St. Matthew Passion BWV 244.1 (1727)

1. TEIL

1. DIE TOCHTER ZION UND DIE GLÄUBIGEN
Z: Kommt, ihr Töchter, helft mir klagen,
Sehet! *Gl:* Wen? *Z:* den Bräutigam.
Seht ihn; *Gl:* Wie? *Z:* als wie ein Lamm.
O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig
Am Stamm des Kreuzes geschlachtet,
Z: Sehet! *Gl:* Was? *Z:* seht die Geduld.
Allzeit erfunden geduldig,
Wiewohl du warest verachtet.
Z: Seht! *Gl:* Wohin? *Z:* auf unsre Schuld.
All Sünd hast du getragen,
Sonst müssten wir verzagen.

PART 1

1. DAUGHTER ZION[1] AND THE BELIEVERS[2]
Z: Come, you Daughters [of Zion/Jerusalem],[3] help me lament;
Look; *B:* At whom? *Z:* at the bridegroom.[4]
Look at him; *B:* [Appearing] how? *Z:* like a lamb [to be slain].[5]
O Lamb of God, innocent,[6]
Slaughtered on the trunk of the cross,
Z: Look; *B:* At what? *Z:* look at the patience [of the lamb].
Always found to be patient,
Even though you were despised.
Z: Look; *B:* Where? *Z:* upon our guilt.
You have borne all sin;
Otherwise, we would have to despair.

[1]In the Hebrew Bible the city of Jerusalem is personified as a woman, "bat-siyyon" ("Daughter Zion"; rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day as "die Tochter Zion" [literally, "the daughter 'Zion' "]). In traditional Christian interpretation, "Daughter Zion" referred to the ancient messiah-expecting and eventual Jesus-acknowledging church in the sense of the people of God as an aggregate. Some modern editions of this libretto give the designation not as the librettist's "die Tochter Zion" ("Daughter Zion") but as "die Töchter Zion" ("the Daughters of Zion"), i.e., with an umlaut added over the "o" making a plural; see also the note, below, regarding "ihr Töchter" ("you Daughters [of Zion/Jerusalem])" in the first line of this movement's poetry.

[2]"The believers" referred to the church in the sense of all the individual ancient faithful expecters of God's messiah, along with the eventual followers of Jesus. Some modern editions of this libretto give the designation not as the librettist's "die Gläubigen" ("the Believers") but as "Gläubigen Seelen" with the translation "Faithful Souls."

[3]In this line, "you Daughters [of Zion]" (which in Song of Songs 3:11 is rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day either as "ihr Töchter zu Zion" or "ihr Töchter Zion") are exhorted by their mother, "Daughter Zion," to lament Jesus's crucifixion. "The Daughters of Zion" were understood in Christian interpretation allegorically as the Christian church in general ("the believers"). They were traditionally associated or conflated with the "Daughters of Jerusalem," who in Luke 23:28 lament Jesus's crucifixion. It was said of Jerusalem in Galatians 4:26 that "das Jerusalem, das droben ist, das ist die Freie; die ist unser aller Mutter" ("the Jerusalem that is above [in heaven], that [ideal city] is the free [woman]; she [the free woman, Daughter Zion] is the mother of us all [i.e., we believers in Jesus who are the daughters of Daughter Zion]").

[4]The "bride" of the Song of Songs in the Hebrew Bible was understood in Christian interpretation allegorically as the church in general, whose "bridegroom" is Christ.

[5]Jesus as "lamb" originates from John 1:29, "Siehe, das ist Gottes Lamm, welches der Welt Sünde traget" ("Look, this one is God's [Passover] lamb, which bears the sin of the world"). The specific sense of the librettist's line is derived from Isaiah 53:7, "da er gestraft und gemartert ward, tat er seinen Mund nicht auf: wie ein Lamm, das zur Schlachtbank geführt wird" ("when he was punished and tortured, he did not open his mouth, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-bench"), a text for which in traditional Christian interpretation the "he" is applied prophetically to Jesus as God's Passover lamb.

[6]Jesus as a "innocent lamb" is derived from Luther's rendering of 1 Peter 1:18-19, "[Ihr] wisset, dass ihr … erlöst seid … mit dem teuren Blut Christi, als eines unschuldigen und unbefleckten Lammes" ("[You followers of Jesus]" know that you … are redeemed … with the precious blood of Christ, as of an innocent and unspotted [sacrificial/Passover] lamb"). The underlying New Testament Greek word for Luther's "unschuldig" here was "amomos," a cultic term literally denoting the physical perfection of a sacrificial animal, but which was also used as an ethical term metaphorically denoting the moral blamelessness of a person.

[Gl &] Z: Sehet ihn aus Lieb und Huld
Holz zum Kreuze selber[7] tragen.
Erbarm dich unser, o Jesu![8]

[B &] Z: Look at him, out of love and favor,
Bearing wood for the cross himself.[9]
Have mercy on us, O Jesus.

2. *Da Jesus diese Rede vollendet hatte, sprach er zu seinen Jüngern: Ihr wisset, dass nach zweien Tagen Ostern wird, und des Menschen Sohn wird überantwortet werden, dass er gekreuziget werde.*[10]

2. *When Jesus had brought this discourse*[11] *to a close, he declared to his disciples: "You know that after two days will be [the Jewish] Easter,*[12] *and the Son of Man*[13] *will be handed over, so that he may be crucified.*"

3. **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?[14]

3. **Most dearly beloved Jesus, what crime have you**
committed,
That such a severe judgment has been declared?
What is the trespass; what sort of misdeeds
Did you fall into?

4. *Da versammleten sich die Hohenpriester und Schriftgelehrten und die Ältesten im Volk in den Palast des*

4. *Then the chief priests,*[15] *and scripture scholars,*[16] *and the elders among the people gathered into the palace of the*

[7]The word "selber" ("himself") does not appear in the poet's reprinted libretto; it was probably left out by accident: the scansion of this line seems to require more than six syllables. All the other original sources include the "selber."

[8]The first stanza of this hymn. In the original text reprint its lines are interweaved with those of the new poem, as here.

[9]According to the Gospel of John (19:17), Jesus carried the cross himself (i.e., apparently unaided the whole time), but Matthew 27:32 (recited in movement 55, below) relates that the Roman soldiers coerced Simon of Cyrene to bear the cross for Jesus.

[10]Matthew 26:1b-2.

[11]That is, brought to a close perhaps not just the words of the previous chapters in the Gospel of Matthew but of his verbal preaching of the entire gospel message. The biblical text in the *St. Matthew Passion* libretto sticks very closely to Luther's rendering of Matthew 26–27, but Luther gave Matthew 26:1 as "Und es begab sich, da Jesus alle diese Reden vollendet hatte, sprach er zu seinen Jüngern" ("And it came to pass, when Jesus had brought all these discourses [plural] to a close, he declared to his disciples").

[12]Luther's use of "Oster" ("Easter") here is apparently meant to distance the observance of this festival by Jesus and his followers as much as possible from the Jewishness of Passover. Luther and Lutheranism equivocated on whether the word "Oster" referred to the (Christian) festival of "Easter" or to the (Jewish) festival of "Passover," with the latter also understood as prefiguring the former. Luther used both "Oster" and "Passah" for "Passover" in his translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, but he used only "Oster" in his New Testament. It may have been largely for its lack of Jewish associations that Luther went with the non-biblical word "Oster," derived from the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, "Eostre" or "Ostara." In older German, "Passah" was even defined as "das judische Osterfest" ("the Jewish Easter festival"); and in English, Passover has sometimes been referred to as "Jewish Easter." See also, at the first sentence of movement 9, below, the footnote regarding the Festival of Unleavened Bread and its relation to Passover/Easter.

[13]The phrase "Son of Man" had a variety of meanings in the Bible, and the import of its New Testament usages has been much contested. In any event, in its application to Jesus, the phrase was often especially meant to indicate his human nature.

[14]The first stanza of this hymn.

[15]Luther Bibles of Bach's day use "die Hohenpriester" (plural) to refer to the rotation of priests who worked in the Jerusalem Temple, and "der Hohepriester" (singular) to the head priest of them all. Partly to avoid potential narrative confusion, it became conventional in English translations of the Bible to call the former "the chief priests" and the latter "the high priest." The original Greek of the New Testament text gives "hoi archiereis" (literally, "the chief priests") and "ho archiereus" (literally, "the chief priest").

[16]This group consisted of men who copied biblical writings on scrolls and were learned in Mosaic laws and teachings. The standard English translation "scribe" might seem to overemphasize the writing component of their duties, while Luther's rendering "Schriftgelehrten" (literally, "scholars of scripture") would seem to place the greater emphasis on their biblical learning.

Hohenpriesters, der da[17] *hiess Kaiphas, und hielten Rat, wie sie Jesum mit Listen griffen und töteten. Sie sprachen aber: Ja nicht auf das Fest, auf dass nicht ein Aufruhr werde im Volk. Da nun Jesus war zu Bethanien, im Hause Simonis des Aussätzigen, trat zu ihm ein Weib, das*[18] *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: Wozu dienet dieser Unrat? Dieses Wasser hätte mögen teuer verkauft und den Armen gegeben werden. Da das Jesus merkete, sprach er zu ihnen: 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.*[19]

high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and held [a] council on how with cunning they might seize and kill Jesus. But they declared: "*Definitely not during*[20] *the [Passover]*[21] *festival, lest there be an uproar among the people.*" *Now when Jesus was at Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, a woman who had a glass jar with precious*[22] *[nard] water*[23] *approached him and poured it on his head, as he sat at table. When his disciples saw that, they became indignant and declared:* "*What purpose does this waste serve? This water might have been sold for a great sum and [the money] given to the poor.*" *When Jesus took note of that, he declared to them:* "*Why do you trouble the woman? She has done me a good deed. You always have poor people among you; but me you do not always have. The reason why she has poured this water on my body is that I am going to be buried. Truly, I say to you: Wherever this good news*[24] *is preached in the entire world, there they will also, in memorial to her, tell of what she has done.*"

5. Du lieber Heiland du,
Wenn deine Jünger töricht streiten,
Dass dieses fromme Weib

5. You, dear savior, you:
If your disciples foolishly bicker
Because this good/pious[25] woman wants

[17]"Da" had a wide variety of meanings in older German. At the beginning of this narrative portion it means "then," as in "next." Here it is an intensifier particle, inserted by Luther as a conventional element of story-telling, now archaic, of pointing to a specific character for dramatic emphasis, i.e., to highlight the character in a more immediate and vivid scene. Later German Bibles give the more neutral reading "der hiess Kaiphas" ("who was called Caiaphas").

[18]In BWV 244.1, this reads "das" (neuter singular, as in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day) with the antecedent "das Weib." In BWV 244.2, it reads "die" (feminine singular); this was common as a reflection of the sex of the person rather than the grammatical gender of the word. Both, in any event, translate as "who."

[19]Matthew 26:3-13.

[20]That is, the leaders hoped to wait until after the festival. (Jerusalem at this point, a few days before the festival, would already have been filled with pilgrims.) Note that in older German, "during the festival" was given with the accusative, "auf das Fest," whereas in the German of modern Bibles this is given with the dative, "auf/bei dem Fest."

[21]Luther emphatically understood this festival to be "Easter," not "Passover" (see the footnote in movement 2, above, regarding "the [Jewish] Easter"), and this is reflected in his New Testament translation. But the (Jewish) chief priests would of course, even in Luther's rendering of the narrative, be referring to the festival (if they were to name it explicitly) as "Passover," not "Easter."

[22]In modern German, "köstlich" means "delicious," or "exquisite," or "amusing," but in older German it could be used as a synonym for "teuer" or "kostbar" ("precious" in the sense of "expensive").

[23]In older German, "Nardenwasser" was sometimes used as a synonym for "Nardenöl" ("nard sap," "nard oil," or "spikenard"), a botanical extract. The parallel gospel passage in Mark 14:3 was rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day as "da kam ein Weib, die hatte ein Glass mit ungefälschtem und köstlichem Narden-Wasser; und sie . . . goss es auf sein Haupt" ("there came a woman who had a glass jar with genuine and precious nard water; and she . . . poured it on his head"). In Judith 10:3 and 16:10 the phrase "with precious ointment" was also rendered in the Luther Bibles as "mit köstlichem Wasser" (later German Bibles gave this as "mit kostbarem Balsam," among other substitutes).

[24]That is, this good news of salvation through the suffering Christ.

[25]"Fromm" generally means "pious." In older German it can also mean "upright," as e.g. in Psalm 25:8 (which is alluded to in line 5 of movement 25, below), "Der HERR ist gut und fromm" ("The LORD is good and upright"). Further, in older German it can also mean "good," as e.g. in the case of the "good wife" or "good woman" of Sirach 7:21 (Luther Bibles of Bach's day, "einer frommen Frauen"); she

Mit Salben deinen Leib
Zum Grabe will bereiten,
So lasse mir inzwischen zu,
Von meiner Augen Tränenflüssen
Ein Wasser auf dein Haupt zu giessen!

To prepare your body with salve[26] [of nard water]
For the grave,
Then allow me in the meantime
To pour from the rivers of my eyes' tears
A [stream of anointing] water upon your head.

6. Buss und Reu
Knirscht das Sündenherz entzwei,
  Dass die Tropfen meiner Zähren
  Angenehme Spezerei,
  Treuer Jesu, dir gebären.

6. Penitence and remorse
Grinds my sinful heart into pieces,[27]
  So that my teardrops might bring forth
  [Anointing] spices[28] acceptable[29]
  To you, faithful Jesus.

7. *Da ging hin der Zwölfen einer mit Namen Judas Ischarioth zu den Hohenpriestern und sprach: Was wollt ihr mir geben? Ich will ihn euch verraten. Und sie boten ihm dreissig Silberlinge. Und von dem an suchte er Gelegenheit, dass er ihn verriete.*[30]

7. *Then one of the twelve [disciples of Jesus], named Judas Iscariot, went forth to the chief priests and declared:* "*What will you give me? I will betray him [Jesus] to you.*" *And they offered him thirty pieces of silver.*[31] *And from then on he sought [an] opportunity that he might betray him.*

8. Blute nur, du liebes Herz!
  Ach! ein Kind, das du erzogen,
  Das aus[32] deiner Brust gesogen,

8. Just bleed [in mourning],[33] you dear heart [of Jesus]![34]
  Ah, a child that you have reared,
  Who has suckled from your breast,

is "good" in the sense of being willing to fulfill her duties and of being skilled at doing them (consider, too, e.g., such expressions in German as "ein frommes Pferd," which refers not to a pious or upright horse but one that is good for riding). Since the good deed of anointing Jesus for burial is also a religious act, perhaps all these senses of "fromm" are meant here.

[26]"Mit Salben," with the "n," is (old-fashioned) dative singular ("with salve"), not plural—the woman was not depicted as using several ointments or oils in preparing Jesus for the grave.

[27]The etymology of "entzwei" points to something "in two pieces," but the word came to mean "in many pieces," as probably intended here.

[28]That is, the sort of sacrificial or anointing spices alluded to in Ephesians 5:2, "Christus uns hat geliebt, und sich selbst dargegeben für uns zur Gabe und Opfer, Gott zu einem süssen Geruch" ("Christ loved us, and presented himself for us as a gift and offering, a sweet aroma [of incense] to God").

[29]The word "angenehm" can mean "pleasant," "comfortable," and the like. But here the sense, sometimes used by Luther, is of "acceptable" or "befitting."

[30]Matthew 26:14-16.

[31]In very old German, "Silberling" meant "a thing/item of silver," but those "things" apparently did not include coins. When the word had otherwise already essentially gone out of use, Luther nonetheless made use of it, frequently, in his Bible translation as a way of creating a special designation for ancient Jewish coinage. The underlying word here in the Gospel of Matthew is "argurion," which can mean "silver [in general]," "money [in general]," or "piece of silver [i.e., a coin]." When this Greek word refers to coinage, Luther rendered it as "Silberlinge" if the money sources are Jewish, but as "Groschen" if the money source involves any gentiles.

