THE ROLE OF THE CHORALE IN THE ORATORIOS AND SYMPHONIES OF

FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY

by

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DEDICATION

In the same spirit of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and J.S. Bach, I dedicate this document to the glory of God.
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ABSTRACT

The Lutheran chorale fascinated Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1947) to the extent that it became a signature element in some of his major works. The purpose of this study is to examine how and why he incorporated chorales and “pseudo-chorales” in three oratorios (Paulus, Op. 36, 1836; Elijah, Op. 70, 1846; Christus, Op. 97, 1847, unfinished), and two symphonies (#2 “Lobgesang,” Op. 52, 1840; #5 “Reformation,” 1830, Op. 107, publ. posth.) It also considers the effects of these issues on musical performance.

Four influences upon Mendelssohn’s inclusion of the chorale form are investigated: the music of J.S. Bach (1685-1750); Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834, theologian); Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832, author and poet); and Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841, painter and architect). The five works are analyzed in an attempt to illustrate how these influences led Mendelssohn to introduce chorales, with or without texts, with the intention of more fully engaging his audiences in the sacred drama the works produce, a supposition that has important implications for the musical phrasing, vocal color, articulation, dynamics, tempi, and momentum within and between movements. An over-arching purpose of this study is to provide a basis for more informed performances of Mendelssohn’s oratorios and symphonies—a clearer understanding of his motives for including the chorale form is a logical beginning.

While the influence of Bach’s music on Mendelssohn—especially St. Matthew Passion with its extensive use of the chorale—is generally accepted, there is much debate about Mendelssohn’s theological proclivities and their influence on his music.
Mendelssohn’s letters indicate that it is Schleiermacher’s Christo-centric theology—not a Jewish or humanistic approach as propounded by others—that explains Mendelssohn’s faith and explicates one of the motivations/purposes in his life. The comprehension of this motivation, especially relating to his use of chorales, is prerequisite to the effective interpretation of Mendelssohn’s chorale-based works. Goethe and Schinkel, as leaders of the neoclassical trend in the arts and undeniable influences on Mendelssohn, provided additional encouragement for Mendelssohn’s employment of the older musical form. This formative confluence led Mendelssohn to adopt the chorale as the emblem of his musical, theological, and philosophical ideals.
INTRODUCTION

The Lutheran chorale fascinated Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1947) to the extent that it became a signature element in some of his major works. The purpose of this study is to examine how and why he incorporated chorales and "pseudo-chorales" in three oratorios (Paulus, Op. 36, 1836; Elijah, Op. 70, 1846; Christus, Op. 97, 1847, unfinished), and two symphonies (#2 Lobgesang, Op. 52, 1840; #5 "Reformation," 1830, Op. 107, publ. posth.) It also considers the effects of these issues on musical performance.

The New Oxford Companion to Music (NOC) defines the term "chorale" in the following manner:

Chorale: English term for the strophic congregational hymns of the Protestant Church in Germany. The German word, Choral, from which it is derived, originally signified a plainchant melody sung chorally, but from the late 16th century its meaning was widened to include vernacular hymns. . . . Strictly speaking, the word 'chorale' means both the text and the melody of a hymn, as a single unit, but not infrequently the term is used to describe the music only—either a single-line melody or a fully harmonized version as in the four-part settings of Bach.¹

"Pseudo-chorale" is a term created specifically for musical passages exhibiting the following characteristics:

- hymn-like melody in the upper voice that is not drawn from the Lutheran musical tradition
- accompaniment provided by other voices or instruments
- chordal or contrapuntally-enlivened homophony

Mendelssohn’s fascination with the chorale could have been a consequence of his interest in the works or influence of several individuals, including J.S. Bach (1685-1750); Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834, theologian); Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832, author and poet); and Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841, painter and architect). Mendelssohn became familiar with the thinking and art of pre-eminent contemporaries as a consequence of his upbringing. As son of a wealthy banker, Abraham Mendelssohn, (1776-1835), and grandson of the famous philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn, (1729-1786), Felix enjoyed a privileged lifestyle. Mendelssohn’s parents “spared no effort or expense in surrounding their children, from the earliest age, with gifted educators in an array of fields:” e.g., literature, music, painting, arithmetic, French, and classical languages, as well as gymnastics, swimming, dancing, chess, and horse riding. Among his many music teachers and/or influences were Marie Bigot, Pierre Baillot, Ludwig Berger, Carl Wilhelm Henning, A.W. Bach, and Carl Friedrich Zelter, with particular significance given to Zelter whose teaching was rooted in the music of J.S. Bach.2

At the height of the Enlightenment period, the Mendelssohns were known and respected by the Jewish and Christian communities throughout Prussia, and the Mendelssohn home in Berlin served as the gathering place on Sunday afternoons for the leaders of the area—including renowned scholars and innovators in the sciences, performers in the visual and performing arts, as well as writers in the literary arts, philosophy, and theology. The participants, some of whom had tutored Mendelssohn, included Alexander von Humboldt, scientist; Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, philosopher; G.A.H. Stenzel,

historian; and Schleiermacher, who was instrumental in shaping Mendelssohn’s theology. As a youngster, Mendelssohn was also introduced to Goethe—with whom he enjoyed a close friendship—and to the work of one of the foremost painters and architects of the time, Friedrich Schinkel, both leaders of the neo-classical movement in the arts. Thus, Mendelssohn was regularly exposed to a high level of intellectual discourse and debate, and to the ideals of the leading artists, which significantly affected the development of his intellect and musicianship.

This study will attempt to demonstrate that Mendelssohn, as a result of the influence of Bach, Schleiermacher, Goethe, and Schinkel, introduced chorales, with or without texts, into some of his large choral and orchestral works with the intention of more fully engaging his audiences in the sacred drama they produce, a supposition that has important implications for the musical phrasing, vocal color, articulation, dynamics, tempi, and momentum within and between movements. An over-arching purpose of this study is to provide a basis for more informed performances of Mendelssohn’s oratorios and symphonies—a clearer understanding of his motives for including the chorale form is a logical beginning.
Chapter 1

INFLUENCE OF BACH

Musicologists have often recognized the influence of J.S. Bach’s music on Mendelssohn. His early musical training with C.F. Zelter, (1758-1832), a promulgator of the pedagogical methods of Bach, was formative according to Larry Todd, who stated that “Mendelssohn’s musical personality was forged and refined” by tutelage from Zelter, whose instructional techniques can be traced to J.S. Bach. Zelter had studied with Carl Friedrich Christian Fasch, (1688-1758, founder, Berlin Singakademie,) and with Johann Philipp Kirnberger, (1721-1783), both of whom had experienced Bach’s methods during their close association with Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788), son and student of J.S. Bach.3

