

(a)

The opening Chorus of the Cantata introduces a Choral melody that does not appear elsewhere in the Cantatas, Oratorios, or Motetts. The movement is a Chorus upon the words, "Du sollst Gott, deinen Herren, lieben von ganzem Herzen, von ganzer Seele, von allen Krafen, von ganzem Gemüthe, und deinen Nächsten als dich selbst" ("Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself," St Luke x. 27). As Spitta comments¹, Bach called to mind the continuation of the Scripture text: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." He therefore enforces the text by the melody of Luther's Hymn, "Dies sind die heil'gen zehn Gebot'" ("These are the sacred ten commandments"). While the Chorus is worked out in quavers from the first line of the melody, the lesser commandment is stated by the Tromba da tirarsi, which announces the tune in crotchets, while the greater commandment is emphasised by the Organ, treating the melody in minims as a *cantus firmus*.

The melody is an adaptation of the tune of the song, "In Gottes Namen fahren wir." Reconstructed for Luther's Hymn, the tune was published both in

¹ Vol. II. 430.

the Erfurt *Enchiridion* of 1524 and in Johann Walther's *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn* at Wittenberg in the same year. The reconstruction of the tune may be attributed to Walther.

There is a harmonisation of the tune in the *Choralgesange*, No. 66 Organ Works, N. xv. 103; xvi. 42, 47.

Form. Choral Fantasia (*Tromba da tirarsi*, *Strings*, *Continuo*)¹.

(b)

For the melody of the concluding Choral, "Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh' darein," see Cantata 2.

Bach's MS. lacks a text here² and the words of the Choral were selected as appropriate by Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1833). They are the eighth stanza of the Hymn, "Wenn einer alle Ding verstünd," published in *Das Hannoverische ordentliche, vollstandige Gesangbuch* (Lüneburg, 1657), attributed to David Denicke:

Du stellst, mein Jesu, selber dich³
 Zum Vorbild wahrer Liebe ·
 Gieb mir auch Gnad' und Kraft, dass ich⁴
 Gott und den Nachsten liebe⁵;

¹ See Spitta, II. 430, on the relation of the movement to the Organ Chorals. He regards it as a development between the earlier *Orgelbuchlein* (N. xv. 103) and the later *Clavierübung* (N. xvi. 42) Preludes

² Spitta, II. 429, remarks that the MS. indicates haste and lack of leisure

³ 1657 Herr Jesu, du stellst selber dich.

⁴ 1657 Verleih, das dem zu folge ich.

⁵ 1657 Die lieb am nechsten ube.

CANTATA II. ACH GOTT, VOM HIMMEL SIEH
DAREIN¹. Second Sunday after Trinity
(c. 1740)

Melody: "Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh' darein"

Anon. 1524



A Choral Cantata, on Luther's Hymn, "Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh' darein," a free rendering of Psalm xii, probably written in 1523, and first published in the so-called "Achtliederbuch," *Etlich Christlich liden Lobgesang, und Psalm* (Wittenberg, 1524), where it is set to the melody, "Es ist das Heil uns kommen her" (see No. 9 *infra*). The Hymn was published in the same year in the Erfurt *Enchiridion Oder eyn Handbuchlein*, in association with the melody printed above. The tune, which Bach uses in the first and last movements of the Cantata, has a pre-Reformation origin and, no doubt, owes its present form to Johann Walther, Luther's collaborator. Walther arranged yet a third melody for the Hymn in his *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn* (Wittenberg, 1524).

¹ An English version of the Cantata, "Ah God, in mercy look from Heaven," is published by Breitkopf & Haertel.

The melody occurs also in Cantatas 77 and 153.

(a)

The words of the opening Chorus are the first stanza of Luther's Hymn :

Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein
 Und lass dich's doch¹ erbarmen :
 Wie wenig sind der Heil'gen dein,
 Verlassen sind wir Armen ·
 Dein Wort man nicht lässt² haben wahr,
 Der Glaub' ist auch verloschen gar
 Bei allen Menschenkindern.

B.G. i. 55.

English translations of the Hymn are noted in the *Dictionary of Hymnology*, p. 9.

Form. Choral Motett (2 *Ob.*, 4 *Trombones*, *Strings*, *Continuo*³). Erk, No. 149.

(b)

The words of the last movement are the sixth stanza of Luther's Hymn :

Das wollst du, Gott, bewahren rein
 Fur diesem arg'n Geschlechte,
 Und lass uns dir befohlen sein,
 Dass sich's in uns nicht flechte.
 Der gottlos' Hauf' sich umher find't,
 Wo solche⁴ lose Leute sind
 In deinem Volk erhaben.

B.G. i. 72.

Form. Simple (2 *Ob.*, 4 *Trombones*, *Strings*, *Continuo*). *Choralgesange*, No. 7.

¹ 1524 das.

² 1524 lesst nicht.

³ On the movement, see Parry, p. 380

⁴ 1524 dise.