[32]In BWV 244.1, in an early scribal copy of the libretto, and in the poet's reprinted libretto, this reads "aus deiner Brust gesogen" ("has suckled from your breast"); in BWV 244.2, it reads "an deiner Brust gesogen" ("has suckled at your breast"), but in m. 39 it still reads "aus" (it is unclear whether the revision in BWV 244.2 was made to soften the meatphorical language, even if only slightly, of being breastfed by Jesus).

[33]"Herz bluten" (literally, "heart bleeding") means "to mourn."

[34]Jesus is here depicted as a maternal caretaker; seventeenth and eighteenth-century Lutheran writings frequently speak of the "Mutterherzen Jesu" ("motherly heart of Jesus").

Droht den Pfleger zu ermorden,
Denn es ist zur Schlange worden.

Threatens to murder its caretaker,
For it [the child, Judas,] has become a serpent [a devil].[35]

9. *Aber am ersten Tage der süssen Brot traten die Jünger zu Jesu und sprachen zu ihm: Wo willst du, dass wir dir bereiten, das Osterlamm zu essen? Er sprach: Gehet hin in die Stadt zu einem und sprecht zu ihm: Der Meister lässt dir sagen: Meine Zeit ist hie,*[36] *ich will bei dir die Ostern halten mit meinen Jüngern. Und die Jünger täten, wie ihnen Jesus befohlen hatte, und bereiteten das Osterlamm. Und am Abend satzte er sich zu Tische mit den Zwölfen. Und da sie assen, sprach er: Wahrlich, ich sage euch: Einer unter euch wird mich verraten. Und sie wurden sehr betrübt und huben an, ein jeglicher unter ihnen, und sagten zu ihm: Herr, bin ichs?*[37]

9. *But on the first day [of the Festival] of Unleavened Bread*[38] *the disciples approached Jesus and declared to him:* "*Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the lamb of [the Jewish] Easter*[39] *[meal]?*" *He declared:* "*Go forth into the city [Jerusalem] to someone and declare to him:* '*The master would have us say to you,* "*My time has come;*[40] *I want to hold the [observance of] Easter with you, [together] with my disciples.*"'" *And the disciples did as Jesus had commanded them, and prepared the Easter lamb. And in the evening he sat down at table with the twelve. And as they ate, he declared:* "*Truly, I say to you: one among you will betray me.*" *And they became very distressed and started up,*[41] *each and every one among them, saying to him:* "*Lord, am I the one?*"

10. **Ich bins, ich sollte büssen,
An Händen und an Füssen
Gebunden in der Höll.
Die Geisseln und die Banden**

10. **I am the one; I should atone,
Bound by [my] hands and by [my] feet
In hell.
The scourges and the bonds**

[35]John 13:27 says that at Jesus's last supper with his disciples "fuhr der Satan in ihn" ("Satan entered into him [Judas]"). The "Schlange" ("serpent") of Genesis 3 who lured Adam and Eve into sin was traditionally equated with Satan.

[36]In BWV 244.1, this reads "hie" (as in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day); in BWV 244.2, it reads "hier." Both translate as "here."

[37]Matthew 26:17-22.

[38]Literally, "the first day [of the Festival] of Sweet Breads." The word "sweet" is used for "unleavened" likewise in older English Bibles, as opposed to the word "sour-dough" for "leavened." (The early sixteenth-century English translation of William Tyndale here reads, "The fyrst daye of swete breed.") There is considerable confusion over the day and year marking Jesus's final Passover (biblically, the 14th day of the month, when the paschal lambs were sacrificed) and the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread (biblically, the 15th, when the lambs were eaten). "Passover" (which, in his New Testament, Luther called "Oster" ["Easter"]) came at some point to be the name for the festival itself. In any event, all four gospels appear to agree that Jesus died on the day before a sabbath; the accounts in Matthew, Mark, and Luke place the Passover meal on a Thursday evening, with Jesus dying in the daytime after it, whereas the narrative in John places the Passover meal on Friday evening, with Jesus dying in the daytime before it (i.e., in John the final meal Jesus shares with his disciples is likewise on a Thursday evening, but, unlike in the other gospels, it is not a Passover meal).

[39]See the footnote regarding "Oster" ("Easter") at the end of movement 2, above.

[40]Literally, "My time is here." The Greek text in Matthew denotes "My time is at hand" or "My time is near."

[41]"Huben an" is older-German form of "hoben an," the past tense of "anheben." One of the many meanings of "anheben" in older German was "to begin [to do something]," which corresponds to the sense of the corresponding verb employed in the original Greek text here, in Matthew 26:22. Luther's formulation "huben an … und sagten zu ihm" would have made more sense, however, as "huben an … zu ihm zu sagen" ("began … to say to him"). So it seems that Luther, by using not "zu sagen" ("to say") but "und sagten" ("and said") in connection with "huben an," had in mind one of the other senses of "anheben," namely "to get up." We have opted for a sort of compromise, "they started up, … saying to him." It is worth noting that the Greek source texts of the parallel passage (including the Erasmus 1519 edition of the Greek text of the New Testament that Luther worked from), Mark 14:19, read literally "They began to be grieved and to say to him, one by one, 'Surely not I?'"; Luther in this case ignored the source word for "began," rendering the verse as "Und sie wurden traurig, und sagten zu ihm, einer nach dem anderen: Bin ichs? und der andere: Bin ichs?" ("And they became sad, and said to him, one after the other: 'Am I the one?' And the other: 'Am I the one?'").

Und was du ausgestanden,
Das hat verdienet meine Seel.[42]

And what you have withstood—
My soul has earned that.

11. *Er antwortete und sprach: 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. Da antwortete Judas, der ihn verriet, und sprach: Bin ichs, Rabbi? Er sprach zu ihm: Du sagests. Da sie aber assen, nahm Jesus das Brot, dankete und brachs und gabs den Jüngern und sprach: Nehmet, esset, das ist mein Leib. Und er nahm den Kelch und dankete, gab ihnen den und sprach: Trinket alle daraus; das ist mein Blut des neuen Testaments, welches vergossen wird für viele zur Vergebung der Sünden. Ich sage euch: Ich werde hinfort*[43] *nicht mehr von diesem Gewächs des Weinstocks trinken bis an den Tag, da ichs neu trinken werde mit euch in meines Vaters Reich.*[44]

11. *He [Jesus] answered, declaring:* "*He who dips his hand into the bowl with me, he will betray me. The Son of Man*[45] *is going forth there [to his death], indeed, as is written of him;*[46] *yet, woe to the man by whom the Son of Man will be betrayed! It would be better for him [the traitor] that [he]—this same [traitorous] man—had never yet*[47] *been born.*" *Then Judas (who [later] betrayed*[48] *him) answered, declaring:* "*Am I the one, rabbi?*" *He declared to him:* "*You are saying so.*" *But as they ate, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and declared:* "*Take, eat; this is my body.*" *And he took the cup and gave thanks, gave it to them, and declared:* "*Drink from it, all of you;*[49] *this is my blood of the new testament,*[50] *which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. I say to you: henceforth I will drink no more from this fruit of the grapevine, up to the day when I will drink it anew with you in my father's kingdom.*"

12. Wiewohl mein Herz in Tränen schwimmt,
Dass Jesus von mir Abschied nimmt,

12. Even though my heart floats[51] in tears
Because Jesus takes leave of me,

[42]A stanza of "O Welt, sieh hier dein Leben."

[43]In BWV 244.1, this reads with the two-syllable "hinfort" ("henceforth"); in BWV 244.2, it reads, as in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, with the three-syllable "von nun an" ("from this time onward").

[44]Matthew 26:23-29.

[45]With regard to the "Son of Man," see the note at the end of movement 2, above.

[46]This is said of the "Suffering Servant" of Isaiah 52–53, whom Luther identifies with the "Son of Man" mentioned here in Matthew's gospel and in Daniel 7:13. In the parallel passage the Gospel of Luke does not say this was foretold in scripture; Luke 22:22 instead states that "des Menschen Sohn geht zwar hin, wie es beschlossen ist" ("the Son of Man is going forth, indeed, as it was determined [i.e., by God]"). The theological import of both Matthew and Luke is in any case the same: Jesus's death on the cross is God's will.

[47]Later German Bibles drop Luther's "noch" ("yet/still").

[48]The underlying Greek verb here (Matthew 26:25) is not in a past tense.

[49]"Trinket alle daraus" denotes not "drink all the wine from this cup" but "drink the wine from this cup, all of you."

[50]The word "new" turns out to have been added here at Matthew 26:28 in some early manuscripts of the gospel (likewise at Mark 14:24), and so many recent Bibles now read simply, "this is my blood of the covenant"; see Exodus 24:8, "Da nahm Moses das Blut, und sprengte das Volk damit, und sprach: Sehet, das ist das Blut des Bundes, den der HERR mit euch macht" ("Then Moses took the blood [of the sacrificial young bulls], and sprinkled the people with it, and said: 'Look, this is the blood of the covenant that the LORD is making with you'"). Luther and others understood "diatheke" (along with "kainos") as "new testament" and identified it (i.e., Jesus's last will and testament) with what Luther called the "neuer Bund" ("new covenant") in Jeremiah 31:31 (cf. Hebrews 8:8). The Hebrew word "berit" was given in the Septuagint (the ancient Jewish Greek translation of the Torah and, eventually, the entire Hebrew Bible, with some additional Greek texts) as "diatheke," which in secular Greek referred to a particular type of agreement or covenant related to death, a testament, or will.

[51]It is not wrong to translate "schwimmt" as "swims," but here the word needs to be understood in the sense of "to passively float on the surface of a liquid," not "to actively move in, or on, a liquid."

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.

Still his testament[52] makes me glad;
His flesh and blood—O treasure—
He bequeathes to me, into my hands [via the sacrament].
Just as in the world toward his own
He cannot mean any harm,
Just so does he love them, up to the end.

13. Ich will dir mein Herze schenken,
Senke dich, mein Heil, hinein!
Ich will mich in dich[53] versenken;
Ist dir gleich die Welt zu klein,
Ei so sollst du mir allein
Mehr als Welt und Himmel sein.

13. I will give my heart as a gift to you;
Sink inside it [via the sacrament], my salvation [Jesus].
I will immerse myself into you;
Even if to you the world is too small,[54]
Well,[55] then to me you shall alone
Be more than the world and heaven.[56]

14. *Und da sie den Lobgesang gesprochen hatten, gingen sie hinaus an den Ölberg. Da sprach Jesus zu ihnen: In dieser Nacht werdet ihr euch alle ärgern an mir. Denn es stehet 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.*[57]

14. *And when they [Jesus and the disciples] had rendered the song of praise,*[58] *they went out [of Jerusalem]*[59] *to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus declared to them:* "*On this night you will all be offended at me. For it is written,*[60] '*I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will scatter.*' *But when I rise [from the dead], I will go forth before you into Galilee.*"

15. **Erkenne mich, mein Hüter,
Mein Hirte, nimm mich an!**

15. **Acknowledge**[62] **me [as your own], my guardian;
My shepherd, accept me.**

[52]On this "testament," see the note on movement 11, above.

[53]In BWV 244.1, in an early scribal copy of the libretto, and in the poet's reprinted libretto, this reads "in dich" ("into you") but is given in the leading modern edition of BWV 244.1 as "in dir" ("in you"); in BWV 244.2, it reads "in dir" ("in you").

[54]That is, the world just seems too small as a fitting metaphorical altar for the blood sacrifice of Jesus, who is God. (With regard to the altar of sacrifice, see 1 Kings 8:64 and 8:27.)

[55]"Ei" can simply be a synonym for "ach" ("ah"), but it could also used in place of "nun ja" (the interjection, "well").

[56]That is, while to Jesus the world is too small to contain him, "to me" the love displayed in his sacrifice—in the sacrament of communion, the bread of his body and the wine of his blood (these tiny elements that do actually contain him in the Lutheran view)—is "too large," greater than the cosmos itself.

[57]Matthew 26:30-32.

[58]Presumably from the "Hallel" sung at Passover (at this point, Psalms 115–18; Johann Olearius's Bible Commentary, a book owned by Bach, here refers to the practice of singing these Psalms at Passover). Luther uses the word "Lobgesang" in Exodus 15:2, "Der HERR ist meine Stärke und mein Lobgesang" ("The LORD is my strength and my song of praise"), and in Isaiah 51:3, "man Wonne und Freude darin findet, Dank und Lobgesang" ("joy and gladness will be found in [Zion], thanksgiving and song of praise"). The Greek text in Matthew 26:30 gives a form of the verb "hymnnein" in which it is unclear whether one hymn is meant or more.

[59]At Passover, Jerusalem itself was always overcrowded with pilgrims. Where Jesus and the disciples (who were visiting from Galilee) went out to stay overnight was still within the area that, at the time, was considered ritually proper for pilgrims to be during the festival.

[60]Adapted from Zechariah 13:7, "Schlage den Hirten, so wird die Herde sich zerstreuen" ("If you strike the shepherd, then the flock will scatter"). See also Matthew 12:30, "Wer nicht mit mir ist, der ist wider mich; und wer nicht mit mir sammelt, der zerstreut" ("Whoever is not with me, he is against me; and whoever does not gather with me, he [is one who] scatters"); see Matthew 26:56 in movement 28, below, where the disciples flee when Jesus is seized by the bands of attendants of the Jewish authorities.

[62]"Erkennen" is used here in its sense as a synonym for "anerkennen" ("avow"/"acknowledge [as one's own]").

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.[61]

By you, source of all good things,
Much good is done to me.
Your mouth [in kissing me] has refreshed me
With [the] milk [under your tongue] and sweet fare;[63]
Your spirit has endowed me
With many a heavenly delight.

16. *Petrus aber antwortete und sprach zu ihm: Wenn sie auch alle sich an dir ärgerten, so will ich doch mich nimmermehr ärgern. Jesus sprach zu ihm: Wahrlich, ich sage dir: In dieser Nacht, ehe der Hahn krähet, wirst du mich dreimal verleugnen. Petrus sprach zu ihm: Und wenn ich mit dir sterben müsste, so will ich dich nicht verleugnen. Desgleichen sagten auch alle Jünger.*[64]

16. *But Peter answered, declaring to him:* "*Even were they all to be offended at you, still then I will never be offended.*" *Jesus declared to him:* "*Truly, I say to you: on this night, before the cock crows, you will disavow me three times.*" *Peter declared to him:* "*And should I have to die with you, [even] then I will not disavow you.*" *All the disciples said similar things.*

([17a]. **Es dient zu meinen Freuden,**
Und kömmt mir herzlich wohl,
Wenn ich in deinem Leiden,
Mein Heil, mich finden soll.
Ach möcht ich, o mein Leben,
An deinem Kreuze hier,
Mein Leben von mir geben,
Wie wohl geschähe mir!)[65]

([17a]. **It serves to [deepen] my joys,**
And is warmly welcome to me,
Whenever I am to find myself [a partaker]
In your suffering, [O Christ who is] my salvation.
Ah were I, O [Christ who is] my life,[66]
Here at your cross,
Able[67] **to give away my [own] life**[68]**—**
How welcomely, to me, would [that] take place!)

It is not clear that this hymn stanza belongs in BWV 244.1, but because it is typically included in modern editions and performances, we have provided for its use here.

18. *Da kam Jesus mit ihnen zu einem Hofe, der hiess Gethsemane, und sprach zu seinen Jüngern: Setzet euch hie,*

18. *Then Jesus came with them to a villa,*[71] *which was called Gethsemane, and declared to his disciples:* "*Sit here,*

[61]A stanza of "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden."

[63]The sense of this talk of the mouth and of milk and sweetness is derived from the erotic language of Song of Songs 4:11, "Deine Lippen … sind wie triefender Honigseim: Honig und Milch ist unter deiner Zungen" ("Your lips … are like dripping honeycomb: honey and milk is under your tongue"). The Lutheran exegesis in the Calov Commentary Bible (owned by Bach) explains that "honey and milk is under your tougue" signifies how "deine Wort, so aus dem durch den Glauben gereinigten Herzen herquellen" ("your words [are ones] that spring forth from the heart purified by faith"). The hymn writer, however, here applied the language in the Song of Songs of the female beloved (understood in traditional Christian interpretation to be a foreshadowing of the church and of the individual Christian soul) over to Jesus (understood to have been foreshadowed by the male beloved in the Song of Songs).