Kirnberger also had studied with J.S. Bach for two years, and, subsequently, dedicated significant time to summarizing Bach’s pedagogical and compositional techniques. Kirnberger regarded J.S. Bach as the supreme composer, performer and teacher. He regretted that Bach left no didactic or theoretical works and tried through his own teaching and writing to propagate ‘Bach’s method.’ His devotion to this cause is reflected in 14 years’ intermittent effort to obtain the publication of all Bach’s four-part chorales.4

Kirnberger’s Die Kunst des reinen Satzes in der Musik, (1771-79), based largely on the study of four and five part chorales, was acknowledged as “a formal theoretical system

3 Portions of this chapter are based on R. Larry Todd, Mendelssohn’s Musical Education: A Study and Edition of His Exercises in Composition (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

illustrative of Bach’s teaching.” Zelter’s approach was rooted in Die Kunst, therefore, Mendelssohn’s “workbook establishes clearly that the treatise was still held in high esteem in Berlin several decades after its first appearance in the 1770s.”

Zelter’s leadership of the Singakademie had J.S. Bach’s music as its primary focus. The philanthropic assistance of Sara Levy, Mendelssohn’s great-aunt, and Abraham, his father, made it possible for this institution to become a repository for Bach’s music; its collection consisted of more than 100 manuscript scores and parts of cantatas, masses, Passion music, organ works, keyboard suites, Brandenberg concerti, orchestral suites, the Musical Offering, and the Art of the Fugue. Todd stressed the importance of this by pointing out that few of Bach’s compositions appeared in print during the eighteenth century.

The two ways by which the Bach tradition was sustained in Prussia during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were by theoretical discussion and by performance. In Berlin Kimberger attempted to formulate the essence of Bach’s teaching; in Berlin many of Bach’s works were revived. And in this environment Mendelssohn’s musical personality was forged and refined.5

Outside Berlin, Bach’s music was often criticized. In a letter to his sister Fanny Mendelssohn, Mendelssohn wrote of an experience in Paris in which Bach was criticized by musicians as “an old pedant stuffed with too much learning”—an opinion not restricted to that city. In Germany, during Bach’s lifetime, Adolph Scheibe attacked his music by labeling it “confused, turgid, and even unnatural.” Todd explains that “musical erudition was now less valued than musical enlightenment.” Due in part to the efforts of Kimberger, Fasch and Zelter, Berlin served as a center for the perpetuation of Bach’s

5Todd, Mendelssohn’s Musical Education, 11.
teaching and music. Mendelssohn’s association with the Singakademie, as well as his relationship with Zelter, were among the most important in arousing his fascination with Bach.

In 1823, Mendelssohn was presented with a copy of the St. Matthew Passion as a Christmas gift from Sara Levy. He studied the work intensely, never thinking that he would lead the work in performance, given that it had not been heard since Bach’s last performance. As early as 1827, while still in Berlin, Mendelssohn gathered friends for a sing-through. At the urging of Eduard Devrient (1801-1877), and with permission from Zelter, in 1829 he conducted a momentous performance of it with the Singakademie. Two additional performances were quickly scheduled, 21 March (Bach’s birthday), and 12 April (Holy Week) – a prior engagement in England prevented him from conducting the latter.

Mendelssohn’s leading of the 1829 revival of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244, has been described as a crowning achievement of his youth, and, therefore, can be presumed to have had a significant impact on his musical development both as a composer and conductor. It can be argued that Mendelssohn’s study and performance of this work was paramount in his fascination with Bach’s music and ideals. As a youngster who twice weekly attended Singakademie rehearsals, Mendelssohn was captivated by the sounds of Bach’s music. He would have learned about Bach’s musical, theological, and philosophical ideals through an oral tradition handed down by the aforementioned teachers. As a mature young man who dedicated at least five years to the study of one of Bach’s greatest works, he became increasingly more interested in those ideals.
Why was Mendelssohn so taken with the *St. Matthew Passion*? It seems religion played a more significant role than is generally recognized.

Religious aspects are among the most important in understanding why Mendelssohn chose a work by Bach, why he chose the *St. Matthew Passion*, and why he made specific, extensive cuts in [it].

Mendelssohn chose the *St. Matthew Passion* rather than the traditional work performed by the *Singakademie* during Passion week—*Der Tod Jesu*, of Karl Heinrich Graun, (1703? -1759). In addition to its inferior quality in comparison to Bach’s work, Graun’s text, considered “overtly anti-Jewish” by Todd, may have met with a negative reaction from the young musician who came from Jewish heritage. This heritage may also explain why he chose Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* rather than his *St. John Passion* for his conducting debut. The former work is focused “on Christ as suffering servant—one who is guiltless and whose death is brought on by the guilt of *all* . . . whereas the latter may be interpreted as placing blame upon the Jews for killing him whom they would not accept as king.”

Documents from Mendelssohn and others illuminate the perception of the *St. Matthew Passion* as a work of religious depth. For instance, friend Adolph Bernhard Marx, called the work a “high-feast of religion and art,” and a “living church service of the congregation.” Subsequently, after hearing a performance under another conductor, Mendelssohn commented that “they sang with a devotion, as if they were in church …

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*Much of the next several paragraphs is based on Michael Marissen, “Religious Aims in Mendelssohn's 1829 Berlin-Singakademie Performances of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*,” *Musical Quarterly* 77 (1993).*
the public ... felt that this was not a matter of music and concert, but rather of religion and church."

For the revival performance in 1829 Mendelssohn cut some arias, chorales, and "snippets" from recitatives, mostly from the arrest and trial scene in Part Two. Other than concern for length, two influences on Mendelssohn's cuts are at work: Friedrich Schleiermacher's theology and the desire to avoid anti-Jewish texts. Nearly all of the cuts involved texts that "ran the risk of being perceived as anti-Jewish." Marissen describes Schleiermacher's influence:

In particular, an essential element of Schleiermacher's thought is his Christocentric, communal theology. Schleiermacher stressed the second article of the creed ("I believe in one God the son") in contrast to Enlightenment deists, who emphasized the first ("God the father"). He also placed less emphasis on religious individualism and more on the (Protestant) congregation. The influence of Schleiermacher's ideas may help to explain why Mendelssohn keeps most of the verbatim biblical account (the recitatives) and the group responses (the chorales), but was less interested in the individual's responses (the arias).

Within the *St. Matthew Passion*, more than in his other major works, Bach demonstrated his predilection for the chorale.

Chorales were the cornerstone of Lutheran worship, and their appearance at focal points in [Bach's] Passions provided a link between elaborately composed music and that understood and participated in by the people.

