Gnadenwille**
Verlässt uns nie mit Rat und Tat.
Gott, der die Auserwählten kennt,

1. Whoever only lets dear God rule
And hopes in him all the time,
He [God] will wondrously uphold him
In all cross-bearing and sadness.
Whoever trusts God, the Most High,¹
He [that person] has not built upon sand.²

2. How do heavy worries help us?
They only press the heart
With hundredweight of pain, with thousandfold³ fear and
anguish.
How does our “woe-and-alas” help us?
It brings only bitter affliction.
How does it help that every morning we
Rise from sleep with sighs,
And go to bed at night with tearful countenance?
We make our cross-bearing⁴ and suffering
Only greater by anxious sadness.
Thus a Christian does much better
If he bears his cross with Christian⁵ resignation [to God’s
will].⁶

3. Let one only hold still for a bit
When the hour of cross-bearing approaches,
For **the gracious will of our God**

GENERAL NOTE: The text of this cantata presents stanzas 1, 4, and 7 of this hymn intact as the first, middle, and last movements of the cantata; the other movements paraphrase and partly or wholly quote inner stanzas.

¹“Der Allerhöchste” means not “the Almighty” but “the Most High.” “Elyon” in Hebrew, “hupsistos” in Greek, is used in the Bible as a name for Israel’s God, “the Most High,” who dwells on high. In nonbiblical Greek, “hupsistos” was used for Zeus as the most high god.

²The last two lines of this hymn stanza allude to Matthew 7:26, where “the LORD” says, “Wer diese meine Rede hört und tut sie nicht, der ist einem törichten Mann gleich, der sein Haus auf den Sand bauete” (“Whoever hears this my discourse and does not act [upon] it, he is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand”).

³The leading German historical dictionary gives a definition of “tausend” as Leipzig dialect for “thousandfold.”

⁴“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”).

⁵“Christlich” does not mean “Christ-like” (i.e., to be like Christ); it means to be like others who follow Christ (i.e., to be “Christian”).

⁶“Gelassenheit” is used here in its older sense of resignation and calmness associated with leaving things to God’s will, as opposed to its modern sense of general placidity or imperturbability.

Gott, der sich uns ein⁷ Vater nennt,
Wird endlich allen Kummer wenden
Und seinen Kindern Hilfe senden.

**4. Er kennt die rechten Freudenstunden,
Er weiss wohl, wenn es nützlich sei;
Wenn er uns nur hat treu erfunden
Und merket keine Heuchelei,
So kömmt Gott, eh wir uns versehn,
Und lässet uns viel Guts geschehn.**

5. Denk nicht in deiner Drangsalshitze,
Wenn Blitz und Donner kracht
Und dir ein schwüles Wetter bange macht,
Dass du von Gott verlassen seist.
Gott bleibt auch in der grössten Not,
Ja gar bis in den Tod
Mit seiner Gnade bei den Seinen.
Du darfst nicht meinen,
Dass dieser Gott im Schosse sitze,
Der täglich wie der reiche Mann,
In Lust und Freuden leben kann.
Der sich mit stetem Glücke speist,
Bei lauter guten Tagen,
Muss oft zuletzt,
Nachdem er sich an eitler Lust ergötzt,
“Der Tod in Töpfen” sagen.
Die Folgezeit verändert viel!
Hat Petrus gleich die ganze Nacht

Never abandons us of [his] counsel and action.⁸
God, who knows the elect [for eternal salvation],
God, who calls himself a father to us,
Will ultimately turn away all grief
And send his children help.

**4. He knows the proper hours for joy;
He is well aware of when it [his help] will be
beneficial.
If he has only found us faithful
And notes no hypocrisy,
Then God comes, before we know it,
And lets many good things happen to us.**

5. Do not think, in the heat of your oppression,
When lightning and thunder cracks
And a sweltering storm makes you anxious,
That you are abandoned by God.
God abides even in the greatest need,
Yes even unto death,
In his grace with those who are his.
[But] you must not suppose
**That this⁹ [abiding/gracious] God may seat in the
bosom [of Abraham—heaven]¹⁰**
[The person] who can live daily like the rich man [of the
biblical parable],¹¹
In pleasure and joy;
[He] who [on earth] dines in constant good fortune,
Among nothing but good days,
Often, in the end,
After he has disported himself in idle pleasure,

⁷This line is sometimes given in modern printings as “Gott, der sich unser Vater nennt” (“God who calls himself our father”).