[64]Matthew 26:33-35.

[65]A stanza of "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden."

[66]The sense of this line is derived from Philippians 1:21, "Christus ist mein Leben" ("Christ is my life").

[67]The verb "mögen" is here employed in its older-German sense, where modern German would use "vermögen" ("to be able to").

[68]Drawing on the sentiment of Galatians 2:19, "Ich bin mit Christo gekreuzigt" ("I am crucified with Christ").

[71]Luther's "Hofe" does not mean "garden." In the Greek text of the Gospel of John, the only canonical gospel where the idea of Jesus being in a garden is mentioned (for special theological reasons peculiar to John among the four gospels—note that the garden is not identified as "Gethsemane"), Luther does use "Garten" ("garden"). The Olearius Bible, which Bach owned, and other sources explain Luther's "Hofe" in Matthew in the sense of a "villa." The underlying word in Matthew is "chorion," which Luther never translates as "garden"; he renders it with "Dorflein" ("village") in John 4:5, "Ort" ("place") in Acts 28:7, and "Acker" ("field") in Acts 1:18-19, 4:34, and 5:3,8. The "garden" of the passion narrative in John is "kepos" in Greek, a word that appears only five times in the New Testament

bis dass ich dort hin gehe[69] *und bete. Und nahm zu sich Petrum und die zween Söhne Zebedäi und fing an zu trauern und zu zagen. Da sprach Jesus zu ihnen: Meine Seele ist betrübt bis an den Tod, bleibet hie und wachet mit mir!*[70]

19. [Die Tochter] Zion und die Gläubigen
Z: O Schmerz!
Hier zittert das gequälte Herz;
Wie sinkt es hin! wie bleicht sein Angesicht!
Chor der Gläubigen
Gl: **Was ist die Ursach aller solcher Plagen?**
Z: Der Richter führt ihn vor Gericht;
Da ist kein Trost, kein Helfer nicht.
Gl: **Ach! meine Sünden haben dich geschlagen;**
Z: Er leidet alle Höllenqualen,
Er soll vor fremden Raub bezahlen.
Gl: **Ich, ach! Herr Jesu, habe dies verschuldet**
Was du erduldet.[73]
Z: Ach könnte meine Liebe dir,
Mein Heil, dein Zittern und dein Zagen
Vermindern oder helfen tragen,
Wie gerne blieb ich hier!

until I may go over there and may pray." *And [he] took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee*[72] *and began to grieve and lose heart. Then Jesus declared to them:* "*My soul is distressed, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with me.*"

19. [Daughter] Zion and the Believers
Z: O agony!
Here the tormented heart [of Jesus] trembles;
How it sinks low,[74] how his face pales!
Chorus of Believers
B: **What is the cause of all such afflictions?**
Z: The judge [God] leads him [Jesus] before [God's] judgment;
[For Jesus] there is no comfort, no helper at all.[75]
B: **Ah! my sins have struck you;**
Z: He suffers all the torments of hell;
He is to pay for others' robbery[76]
B: **I—ah!, Lord Jesus—have deserved this [punishment]**
That you are enduring.
Z: Ah, if only my love for you,
My salvation, were able to alleviate or help you to bear
Your trembling and your faintheartedness,
How happily would I remain here!

(Luke 13:19; John 18:1,26; 19:41—each time given as "Garten" by Luther, who also renders no other words than "kepos" as "Garten"). Luther consistently uses "Hofe" to mean a court or courtyard, but not a garden (hence, e.g., his expression "im Hofe des Gartens" ["in the court of the garden"] in Esther 1:5).

[69]The Luther Bibles of Bach's day, including the Calov Bible Commentary (which Bach owned), read not, as with BWV 244.2, "bis dass ich dort hingehe und bete" ("until I may go forth and may pray there") but "bis dass ich dorthin gehe und bete" ("until I may go there and may pray," or "until I may go and pray there"); "dorthin" is a synonym for dort" ("there"). BWV 244.1, the Olearius Bible Commentary (which Bach owned), and the early Luther Bibles read, somewhat ambiguously, "bis dass ich dort hin gehe, und bete" ("until I may go over there, and may pray"). The standard modern edition of BWV 244.1 gives the reading of BWV 244.2 here.

[70]Matthew 26:34-38.

[72]The two sons of Zebedee are James and John (as narrated in Matthew 4:21 and Mark 1:19). They are presumably unnamed here because the narrative will place its emphasis on Peter.

[73]A stanza of "Herzliebster Jesu, was hast du verbrochen?"

[74]"Hinsenken" is an older German synonym for "niedersinken" ("to sink downwards, to the ground]").

[75]Whereas modern German assiduously follows the logical rule that two negatives cancel each other out, the construction "da ist kein Helfer nicht" (literally, "there is no helper not," i.e., "there is not no helper") employed here reflects an older German grammar where "pleonastic negatives" could be employed to intensify the negation rather than nullify it.

[76]In Genesis 3:5, before "the Fall," humankind is tempted by a serpent to become like God—to have the knowledge of good and evil. Philippians 2:6-7 reads, "ob er wohl in Göttlicher Gestalt war, hielt ers nicht für einen Raub, Gott gleich sein; sondern äusserte sich selbst, und nahm Knechtsgestalt an, ward gleich wie ein ander Mensch" ("though he [Jesus] was without doubt in the form of God, he held it not robbery to be equal with God; rather, [he] relinquished his own advantage, and took on the form of a servant, becoming [in this sense] like any other human being"); note that Luther has added the word "wohl" (here, "without doubt") to the original biblical text. What Bach's movement 19 is saying, then, is that for Jesus "to pay for others' robbery" is to pay for fallen humanity's cardinal robbery—in desiring to become like God, humanity "steals" God's honor.

20. [DIE TOCHTER ZION UND DIE GLÄUBIGEN]
Z: Ich will bei meinem Jesu wachen,
Gl: So schlafen unsre Sünden[77] ein.
Z: Meinen Tod
Büsset seine Seelennot;
Sein Trauren machet mich voll Freuden.
Gl: Drum muss mir[78] sein verdienstlich Leiden
Recht bitter und doch süsse sein.

21. *Und ging hin ein wenig, fiel nieder auf sein Angesicht und betete und sprach: Mein Vater, ists möglich, so gehe dieser Kelch von mir; doch nicht wie ich will, sondern wie du willt.*[80]

22. Der Heiland fällt vor seinem Vater nieder;
Dadurch erhebt er mich und alle
Von unserm Falle
Hinauf zu Gottes Gnade wieder.
Er ist bereit,
Den Kelch, des Todes Bitterkeit
Zu trinken,
In welchem[82] Sünden dieser Welt
Gegossen sind und hässlich stinken,
Weil es dem lieben Gott gefällt.

23. Gerne will ich mich bequemen,
Kreuz und Becher anzunehmen,

20. [DAUGHTER ZION AND THE BELIEVERS]
Z: I will keep watch beside my Jesus;
B: Our sins will fall asleep, then.
Z: For my death
The anguish of his soul atones;
His grieving makes me full of joy.
B: Thus to me his merit-accruing suffering[79] must be
Downright bitter, and yet sweet.

21. *And [Jesus] went forth a little, fell down on his face and prayed, declaring:* "*My father, if it is possible, then may this cup*[81] *pass from me; yet, not as I will, but rather as you will.*"

22. The savior falls down before his father;
Thereby he lifts me and everyone
From our fall [into sin, through Adam,][83]
Up to God's grace again.
He is prepared to drink
The cup, death's bitterness—
In which
[The] sins of this world
Are poured, and stink repulsively—
Since this is our dear God's will.[84]

23. Happily will I accommodate myself
To accept [the] cross and [the] cup [of suffering];

[77]Only at m. 14, Bach's own score of BWV 244.2 reads not "Sünden" ("sins") but "Sorgen" ("worries"/"cares"); the instances in his original performing parts either read "Sünden" or were revised from "Sorgen" to "Sünden."

[78]In BWV 244.1 and in an early scribal copy of the libretto, this reads "mir" ("to me"); in BWV 244.2 and in the poet's reprinted libretto, it reads "uns" ("to us").

[79]In Lutheran teaching, Jesus's sacrificial death on the cross is a righteous act, and his righteousness is imputed/gifted to Christian believers, who are otherwise unrighteous (i.e., Jesus's righteousness is accrued to the believer, as an undeserved gift).

[80]Matthew 26:39.

[81]In biblical language, "the cup" is a metaphor for what God has to offer a person, whether positive (e.g., "the cup of consolation") or negative (e.g., "the cup of wrath," and "the cup of suffering").

[82]In BWV 244.1 and in an early scribal copy of the libretto, this reads "in welchem" ("in which"), but it is given in the leading modern edition of BWV 244.1 as "in welchen" ("into which"); in BWV 244.2 and in the poet's reprinted libretto, it reads "in welchen."

[83]A similar sentiment is expressed in this same librettist's poetry for movement 4 in Bach's church cantata "Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen Jerusalem" BWV 159: "Es ist vollbracht, / Das Leid ist alle, / Wir sind von unserm Sündenfalle / In Gott gerecht gemacht" ("It is accomplished; / The suffering [of Jesus on the cross] is over; / In God we are [by faith] justified [for salvation] / From our fall into sin [through Adam]").

[84]"Es dem lieben Gott gefällt," here, is meant in the sense of "this is our dear God's will"—this is analogous to the expression still used, e.g., in a convention of German death announcements, "Es hat Gott dem Herrn gefallen, … in die Ewigkeit abzurufen" (literal: "It has pleased the Lord God to call [name of person] into eternity"; sense: "It is God's will that [name of person] has now passed away"). The same sentiment lies behind Luther's rendering of 1 Samuel 3:18, "Er aber sprach: Es ist der HERR; er tue, was ihm wohlgefällt" (literally, "But he [Eli] declared [to Samuel]: 'It is the Lord; may he do what well pleases him'").

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.

Indeed, I drink following the example of the savior.
For his mouth,
Which flows with milk and honey,[85]
Has sweetened the grounds[86]
And the galling humiliation of suffering
By [his taking] the first sip.

24. *Und er kam zu seinen Jüngern und fand sie schlafend und sprach zu Petro:*[87] *Könnet ihr denn nicht eine Stunde mit mir wachen? Wachet und betet, dass ihr nicht in Anfechtung fallet! Der Geist ist willig, aber das Fleisch ist schwach. Zum andernmal ging er hin, betete und sprach: Mein Vater, ists nicht möglich, dass dieser Kelch von mir gehe, ich trinke ihn denn, so geschehe dein Wille.*[88]

24. *And he came to his disciples and found them asleep and declared to Peter:* "*Were you all unable, then, to keep watch with me for one hour? Keep watch and pray, that you do not fall into temptation.*[89] *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" *For a second time he went forth, prayed, and declared:* "*My father, if it is not possible that this cup may pass from me unless I drink it, then may your will be done.*"

25. **Was mein Gott will, das gscheh 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 züchtiget mit Massen.

25. **What my God wills, may that always be done;**
His will, it is [for] the best;
He is prepared to save those
Who believe in him steadfastly.
He saves [them] from anguish, this upright[91] **God,**
And chastises in [due] measure.[92]

[85]The librettist's language "sein Mund, der mit Milch und Honig fliesset" ("his mouth, which flows with milk and honey") is similar to the frequent biblical expression "Land, darin Milch und Honig fliesst" ("land [biblically promised by God to the ancient Israelites, leaving behind slavery in Egypt] in which milk and honey flows"). Otherwise, this movement draws principally on the same imagery that is found in the hymn stanza of movement 15, above. The sense of movement 15's and 23's talk of the mouth and of milk and honey is derived from the erotic language of Song of Songs 4:11, "Deine Lippen … sind wie triefender Honigseim: Honig und Milch ist unter deiner Zungen" ("Your lips … are like dripping honeycomb: honey and milk is under your tongue"). The Lutheran exegesis in the Calov Commentary Bible (owned by Bach) explains this "honey and milk is under your tougue" as meaning "deine Wort, so aus dem durch den Glauben gereinigten Herzen herquellen" ("your words that spring forth from the heart purified by faith"). The librettist here in movement 23 applied the language in the Song of Songs of the female beloved (understood in traditional Christian interpretation to be a foreshadowing of the church and of the individual Christian soul) instead over to Jesus (understood to have been foreshadowed by the male beloved in the Song of Songs).

[86]The German word "Grund" (singular) here has a double meaning, and we have rendered it as "grounds" (plural) to effect this same double meaning: compare, e.g., the expressions "coffee grounds" and "grounds for divorce." Printed sermons in Bach's library speak of "die Hefe und Grundsuppe" ("the dregs and slimy surface"): the "grounds" of the sin-dregged "cup of death's bitterness" are sweetened when the mouth of Jesus takes a first sip. In a second sense of the word "Grund," one reaches the cause of something by "getting to the bottom of it," and one cannot go any lower than the "ground." The grounds for God's anger are the "repulsively stinking sins" that have been poured into the "cup" that Jesus is willing to drink.

[87]In BWV 244.1, this reads, as in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, "zu Petro" ("to Peter"); in BWV 244.2, it reads, conforming to the wording of Luke 22:46 in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, "zu ihnen" ("to them," i.e., the disciples). Note that in any event the subsequent "were you not able" is plural (in German "könnet ihr nicht," not the singular "könnest du nicht") and thus refers not to Peter but to the disciples.

[88]Matthew 26:40-42.

[89]"Anfechtung" ("vexation," "temptation," "affliction," and/or "tribulation") was, and still is, the Lutheran term for a variety of tribulations surrounding doubts and terrors about one's moral and spiritual stature before God.

[91]The sense of this line is derived from Psalm 25:8, "Der HERR ist gut und fromm" ("The LORD is good and upright"); see also Deuteronomy 32:4.

[92]The language of this line is derived from Jeremiah 10:24, "Züchtige mich, HERR, doch mit Masse und nicht in deinem Grimm, auf dass du mich nicht aufreibest" ("Chastise me, LORD, but with measure and not in your wrath, lest you stamp me out").

Wer Gott vertraut, fest auf ihn baut,
Den will er nicht verlassen.[90]

Whoever trusts in God, [and] relies on him steadfastly,
He [God] will not forsake.

26. *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: Ach! 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. Und als er noch redete, siehe, da kam Judas, der Zwölfen einer, und mit ihm eine grosse Schar mit Schwerten 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: Gegrüsset seist du, Rabbi! Und küssete ihn. Jesus aber sprach zu ihm: Mein Freund, warum bist du kommen? Da traten sie hinzu und legten die Hände an Jesum und griffen ihn.*[93]

26. *And he came and found them asleep again,*[94] *and their eyes were heavy with sleep. And he left them and went forth once more and prayed for the third time, speaking the same words [to God]. Then he came to his disciples and declared to them:* "*Ah! now you want to sleep and rest? Look, the hour is here when the Son of Man*[95] *is given over into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going; look, there he is who betrays me.*" *And while he was still speaking, look: there came Judas, one of the twelve [disciples], and with him a great band [of attendants of the Jewish authorities]*[96] *with swords and with clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. And the betrayer had given them a sign, saying:* "*The man I will kiss, he is the one—seize him!*" *And immediately he approached Jesus and declared:* "*Greetings to you, rabbi!*" *And [Judas] kissed him. But Jesus declared to him:* "*My friend, why have you come?*"[97] *Then they stepped forward and laid their hands on Jesus and seized him.*

27. [Die Tochter] Zion und die Gläubigen
Z: So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen.
Gl: Lasst ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!
Z: Mond und Licht
Ist vor[98] Schmerzen untergangen,
Weil mein Jesus ist gefangen.
Gl: Lasst ihn, haltet, bindet nicht!
Z: Sie führen ihn, er ist gebunden.