It is clear that the chorale texts were well known to the congregation, and

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7 Mendelssohn's relationship to Schleiermacher and Mendelssohn's avowed acceptance of his theology are the focus of Chapter Two.

8 Marissen, 721.

knowledge of the words would have increased their sense of active participation not only in the music but in the events celebrated by the music.  

Within *Paulus* "there can be little question of Mendelssohn’s intention to invoke *St. Matthew* through the chorales." In a letter to Pastor Julius Schubring, his friend and collaborator on *Paulus*, Mendelssohn asked him to “come up with chorales that are entirely on the order of the Bach Passion.”

The following letter from Mendelssohn shows that he had been contemplating on the personality of Bach:

> That I have just now written a number of sacred works was an inner necessity for me, just as one feels sometimes driven to read a specific book, the Bible or something else, which is the only way to make oneself feel good. If it shows similarities to Seb. Bach, I once more cannot help it, since I wrote it according to my mood, and if I felt just like the old Bach when reading the words, so much the better for me. Because you will not think that I copy his forms, without content; if so, I could not finish a single piece due to disgust and emptiness.  

Mendelssohn’s admiration for Bach generated a humility expressed in the statement that “if I felt just like the old Bach, so much the better for me.” Mendelssohn appreciated the sincere reflection of faith he perceived in Bach’s music. His fascination with the *St. Matthew Passion*, and the manner in which Bach articulated many of his Christian ideals in the chorales, seems to be a major reason why Mendelssohn extensively used that form in his chorale cantatas, organ works, oratorios and symphonies.

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Chapter 2

INFLUENCE OF SCHLEIERMACHER

There has been much debate among scholars about Mendelssohn’s theological proclivities and their influence on his music. At the core of the debate is whether Mendelssohn was Jewish, Christian, Humanist, or a combination. The primary debaters are Eric Werner, Leon Botstein, and Jeffrey Sposato.

Werner, one of the first biographers of Mendelssohn after World War II, described Mendelssohn as a hero of the Jewish people and as someone who strongly valued his Jewish heritage, and, however, was “never untrue to the rationalistic theology of Protestantism.” Werner cites Abraham Mendelssohn in an attempt to characterize the younger Mendelssohn’s theological credo as “Judaism in transition.” Botstein formulizes Werner’s assessment of Mendelssohn’s Protestantism as “a logical outgrowth of Judaism, an extension of a reformed and modernized Judaism.” This concept of transitional faith is explained in a letter to Mendelssohn’s sister Fanny Mendelssohn from their father Abraham Mendelssohn on the occasion of her confirmation:

The outward form of religion your teacher has given you is historical, and changeable like all human ordinances. Some thousands of years ago the Jewish form was the reigning one, then the heathen form, and now is the Christian . . . . We have educated you and your brothers and sister in the Christian faith, because it is the creed of most civilized people, and contains nothing that can lead you

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away from what is good, and much that guides you to love, obedience, tolerance, and resignation.\(^{15}\)

Abraham’s ambivalence to a specific creed demonstrates the value he placed on the sociological aspects of religion rather than adherence to a particular doctrine—a reflection of the humanism of Moses Mendelssohn, his father and famous exemplar of the Enlightenment movement who had influenced Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). In this same letter, Abraham’s humanism is further explicated:

Does God exist? What is God? Is He a part of ourselves, and does he continue to live after the other part has ceased to be? And where? And how? All this I do not know, and therefore I have never taught you anything about it. But I know that there exists in me and in you and in all human beings an everlasting inclination towards all that is good, true, and right, and a conscience which warns and guides us when we go astray. I know it, I believe it, I live in this faith, and this is my religion.\(^{16}\)

Given Abraham’s attitude, and Felix’s education in the Christian faith (an education that began with his baptism at the age of 7), Sposato finds it difficult to observe any Jewish identification within Mendelssohn. Sposato argues that Mendelssohn was more influenced by a Humanism movement that embraced the late eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideals of rationalism and social tolerance. To strengthen his argument, Sposato applies the term *Neuchrist*\(^{17}\) to Mendelssohn—a term used to describe Jewish persons who converted for purely political reasons.

\(^{15}\text{Jeffrey Sposato, "The [Self-] Identification of Mendelssohn as Jew," in Musical Quarterly 82 (1998), 201.}\)

\(^{16}\text{Ibid., 201}\)

\(^{17}\text{This term, used by Sposato and others, is applied to those whose conversion permitted an identification with the gradually ascending Nationalism movement with its concomitant devaluing of the Enlightenment ideal of tolerance. Although the percentage}\)
In his dissertation, Sposato, in a seeming contradiction to his earlier assessment of Mendelssohn as an enlightened humanist concerned with social tolerance, claims that Mendelssohn unnecessarily included anti-Semitic texts in his oratorios, especially in his first oratorio, *Paulus*. Sposato further argues that Mendelssohn did this to assure his place in the majority Protestant culture—a defining aspect of Nationalism.

While Sposato asserts that Mendelssohn tried to "distance himself from his heritage as much as possible," Botstein agrees with Werner's assessment that Mendelssohn valued his Jewish roots but practiced a rationalistic form of Protestantism. He claims that Mendelssohn's view of his own baptism was the "synthesis of past and present," an idealistic theory about the conversion of *Neuchristen* which does not consider the anti-Semitic attitude associated with Nationalism:

> It represented human progress in the modern age in which the Jewish tradition was preserved. The ultimate aim of the Jewish religion—the triumph of rational human wisdom in the name of God—understood in the sense of Moses Mendelssohn and realized by modern Protestantism, was therefore embraced psychologically by Felix Mendelssohn and rendered central to his vocation as a musician.

The advent of Protestant Christianity was itself a sign of human progress, for through it the historic religious divisions between Jew and Christian could be

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is unknown, it seems the majority of the converted identified more with the rationalism movement of the Enlightenment rather than Judaism.


reconciled …. [Mendelssohn's] Christian faith focused on the extent to which Christianity was a universalization of Judaism.²⁰

Applying his theory to Mendelssohn’s music, Botstein states:

Mendelssohn’s prominent and public commitment to and interest in the theology of Christianity and his reverent use of music to evoke Christian faith and religious sentiment reflected a quality and depth of conviction that rivaled that of J. S. Bach. However, the residue of commitments to what Mendelssohn knew to be the heritage of his forebears is evident in his music. The texts Mendelssohn selected, the prominence played by the issues of conversion and graven images (in St. Paul), and attraction to the figure of Elijah are markers of the extent to which Mendelssohn devoted his artistic energy to finding bridges between Judaism and Christianity.²¹

Botstein, Sposato, and Werner all agree that Mendelssohn was a humanist—as defined by Abraham Mendelssohn (see footnote 15)—who practiced a “rationalistic” form of Protestantism. Sposato alone attempts to refute the idea of Mendelssohn’s connection to his Jewish heritage. He quotes a letter from Mendelssohn to Schubring in which Mendelssohn emphasizes his relationship with Schleiermacher: “Strange as it may seem, I have become a follower of Schleiermacher.”²² As further evidence he later cites a letter to Mendelssohn from Fanny Mendelssohn – written six days after Schleiermacher’s death: “In Schleiermacher, you also lost a friend.”²³


²¹Ibid., 22.


