

= Nur jedem das Seine , BWV 163 =

Nur jedem das Seine (To each his own !) , BWV 163 , is a church cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach . He composed it in Weimar for the twenty @-@ third Sunday after Trinity and first performed it on 24 November 1715 .

This work was part of Bach 's sequence of composing monthly church cantatas for the Weimar court , which he began in 1714 . It was the first piece performed after a mourning period of several months for Prince Johann Ernst . The text , written by the court poet Salomon Franck , is based on the prescribed gospel reading for the Sunday , " Render unto Caesar ... " , and includes several allusions to money and gold . The cantata has six movements , beginning with an aria for tenor , followed by two pairs of recitatives and arias , one for bass and the other for the duet of soprano and alto , and a concluding chorale . Similar to other cantatas on words by Franck , the work is scored for a small Baroque chamber ensemble of two violins , viola , two cellos and continuo . Bach composed a unique aria with a dark texture of a bass voice and two obbligato cellos . A duet has been described as a love duet and compared to operatic duets . The music of the closing chorale is lost , except for the continuo part . It is not clear if Bach set the stanza printed in the libretto from Heermann 's " Wo soll ich fliehen hin " , or instead his " Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht " , in a tune that appears as a cantus firmus in movement 5 .

= = History and text = =

On 2 March 1714 Bach was appointed concertmaster of the Weimar court orchestra (Kapelle) of the co @-@ reigning dukes Wilhelm Ernst and Ernst August of Saxe @-@ Weimar . As concertmaster , he assumed the principal responsibility for composing new works , specifically cantatas for the Schlosskirche (palace church) , on a monthly schedule . Bach composed the cantata in 1715 for the twenty @-@ third Sunday after Trinity . The prescribed readings for the Sunday were from the Epistle to the Philippians , " our conversation is in heaven " (Philippians 3 : 17 ? 21) , and from the Gospel of Matthew , the question about paying taxes , answered by " Render unto Caesar ... " (Matthew 22 : 15 ? 22) . The librettist was Salomon Franck , the court poet in Weimar . He began with a paraphrase of the famous answer " Render unto Caesar " from the gospel , and included several allusions to money and gold (he was also the numismatist of the Weimar court) . Franck included a stanza from a hymn by Johann Heermann as the sixth and last movement of this cantata , according to the printed libretto the final stanza of " Wo soll ich fliehen hin " (1630) . The music of that chorale is lost ; only the continuo part has survived . Recent scholarship found that Bach possibly chose to set a stanza from Heermann 's " Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht " instead , in a tune he used instrumentally in movement 5 , which would match the continuo part .

Bach led the first performance on 24 November 1715 . It was the first cantata performed after a period of mourning for Prince Johann Ernst from August to November . No account is extant of a later performance in Leipzig , but the Bach scholar Christoph Wolff writes : " it seems safe to assume that it was [revived] " .

= = Scoring and structure = =

The cantata is structured in six movements , beginning with an aria for tenor (T) , followed by two pairs of recitative and aria , one for bass (B) , the other for the duet of soprano (S) and alto (A) , and a concluding chorale when all four parts are united . As with several other cantatas on words by Franck , it is scored for a small Baroque chamber ensemble of two violins (VI) , viola (Va) , two cellos (Vc) and basso continuo (Bc) .

In the following table of the movements , the scoring , keys and time signatures are taken from Alfred Dürr , using the symbol for common time (4 / 4) . The instruments are shown separately for winds and strings , while the continuo , playing throughout , is not shown .

= = Music = =

The opening da capo aria for tenor is based on a paraphrase of "Render to Caesar" : " Nur jedem das Seine ". The aria features an unusual ritornello in which the strings assume a motif introduced by the continuo , which is then repeated several times through all parts . The movement is a da capo aria emphasizing dualism and debt . Craig Smith remarks that it is " almost academic in its metrical insistence " .

The second movement is a secco bass recitative , " Du bist , mein Gott , der Geber aller Gaben " (You are , my God , the Giver of all gifts) . It has been described as " operatic in its intensity and subtle adjustments of character " . The recitative is remarkable for its " aggressive , even belligerent " conclusion .

The following bass aria , " Laß mein Herz die Münze sein " (Let my heart be the coin) , has an unusual and unique accompaniment of two obbligato cellos with continuo . The cellos present an imitative motif to introduce the bass . John Eliot Gardiner , who conducted the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage in 2000 , comments that Bach " conjures up an irresistible picture of two coin @-@ polishers at work , a sort of eighteenth @-@ century sorcerer goading his apprentice " , observing that " two cellos polish away in contrary motion with wide intervallic leaps " . Bach was interested in coins and precious metals . The conductor Craig Smith compares the dark texture to the " descent into the earth in Wagner 's Das Rheingold " . The aria is in three thematic sections : " enjoining " , " melodramatically rhetoric " , and " imprecatory " .

The fourth movement is a soprano and alto duet recitative , " Ich wollte dir , o Gott , das Herze gerne geben " (I would gladly , o God , give you my heart) It is rhythmically metrical and presents five sections based on mood and text . The recitative is " high and light but very complicated in its myriad of detail " .

The duet aria , " Nimm mich mir und gib mich dir ! " (Take me from myself and give me to You !) , again for soprano and alto , is in triple time . The tune of Johann Heermann 's hymn " Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht " (I will not let go of my Jesus) is interwoven in the texture as a cantus firmus of the upper strings in unison . The movement is a " love duet " characterized by " antiphonal avowals of commitment " to God rather than a carnal desire . The musicologist Julian Mincham compares its presentation to Monteverdi 's L 'incoronazione di Poppea . The movement begins with sparse scoring and becomes more richly textured as it progresses , adding the chorale tune .

The final movement , possibly " Führe auch mein Herz und Sinn " (Also lead my heart and mind) , is a four @-@ part chorale setting , marked " Chorale in semplice stylo " ; however , only the continuo line is extant . While the libretto shows that a stanza from Heermann 's " Wo soll ich fliehen hin " was to be used , sung to a melody by Christian Friedrich Witt , the Bach scholar Andreas Glöckner found that the continuo part matches the tune in the previous movement , which appeared in a hymnal published by Witt .

= = Selected recordings = =

Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra & Choir , Ton Koopman . J.S. Bach : Complete Cantatas Vol . 3 . Erato , 1995 .

Bach Collegium Japan , Masaaki Suzuki . J.S. Bach : Cantatas Vol . 4 . BIS , 1996 .

Gächinger Kantorei / Bach @-@ Collegium Stuttgart , Helmuth Rilling . Die Bach Kantate . Hänssler , 1977 .

Holland Boys Choir / Netherlands Bach Collegium , Pieter Jan Leusink . Bach Edition Vol . 11 . Brilliant Classics , 1999 .

Monteverdi Choir / English Baroque Soloists , John Eliot Gardiner . Bach Cantatas Vol . 12 . Soli Deo Gloria , 2000 .