27. [Daughter] Zion and the Believers
Z: Thus is my Jesus now captured.
B: Let him go; stop; do not bind [him]!
Z: Moon-and-light
Has set, in [death-anticipating][100] agonies,
Because my Jesus is captured.
B: Let him go; stop; do not bind [him]!
Z: They marshall him; he is bound.

[90]The first stanza of this hymn.

[93]Matthew 26:43-50.

[94]Here the word "aber" is used in its older German sense as a synonym for "wieder" ("again") or "abermal"/"abermals" ("once more").

[95]With regard to the "Son of Man," see the note at the end of movement 2, above.

[96]This is not an "illegal" vigilante crazed "mob," as is often said in modern commentary, but a large group of authorized attendants of the Jewish authorities with police duties.

[97]The transmitted Greek wording of this verse, Matthew 26:50, presents great difficulties. It reads hyperliterally, "Friend for which you are here." Luther and many other translators understand the formula as a question, "Friend[,] for which [purpose is it that] you are here[?]" Many other Bibles, however, take the utterance to be a statement, "Friend[, do that] for which you are here[.]" The terrifying commentary in movement 27, below, works most effectively following from Luther's rendering.

[98]In BWV 244.1, this reads "von" ("from"), which may well be a copying mistake: in an early scribal copy of the libretto, the poet's reprinted libretto, and BWV 244.2, it reads "vor" (here, "in").

[100]That is, anticipating death, as in Ecclesiastes 12:2-7, "Licht, Mond … finster werden … denn der Staub muss wieder zu der Erde kommen, wie er gewesen ist, und der Geist wieder zu Gott, der ihn gegeben hat ("light [and] moon grow dark … then the dust must return to the earth, as it [the dust once] was, and the spirit return to God who gave [you] it [the spirit]").

Z & Gl: Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken
verschwunden?
Eröffne den feurigen Abgrund der Hölle,[99]
Zertrümmre, verderbe, verschlinge, zerschelle
Mit plötzlicher Wut
Den falschen Verräter, das mördrische
Blut!

Z & B: Have lightning-flashes, have thunderings vanished
in clouds?
Open up the fiery abyss of hell;
Smash, ruin, swallow up, break to pieces,
With sudden fury,
That [morally] false[101] betrayer, that murderous blood
[Judas]![102]

28. *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: Stecke dein Schwert an seinen Ort; denn wer das Schwert nimmt, der soll durchs Schwert umkommen. Oder meinest du, dass ich nicht könnte meinen Vater bitten, dass er mir zuschickte mehr denn zwölf Legion Engel? Wie würde aber die Schrift erfüllet? Es muss also gehen. Zu der Stund sprach Jesus zu den Scharen: 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. Da verliessen ihn alle Jünger und flohen.*[103]

28. *And look: one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand [and pulled out his sword]*[104] *and struck the high priest's servant and lopped off an ear of his. Then Jesus declared to him:* "*Put your sword [back] into its place; for whoever takes [to] the sword, he shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I could not ask of my father that he send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would scripture be fulfilled?*[105] *This is the way it has to go.*" *At that hour Jesus declared to the bands [of attendants of the Jewish authorities]:* "*You have gone out with swords and with clubs to ensnare me, as [though] to a murderer; yet I have sat daily teaching in the Temple among you, and you have not seized me [until now]. But all of this has taken place that the scriptures of the prophets would be fulfilled.*" *Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.*

29[a]. **Jesum lass ich nicht von mir,**
Geh ihm ewig an der Seiten;

29[a]. **I will not let Jesus [go]**[107] **from me—**
[I will] go with him, eternally at his side;

[99]In BWV 244.1, this reads "Abgrund der Hölle" ("abyss of hell"), but is given in the leading modern edition of BWV 244.1 as "Abgrund, o Hölle" ("abyss, O hell"); in BWV 244.2, the poet's reprinted libretto, and an early scribal copy of the libretto, it reads "Abgrund[,] o Hölle."

[101]In the Luther Bibles of Bach's day "falsch" is often an archaic synonym for "lasterhaft" ("depraved"), "false" in the sense of being unrighteous or hypocritical, contrary to God's laws.

[102]Some translations of the libretto render this line as asking hell to break to pieces "the false 'betrayers', that murderous 'race'." But the poet's "den Verräter" is masculine accusative singular, referring to Jesus's disciple Judas Iscariot, and the next phrase applies to him as well. "Blut," then, here refers not to a "race" (i.e., "the Jews") but to the character in the biblical narrative, Judas. (Compare such expressions in English as "young blood.") Note, too, that Jesus is the "innocent blood," in movement 41.

[103]Matthew 26:51-56.

[104]The full reading of this verse, Matthew 26:51, in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day was "Und siehe, einer aus denen, die mit Jesu waren, reckete die Hand aus, und zog sein Schwert aus: und schlug des Hohenpriesters Knecht und hieb ihm ein Ohr ab ("And look: one of those who were with Jesus, stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the high priest's servant, and lopped off an ear of his"). Many biblical commentators have been disturbed by the thought of "those with Jesus" carrying a sword. Only the Gospel of Luke, at 22:36, tries to make narrative sense of the idea. In Matthew 10:34, Jesus says "I have not come to bring peace but a sword"; biblical commentators have long debated whether this was meant literally or figuratively.

[105]Earlier, in movement 14 (Matthew 26:3), Jesus quoted from Zechariah 13:7. The passion narrative will come to a climax in movement 61 (Matthew 27:46) with Jesus citing Psalm 22:2.

[107]This is an allusion to Genesis 32:26, the story of Jacob's wrestling with God at Peniel. God says to Jacob, "Lass mich gehen" ("Let me go"), and Jacob answers, "Ich lasse dich nicht [gehen], du segnest mich denn" ("I will not let you [go], unless you bless me"). According to Luther's radically Christocentric reading of the Hebrew Bible, it was actually Christ himself whom Jacob wrestled with at Peniel.

Christus lässt mich für und für
Zu dem Lebensbächlein leiten.
Selig, wer mit mir so spricht:
Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht.[106]

Christ lets me ever and ever
Be led to the brook[108] **of life.**
Blessed [is] whoever so declares, with me:
"I will not let my Jesus [go]."

2. TEIL

30. DIE GLÄUBIGEN, UND [DIE TOCHTER] ZION
Z: Ach, nun ist mein Jesus hin!
Gl: Wo ist denn dein Freund hingegangen,
O du schönste[109] *unter den Weibern?*
Z: Ist es möglich, kann ich schauen?
Gl: Wo hat sich dein Freund hingewandt?
Z: Ach! mein Lamm in Tigerklauen,
Ach! wo ist mein Jesus hin?
Gl: So wollen wir mit dir ihn suchen.[110]
Z: Ach![111] was soll ich der Seele sagen,
Wenn sie mich wird ängstlich fragen?
Ach! wo ist mein Jesus hin?

PART 2

30. THE BELIEVERS, AND [DAUGHTER] ZION
Z: Ah, now my Jesus has gone!
B: Where then has your beloved gone,
O you most beautiful among women?
Z: Is it possible, can I behold [him]?
B: Where has your beloved turned to?
Z: Ah! my lamb in tiger-claws,[112]
Ah! where has my Jesus gone?
B: So we will seek him with you.
Z: Ah! what am I to tell my[113] soul
When it will anxiously question me?
Ah! where has my Jesus gone?

31. *Die aber Jesum gegriffen hatten, führeten ihn zu dem Hohenpriester Kaiphas, dahin die Schriftgelehrten und Ältesten sich versammlet hatten. Petrus aber folgete ihm nach von ferne bis in den Palast des Hohenpriesters und ging hinein und satzte sich bei die Knechte, auf dass er*

31. *But those who had seized Jesus led him to the high priest Caiaphas, where the scripture scholars and elders had gathered. But Peter followed him, from a distance, up into the palace of the high priest, and went inside [the courtyard] and sat down with the servants,*[115] *so that he*

[106]A stanza of "Meinem Jesum lass ich nicht." Only the first line of text actually appears in the sources for BWV 244.1, and the editorial wording provided in the standard modern edition of this version is given here.

[108]"Brook" is indeed singular—"zu 'dem' Lebensbächlein" ("to the brook of life")—in most of the contemporary hymnbooks, but the word is plural—"zu 'den' Lebensbächlein" ("to the brooks of life")—in some of them and in several Bach cantatas, presumably to strengthen an allusion to Revelation 7:17, "das Lamm … wird sie leiten zu den lebendigen Wasserbrunnen" ("[Jesus] the Lamb [of God] … shall lead them [every Christian believer, in Lutheran interpretation,] to fountains of living water").

[109]The various sources for BWV 244.1 and 244.2, and the various Luther Bibles and quotations from them, more or less evenly distributed, give either the adjective—i.e., with lowercase "s"—"schönste" ("most beautiful") or the adjectival noun—with uppercase "s"—"Schönste" ("Most-Beautiful").

[110]For movement 30, the words of "the Believers" are those of Song of Songs 5:17 (verbatim, as rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day).

[111]This word is not given in an early scribal copy of the libretto or in the poet's reprinted libretto.

[112]Tigers were considered to be thirsty for lamb's blood. Here the "tiger-claws" apparently refers to the authorities in Matthew 26:47 and 26:55, not to the Jewish people as a whole.

[113]The "soul" here does not belong to someone else than the "I" who is the subject of the poetry. This "soul," then, is the "my soul" of the female beloved—taken to foreshadow "the church" (here, as "Daughter Zion")—in Song of Songs 5:6, who in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day declares: "da ging meine Seele heraus nach seinem Wort; ich suchte ihn, aber ich fand ihn nicht" ("then my soul went out [i.e., then I fell into a swoon] in accordance with [i.e., because of] his [i.e., my beloved's] word; I sought him, but I did not find him"); the male beloved of the Song of Songs was taken to foreshadow Jesus, the end-time bridegroom of the church and of the individual Christian soul.

[115]It is not entirely clear to whom the underlying Greek text here refers. It could be to "[policing] attendants" or to "servants." Some English renderings of the *St. Matthew Passion* libretto here give "officers," but Luther's "Knechte" means "servants."

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 funden keines.[114]

might see what[116] *this [capturing of Jesus] was driving at. But the chief priests and elders and the entire council sought false testimony against Jesus, so that they might kill him; and [they] found none.*

32. **Mir hat die Welt trüglich gericht**
Mit Lügen und mit falschem Gdicht,
Viel Netz und heimlich Stricke.
Herr, nimm mein wahr in dieser Gfahr,
Bhüt mich für falschen Tücken![117]

32. **For me the world has miscarried justice**[118]
With lies and with false fabrication,[119]
[With] many nets and secret snares.
Lord, attend to me in this danger;
Guard me in the face of false deceits.

33. *Und wiewohl viel falsche Zeugen herzutraten, funden sie doch keins. Zuletzt traten herzu zween falsche Zeugen und sprachen: Er hat gesagt: Ich kann den Tempel Gottes abbrechen und in dreien Tagen denselben bauen. Und der Hohepriester stund auf und sprach zu ihm: Antwortest du nichts zu dem, das diese wider dich zeugen? Aber Jesus schwieg stille.*[120]

33. *And even though many false testifiers stepped forward, still they did not find any [(useful) false testimony]. Finally, two false testifiers*[121] *stepped forward, declaring:* "*He has said: 'I am able to break down the Temple of God and build the same [again] in three days.'*" *And the high priest stood up and declared to him [Jesus]:* "*Do you answer nothing to what these [men] are testifying against you?*" *But Jesus remained silent.*

34. Mein Jesus schweigt
Zu falschen Lügen stille,
Um uns damit zu zeigen,[122]
Dass sein Erbarmens voller Wille
Vor uns zum Leiden sei geneigt,
Und dass wir in dergleichen Pein

34. My Jesus remains silent
At false lies,
In order thereby to show us
That his will, full of mercy,
Is inclined to suffer for us,
And that we in like pain

[114]Matthew 26:57-60a.

[116]"Wo" is apparently being used here as a synonym for "worauf" ("whereon," "what"). Later German Bibles here read "um zu sehen, worauf es hinauswollte" ("in order to see what this [capturing of Jesus] was driving at").

[117]A stanza of "In dich hab ich gehoffet, Herr."

[118]"Richten" was older German for "Recht machen" ("to dispense justice").

[119]In older German, "Gedicht" had a variety of meanings, including as a synonym for "Erfindung" ("fabrication"); "Geschicht oder Gedicht?" was an equivalent of the English expression "fact or fiction?"

[120]Matthew 26:60b-63a.

[121]Here in Matthew 26:60, Luther's rendering—close but not identical to that of the King James Bible—features extra words not contained in the Greek sources generally used by more recent biblical translators. Luther's text reads as follows with the additional bit in italics: "Und wiewohl viel falsche Zeugen herzutraten, funden sie doch keins*.* Zuletzt traten herzu zween falsche Zeugen" ("and even though many false testifiers stepped forward*,* still they found none; at last, two *false testifiers* stepped forward"). Following the shorter version in Matthew, which simply says "at last two [men] came forward," this latter part of this verse should perhaps be understood, however, as: "At last, two [testifiers with *accurate,* damaging testimony] stepped forward and said: . . ." The narrative details at this point and their logic are difficult to sort out, to say the least, and consulting the other gospels makes matters no easier. In any event, for Luther and his followers (and perhaps also for the author of the extra material in Matthew 26:60), the final "false testimony" could be taken to mean accurate testimony that was falsely understood (i.e., accepted literally rather than spiritually); so argues, more or less, e.g., the Olearius Bible Commentary, which Bach owned.

[122]In BWV 244.1 and 244.2, this line reads as above, "Um uns damit zu zeigen" ("In order thereby to show us"); in an early scribal copy of the libretto and in the poet's reprinted libretto, it reads "Um damit anzuzeigen" ("In order thereby to announce/show").

Ihm sollen ähnlich sein
Und in Verfolgung stille schweigen.

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

36. *Und der Hohepriester antwortete und sprach zu ihm: Ich beschwöre dich bei dem lebendigen Gott, dass du uns sagest, ob du seiest Christus, der Sohn Gottes? Jesus sprach zu ihm: Du sagests. Doch sage ich euch: Von nun an wirds geschehen, dass ihr sehen werdet des Menschen Sohn sitzen zur Rechten der Kraft und kommen in den Wolken des Himmels. Da zerriss der Hohepriester seine Kleider und sprach: Er hat Gott gelästert; was dürfen wir weiter Zeugnis? Siehe, itzt habt ihr seine Gotteslästerung gehöret. Was dünket euch? Sie antworteten und sprachen: Er ist des Todes schuldig! Da speieten sie aus in sein Angesicht und schlugen ihn mit Fäusten. Etliche aber schlugen ihn ins Angesicht und sprachen: Weissage uns, Christe, wer ists, der dich schlug?*[124]

Should be similar to him
And remain silent in persecution.

35. Patience!
When false tongues stab me.
  Should I suffer, through no fault of mine,
  Abuse and derision,
  Well,[123] then may our dear God
  Avenge my heart's innocence.

36. *And the high priest answered, declaring to him:* "*I adjure you by the living God that you tell us whether you are Christ, the son of God?*" *Jesus declared to him:* "*You are saying so. Yet I say to you all: From this time onward it will take place that you will see the Son of Man*[125] *sitting at the right [hand] of the power [of God] and coming in the clouds of heaven.*"[126] *Then the high priest rent his clothing and declared:* "*He has blasphemed God;*[127] *what need*[128] *have we of further testimony? Look, now you have heard his blasphemy of God.*[129] *What does this seem to you?*" *They answered, declaring:* "*He is deserving*[130] *of death!*"[131] *Then they spat in his face and struck him with fists. But some struck him in the face and declared:* "*Prophesy to us, Christ: who is the one that struck you?*"

[123]"Ei" can simply be a synonym for "ach" ("ah"), but it could also used in place of "nun ja" (the interjection "well").

[124]Matthew 26:63b-68.

[125]With regard to the "Son of Man," see the note at the end of movement 2, above.

[126]Alluding to a combination of Daniel 7:13-14 and possibly Psalm 110:1; the Olearius Bible Commentary, which Bach owned, lists both passages.