The foundation of Sposato’s argument is Schleiermacher’s stance on the relationship of Christianity to Judaism—“Christianity cannot in any wise be regarded as a remodeling or a renewal and continuation of Judaism”^24 Schleiermacher’s concept of the relationship of Christianity to Judaism is further explained:

The truth is that the relations of Christianity to Judaism and Heathenism are the same, inasmuch as the transition from either of these to Christianity is a transition to another religion . . . We must assume that Christian piety, in its original form, cannot be explained by means of the Jewish piety of that or of an earlier time, and so Christianity cannot in any wise be regarded as a remodeling or a renewal and continuation of Judaism. Paul does indeed regard the faith of Abraham as the prototype of Christian faith, and represents the Mosaic Law simply as something slipped in between; and from this it might, of course, be inferred that he meant to represent Christianity as a renewal of that original and pure Abrahamitic Judaism. But his meaning was only that Abraham’s faith was related to the promise as ours is to the fulfillment, and not by any means that the promise was the same to Abraham as the fulfillment is to us. Where he expressly speaks of the relation of the Jews and the heathen to Christ, he represents it as being exactly the same: he represents Christ as being the same for both, and both as being alike very far from God and so in need of Christ. Now if Christianity has the same relation to Judaism as to Heathenism, it can no more be regarded as a continuation of the former than of the latter: if a man comes from either of them to Christianity, he becomes, as regards his religion, a new man. But the promise to Abraham, so far as it has been fulfilled in Christ, is represented as having had its reference to Christ only in the divine decree, not in the religious consciousness of Abraham and his people. And since we can only recognize the self-identity of a religious communion when there is a uniformity of the religious consciousness, we can no more recognize an identity between Christianity and Abrahamitic Judaism than between it and the later Judaism or Heathenism. And neither can it be said that the purer original Judaism carried within itself the germ of Christianity, so that it would have developed of itself by natural progress from Judaism without the intervention of any new factor; nor that Christ Himself lay in the line of this progress in such a way that a new communal life and existence could not begin with Him.\^25

\^24 Ibid.

Schleiermacher’s influence combined with his father’s dramatic movement away from his Jewish identity, argues convincingly for Sposato’s assessment. In a letter from 1829, Abraham urged Felix to refrain from using the Mendelssohn name with it distinct Jewish heritage on concert programs.

A Christian Mendelssohn is as impossible as a Jewish Confucius. If your name is Mendelssohn you are eo ipso a Jew, and that is of no benefit to you, because it is not even true. Some music societies exercised their prerogative to print simply “Mendelssohn” for purposes of space and/or their admiration for Felix’s grandfather, Moses. Felix preferred “Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy,” or “Felix M. Bartholdy” from 1823 until his death.

What aspects of Schleiermacher’s Christian theology of Schleiermacher made an impact Mendelssohn? Perhaps it began with Mendelssohn intellectually recognizing that Schleiermacher was promoting a philosophical thought that embraced the spiritual elements most important to Mendelssohn’s life—elements he had ascertained while studying Bach. Schleiermacher’s seminal Der christliche Glaube includes a foreword in which B.A. Gerrish propounds that the editors of the translation.

Agreed with the opinion of those best qualified to judge that as a comprehensive exposition of Protestant theology, Schleiermacher’s Christian Faith was second only to Calvin’s [Christianae Religionis Institutio] (1536, revised 1559).

26 At the time of their baptism in 1822, Mendelssohn’s parents added the surname “Bartholdy” as Mendelssohn’s uncle had done upon his conversion.


28 At the time of their baptism in 1822, Felix’s parents added the surname “Bartholdy” as Felix’s uncle had done upon his conversion.

29 Schleiermacher, i
Schleiermacher explicates the Christian faith in its "evangelical or Protestant form":

Christianity is a monotheistic faith belonging to the teleological type of religion, and is essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything is related to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth . . . . Only through Jesus, and thus only in Christianity, has redemption become the central point of religion. Accordingly, in Christianity the relation of the Founder to the members of the communion is quite different from what it is in the other religions. For those other founders are represented as having been, as it were arbitrarily elevated from the mass of similar or not very different men, and as receiving just as much for themselves as for other people whatever they do receive in the way of divine doctrine and precept. Thus even an adherent of those faiths will hardly deny that God could just as well have given the law through another as through Moses, and the revelation could just as well have been given through another as through Mohammed. But Christ is distinguished from all others as Redeemer alone and for all, and is in no wise regarded as having been at any time in need of redemption Himself; and is therefore separated from the beginning from all other men, and endowed with redeeming power from His birth.30

What then is the response of the members of the Christian "communion" to the "Founder?" The author expounds on the doctrine that the complete dependence on Christ as the only source of redemption is necessary and "has been universally and completely accomplished."31 This doctrinaire approach was persuasive to Mendelssohn and is in direct conflict with the stances assumed by Sposato, Botstein, and Werner, all of whom make two presumptions about philosophy or religion: either they rely on rationalism, or their purpose is to achieve it. Both are irreconcilable to the concepts inherent in Schleiermacher.

30Ibid., 52, 57-58; emphasis added.
31Ibid., 56.
Without conceding the possibility that Mendelssohn might have had other motivations, Botstein construes the philosophy projected in Mendelssohn’s music, including *Paulus*, as the propagation of the Protestant religion espoused by his father and grandfather in which

The unfolding of reason, revelation, and enlightenment within a progressive history linked a Judaic past with a Protestant present... Despite the prominence of the figure of Christ in *Paulus* and the centrality of the conversion, it is the rational, ethical essence of faith that stands out.

In Botstein’s estimation, *Paulus* was Mendelssohn’s “mature sociomusical project”:

Music functions by utilizing a philosophically concerned aesthetic strategy to encourage religious emotion. That immediate feeling is channeled into the recognition of a rational theological and political truth. Faith through feeling leads to enlightenment and the recognition of wisdom understood in the framework of the ideas of Moses Mendelssohn.

