

= Man singet mit Freuden vom Sieg , BWV 149 =

Man singet mit Freuden vom Sieg (There are joyful songs of victory) , BWV 149 , is a church cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach . He composed the work in Leipzig for the Feast of Saint Michael and first performed it on 29 September 1728 or 1729 . It is his third and last of his extant cantatas for the feast . The topic is derived from the prescribed readings for the Sunday from the Book of Revelation , Michael fighting the dragon . The libretto was written by Picander and published in a 1728 / 29 volume of cantata texts . He included as the first movement two verses from Psalm 118 and as the closing chorale the third stanza of Martin Schalling 's hymn " Herzlich lieb hab ich dich , o Herr " . The text focuses on the guardian angels , which the chorale mentions specifically for the situation of death .

Bach structured the work in seven movements and scored it festively with four vocal parts and a Baroque orchestra of three trumpets , timpani , three oboes , bassoon , strings and continuo . He derived the opening chorus from his Hunting Cantata , composed already in 1713 .

= = History and text = =

Bach composed the cantata in Leipzig for the feast of St. Michael (Michaelmas) ; it is his third and last of his extant cantatas for the feast , a feast celebrating the archangel and all angels . The prescribed readings for that Sunday were from the Book of Revelation , Michael fighting the dragon (Revelation 12 : 7 ? 12) , and from the Gospel of Matthew , heaven belongs to the children and the angels see the face of God (Matthew 18 : 1 ? 11) . St. Michael , the archangel , has a prominent position in Lutheranism , as in Judaism . John Eliot Gardiner , who conducted all of Bach 's church cantatas in 2000 on the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage , notes that the Sanctus , composed for Christmas 1724 in close relation to the text by Isaiah , and much later integrated to Bach 's Mass in B minor , shows the relevance of angels for Bach 's Lutheranism .

The libretto was written by Christian Friedrich Henrici , better known as Picander , Bach began to work with him in 1725 , and they collaborated notably on the major St Matthew Passion . Picander wrote his cantata texts , including this one , with Bach as the composer in mind . The poet included as the first movement two verses from a psalm (Psalms 118 : 15 ? 16) and as the closing chorale the third stanza of Martin Schalling 's hymn " Herzlich lieb hab ich dich , o Herr " . The Bach scholar Klaus Hofmann notes that battle scenes were often depicted in art and music . In the opening lines taken from a psalm , the battle of Michael against Satan is already won . Satan is mentioned only in the first movement . A focus of the later sequence of alternating arias and recitatives is on guardian angels seen as " holy watchmen " . The libretto was published in the 1728 / 29 year of his collection Ernstscherzhafte und satyrische Gedichte / Cantaten auf die Sonn- und Fest @-@ Tage . They appeared in quarterly volumes to help the congregation following the text .

Bach led the Thomanerchor in the first performance of the cantata in Leipzig on 29 September , either in 1728 or 1729 .

= = Scoring and structure = =

Bach structured the cantata in seven movements and scored it for four vocal soloists (soprano (S) , alto (A) , tenor (T) and bass) (B) , a four @-@ part choir , and a Baroque orchestra of three trumpets (Tr) , timpani (Ti) , three oboes (Ob) , two violins (VI) , violas (Va) , bassoon (Fg) , violone (Vo) , and basso continuo (Bc) . The title of the autograph score reads simply : " J.N.J. Festo Michaelis . / Man singet mit Freuden etc. di I.S.Bach. "

In the following table of the movements , the scoring and keys follow the Neue Bach @-@ Ausgabe . The time signature is provided using the symbol for common time (4 / 4) . The continuo , playing throughout , is not shown .

= = Music = =

=== 1 ===

Bach based the music of the opening chorus , " Man singet mit Freuden vom Sieg " (There are joyful songs of victory) , on the final movement of his secular Hunting Cantata , which had been his first cantata using " modern " recitatives and arias in 1713 . The polyphonic movement is described by Simon Crouch as being a " high @-@ octane start " . Gardiner notes that in comparison to earlier works for the same occasion , this movement is " festive rather than combative " . Bach reworked the earlier movement considerably to adjust from the court music context to joyful songs of victory : he replaced two horns with three trumpets and timpani , transposed the music from F major to D major , and expanded it " on every level " , as Hofmann notes . The beginning of a different setting of the text hints at the fact that the idea to use the early music as a base was not planned from the start .

=== 2 ===

The bass aria , " Kraft und Stärke sei gesungen " (Power and strength be sung) , is accompanied by two low instrumental melodies . It examines the conflict between God and Satan , and includes a very active continuo to represent " the fury of the battle " . The imagery of a " great voice " , as mentioned in the Book of Revelation , is used , announcing the Lamb " that has defeated and banished Satan " .

=== 3 ===

A short alto recitative , " Ich fürchte mich " (I am afraid) , was described as " tonally unstable " .

=== 4 ===

The soprano aria , " Gottes Engel weichen nie " (God 's angels never yield) , is lyrical and dancing . The string accompaniment uses parallel thirds and sixths . It is stylistically similar to a minuet , and is formally an adapted ternary structure .

=== 5 ===

The tenor recitative , " Ich danke dir " (I thank You) , ends with an ascending phrase meant to represent an appeal to heaven .

=== 6 ===

The duet aria for alto and tenor , " Seid wachsam , ihr heiligen Wächter " (Be wakeful , you holy watchers) , employs canon technique and a repeated interrupted cadence . Its introduction has been described as " the most athletic of bassoon lines " . The tenor and alto voices repeat the opening bassoon figure in canon .

=== 7 ===

The work ends with a harmonically complex four @-@ part setting of the chorale , " Ach , Herr , laß dein lieb Engelein " (Ah , Lord , let Your dear little angel) . It is a prayer to be sent an angel to carry the soul in Abraham 's Bosom , and a promise to praise God eternally . Bach 's setting is remarkable for its final two bars : the trumpets and timpani create a " magnificent blaze of sound " . Bach chose the same stanza of Schalling 's chorale to end his St John Passion , in the work 's first and last version .

= = Selected recordings = =

The sortable table is excerpted from the selection on the Bach @-@ Cantatas website . Choirs are roughly marked as large by red background , orchestras playing on period instruments in historically informed performances by green background in the column Instr ..