⁸This line draws for its sense on Luther’s rendering of Proverbs 8:14, where personified wisdom says “Mein ist beide, Rat und Tat; ich habe Verstand und Macht” (“Mine is both counsel and action; I have understanding and power”).

⁹There are many variant readings for this line in the hymnbooks of Bach’s day and earlier, reflecting and generating much confusion. Modern hymnals update this verse as “Denk nicht in deiner Drangsalshitze, dass du von Gott verlassen seist, und dass ihm der im Schosse sitze, der sich mit stetem Glücke speist” (“Do not think in the heat of your oppression that you are abandoned by God, and [do not think] that he [God] may seat in heaven him who [on earth] dines in constant good fortune”). “Dieser” (“This”) in this cantata libretto is nominative and thus would apparently apply to the subject, “God,” not to the next line’s person who is “like the rich man.”

¹⁰“Im Schosse” here does not refer to God’s lap. The turn of phrase is derived from “Abraham’s bosom,” an expression in Luke 16:19-31, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Being “in someone’s bosom” referred to reclining at the right of the host (i.e., the place of honor) at a meal (e.g., John 13:23). In Luke 16:22-23, Lazarus is depicted as being, after his death, “in seinem Schosse” (“in his [Abraham’s] bosom”). Western Christianity came to use “Abraham’s bosom” as a designation for heaven.

¹¹With regard to the parable of the rich man in Luke 16:19-31, see fn. 10, above.

Mit leerer Arbeit zugebracht
Und nichts gefangen:
Auf Jesu Wort kann er noch einen Zug erlangen.
Drum traue nur in Armut, Kreuz und Pein
Auf deines Jesu Güte
Mit gläubigem Gemüte;
Nach Regen gibt er Sonnenschein
Und setzet jeglichem sein Ziel.

6. Ich will auf den Herren schau'n
Und stets meinem Gott vertraun.
Er ist der rechte Wundermann,
Der die **Reichen arm** und bloss
Und die **Armen reich und gross**
Nach seinem Willen **machen kann.**

7. Sing, bet und geh auf Gottes Wegen,
Verricht das Deine nur getreu
Und trau des Himmels reichem Segen,
So wird er bei dir werden neu;
Denn welcher seine Zuversicht
Auf Gott setzt, den verlässt er nicht.

Must say "[There is] death in [the] pot!"¹²
The ensuing time changes many things!
Though Peter had spent the whole night
In empty labor [of net-fishing]
And caught nothing.¹³
Yet at Jesus's word he can be allotted¹⁴ a haul.
Thus in poverty, cross-bearing, and pain
Trust only in your Jesus's goodness
With faith-professing disposition;
After rain he gives sunshine,
And he sets to each [person] their limit/lifespan.¹⁵

6. I will look unto the Lord¹⁶
And always trust in my God.
He is the true man of miracles,
Who **can make** the **rich poor** and naked,
And the **poor rich and great**
In accordance with his will.

7. Sing, pray, and go on God's paths;
Only carry out faithfully what [duty] is yours
And trust in heaven's rich blessing,
So [that] it [divine blessing] will become new in you
[every morning];¹⁷
For whoever puts his hope
In God, he [God] does not abandon him.

(transl. Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed)

¹²This expression comes from the narrative in 2 Kings 4:38-41 of the prophet Elisha feeding a group of disciples with a stew unwittingly including wild gourds that were apparently poisonous, at which the disciples declared, in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, "O Mann Gottes, der Tod im Töpfen!" ("[Elisha,] oh [you] man of God, [there is] death in the pot!"). Bach's cantata librettist is suggesting here that "idle pleasure" is a kind of "poison."

¹³As related in Luke 5:1-11, the gospel portion in the liturgical occasion that this cantata was designed for.

¹⁴"Erlangen" is employed here in its sense of "auch ohne eigenes Zutun zu etwas kommen, jemandem zuteil werden" ("to obtain something even without one's own effort, for someone to be allotted something").

¹⁵The "Ziel" here evidently refers to the time limit set on a person's life. Job 14:5, in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, reads "Er hat seine bestimmte Zeit, die Zahl seiner Monden steht bei dir; du hast ein Ziel gesetzt, das wird er nicht übergehen" ("[A man] has his specified time, the number of his months is with you [God]; you have set a [time] limit that he will not go over").

¹⁶This line quotes most of Micah 7:7, "Ich aber will auf den HERRN schauen" ("But I will look unto the LORD"); the immediately previous verses in Micah declare that no human being can be trusted, not even close family.

¹⁷This line echoes, a bit distantly, the sentiments of Lamentations 3:22-23, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "Die Güte des HERRN ist, 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 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").



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