In a subsequent comparison of Mendelssohn to his grandfather, Botstein wrote:

The decisive differences between grandfather and grandson lay in the fact that the hopes of Moses Mendelssohn for a tolerant, rational world had been pinned on language. For Felix, the medium for the encouragement of reason in ethics and politics had been transferred to music.32

In another attempt to correlate Felix and his music to his father:

*St. Paul* represented Mendelssohn’s musical-dramatic defense of the theological stance of Abraham Mendelssohn, who ultimately converted to Christianity himself. In *St. Paul*, baptism is the route to a rational enlightenment... baptism marked the synthesis of past and present.... Since in Mendelssohn’s view religion was construed as an antidote to ignorance and superstition and as an agent of freedom, a synthesis of Jewish and Christian theology seemed eminently attractive.”33

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33 Ibid., 574-5.
Botstein argues that the Mendelssohns converted to Protestantism rather than Catholicism because they considered it

the lesser of two evils .... Protestantism seemed to condemn idolatry, priestly hierarchies, and superstition. Furthermore, Protestantism, unlike Catholicism, permitted a continued engagement with the subject matter of the Old Testament .... Mendelssohn was a proud, self-consciously Jewish Protestant who believed in a rational God and the progress of enlightenment. Christ as revealed through Protestantism symbolized the progress of humankind to enlightenment that music was obligated to celebrate. \(^{34}\)

These statements are called into question when one considers Mendelssohn’s agreement with Schleiermacher’s position concerning the relationship of the Old Testament to Christianity. Botstein demonstrated his lack of thorough comprehension of Schleiermacher when he contended that Protestantism permitted a “continued engagement with the Old Testament.”

The Old Testament is, for our Christian usage, but the husk or wrapping of its prophecy, and that whatever is most definitely Jewish has least value.... For those which are distinctively Christian, Old Testament sayings will not provide a suitable expression, unless we think certain elements away from them and read other things into them.”\(^{35}\)

While questioning Botstein’s theory about Mendelssohn’s faith and its impact upon his music, this study also questions the respective arguments of Werner and Sposato. Mendelssohn emerges as a man whose faith permeated his life and music as propounded by the insight of friend Julius Schubring.

Mendelssohn’s character had a deep feeling of religion for its basis.... I recollect with what a serious religious feeling he pursued his art, the exercise of it always


\(^{35}\) Schleiermacher, 62.
being, as it were, a sacred duty; how the first page of everyone of his compositions bears impressed on it the initial letter of a prayer.\(^\text{36}\)

It is Schleiermacher’s theology that explains Mendelssohn’s faith and explicates one of the motivations/purposes in his life. The comprehension of this motivation, especially relating to his use of chorales, is prerequisite to the effective interpretation of Mendelssohn’s chorale-based works. The manner in which he injected the chorale form exemplifies his dedication to the Christian faith, and affected the formal structure, the choice of melodies, the approach to musical textures and the articulation, as well as the momentum of and between movements.

Chapter 3

INFLUENCE OF GOETHE AND SCHINKEL

NGD states that Goethe was "one of the most important literary and cultural figures of his age, he was recognized during his lifetime for his accomplishments of almost universal breadth." In his approach to art Goethe wrote:

In order to satisfy the need to find some exemplary model, we must always return to the ancient Greeks, in whose works the beautiful human being is always portrayed.

[Goethe] returned with regularity to his own version of neoclassic aesthetics.... [He] characterized modern man as launching out 'into infinity' only to return, 'if he is lucky,' to a limited point, as opposed to the ancients, who 'remain firmly within the pleasant confines of the beautiful world.'

His monuments, e.g., Hermann and Dorothea, Faust, Achilles, and others, eventually availed to Mendelssohn "a decisive validation of a neoclassical outlook and its potential to serve as the basis of a nonatavistic musical aesthetic."

It was Mendelssohn's tutor Zelter who introduced Mendelssohn to Goethe. In a letter to her sister-in-law, Mendelssohn's mother wrote:

Just fancy that the little wretch is to have the good luck of going to Weimar with Zelter for a short time. He wants to show him to Goethe . . . . You can imagine what it costs me to part from the dear child, even for a few weeks. But I consider it an advantage for him to be introduced to Goethe; to live under the same roof with him, and enjoy the blessing of so great a man.

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A friendship based on mutual respect was formed and produced much correspondence. The precocious youth became especially fascinated and challenged by the elevated intellect he encountered in Goethe. In a letter to Zelter, Goethe wrote, “the excellent Felix spent a fortnight with us very pleasantly, and enchanted everybody by the perfection and charm of his art.” Baronin Jenny von Gustedt recalls a visit in a letter:

Right from the beginning of his stay, Mendelssohn spent most of his time in Goethe’s house. He was indeed Goethe’s David . . . As [Mendelssohn] remembered those distant years, his eyes lit up and he said to me in tones of the deepest conviction: ‘Who knows, without Weimar and without Goethe, what would have become of me!’

Mendelssohn revered Goethe; he considered him an inspiring and formidable mentor, whose impact was transformational for Mendelssohn. Neoclassicism prevailed among Goethe’s contemporaries, including Schinkel, whom Mendelssohn might have met. According to Botstein, Mendelssohn’s attraction to this philosophy seems also to have been influenced by Schinkel—a prominent architect and artist whose painting, A View of Greece in its Prime (1825), “marked the start of a new, mature phase of neoclassical work.” In 1815 he was appointed state architect of Prussia and subsequently completed commissions for King Frederick William III, as well as other members of the royal family. His major architectural projects in Germany further substantiated the neoclassic as a legitimate and popular artistic expression. They became a “revival of various historical styles of architecture, especially classical Greek, such as Königschauspielhaus, Berlin (1818), and Altes Museum, Berlin (1822-30).”

Goethe and Schinkel espoused the concept that classical Greece was the “model of a civic

39Ibid., 19-20.
community" and that the artistic representation of "classical antiquity could serve as a model for modernity and for the moral and aesthetic cultivation of an ideal community."