[127]Luther has added the word "God" in this sentence. Blaspheming God was a capital offense according to a prevailing understanding of the somewhat ambiguous Hebrew text in Leviticus 24:16. What precisely would count as an example of blasphemy has sometimes been controversial. In ancient Israel the expression "son of God" was used variously to mean "nation of Israel," "enthroned monarch," "child of God," "angels," or "righteous individual." For followers of Jesus the expression "Son/son of God" came to be identified with "preexistence Christology" (i.e., the belief that Jesus is God incarnate). From the standpoint of the chief priests, scripture scholars, and elders, claiming Jesus as God would without question be blasphemy.

[128]In older German, "dürfen" could be used as a synonym for "[etwas] bedürfen" ("to need [something]").

[129]Luther has added the words "of God" in this sentence. With regard to blasphemy of God, see the note on the immediately preceding sentence in this movement.

[130]It is obsolete (and needlessly confusing) English to render "schuldig des Todes" as "guilty of death." The archaic expression "he is guilty of death" means not "he is to blame for death" but "he is deserving of death" or "he is legally subject to being put to death."

[131]Echoing Jeremiah 26:11, "Und die Priester … sprachen … Dieser ist des Todes schuldig" ("And the priests … declared … 'this man is deserving of death'"). It is the Romans, however, who will put Jesus to death. Lutherans of Bach's day would readily have called to mind John 18:31, where "die Juden" ("the Jews") declare to Pilate, "Wir dürfen niemand töten" ("We are not permitted to put anyone to death"). Though this verse has sometimes sparked controversy in modern commentary, there does not appear to be any reason to question that Jews would indeed have been prohibited from putting Jesus to death for the charges against him that are depicted in the Gospel of John. There were other charges, however, for which the Jewish leaders evidently were permitted to carry out death sentences, but by stoning, not crucifixion: e.g., for violating prohibitions against circulating in certain quarters of the Jerusalem Temple, and possibly for adultery.

37. **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 weisst du nicht.[132]

37. **Who has struck you so,**
My salvation, and battered you
So badly with wound-marks?[133]
You are indeed not a sinner,
As we and our children [are];
You do not have experience of [committing] misdeeds.[134]

38. *Petrus aber sass draussen im Palast; und es trat zu ihm eine Magd und sprach: Und du warest auch mit dem Jesu aus Galiläa. Er leugnete aber vor ihnen allen und sprach: Ich weiss nicht, was du sagest. Als er aber zur Tür hinausging, sahe ihn eine andere und sprach zu denen, die da waren: Dieser war auch mit dem Jesu von Nazareth. Und er leugnete abermal und schwur dazu: Ich kenne des Menschen nicht. Und über eine kleine Weile traten hinzu, die da stunden, und sprachen zu Petro: Wahrlich, du bist auch einer von denen; denn deine Sprache verrät dich. Da hub er an, sich zu verfluchen und zu schwören: Ich kenne des Menschen nicht. 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.*[135]

38. *But Peter sat in the [courtyard of the] palace, outside [from where Jesus was being interrogated]; and a maid approached him and declared: "And you, too, were with that Jesus from Galilee." But he denied it before them all, declaring: "I do not know what you are saying." But when he went out to the [courtyard's entrance] door, another [maid] saw him and declared to those who were there [in the courtyard]: "This man, too, was with that Jesus of Nazareth." And he denied it once more, taking an oath to it: "I do not know of the man. And after a little while, those who were standing there stepped forth and declared to Peter: "Truly, you are also one of them [that follow Jesus of Galilee]; for your [manner of] speech*[136] *betrays you." Then he started to curse at himself and to take an oath: "I do not know of the man." And immediately the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the words of Jesus, when he said to him: "Before the cock will crow, you will disavow me three times." And [Peter] went out and wept bitterly.*

39. Erbarme dich,
Mein Gott, um meiner Zähren willen!
Schaue hier,

39. Have mercy,
My God, on account of[137] my tears!
Behold here, [how my]

[132]A stanza of "O Welt, sieh hier dein Leben."

[133]The most general sense of the word "Plage" in older German was given in the leading eighteenth-century German dictionary as "Ein Schlag, ein Streich, … und figürlich auch die dadurch verursachte Wunde" ("A blow, a stroke, … and figuratively also the wound caused by it"). In older English the word "plague" could likewise mean "a blow, a smiting." Psalm 89:33, in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, reads "So will ich ihre Sünde mit der Rute heimsuchen und ihre Missetat mit Plagen" ("Then will I visit their sin with the rod, and their misdeed with strokes/wounds"). The last word of the sentence renders the plural of the Hebrew "nega," which means variously "stroke," "plague," "wound," "mark," "plague-spot," "wound-mark."

[134]Literally, "Of misdeeds know you not." This line is not saying that Jesus was unaware of the existence of misdeeds or sin. The sense of the line derives from 2 Corinthians 5:21, "er hat den, der von keiner Sünde wusste, für uns zur Sünde gemacht" ("he [God] has made into sin for us him [Jesus] who knew of no sin [i.e., who had no personal experience of committing a sin]"). See also line 3 in movement 49, below.

[135]Matthew 26:69-75.

[136]This was traditionally taken to mean that Peter betrayed himself as a non-Judean, in that he spoke in the Galilean dialect of Aramaic, with its distinctive accent.

[137]In modern German, "um [jemandens / einer Sache] willen" is used as a synonym for "zuliebe" ("for the sake of [someone / something]"). In older German though, as here, this construction was also used as a synonym for "wegen" ("on account of" or "because of"), even though this usage was frowned upon by strict grammarians in the eighteenth century.

Herz und Auge weint vor dir
Bitterlich.

Heart and eye weeps before you
Bitterly.

40. **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.[138]

40. **Though I have turned aside**[139] **from you [God],**
I do, indeed, come back;
Your son has indeed reconciled[140] **[the ledger] for us**
By his fear and [by his] death pang[s] [on the cross].[141]
I do not disavow my debt;
But your grace and favor
Is much greater than the sin
That I constantly find in me.

41. *Des Morgens aber hielten alle Hohenpriester*[142] *und die Ältesten des Volks einen Rat über Jesum, dass sie ihn töteten. Und bunden ihn, führeten 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: Ich habe übel getan, dass ich unschuldig Blut verraten habe. Sie sprachen: Was gehet uns das an? Da siehe du zu! 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: Es taugt nicht, dass wir sie in den Gotteskasten legen, denn es ist Blutgeld.*[143]

41. *But in the morning all the chief priests and the elders of the people held a council about Jesus,*[144] *so that they might kill him. And [they] bound him, led him forth, and handed him over to the [Roman] governor [of Judea], Pontius Pilate. When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw this, that he [Jesus] was condemned to death, it made him remorseful, and [he] brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, declaring:* "*I have done evil by betraying innocent blood.*" *They declared:* "*What has that to do with us? You see to it, then!*" *And throwing the pieces of silver into the Temple, he departed, went forth, and hanged himself.*[145] *But the chief priests took the pieces of silver and declared:* "*It is not proper that we deposit them into the offering box, for it is blood money.*"

[138]A stanza of "Werde munter, mein Gemüte."

[139]This line draws on Daniel 9:5, "wir sind von deinen Geboten und Rechten gewichen" ("[LORD,] we have turned aside from your commandments and laws").

[140]"Hat uns doch dein Sohn verglichen" does not mean "even so your Son set the example for us" or "your Son indeed has likened himself to us." Here, "vergleichen" (past tense, "verglichen") is an archaic synonym for "ausgleichen" in its sense of "to balance" or "to reconcile" (e.g., a ledger, used as a metaphor for a record of sins as debts). See also movement 46, below: "Die Schuld bezahlt der Herre, der Gerechte, für seine Knechte" ("the Lord, the righteous one, pays the debt for his servants").

[141]"Todespein" (literally, "death's pain")—usually expressed in the plural as "Todesschmerzen" ("pangs/pains of death")—here is understood to be a type of evil "force." Luther argued that Jesus's sacrificial, atoning death on the cross was a victorious passing in which Jesus, as true God and human being, had experienced fully the pains of the evil cosmic power of Death itself (that is, as opposed to Jesus's simply having experienced such great physical agonies that he died from them). This view was expressed in Luther's commentary on Acts 2:24, which says of Jesus, as rendered in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, "Den hat Gott auferwecket, und aufgelöset die Schmerzen des Todes" ("God [the father] has raised him [God the son] up [from the dead], having loosed the pains of death").

[142]In BWV 244.1, this reads "alle Hohenpriester"; in BWV 244.2, it reads "alle Hohepriester." Both translate as "all the chief priests." In modern German, the plural of "der Hohepriester" ("the high priest") is "die Hohepriester" ("the chief priests"), but in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, and otherwise, the plural was, ordinarily, "die Hohenpriester."

[143]Matthew 27:1-6.

[144]The Gospel of Matthew does not give any explicit indication that this is more than a hearing or interrogation. (The idea of a truly formal session of the Sanhedrin in which a capital case was decided at dawn on a feast day that began the previous sundown with the Passover seder remains controversial.)

[145]Possibly echoing 2 Samuel 17:23.

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

43. *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: Bist du der Jüden König? Jesus aber sprach zu ihm: Du sagests. Und da er verklagt war von den Hohenpriestern und Ältesten, antwortete er nichts. Da sprach Pilatus zu ihm: Hörest du nicht, wie hart sie dich verklagen? Und er antwortete ihm nicht auf ein Wort, also, dass sich auch der Landpfleger sehr verwunderte.*[148]

42. Give me back my Jesus!
Look, the [morally] lost son[146] throws
The money, the murderer's[147] wage,
Down at your feet.
Give me back my Jesus!

43. *But they held a council and bought with them [the pieces of silver] a potter's field for the burial of pilgrims. That is why on to the present day this same field has been called the Field of Blood. Here is fulfilled what is told by the prophet Jeremiah,*[149] *when he declares: "They have taken thirty pieces of silver, with which the Sold Man was paid for, whom they bought from the children of Israel, and have given them for a potter's field, as the Lord has commanded me."*[150] *But Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor questioned him, declaring: "Are you the King of the Jews?" But Jesus declared to him: "You are saying so." And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. Then Pilate declared to him: "Do you not hear how harshly they accuse you?" And he answered him not to one word,*[151] *insofar that even the governor wondered greatly.*

[146]The "[morally] lost son" is Judas. This line draws on the quasi-technical biblical term "huios tes apoleias" ("son of perdition"; or, also possibly, "son of lostness") that is famously applied to Judas in John 17:12, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "Die du mir gegeben hast, die habe ich bewahrt, und ist keiner von ihnen verloren, ohne das verlorne Kind" ("Those [followers that] you [God] have given me [Jesus], they have I safeguarded, and none of them is lost, except the [morally] lost child [Judas]"). The librettist has adjusted Luther's "das verlorne Kind" to "der verlorne Sohn" ("the lost son") because of the need for a rhyme with the word "Mörderlohn" ("murderer's wage"). Modern Luther Bibles read in John 17:12 not the "verlor[e]ne Kind" but instead the "Sohn des Verderbens" ("son of doom/destruction/perdition/corruption/ruin/loss"). Another biblical "lost" (Greek, "apololos") son is narrated in the parable, in Luke 15:11-31, about what in English is often called "the 'prodigal' son" (i.e., where the "apololos" is taken to mean "prodigal/wasteful"), a story that Luther, however, called "Das Gleichnis vom verlorenen Sohn" ("The Parable of the 'Lost' Son"). Lutheranism emphasized God's grace in this son's having been "lost" and then "found," as opposed to Judas, who remained "lost" and met a violent death, according to Matthew 27:5 and Acts 1:18 (note that John 13:27 says that at Jesus's last supper with his disciples "fuhr der Satan in ihn" ["Satan entered into him (Judas)], and thus Judas could be considered a [metaphorical] child of "Apollyon" ["the Destroyer"], a name linguistically related to "apoleias" ["lostness/perdition"]) and which is applied to Satan in Revelation 9:11).

[147]Judas was frequently called a murderer in Lutheran discourse.

[148]Matthew 27:7-14.

[149]See possibly Jeremiah 18:2-6, 19:1-11; 32:6-15, but the citation is actually adapted from Zecharaiah 11:12-13. Luther considered the attribution to Jeremiah in Matthew to be a simple error and of no consequence.

[150]An adaptation of Zechariah 11:12-13.

[151]The Greek text in Matthew reads literally, "And he did not answer him to nothing one word." Some manuscripts do not contain the phrase, "to nothing." Our direct rendering of Luther's German for this phrase corresponds to the reading of the Geneva Bible of 1560 (which was Shakespeare's Bible).

44. **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.[152]

44. **Commend your ways,**[153]
And whatever causes your heart grief,[154]
To the very most faithful governing/caretaking[155]
By the one who guides heaven.
He who grants clouds, sky, and winds
[Their] [path]ways, course, and route—
He will also find [path]ways
Where you can set foot.

45. *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 versammlet waren, sprach Pilatus zu ihnen: Welchen wollet ihr, dass ich euch losgebe? Barrabam oder Jesum, von dem gesaget wird, er sei Christus? 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: Habe du nichts zu schaffen mit diesem Gerechten; ich habe heute viel erlitten im Traum von seinetwegen! Aber die Hohenpriester und die Ältesten überredeten das Volk, dass sie um Barrabas bitten sollten und Jesum umbrächten. Da antwortete nun der Landpfleger und sprach zu ihnen: Welchen wollt ihr unter diesen zweien, den ich euch soll losgeben? Sie sprachen: Barrabam!*[156] *Pilatus sprach zu*

45. *But the governor had [a] custom during the festival to release a prisoner to the people,*[158] *whomever they wanted. But at that time he*[159] *had a prisoner, one notable before others, who was called Barabbas. And when they were gathered, Pilate declared to them:* "*Which man do you want that I should release to you? Barabbas; or Jesus, of whom [it] is said, 'he is Christ'?*" *For he was well aware that they*[160] *had handed him over out of envy. And when he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent [word] to him, desiring him to be told:* "*Have nothing to do with this righteous one; I have suffered much today in a dream on his account!*"[161] *But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the people that they should ask for Barabbas and do away with Jesus. Now then the governor answered, declaring to them:* "*Of these two, which man do you want whom I shall release to you?*" *They declared:* "*Barabbas!*"

[152]The first stanza of this hymn.

[153]Quoting Psalm 37:5, "Befiehl dem HERRN deine Wege" ("Entrust/commend your ways to the LORD"). The verb "befehlen" is employed biblically in one of its older German senses, as a synonym for "empfehlen" in the sense of "to entrust" or "to commend." The word is also used this way, e.g., in Jeremiah 11:20, "HERR …, ich habe dir meine Sache befohlen" ("LORD, … I have commended/entrusted my cause to you").

[154]The language of this line draws on Proverbs 12:25, "Sorge im Herzen kränkt, aber ein freundliches Wort erfreut" ("concern in one's heart causes grief; but a friendly word gladdens").

[155]The insertion of this hymn stanza effects a contrast between Pilate the "Landpfleger" ("governor"; literally, "caretaker of the land") and God the "[Himmels]pfleger" ("governor/caretaker [of heaven and of the heavens]"), something that cannot be smoothly captured in English translation.

[156]"Barrabam" is the accusative (objective) inflection in Latin of the name "Barrabas."

[158]The idea of such a custom is often debated by historians. There were instances of pardons but the extrabiblical evidence for a custom in Judea of releasing a prisoner at Passover or at other feasts is by itself not decisive.

[159]The Greek text in Matthew 27:16 reads, "they ['the crowd' ('ochlos')] had a prisoner," but the pronoun in Luther's version makes better sense: "he [Pilate] had a prisoner."

[160]The parallel passage in most early manuscripts of the Gospel of Mark (15:10) reads here, "the chief priests had handed him over," and not as in Matthew 27:18, "they" ['das Volk,' 'the (Jewish) people,' which is the closest antecedent in Luther's rendering of Matthew 27:15. Even in Matthew, as is the case in Mark, the priests might be understood as the agents, from the more distant antecedents of Matthew 27:1-2,12.

