

### 3. Recitative

*Ah! My failings sorely grieve me  
Yes! my sins are very great  
The curse of Adam never more will leave me  
So long as I exist in man's estate.  
My inclinations lead to evil,  
Though oft my soul cries,  
Who is there to save me?  
Ah me! to resist temptation  
And attain thereby salvation  
Is far beyond my feeble strength.  
Though I admit my every failing  
I find, alas, the bad in me prevailing  
And so I carry to Thy mercy seat  
My heavy load of sorrow,  
With all my sins and derelictions,  
And lay them penitently at Thy feet.  
Do Thou Lord forgive them me,  
Nor let them anger Thee.*

After the gentle nature of the preceding duet, this recitative refers to children of sin. Bach uses wide intervals and chromatic notes to emphasise the anguish of the words. It acts as a contrast to the two arias before and after it. This is an example of recitativo secco (dry), which is more closely related to dramatic speech than singing. It is a syllabic setting (one note per syllable). The continuo (cello and organ) accompany throughout.

1. There is no tonal centre, cadences in c minor and f minor, finishes in c minor.
2. A series of diminished and 7<sup>th</sup> chords reflects the tone of uncertainty and repentance in the text.
3. Note the voice part ends the phrases unaccompanied, three times, the continuo then finishes the cadences. (Perfect).
4. Bar 20-21 note the pedal note in the continuo.
5. Use of melisma near the end (many notes to a syllable).
6. Suspensions also appear as the vocal part becomes more lyrical from bar20.