[Schinkel was the] dominant architect of the age, whose work defined nineteenth-century Berlin and Potsdam . . . [His] designs transformed Berlin and set the standard for the interior design, stage design, and architecture of his age . . . . By the late 1820s Schinkel had emerged not only as a proponent of classical aesthetic, in the formalist sense, exemplified by the great 1830 "New" Museum on the Lustgarten; he was convinced, as his 1825 canvas suggests, that Greece offered German Europe a model of a civic community. He sought to 'enoble human relationships' through design.\textsuperscript{40}

Schinkel has been described as the German architect and painter whose creations made him the "leading arbiter of national aesthetic taste in his lifetime." The importance of Schinkel to Mendelssohn is described by Botstein:

Perhaps Mendelssohn's career and work can be more properly understood as the moral equivalents of the career and work of the greatest German architect of the age, Karl Friedrich Schinkel. A parallel is drawn between Mendelssohn and Schinkel by asserting that they are unique figures in the "realization of an idealist neoclassicism." He posits that this approach was Designed to enhance a renewed, classically inspired construct of civic and theological humanism for a post-Napoleonic Germany . . . . Like Mendelssohn, Schinkel, particularly in his neo-Gothic structures and his painterly output, bridged overt neoclassicism with a newer Romantic sensibility . . . . Classicism, understood as an aesthetic ideal rooted in philosophy and art, played a constructive and essential role in Mendelssohn's evolution as a composer . . . . Classicism . . . .was, for the young Felix Mendelssohn, an 'inner necessity' . . . . It resulted in the unique defining characteristic of his career and aesthetic outlook . . . .as an ideology informed the self-image of a composer. It guided him throughout his life, often in conjunction with the sensibilities of Romanticism.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{40}Botstein, "Neoclassicism, Romanticism . . ." 9.

\textsuperscript{41}Ibid., 20.
Schinkel’s concept of architecture, especially after 1825 with its emphasis on the
eoclassical approach to the Greek civic ideal, was influential on Mendelssohn.

The project of a spirituality that defined Schinkel’s work and the intense political
and cultural debate that surrounded it are mirrored in Mendelssohn’s tireless
engagement with music as a civic, religious, and political enterprise. . . . Key to
this enterprise was finding, in music, a parallel or moral equivalent to the
adaptation of classical models in architecture and their integration with Christian
ideals.42

The task was through contemporary art and design, to “effect a synthesis between
the daily civic life of the ancients . . . and the spirituality of Christianity’ for
modern times.43

Other notable artists of the time, including Johann Gottfried Schadow (1764-
1850) and Bertel Thorwaldsen (1768/70-1844), both of the same philosophical ilk as
Goethe and Schinkel, also made an impact on Mendelssohn. Botstein writes:

The self-conscious mix of adaptation and deviation in the use of classical and
renaissance models in the work of Schadow and Thorwaldsen is suggestive of
Mendelssohn’s attitude toward his own craft as a musician.

The former (of the modern Berlin school of sculpture) and the latter (of prominent Danish
school of sculpture of the Neoclassical style) were revered throughout much of Europe.
Many of Thorwaldsen’s more signature sculptures were created as re-interpretations of
the figures or themes in classical antiquity.

The neoclassical concept espoused by Goethe and Schinkel with its goal of
achieving enhanced human relationships and communities fascinated Mendelssohn. He
saw the chorale, especially those in St. Matthew Passion, as the musical parallel to the

42Ibid., 10.

43Ibid., 9-10.
neoclassical models of Goethe and Schinkel and the musical vehicle by which to achieve the goal. Given Goethe’s and Zelter’s admiration for Bach, Mendelssohn would have welcomed the affirmation he received from his closest mentors and confidants when he decided to include the chorale—derided by others as an anachronism—in his largest and most significant works.

For Mendelssohn, however, better relationships and communities could not be attained through an aesthetic experience alone. He perceived Goethe’s and Schinkel’s art as appealing primarily to the mind and therein achieving its goal; Bach’s art, however, as appealing to both the mind and the spirit, with emphasis on the spirit. This does not imply that the neoclassicism of Goethe, Schinkel and others was not spiritual, only that it effectuates its goal by appealing to the aesthetic response which it hopes will promote better personal relations. Bach’s insertion of Jesus Christ into the concept creates a vertical component that motivates relations transcending the horizontal humanism of Goethe and Schinkel. Mendelssohn especially ascertained this in Bach’s chorales. Botstein’s theory about Mendelssohn’s response to the neoclassical trend in art contends that Mendelssohn opportunistically attempted to propagate the humanism espoused by his father and grandfather. While such references to humanism might be applied to the motivations of Goethe and Schinkel, the explicit Christian themes within Mendelssohn’s chorales and pseudo-chorales along with his allegiance to Schleiermacher seem to suggest otherwise.
Chapter 4

PAULUS

In the early 21st century, several surveys, evaluations and comparisons appeared containing contradicting statements concerning the merits of Mendelssohn’s oratorios.

Howard Smither ranks Mendelssohn’s as

among the most important works of their time in the genre... they received more performances and remained in the standard repertoire longer than any other oratorios of their time.

Smither quotes Otto Jahn who wrote about Paulus: “Hardly a more brilliant, effective conception would have been possible.”

Krummacher supports this statement in the following:

Undoubtedly, St. Paul not only signified Mendelssohn’s breakthrough to European fame but also a marked turning point in the history of the oratorio.

Krummacher quotes Ferdinand Hand’s evaluation of Paulus: “[It is the] greatest work of our day [but lacks] unity and suitable organization.” Krummacher rebuts that this misperception had

to do with the resumption of the chorale, the division of the chorus and the individuals into acting and reflecting masses and persons, as well as to the character of these details themselves... [the] construction is not at all unclear but rather follows the biblical report.


46 Ibid., 311.
Mendelssohn’s correspondence from November and December, 1831, indicate that he had accepted a commission from the Cäcilien-Verein, Frankfurt am Main, for an oratorio about St. Paul; he had stopped there en route to Paris. In seeking assistance with the libretto, Mendelssohn turned to friend Adolf Bernhard Marx. Each agreed to create an oratorio text for the other; Marx would write *Paulus*, and Mendelssohn *Mose*. Mendelssohn also consulted with Julius Schubring. While Marx was opposed to the inclusion of chorales in the work, Schubring was happy to do so. Ultimately, Schubring’s influence proved more persuasive than that of Marx.

Essentially taken from the Acts of the Apostles of the Bible, the *Paulus* libretto also uses other texts from both the New and Old Testaments, as well as five chorales and an original text for one chorus. Part One treats Saul’s persecution of Christians, the stoning of Stephen, and Saul’s conversion; Part Two dramatizes the ministries of Paul, and his assistant Barnabas, which lead to Jewish opposition; healing a lame man in Lystra; a sermon explaining the in-dwelling of God’s spirit in each person; and their farewell.