[161]Presumably Luther's biblical text should be understood to mean that Pilate's wife sent word via an adult male messenger. Bach could either have had the tenor evangelist simply report the verbal content of her message, or had another tenor or a bass do the job of messenger, but he set the text instead in the upper octave, for soprano, as a cutaway flashback.

ihnen: Was soll ich denn machen mit Jesu, von dem gesagt wird, er sei Christus? Sie sprachen alle: Lass ihn kreuzigen![157]

Pilate declared to them: "What, then, shall I do with Jesus, of whom is said, 'he is Christ'?" They all declared: "Have him crucified!"

46. **Wie wunderbarlich ist doch diese Strafe!**
Der gute Hirte leidet für die Schafe,
Die Schuld bezahlt der Herre, der Gerechte,
Für seine Knechte.[162]

46. **How wondrous, indeed, is this punishment!**
The good shepherd suffers for the sheep;
The Lord, the righteous one, pays the debt
For his servants.

47. *Der Landpfleger sagte: Was hat er denn Übels getan?*[163]

47. *The governor said: What evil has he done, then?*

48. 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 aufgericht,
Er nahm die Sünder auf und an.
Sonst hat mein Jesus nichts getan.

48. He has done good to us all:
The blind he gave sight;
The lame he made able to walk;
He told us his father's word;
He drove demons away;[164]
The distressed he has lifted up;[165]
He received and accepted sinners.
Nothing otherwise has my Jesus done.

49. Aus Liebe,
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.

49. Out of love,
Out of love my savior is willing to die—
Of [committing] a single sin he experiences nothing[166]—
  So that eternal ruin
  And the punishment of the [Day of] Judgment
  Might not remain upon my soul.

50. *Sie schrieen aber noch mehr und sprachen: Lass ihn kreuzigen! Da aber Pilatus sahe, dass er nichts schaffete, sondern dass ein viel grösser Getümmel ward, nahm er Wasser und wusch die Hände vor dem Volk und sprach: Ich*

50. *But they shouted out yet more, declaring: "Have him crucified!" But when Pilate saw that he could do nothing—rather, that a much greater commotion was developing—he took water and washed his hands*[168] *before the people and*

[157]Matthew 27:15-22.

[162]A stanza of "Herzliebster Jesu, was hast du verbrochen."

[163]Matthew 27:23a.

[164]The standard biblical and elsewhere widely used wording was not "Teufel forttreiben" ("to drive demons away") but "Teufel austreiben" ("to drive demons out"). The librettist uses "trieb fort" ("drove away") in place of "trieb aus" ("drove out") simply to accommodate a rhyme with God the father's "Wort" ("word").

[165]The sense of this line is probably derived from Psalm 147:6, "Der HERR richtet auf die Elenden" ("The LORD lifts up the abject").

[166]Literally, "Of one sin knows he nothing." This line is not saying that Jesus was unaware of the existence of misdeeds or sin. The sense of the line derives from 2 Corinthians 5:21, "er hat den, der von keiner Sünde wusste, für uns zur Sünde gemacht" ("he [God] has made into sin for us him [Jesus] who knew of no sin [i.e., who had no personal experience of committing a sin]"). 1 Peter 2:21-22 declares that Jesus was someone "welcher keine Sünde getan hat" ("who had done/committed no sin"). The belief reflected in this movement is not only that out of love Jesus is willing to die for humankind, but also that because of his sinlessness, he was indeed qualified to be the unblemished, spotless sacrifice necessary to pay the debt of human sin. See also the last line in movement 37, above.

[168]The idea of "hand washing" as an expression of absolving oneself of responsibility is not a well-attested Roman custom (and this narrative detail is not found in the Gospels of Mark, Luke, or John), but it is biblical: perhaps Matthew here primarily reflects Hebrew scriptural passages like Deuteronomy 21:6-7, Psalm 26:6, and Psalm 73:13.

bin unschuldig an dem Blut dieses Gerechten, sehet ihr zu! Da antwortete das ganze Volk und sprach: Sein Blut komme über uns und unsre Kinder. Da gab er ihnen Barrabam los; aber Jesum liess er geisseln und überantwortete ihn, dass er gekreuziget würde.[167]

declared: "*I am innocent of the blood of this righteous one—you see to it!*" *Then the entire people answered, declaring:* "*May his blood come over us and our children.*"[169] *Then he released Barabbas to them; but he had Jesus scourged, and handed him over [to the Roman soldiers] so that he would be crucified.*

51. Erbarm es Gott!
Hier steht der Heiland angebunden.
O Geisselung, o Schläg, o Wunden!
Ihr Henker, haltet ein!
Erweichet 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!

51. For the love of God![170]
Here the savior stands, tied up [to a whipping post].
O scourging, O blows, O wounds!
You [Roman] executioners, stop!
Does not
The soul's agony,
The sight of such misery soften you?
Ah indeed! you [executioners] have an [unyielding] heart
That must be like the whipping post
And a great deal harsher still.
Have mercy; stop!

52. 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!

52. If the tears of my cheeks cannot
Achieve anything [at the whipping post],
O, then take my [yielding] heart inside[171] [the hall of judgment].
But let it [my heart], at the streams [of Jesus's blood]—
When his wounds bounteously/generously[172] bleed—
Also be the offering basin [for that blood].[173]

[167]Matthew 27:23b-26.

[169]The Greek in Matthew 27:25 reads hyperliterally, "His blood on us and our children" (there is no verb in Matthew's formula, and this narrative detail is not found in the Gospels of Mark, Luke, or John). Luther gives the verse as "May his blood 'come over' us and our children," a rendering that is less obviously a curse than the one typically found in English Bibles: "His blood 'be on' us and 'on' our children" (and which rendering is wrongly given in many modern translations of the libretto from Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*). Some Lutheran theologians of Bach's day and earlier read Matthew 27:25 as saying that the Jews were, wittingly or unwittingly, calling on themselves a blessing of God's redemption through the blood of Christ. See also the footnote regarding the line "the wounds [of Jesus] copiously/generously bleed" in movement 52, below.

[170]"Erbarm es Gott" is not a quasi-liturgical plea for God's forgiveness ("Lord, have mercy") but an idiomatic cry of horror or dismay. In the south of Germany still today people say "Gott erbarm!", much in the way that dismayed Americans would exclaim "Good Lord!" or "Mercy's sakes!" or "For the love of God!"

[171]The sense of this line appears to be "Take my yielding heart in place of the hard, unyielding heart of those who scourged Jesus and then further maltreated him in the hall of judgment."

[172]The word "milde" is here regularly mistranslated as "gently" (i.e., "lightly"). For the word's less well-known sense, which is much more likely the operative one in the present context, consider for example the wording of Psalm 37:21, "Der Gottlose borgt und bezahlt nicht; der Gerechte aber ist barmherzig und milde" ("The Godless one borrows and [re]pays not; the righteous one, however, is merciful and generous"). In the libretto of Bach's cantata "Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot" BWV 39, movement 2 declares "dass er der Armut auch die Notdurft ausgespendet, / Als er mit milder Hand, / Was jener nötig ist, uns reichlich zugewendet" ("that he [God] also provides for poverty's dire need, / As with his bounteous/generous hand [i.e., not 'with his "gentle" hand'] / He bountifully bestows on us what each requires").

[173]In ancient mythology the "Opferschale" is a basin in which the blood of the sacrificial animal is collected. Consider, too, the offerings for the altar in the Dedication of the Tabernacle in Numbers 7, where twelve times a silver basin (Luther: "Schale") is presented for use in grain offering (Luther: "Speisopfer").

53. *Da nahmen die Kriegsknechte des Landpflegers Jesum zu sich in das Richthaus und sammleten über ihn die ganze Schar und zogen ihn aus und legeten ihm einen Purpurmantel an und flochten eine dornene Krone und satzten sie auf sein Haupt und ein Rohr in seine rechte Hand und beugeten die Knie vor ihm und spotteten ihn und sprachen: Gegrüsset seist du, Jüdenkönig! Und speieten ihn an und nahmen das Rohr und schlugen damit sein Haupt.*[174]

54. **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![177]

55. *Und da sie ihn verspottet hatten, zogen sie ihm den Mantel aus und zogen ihm seine Kleider an und führeten ihn hin, dass sie ihn kreuzigten. Und indem sie hinausgingen, funden sie einen Menschen von Kyrene mit Namen Simon; den zwungen*[179] *sie, dass er ihm sein Kreuz trug.*[180]

53. *Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the hall of judgment, and gathered the entire band [of Roman soldiers] about him, and undressed him, and laid on him a purple*[175] *cloak, and plaited a crown of thorns, and placed it on his head and a reed into his right hand, and kneeling before him, derided him, declaring:* "*Greetings to you,*[176] *King of the Jews!*" *And spat on him, and took the reed, and struck his head with it.*

54. **O head full of blood and wounds,**
Full of agony and full of scorn;
O head, braided[178] **in derision**
With a crown of thorns;
O head—otherwise adorned beautifully
With highest honor, and decoration,
But now highly abused—
My greetings to you!

55. *And when they [the Roman soldiers] had ridiculed him, they took the cloak off him and put his [own] clothing on him, and led him forth, that they [these soldiers] might crucify him. And as they were going out, they found a man from Cyrene named Simon; they coerced him so that he*[181] *bore his [Jesus's] cross for him.*[182]

[174]Matthew 27:27-30.

[175]"Purple" would signify royal or imperial attire. In Matthew the color is actually "scarlet," which would in the gospel's day most immediately call to mind not royalty but the cloak of the Roman general (the more distant possibility would be the emperor's specifically military cloak). Mark 15:17 and John 19:2 read "purple." Luther's "purple" for the Gospel of Matthew's "cloak" (27:28), however, precludes the richer variety of symbolism; i.e., while in Matthew Jesus is decidedly military (and possibly aristocratic), in Luther's rendering he would be decidedly aristocratic (but not military).

[176]The expression here in Matthew 27:29 plays on the traditional greeting to the emperor, "Ave, Caesar!" The "greetings-to-you" parallels Judas's greeting to Jesus earlier on in the story (26:49, set in movement 26). Following upon these two villainous ironic uses in the biblical narrative, the commentary hymn at movement 54 will nicely furnish a virtuous straightforward one, "my [i.e., the implied singer's] greetings to you."

[177]In BWV 244.2, the first two stanzas of this hymn are included; in BWV 244.1, however, apparently only the first stanza was included.

[178]In movements 10 and 27, the word "gebunden" is employed in the sense of "bound" (i.e., referring to tying Jesus's hands together by rope behind his back) but here in the sense of "braided."

[179]"Zwungen" is the older-German past tense of "zwingen" ("to compel/coerce"); later German Bibles here read "zwangen."

[180]Matthew 27:31-32.

[181]In the Gospel of John (19:17), and in movement 1 of the present libretto (see the penultimate line of that movement), Jesus carries the cross himself (i.e., apparently unaided the whole time). In Matthew, it seems the Roman soldiers were afraid that Jesus, weakened from having been flogged, might die before they could crucify him as a public warning example to the Passover pilgrims.

[182]In denoting whose cross it was, Luther employed the "dative of interest" + "possessive determiner" ("[anstelle von] ihm" + "sein" ["(instead of / for) him" + "his"]), thereby emphasizing that the burden belonged to Jesus while Simon of Cyrene was forced to bear it. The

56. Ja freilich will in uns das Fleisch und Blut
Zum Kreuz gezwungen sein;
Je mehr es unsrer Seele gut,
Je herber geht es ein.[183]

56. Yes assuredly, the flesh-and-blood [sinful human nature][184] in us
Has to be[185] coerced to the cross;
The more it [the cross[186]] does our soul good,[187]
The more gallingly [to us] it enters [the soul].

57. 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 wieder[188] tragen.

57. "Come, sweet cross," so I [against my human nature] will say;[189]
My Jesus, ever give it here [for me to bear]!
If someday my suffering becomes too heavy for me,
Then you will help me bear it [the cross] again.

58. *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 ers schmeckete,*

58. *And when they [the Roman soldiers] came to the place named Golgotha, which translated is "Place of Skulls,"*[190] *they gave him vinegar mixed with gall to drink;*[191] *and*

Greek source texts of the New Testament (including the Erasmus 1519 edition that Luther worked from) do not contain the wording "for him."

[183]This line reads with this wording in the surviving musical sources of BWV 244.1 and 244.2. In an early scribal copy of the libretto and in the poet's reprinted libretto, it reads "Je herber geht es dennoch ein" ("The more gallingly [to us], nonetheless, it enters [the soul]").

[184]The expression "flesh and blood" here refers to (inherently sinful) human nature. This sense is derived from 1 Corinthians 15:50, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "Davon sage ich aber, lieben Brüder, dass Fleisch und Blut nicht können das Reich Gottes ererben" ("Hence I [the apostle Paul] say, however, to you dear brothers [in Christ], that flesh and blood [which, according to Luther, is essentially corrupted human nature, the 'Old Adam in us'] cannot inherit the kingdom of God"). It is the "spirit" that inherits the kingdom of God.

[185]Lines 1–2 do not mean "Yes, willingly/gladly are flesh and blood compelled to the cross" (and note that this would pointlessly contradict the sentiment of lines 3–4). The sense of "Ja freilich will in uns das Fleisch und Blut zum Kreuz gezwungen sein" is indeed the opposite: "Yes, unwillingly are flesh and blood compelled to the cross." The verb "wollen" appears here in its the passive use, "etwas will etwas sein" ("something has to be [or, 'needs to be'] something"), as, e.g., in the expression "auch Strippen will gelernt sein" ("even stripteasing has to be learned," or "even stripteasing requires skill"). Compare the English expression "boys will be boys" (i.e., "boys have/need to be boys"). Note, too, that the poet apparently based his libretto in part on passion sermons of the seventeenth-century theologian Heinrich Müller (which are known to have been in Bach's personal library); Müller writes, e.g., "Fleisch und Blut will nicht gern ans Kreuz; ach, wie träg ist Fleisch und Blut, wanns ans Kreuz soll" ("flesh-and-blood does not want [to go] gladly to the cross; ah, how lethargic is flesh-and-blood, when it is [to go] to the cross").

[186]The antecedent for this "es" is apparently "[das] Kreuz" ("cross"), the word that here is emphasized in Bach's musical setting.

[187]The older-German verb "guten" is used here in its sense as a synonym for "wohltun" ("to do good [to]").

[188]In an early scribal copy of the libretto, in the poet's reprinted libretto, and in mm. 32–34 of BWV 244.1, this line reads "So hilfst du mir es wieder tragen" ("Then you will help me bear it again")—in mm. 29–32, however, BWV 244.1 gives "So hilfst du mir es selber tragen" ("Then you yourself will help me bear it"); throughout in BWV 244.2 it reads "So hilfst du mir es selber tragen."

[189]It is not easy to parse the logic of movements 56 and 57.

[190]Grammatically, the word "Schädel" in "Schädelstätt" (or "Schädelstätte") could be singular ("der Schädel" ["the skull"]) or plural ("die Schädel" ["the skulls"]), but definitions of the word in German historical dictionaries explain this as a place where skulls from abandoned graves were found, as opposed to other sources which describe Golgotha as a hill that was shaped like a skull.

[191]Echoing Psalm 69:22.

wollte ers 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: Der du den Tempel Gottes zerbrichst und bauest ihn in dreien Tagen, hilf dir selber! Bist du Gottes Sohn, so steig herab vom Kreuz! Desgleichen auch die Hohenpriester spotteten sein samt den Schriftgelehrten und Ältesten und sprachen: 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, lüstets ihn; denn er hat

when he tasted it,[192] *he did not want to drink it. But when they [the soldiers] had crucified him, they divided his clothes and cast lots for them, so that what is said by the [psalmist] prophet*[193] *would be fulfilled:* "*They have divided my clothing among themselves, and about my garment they have cast lots.*" *And they sat there keeping guard over him. And high up, at [above] his head,*[194] *they tacked, written, the cause of his death, namely [the seditious claim]:* "*This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.*"[195] *And there were two murderers crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. But those passing by blasphemed him, shaking their heads*[196] *and declaring:* "*You who destroys the Temple of God and builds it in three days, save yourself! If you are God's son, then [by miracle] climb down from the cross!*" *Similarly also the chief priests derided him, along with the scripture scholars, and elders, declaring:* "*he has [so they say] saved*[197] *others, and [yet he] cannot save himself. If he is the King of Israel, then he should [by miracle] climb*

[192]The "it" as neuter "es" in "und da ers [i.e., 'er es'] schmeckete" ("and when he tasted it"), as opposed to an "it" as masculine "ihn" (for "der Essig" ["the vinegar"]) or feminine "sie" (for "die Galle" ["the gall"]) refers to the implied grammatical neuter of the combination of the vinegar and gall.