Each Part in *Paulus* can be divided into scenes comprised of movements consisting of recitatives, aria, choruses and chorales:
PART ONE

Introduction
1. Overture (with chorale)
2. Chorus
3. Chorale

Stoning of Stephen
4. Recitative
5. Chorus
6. Recitative, chorus
7. Aria
8. Recitative -- Chorus
9. Recitative -- Chorale
10. Recitative
11. Chorus

Conversion of Paul
12. Recitative -- Aria
13. Recitative -- Arioso
14. Recitative
15. Chorus
16. Chorale

Paul in Damascus
17. Recitative
18. Aria
19. Recitative
20. Aria -- Chorus
21. Recitative
22. Chorus

PART TWO

Commissioning of the apostle
23. Chorus
24. Recitative
25. Duet
26. Chorus
27. Recitative -- Arioso

Opposition of the Jews
28. Recitative
29. Chorus -- Chorale
30. Recitative
31. Duet

Mission to Lystra
32. Recitative
33. Chorus
34. Recitative
35. Chorus
36. Recitative -- Aria -- Chorus/ Chorale

Persecution and Farewell
37. Recitative
38. Chorus
39. Recitative
40. Cavatina
41. Recitative
42. Chorus-Recitative
43. Chorus
44. Recitative
45. Chorus

47Ibid., 311-12.
While Krummacher claims the overture is not “primarily defined by the chorale “Wachet auf,” Smither argues that it is based on a “rising motive” derived from the second phrase of the chorale (see p. 101). Mercer-Taylor describes it as an “approximation of the pattern that will govern the rest of the piece.” The apparent prominence of this melody suggests otherwise: that it is the basis upon which the overture is constructed and even could be categorized as a “chorale fantasy.”

The overture, in two sections, starts with the melody in its original form in the winds (see p. 102) and includes both Stollen from Wacht auf, goes through a short development and ends in a half cadence. This first section—in Common time, andante, and contemplative—is followed by a contrasting second section in triple time, Con moto, and fugal. A shift in mood occurs from one to the other: the first tonality, A major—hopeful, optimistic; gives way to the second in A minor—ominous. The first six pitches of the fugue’s subject could be named the “Saul motive” with the fugal texture suggesting the wanderings of Saul persecuting the church (see p. 103).

Although the opening seems to image the light of God represented by the Wachet auf melody, the second seems to suggest its dimness by leading the listener to perceive Saul’s mission as in direct opposition to the light—all effected through changes: tonality (becomes minor), meter, tempo, and texture (becomes polyphonic). However, the light

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48 Ibid., 314.

49 Smither, 165.

seems not to have been destroyed, but is temporarily effected by the minor tonality of "Saul" music—connoting his persecution of and presence at the stoning of Stephen and other martyrs (see p. 104). The persisting light eventually returns to dominance as indicated by the return to A Major for the chorale melody (see p. 105).

The dramatization of Saul’s conversion (his name has been changed to Paul) transforms minor into major tonality, symbolizing his mission to spread the light (see p. 106). The Abgesang of Wachet auf is not incorporated in the overture, suggesting that the full dramatization of Paul’s conversion is yet to come in the oratorio. It is stated fully in what can be called the dramatic high point of Part One (#16).

Allein Gott in der Höh

General Description

Allein Gott in der Höh, #3, set in traditional four-part chorale (church) style and accompanied by instruments, colle parte, is the first foil chorale of the work (see p. 107). The overture, first chorus and chorale seem to serve as an introduction to the entire work, and, therefore, could be perceived as a prelude to the beginning of the first scene (#4). The chorus—asking God to grant courage and strength to his servants in the “midst of heathen who rage against God and Christ”—evokes a response from the chorale:

Praise be to God alone on high
And thanks for His mercy;
That now and for ever more
No harm may befall us.
His power is immeasurable
Only that happens which he hath ordained.
Let us rejoice in the Lord!
By including this chorale this early, Mendelssohn achieves two objectives. Firstly, he establishes a sacred context (initially alluded to by the inclusion of *Wachet auf* in the overture) which he maintains throughout the entire work; secondly, he invokes the image of congregational response. During the chorus the people, God’s servants, had prayed for boldness to “speak Thy word.” In the chorale, through the judicious use of the plural pronoun “us,” members of the audience are invited to personally identify themselves as God’s servants. The traditional setting further facilitates an identification with the sacredness of the movement and the entire work.

Significant influences on Mendelssohn are present. Use of this chorale so early in the work parallels Bach’s insertion of *Herzliebster Jesus*, immediately after the opening chorus and recitative in the *St. Matthew Passion*. Schinkel’s and Goethe’s “ideal community” emerges in the text “No harm may befall us . . . . Only that happens which he hath ordained.” Schleiermacher’s theology is implied (our protection is based on dependence on God’s mercy), which is, according to Schleiermacher, afforded through Christ.

**Interpretation**

In order to engender a mood of humble gratitude within the chorale, Mendelssohn indicates *piano* and a slow metronomic marking (eighth note equals 80) which would be enhanced by specific interpretive techniques: *Legato*—connecting final consonants of words to the beginning of the next words; beauty of vowels—a darker color; arch phrasing – consistently divided four-bar phrases; fermati (treated as in a Bach chorale) serving two purposes: a slight stretching of value, and indication of breaths – the
selection being determined by consideration of formal structure illustrating AAB and textual context.

The *Abgesang* should be sung without breaths between the first and second fermata, and the last phrase should be preceded by a breath in order to prepare for the culmination. Although Mendelssohn indicates the eighth note as the basis for the pulse, it is recommended that the conducting be based on either the quarter note, or a subtle subdivision of it, which will be more conducive to eliciting appropriate phrasing. *Rubato* that enhances the dynamic arch is strongly encouraged, and a warm, rich tone will create a contemplative mood in humble thanksgiving.

The momentum in these introductory movements is crucial, particularly between the chorus (#2), and the chorale (#3), due to the change of roles assigned to the choir—a technique used several times throughout the work. In the opening chorus, the choir refers to God's servants in the third person; in the chorale, the first person denotes the people as God's servants. A pause is necessary to assist the audience in ascertaining the differentiating dramatic functions of the choir; a longer pause after the chorale will signify the end of the introduction as well as with the beginning of the first scene.

*Dir, Herr, dir will ich mich ergeben*

**General Description**

The second chorale (#9), *Dir, Herr, dir will ich mich ergeben*, appears after Stephen is stoned. After having functioned in the chorus (#8) as a turba demanding that Stephen be stoned, "He has blasphemed the name of the Lord, and he that blaspemeth
the name of the Lord shall be put to death (see p. 108),” the choir now functions
differently in the chorale:

To Thee, Lord, will I devote myself,
To Thee, whose creature I am.
Thou alone, Thou art my life,
Death my only prize.
I live for Thee, die for Thee:
If Thou art mine, it is enough for me.