[193]Psalm 22:19. Note that "durch den Propheten" is accusative masculine singular, "by the prophet" (the plural, "through the prophets," would have required "durch die Propheten").

[194]"Zu seinen Häupten" is a later orthography for Luther's original but now archaic plural-for-singular rendering in Matthew 27:37, "zu seinen Heubten" (literally, "at his [at Jesus's] heads"). Compare the plural-for-singular "zu seinen Häupten," e.g., in Genesis 28:11, which in Luther's rendering reads "er nahm einen Stein des Orts, und legte ihn zu seinen Häupten, und legte sich an demselbigen Ort schlafen" ("he [Jacob] took a stone of the place [Luz], and laid it [as a pillow] at [below] his head, and laid himself to sleep in this same place"). In Matthew 27:37, later Bibles give "Und oben über sein Haupt setzten sie" ("And high up, above his head, they put") in place of Luther's "Und oben zu seinen Häupten hefteten sie" ("And high up, at [above] his head [literally, 'at his heads'], they tacked").

[195]To anyone religiously celebrating the Passover, this expression would be understood first and foremost as a messianic title; to the Romans, as a challenge to the emperor.

[196]Echoing Psalm 22:8.

[197]Here (Matthew 27:42) the Jewish leaders are being sarcastic (in 27:40 they had just declared to Jesus, "Der du den Tempel Gottes zerbrichst und bauest ihn in dreien Tagen, hilf dir selber!" ["You who destroys the Temple of God and builds it in three days, save yourself!"]); the Gospel of Matthew depicts Jesus as being able to do something to save himself from crucifixion, however, should he wish this (see 26:53, where he says, "meinest du, dass ich nicht könnte meinen Vater bitten, dass er mir zuschickte mehr denn zwölf Legion Engel?" ["do you think that I could not ask of my father that he send me more than twelve legions of angels?"]).

gesagt: Ich bin Gottes Sohn. Desgleichen schmäheten ihn auch die Mörder, die mit ihm gekreuziget waren.[198]

[down] from the cross now; then we will believe him. He trusted in God, who may redeem him now, if it delights him[199] *[God];*[200] *for he has said: 'I am God's son.'"*[201] *Similarly also the murderers who were crucified with him reviled him.*

59. [DIE TOCHTER] ZION
Ach Golgatha, unselges Golgatha!
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 Seelen[202] nah;
Ach Golgatha, unselges Golgatha!

59. [DAUGHTER] ZION
Ah Golgotha, unhallowed[203] Golgotha!
Here [Jesus][204] the Lord of glory must be abusively ruined;
The blessing and the salvation of the world
Is, as a [redemptive] curse, placed on the cross.[205]
[Jesus][206] the creator of heaven and of the earth
Is to be withdrawn [to heaven][207] from [creation's] earth and sky.[208]
Here innocence must die guilty;
This disturbs my soul;
Ah Golgotha, unhallowed Golgotha!

[198]Matthew 27:33-44.

[199]The (old-fashioned) formulation "lüstets ihn" (i.e., "lüstet es ihn") means "if it delights him"; it does not mean not "he lied."

[200]Echoing Psalm 22:9.

[201]This verse (Matthew 27:43) fits with the sentiments of Wisdom of Solomon 2:18, "Ist der Gerechte Gottes Sohn, so wird er ihm helfen" ("If the righteous one is God's son, then he [God] will save him [the son]").

[202]In BWV 244.1, an early scribal copy of the libretto, and the poet's reprinted libretto, this reads "Seelen"; in BWV 244.2, it reads "Seele." There is no difference in meaning. (The "n"-ending in "Seelen" does not denote a plural. It is simply the older-fashioned form for a singular possessive noun.)

[203]The "unblessed/unhallowed" bones littered about Gologotha would contrast with the "selige Gebeine" ("blessed/hallowed bones") of Jesus in movement 67.

[204]Jesus is called "der HERR der Herrlichkeit" ("the LORD of glory") in 1 Corinthians 2:8 and James 2:1. The title links the concept of God's glory in the Hebrew scriptures (often associated with the Tabernacle or the divine presence) with God's glory in the New Testament (associated with Jesus Christ, even in his crucifixion).

[205]This line draws on the language of Galatians 3:13, "Christus aber hat uns erlöst von dem Fluch des Gesetzes, da er ward ein Fluch für uns—denn es steht geschrieben: Verflucht ist jedermann, der am Holz hängt" ("But Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law [of Moses], when [on the cross] he became a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is every one who hangs on a [piece of] wood'"), quoting Deuteronomy 21:23.

[206]Jesus is referred to as creator, e.g., in Colossians 1:16, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "durch ihn ist alles geschaffen, das im Himmel und auf Erden ist; … es ist alles durch ihn und zu ihm geschaffen" ("by him [Jesus] is created everything that is in heaven and on earth; everything is created by him and unto him").

[207]The idea of Jesus being "lifted up" (on the cross) and thereby entering the process of being "[with]drawn" back to God the father in heaven comes from John 12:32, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "Und ich, wenn ich erhöhet werde von der Erden, so will ich sie alle zu mir ziehen" ("And I [Jesus], when I am lifted up from the earth [on to the cross], then will I [through the word of the gospel] draw them all to me [and, thereby, toward God in heaven]").

[208]"Der Schöpfer Himmels und der Erden Soll Erd und Luft entzogen werden" means not "Earth and air/sky shall be withdrawn from the creator of heaven and earth" but "The creator of heaven and earth shall be withdrawn from earth and air/sky."

60. [DIE TOCHTER] ZION UND DIE GLÄUBIGEN
Z: Sehet, Jesus hat die Hand,
Uns zu fassen, ausgespannt,
Kommt!
Gl: Wohin? *Z:* in Jesu Armen
Sucht Erlösung, nehmt Erbarmen,
Suchet! *Gl:* Wo? *Z:* in Jesu Armen.
Lebet, sterbet, ruhet hier,
Ihr verlassnen Küchlein ihr,
Bleibet! *Gl:* Wo? *Z:* in Jesu Armen.

60. [DAUGHTER] ZION AND THE BELIEVERS
Z: Look, Jesus has extended his hand[209]
To grasp us;
Come!
B: Where to? *Z:* into Jesus's arms
Seek redemption, receive mercy;
Seek! *B:* Where? *Z:* in Jesus's arms.
Live, die, rest here,
You forsaken chicks,[210] you;
Remain! *B:* Where? *Z:* in Jesus's arms.

61. *Und von der sechsten Stunde an war eine Finsternis über das ganze Land bis zu der neunten Stunde. Und um die neunte Stunde schriee Jesus laut und sprach: Eli, Eli, lama*[211] *asabthani? Das ist: Mein Gott, mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen? Etliche aber, die da stunden, da sie das höreten, sprachen sie: Der rufet dem Elias! Und bald lief einer unter ihnen, nahm einen Schwamm und füllete ihn mit Essig und steckete ihn auf ein Rohr und tränkete ihn. Die andern aber sprachen: Halt! lass sehen, ob Elias komme und ihm helfe?*[212] *Aber Jesus schriee abermal laut, und verschied.*[213]

61. *And a darkness was over the entire land, from the sixth hour*[214] *on, up unto the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus loudly shouted out, declaring:* "*Eli, Eli, lama, asabthani?*"[215] *That is:* "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*" *But some who were standing there, when they heard this, they declared:* "*He is calling to Elijah!*"[216] *And promptly one among them ran [and] took a sponge and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. But the others declared:* "*Stop! let us see whether Elijah might come and save him?*" *But Jesus loudly shouted out again, and departed this life.*

[209]The cross as seeming curse but actual blessing (see the footnote regarding line 4 in movement 59, above) continues at this point. Lutheran Passion sermon materials in Bach's personal library, following Augustine, refer to Jesus as "der rechte Hohepriester" ("the proper high priest"), with his hands "ausgespannt" ("extended") on the cross to bless his followers (i.e., by forming the posture of the priest in a prayer of blessing). Presumably the librettist uses the singular form "die Hand" ("the/his hand") because the plural ("die Hände" ["the/his hands"]) would not rhyme and scan properly with "ausgespannt" in the next line.

[210]Compare to Matthew 23:37, "Jerusalem … wie oft habe ich deine Kinder versammlen wollen, wie eine Henne versammlet ihre Küchlein unter ihre Flügel, und ihr habt nicht gewollt" ("Jerusalem, … how often have I wanted to gather your children, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you all did not want [this]").

[211]Although Luther's biblical text (in Matthew 27:46a) gave the (Hebrew) word "lama" ("why") only once, Bach musically set the word twice. In its immediate quotation in German (27:46b), however, he matched the biblical text and musically set the corresponding word "warum" ("why") only once.

[212]Nearly all Luther Bibles of Bach's day employ a period here, not a question mark.

[213]Matthew 27:45-50.

[214]The "sixth hour" is at noon.

[215]In the Gospel of Matthew this quotation from Psalm 22:2 was rendered in (transliterated) Aramaic, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani" (not the Hebrew, "Eli, Eli, lama asabthani"). While most ancient Greek sources of Matthew give the phrase in its Aramaic wording, Luther's translation of the Gospel provides a transliteration of the traditional Hebrew text from Psalm 22. Thus, in Luther's text these words of Jesus are given as an even more literal fulfillment of (what was taken to be) prophecy than they were in Matthew's text.

[216]That is, the prophet Elijah did not die but ascended to heaven, and thus he could be in a position to help Jesus, whose cry to "my God" ("Eli" in Hebrew and also in an Aramaic form attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls) is depicted in Matthew as having been misunderstood as a cry to the prophet; consider also Malachi 4:5, "Siehe, ich will euch senden den Propheten Elia, ehe denn da komme der grosse und schreckliche Tag des HERRN" ("Look, I [the LORD of hosts] will send you the prophet Elijah before there should come the great and fearful day of the LORD").

62. **Wenn ich einmal soll scheiden,**
So scheide 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![217]

62. **When some day I am to part [from this world],**
Then do not part from me;
When I am to suffer death,
Then do make your appearance.[218]
When I will be most afraid of all
In my heart,
Then pluck me out of my fears
By virtue of your fear and pain.

63. *Und siehe da, der Vorhang im Tempel zerriss in zwei Stück von obenan bis untenaus. Und die Erde erbebete, und die Felsen zerrissen, und die Gräber täten sich auf, und stunden auf viel Leiber der Heiligen, die da schliefen, 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: Wahrlich, dieser ist Gottes Sohn gewesen. Und es waren viel Weiber da, die von ferne*

63. *And look, there: the veil in the Temple split apart*[222] *wholly and utterly into two pieces, from top to bottom.*[223] *And the earth quaked,*[224] *and the rocks split apart,*[225] *and the graves opened,*[226] *and many bodies of the saints that were sleeping there [in death] arose [to life]*[227] *and went out of the graves after his [Jesus's] resurrection*[228] *and came into the holy city [Jerusalem]*[229] *and appeared to many. But when the captain and those who were with him safeguarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what was taking place there, they were exceedingly frightened, and*

[217]A stanza of "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden."

[218]The verb "herfürtreten" means, literally, "to step forth." We have translated it here in the sense that Luther uses in Luke 1:80, where it is said of John the Baptist: "er war in der Wüsten, bis dass er sollte hervortreten vor das Volk Israel" ("he was in the desert, until he should make his appearance unto the people Israel").

[222]The Calov Commentary Bible (owned by Bach) explains that this happened to indicate that Jesus, as God's high priest, would enter the Temple's Holy of Holies with his own blood and earn for his followers an everlasting redemption (i.e., and thus the animal and vegetable sacrifices offered in the Temple for centuries would no longer be necessary).

[223]"Von obenan bis untenaus" ("from above in until below out") was a rare expression in Luther's day and also in Bach's day (likewise "von oben an bis unten aus"). The standard expression was simply "von oben bis unten" ("from top to bottom," which would be a more direct translation of the Greek in Matthew). By rendering not only with the "oben" versus "unten" but additionally with the "an" versus "aus," Luther apparently meant to intensify and emphasize strongly the very thoroughness of the temple veil's being torn apart (both "top-to-bottom" and "in-and-out [i.e., 'out-and-out']").

[224]There are many examples in the Hebrew Scriptures of the earth shaking as a sign of divine judgment of God's people or of the last times.

[225]The Calov Commentary Bible (owned by Bach) says that the rocks were split apart as a sign of Godly wrath against the Jews. The Olearius Bible (also owned by Bach) provides similar commentary.

[226]Using language from Ezekiel 37:12.

[227]Lutheranism held that the true church of God had been established before the fall of Adam and Eve into sin and, further, that all messianic promises in the Hebrew Scriptures refer to Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, living by faith in God's promises, the saintly Israelites of the Hebrew Scriptures (but not later Jews) were considered to be part of the true church, "die Heiligen" ("the saints"), and could rise at this moment.

[228]The interpretive challenges of the Greek in Matthew here are several. Luther gives no evidence of being troubled, however, by the problems of narrative chronology in his translation. Remarks John Calvin: "It is absurd . . . to imagine that they spent three days alive and breathing, hidden in tombs." The arising of the saints here in Matthew is in any event a foreshadowing of the general resurrection of the dead at the End Time.

[229]See, e.g., Isaiah 52:1, "du heilige Stadt Jerusalem" ("you holy city, Jerusalem"). See also Matthew 4:5, "in die heilige Stadt . . . auf die Zinne des Tempels" ("into the holy city [Jerusalem] . . . on the pinnacle of the temple").

zusahen, die da[219] *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*[220] *Jesu. Da befahl Pilatus, man sollte ihm ihn geben.*[221]

declared: "*Truly, this man was God's son.*" *And there were many women there looking on, from afar, who had followed [Jesus] there from Galilee and had served him, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses,*[230] *and [Salome]*[231] *the mother of the children of Zebedee. But in the evening came a rich man of Arimathea, called Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus; he went to Pilate and asked him for Jesus's corpse.*[232] *Then Pilate commanded that it should be given to him.*

[219]The Luther Bibles of Bach's day here read "die da Jesus waren nachgefolget aus Galiläa" ("who had followed Jesus there from Galilee").

[220]The Luther Bibles of Bach's day, however, here read not "Leichnam" ("corpse") but "Leib" ("body").

[221]Matthew 27:51-58.

[230]Luther's biblical source text (the Erasmus 1519 edition of the Greek text of the New Testament) reads "Joses" here, where more reliable New Testament sources give "Joseph."

[231]Zebedee was the father of Jesus's disciples James and John (see also movement 18, above). His wife was traditionally, including in the Lutheranism of Bach's day, taken to be the "Salome" of Mark 15:40.

[232]The Luther Bibles of Bach's day here read "Leib" ("body"), not "Leichnam" ("corpse"), and "Leichnam" appears nowhere else, either, in Luther's rendering of the Gospel of Matthew. Perhaps Bach's text simply represents a slip; or perhaps it (unintentionally?) reflects the wording in the passion narrative in Luther's rendering of Mark (14:8; 15:43,45) and John (19:31,38,40), or in his rendering of Deuteronomy 21:22-23, "Wenn jemand eine Sünde getan hat, die des Todes würdig ist, und wird also getötet, dass man hängt ihn an ein Holz, so soll sein Leichnam nicht über Nacht an dem Holz bleiben" ("If someone has committed a sin that is worthy of death and he be therefore put to death such that he is hanged on a [piece of] wood, then his corpse is not to remain on the wood overnight")—note that in Galatians 3:13, where this verse is quoted, Luther also gives the word "Holz" ("wood," not "tree"); consider also "Leichnam" in the commentary at movement 64; likewise "Leichenstein" ("tombstone"; literally, "corpse's stone") at movement 68, and the common expression "Holz zum Kreuz" ("wood of/for the cross"; e.g., at movement 1).

64. 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,

64. In the evening [in the garden of Eden], when it was cool,
Adam's falling[233] [into sin] became manifest;[234]
In the evening, the savior [Jesus, the New Adam] bears him
[the Old Adam][235] down[236] [by taking sin to the grave].[237]
In the evening, the dove came back [to Noah, after the
flood],[238]
Carrying an olive leaf in its mouth.
O lovely time! O evening hour!
The peace treaty[239] is now made with God,

[233]There is no real interpretive difference between this unusual and slightly clumsy nominative subject "Adams Fallen" ("Adam's falling [into sin]") and the standard expression "Adams Fall" ("Adam's fall [into sin]"). It would seem that the librettist employed the gerund simply to accommodate the need for an extra syllable in the poetry's scansion.

[234]In Genesis 3:8, God is depicted as walking in the garden of Eden "da der Tag kühle worden war" ("when the day had become cool"; a literal rendering of the underlying Hebrew would be "in the breeze of the day" [i.e., a poetic expression for "in the evening"]); Adam and Eve, having eaten of the tree that God had commanded them not to eat from (and thus, in traditional Christian interpretation, having fallen into a state of sin), hid themselves among the trees, but then they came out into the open, narratively making manifest to the Lord their having disobeyed him.

[235]Here the meaning of "ihn" (accusative, either "him" or "it") is not entirely clear, although its antecedent is probably not "[der] Fall" ("[the] fall ([of Adam into sin]"), not least because strictly speaking the subject of this sentence is not "[der] Fall" (which is the regular noun that is used by the librettist in movements 22 and 67) but "[das] Fallen" (a verbal noun, "[the] falling [of Adam into sin]"). The probably two best guesses, then, are: 1) by dying sacrificially on the cross, Jesus, the New Adam (in Hebrew, "adam" = "man"), bears down sin-stained Old Adam, the source of the from-then-on inherited "original sin" that has thereby corrupted human nature—many earlier and some contemporary paintings and woodcuts thus depict Adam's skull beneath the cross of Jesus; or 2) this is a reference to Genesis 3:15, a textually and interpretively much contested verse that in any event involves violence against the devil (i.e., traditionally associated with the "serpent" of Genesis 3)—there are also many artworks that show the cross crushing the devil (or a dragon representing Satan). We have settled on the first option, as several historical dictionaries note that the separable verb "niederdrücken" ("to press/weigh/bear down") can be used as a synonym for "niederschlagen" ("to strike down"), and in Bach's day the verb "niederschlagen" was employed to describe Jesus striking down Old Adam, e.g., in the hymn lines "Durch dein Blut und Kreuzestod: / Schlage du die Sündenglieder / Meines alten Adams nieder" ("Through your blood and death on the cross: / Strike down the sin-marked members / Of my Old Adam [i.e., the 'Old Adam' in me, my nature/essence that is corrupted with original sin]").

[236]"Am Abend drücket ihn der Heiland nieder" does not mean "In the evening the savior bowed himself down."

[237]The passion narrative does not clearly indicate when exactly Jesus died on the cross, but it does say (in Matthew 27:57-58, as set in movement 63 above) that "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" ("But in the evening came a rich man of Arimathea, called Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus; he went to Pilate and asked him for Jesus's corpse [to bury]"); Lutheranism taught that on the cross Jesus completed his suffering for sin and that his descent into the grave/hell was not a extension of his punishment—Jesus's descent was held to be a step in his exaltation and his victory over death and sin, not a final stage of his humiliation and suffering. Note, too, that the poet apparently based his libretto in part on passion sermons of the seventeenth-century theologian Heinrich Müller (which are known to have been in Bach's personal library); Müller writes, e.g., "Am Abend, da der Tag kühle worden war, kam die Sünde der Menschen erstlich ans Licht; am Abend nimmt sie Christus wieder mit sich ins Grab" ("In the evening [in the garden of Eden], when the day had grown cool, the sin of humankind initially came to light; in the evening, Christ takes it [i.e., sin] back with him into the grave").

[238]To Noah in the ark, after the biblical flood had subsided—Genesis 8:11.

[239]The poet is using the theologically somewhat clumsy expression "Friedensschluss mit Gott" ("peace treaty with God") to refer to the crucifixion as a fulfillment of the "covenant" (Luther, "Bund") that God made with Noah and his descendants, in Genesis 9:8-17, that never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood and never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth. Passion sermons of the seventeenth-century theologian Heinrich Müller (known to have been in Bach's personal library) refer to the crucified Jesus as "das reine, fruchtbringende Täublein das … trägt ein Ölblatt in seinem Munde; sein Begräbniss versichert uns der Barmherzigkeit Gottes, des Friedens mit seinem Vater, und dass das Zorn-Gewässer [von der Sündflut] Gottes nunmehr gefallen sei" ("the pure, fruitful dove that … carries an olive leaf in its/his mouth; his [Jesus's] burial assures us of God's mercy, of peace with [God] his father, and that God's wrath-water [of Noah's sin-flood] is from now on subsided").

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!

For Jesus has accomplished his [purpose on the] cross.
His corpse arrives at its rest;
Ah! dear soul, ask [the favor]:
Go, let the death-stricken Jesus be given as a gift to you;
O wholesome, o precious remembrance!

65. 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!

65. Make yourself pure [of sin],[240] my heart;
I myself[241] want to bury Jesus [inside my heart, as his grave].
For in me is he now,
Ever and ever,
To have his sweet rest.
World, get out [of my heart]; let Jesus in!

66. *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: Herr, wir haben gedacht, dass dieser Verführer sprach, da er noch lebete: Ich will nach dreien Tagen wieder*[242] *auferstehen. Darum befiehl,*

66. *And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shawl and laid it in his [Joseph's] own new grave, which he had had*[245] *hewn into a rock; and [he] rolled a great stone before the door of the grave, and went away. But Mary Magdalene was there and the other Mary [the mother of James and Joses] sitting over against the grave. On the next day, [the one] that then follows after the day of preparation*[246] *[for the sabbath],*[247] *the chief priests and Pharisees all together came to Pilate and declared:* "*Lord [Pilate], we have kept in mind that, when he was still*

[240]Probably alluding to Proverbs 20:9, "Wer kann sagen: Ich bin rein in meinem Herzen, und lauter von meiner Sünde?" ("Who can say: 'I am pure in my heart, and clear of my sin'?"). Compare also the language of a poem that appeared in the famous contemporary hymn and prayer book *Himmlisches Freuden-Mahl*, by Johann Rittmeier, together with a marvelous woodcut picturing Jesus sweeping snakes out of a human heart: "Jesu kehre selbst und fege / Was dir misfällt aus dem Wege, / Mach mein Herz von Sünden rein, / Lass es deine Wohnung sein" ("Jesus, do—yourself—sweep and mop / Out of the way [in my heart] what displeases you; / Make my heart pure of sins; / Let it be your dwelling place").

[241]"Selbst" here is apparently an intensifier, and despite its position in the verse, the word would most likely refer to the speaker, in an emphatic as opposed to a reflexive usage, meant to convey not the sense "I want to bury Jesus—by myself, without any assistance—inside my heart," but "I myself—as far as I am concerned, for my own part—want to bury Jesus inside my heart"). Other, probably less likely possibilities are that the "selbst" refers to Jesus, yielding the sacramental sense "I want to bury Jesus himself inside my heart" (in Lutheran teaching, Jesus himself is physically present in the consecrated elements of the sacrament of communion, and there is occasional attestation in older Lutheran writings of referring to the taking of communion as "burying Jesus in the heart"; in any event, whether "selbst" here means "myself" or "himself," this aria does continue the sacramental meditations of movement 13, above. Another of the possible but probably less likely senses of "selbst" here would be as a synonym for "daselbst" ("in said place"; namely, in my heart).

[242]The word "wieder" ("again") does not appear in Matthew or in Luther's translation. "Auferstehen" ("rise") and "Wiederauferstehen" ("rise again") both, however, carry essentially the same message.

[245]Some modern printings of this libretto give the German text incorrectly as "welches er hatte in einen Fels hauen," i.e., they lack the word "lassen" (and some printings that do include the German "lassen" do not accommodate it in their English translation); for "he had hewn," the German would have been "er hatte gehauen/behauen." Luther's idiosyncratic rendering of the verse "welches er hatte lassen in einen Fels hauen" means "which he had [arranged to have] had hewn into a rock." Luther's wording avoids any implication that Joseph himself—a wealthy person of high social status—might have performed the hard manual labor of rock-cutting.

[246]"Des andern Tages, der da folget nach dem Rüsttage" does not mean "On the next day, [the one] that followed after the Sabbath day." The "Rüsttag" is not a "day of rest" but a "day of preparation" (derived from the verb "rüsten" in its sense of "to prepare").

[247]The convoluted expression in Matthew, avoiding the use of the word "sabbath," may reflect awareness of the religious implausibility in first-century Judaism of the events depicted as taking place on a Saturday, the sabbath, a day of religious observance and of rest (i.e., which would be profaned in the priests' work of sealing the gravestone, in Matthew 27:66). The Olearius Bible Commentary, which Bach owned, notes here that "Unsern hochgelobten Heiland feindeten sie an, als einen Sabbats Schänder . . . aber ihre tolle rachgierige Unart hier v.63 erweisete, sie wären die ärgsten Sabbats Schänder keiner Ruhe würdig" ("They [the Jews] were hostile to [Jesus] our highly lauded

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! Pilatus sprach zu ihnen: Da habt ihr die Hüter; gehet hin und verwahrets, wie ihrs wisset![243] *Sie gingen hin und verwahreten das Grab mit Hütern und versiegelten den Stein.*[244]

living, this misleader declared: 'I will rise again after three days.'[248] *Command therefore that the grave be secured up to the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him and say to the people: 'He is risen from the dead,' and the final deception be worse than the first.*" *Pilate declared to them:* "*There, you have the guards; go forth and make it secure, [as well] as you know how.*"[249] *They [the priests and Pharisees]*[250] *went forth and secured the grave with [the Roman] guards and sealed [with wax] the stone [in front of the door].*

67. [Die Tochter] Zion, und die Gläubigen
Z: Nun ist der Herr zur Ruh gebracht.
Gl: Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!
Z: Die Müh ist aus, die unsre Sünden ihm gemacht.
Gl: Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!
Z: O selige Gebeine,
Seht, wie ich euch mit Buss und Reu
beweine,
Dass euch mein Fall in solche Not
gebracht!
Gl: Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!
Z: Habt lebenslang
Vor euer Leiden tausend Dank,
Dass ihr mein Seelenheil so wert geacht.
Gl: Mein Jesu, gute Nacht!

67. [Daughter] Zion, and the Believers
Z: Now is the Lord brought unto rest.
B: My Jesus, good night.
Z: The trouble is over that our sins have caused him.[251]
B: My Jesus, good night.
Z: O hallowed bones [of Jesus],
Look, how I bewail you [bones] with penitence and
remorse—
That my fall [into sin, through Adam,][252] has brought you
[bones] into such anguish.
B: My Jesus, good night.
Z: [You bones of Jesus, may you] have lifelong,
In view of your sufferings, a thousandfold[253] thanks
For having valued the salvation of my soul so highly.
B: My Jesus, good night.

savior, as a profaner of the sabbath . . . but their crazy, vengeful bad behavior here [in Matthew 27] verse 63 demonstrates that they would be the worst profaners of the sabbath, worthy of no rest").

[243]The Luther Bibles read not "wie ihrs wisset" ("[as well] as you know how"; hyperliterally, "as you it know") but "wie ihr wisset" ("as you know [to do]"). Later Bibles give "so gut ihr könnt" ("as well as you can").

[244]Matthew 27:59-66.

[248]The chief priests and Pharisees declare that Jesus had declared he would rise again "after three days." Matthew 16:21, however, depicts Jesus declaring that he would be raised "on the third day" (Luther Bibles, "am dritten Tag"). The Jewish leaders were apparently claiming, then, that Jesus had declared he would be resurrected not on the Sunday ("on the third day") but the Monday ("after three days," i.e., on the fourth day).

[249]Luther's text here reads "wie ihr wisset" ("as you know"), not, as in Bach's materials, "wie ihrs wisset" (literally, "as you know it"). The Olearius Bible (which Bach owned) comments a few verses earlier, at Matthew 27:60, "Bei dem Grabe des Herrns ist zu merken: … Die Hüter waren Heiden" ("In the case of the grave of the Lord [it] is to be noted: … The guards were gentiles").

[250]The word "they" (referring to the chief priests and Pharisees) is the subject of all three verbs in the verse, including the sealing.

[251]Quoting from Isaiah 43:24, "Ja, mir hast du Arbeit gemacht in deinen Sünden und hast mir Mühe gemacht in deinen Missetaten" ("Yes, in your sins you have made [a great deal of] work for me [the Lord; i.e., typologically, Jesus], and in your misdeeds you have made [a great deal of] trouble for me").

[252]"Mein Fall" connotes not "my disgrace" or "my case" or "my downfall" but "my fall [into sin, through Adam]."

[253]The leading German historical dictionary gives a definition of "tausend" as Leipzig dialect for "thousandfold."

68. TUTTI. [DIE TOCHTER ZION, UND DIE GLÄUBIGEN]
[*Z & Gl:*] Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder
Und rufen dir im Grabe zu:
Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!
[*Z:*] Ruht, ihr ausgesognen Glieder!
[*Gl:*] Ruhet sanfte, ruhet wohl![254]
[*Z:*] Euer Grab und Leichenstein
Soll dem ängstlichen Gewissen
Ein bequemes Ruhekissen
Und der Seelen Ruhstatt sein.
[*Gl:*] Ruhet sanfte, ruhet wohl!
[*Z:*] Höchst vergnügt schlummern da die Augen ein.

Christian Friedrich Henrici (Picander) (free poetic movements)

68. TUTTI. [DAUGHTER ZION, AND THE BELIEVERS]
[*Z & B:*] With tears, we settle[255] ourselves down
And call to you [Jesus] in the grave:
"Rest gently; gently rest."
[*Z:*] Rest, you depleted limbs.
[*B:*] Rest gently, rest well.
[*Z:*] [O limbs,] your grave and tombstone
Shall be to our anxious conscience
A comfortable resting cushion
And our soul's resting place.
[*B:*] Rest gently, rest well.
[*Z:*] There, with highest pleasure, our eyes fall into slumber.

(transl. Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed)

Scan or go to https://bachcantatatexts.org/BWV244.1.htm for an annotated translation

[254]The poet's original puts all the words of this aria-tutti in the combined voices of the two allegorical characters, as was usual for the final movement of a dialogue. In composing this movement, though, Bach created some musical independence of the two in keeping with the work's double-chorus scoring. This line—"[*Gl:*] Ruhet sanfte, ruhet wohl! ([*B:*] "Rest gently, rest well")—Bach appears to have assembled himself, almost entirely from words in the original poem. It is unclear why he did not simply echo the wording of line 3, "Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!" ("Rest gently; gently rest"), which has the same scansion. He may have been drawing upon the wording of the closing chorus in his *St. John Passion*, "Ruht wohl, ihr heiligen Gebeine, / Die ich nun weiter nicht beweine, / Ruht wohl und bringt auch mich zur Ruh!" ("Rest well, you saintly bones, / Which I will no longer bewail; / Rest well and bring also me unto rest"); note that the *St. John Passion*'s "heilige Gebeine" does not mean "relics" (i.e., in this context, any physical remains of a deceased holy/saintly person), a concept that would have been (unfavorably) associated with the Roman Catholic church.

[255]Usually, "sich niedersetzten" means simply "to sit oneself down." Here it is apparently employed in its sense of "to settle oneself down," as a synonym for "sich niederlassen." (The poet most likely does not mean to stress that the "we" here are sitting by the grave, as opposed to standing.)