The accompaniment consists of only strings, *colle parte*. This chorale, like the
first in traditional chorale style, has two unusual aspects: it immediately segues from the
recitative, and it employs only three voice parts—the sopranos and altos are unison (see
pp. 109-110). Similar to the first chorale, it is not revealed who is speaking. Given that
Stephen has just died and that the text is about the consequence of death, it could be
assumed to be his thoughts, or, they could be the thoughts of someone who witnessed the
death. Thus, the text becomes a response—statement of faith—from a community who
witnessed the death of one of their own and essentially stating that they live and die for
God, and God is all that is needed. In this statement, Mendelssohn manifests
Schleiermacher’s sentiment of dependence and exhibits the communal component
inherent in the thinking of Goethe and Schinkel.

**Interpretation**

The differentiation between the previous chorus and the chorale provides an
interesting contrast in conducting styles: the former, angular shouts morph into contem­
plation—*molto legato*, requiring well-connected consonants. Although the chorale has
segued from the previous recitative, the transition should allow time for the audience to
realize that Stephen has just died—depicted in a brief two-measure interlude for winds
only. Since this material is "Recitative," a flexible approach to tempo is appropriate in order to support the envisioning of the ascension to heaven by Stephen's soul. Such *ad libitum* treatment must not come quickly since the moment portrays the bewilderment and slow response of the witnesses.

Mendelssohn's moderate tempo marking—eighth note equals 80—suggests that the movement could be well led if conducted in a subdivided four. In an attempt to symbolize the absence of Stephen's soul, Mendelssohn focuses on two techniques: instrumentation is thin throughout—no winds save bassoon, and strings *colle parte*; and a *piano* dynamic that predominates except for the moderate crescendo in the first phrase of the *Abgesang*. The crescendo assists in underlining the crux of the chorale (often found in the *Abgesang*): "I live for Thee, I die for Thee." The last phrase of the chorale returns to *piano*.

While the nature of the text is deliberate and strong, the overall affect is contemplative devotion with some sadness present. As a result, relatively small arches should define each phrase (the low tessitura restricts the singers ability to create bigger arches). Dark vocal color in the context of *molto legato* mitigates sharply attacked consonants. Attaching final consonants, as much as possible, to the beginning of the next words is desirable, enabling deliberate enunciation of the text.

A pause after the chorale indicates that the statement is finished and the drama continues, despite the fact the scene is not finished. Mendelssohn seems to have developed a pattern for the chorale—serving as a response of the believers (to the death of Stephen)—it temporarily interrupts the forward progress of the drama with a statement
of faith or reflection upon faith. The scene reaches its conclusion in the subsequent recitative and chorus.

**Wacht auf**

**General Description**

*Wacht auf* (#16), climaxes the dramatic progression that began with Saul’s Damascus road confrontation with God, and is the dramatic high point of Part One. The scene is a brief description of Saul’s conversion experience beginning with #12 in which Saul implores the Lord Sabaoth to consume the disciples who will “not know Thee,” and to “pour out Thine indignation upon them.” He sets out for Damascus, charged by the high priests to bind the disciples and bring them back to Jerusalem. The recitative (#14) describes a light from heaven shining upon him; he falls and hears a voice: “Saul, why persecutest thou me?” He replies, “Who art thou, Lord?” The Lord says, “I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.” The Lord instructs him to arise and enter the city (see pp. 111-115).

These instructions are accompanied by a musical element which Smither calls the “rising motive”—derived from the *Wacht auf* chorale, on the text “Arise, and go into the city.” The entrance (#15) consists of thirty measures of Mendelssohn’s most dramatic, anticipatory music of the whole work (see pp. 116-120). Underpinned by seventeen bars of a low pedal tone D, the tenors make the first choral entry prominently featuring the “rising motive,” this time on the text, “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon the.” This motive permeates the movement and foreshadows the
ensuing full iteration of the *Wachet auf* melody in the following movement. The chorus (#15) introduces the chorale (#16) without interruption.

The choral writing in #16 is traditional church style with winds and strings *colle parte* (see pp. 121-124). Trombones, trumpets, and horns add a majestic quality in the mini-fanfares placed after the subdivision of the *Stollen*, and before the last phrase of the *Abgesang*. The only peculiarity in the chorale setting is four and a half measures of a plagal codetta in which the text “ihm entgegengehn” is repeated.

Awake, cries to us the voice
Of the watchers high on the battlements,
Awake, thou city of Jerusalem!
Prepare, the bridegroom comes.
Arise, take up your lamps!
Alleluia!

While the previous chorus seems to be speaking directly about Saul, “But the Lord rises up on thee, and his glory is seen upon thee,” the chorale uses the pronoun “us” as a statement connoting the corporate body, “Awake, cries to us the voice.” It is a command to the people: identify with Paul (newly renamed), follow his example, “Arise, take up your lamps.”

Repeatedly, the influences on Mendelssohn are displayed in a consistent manner. Bach, by the envelopment of the audience in the drama; Schleiermacher, by the Christian reference to the Bridegroom—the scriptures frequently refer to Christ as the bridegroom and the church his bride. Schleiermacher’s affect is present, though obliquely, as the audience is called to rise to meet Christ (implied). The pronoun “us” connotes universality and, thereby, demonstrates the ideals of Goethe and Schinkel.
Interpretation

Mendelssohn provides a tempo indication based on the quarter note, however, the movement clearly moves in half notes. To create a forward rhythmic inertia, the use of a subdivided two pattern would help. An arch phrase in each of the three phrases of the *Stollen* climbs to its crest on the penultimate syllable in the first two phrases—"Stim," "Zin," and "ru" (Jerusalem) in the third phrase. By shaping this way, a feeling of forward movement is accomplished as per Mendelssohn’s *con moto* indication.

The *Abgesang*—mainly consisting of two three-bar phrases, as compared to five six-bar phrases of the *Stollen*—is better realized within an arch arriving at its crest on the downbeat of the penultimate measure. The last two phrases of the *Abgesang* return to the five-measure structure of the *Stollen*. *Marcato* is achieved with accents on each syllable within the *messa di voce* style with more emphasis on consonants than on vowels, yet caution should be used to avoid over-accenting. Vocal tone should have a slight edge with a rather bright quality. Similar articulation and phrasing also pertains to the strings and winds. To further enhance the *con moto* feeling, the brass could create a long crescendo through their fanfares of two-and-a-half measures. The fermati are to be treated similarly to those in the first two chorales, and since this chorale ends the scene, a pause should occur after the cut-off.

*Jesu Christe, wahres Licht*

General Description

Movement #29 (see pp. 125-128), a chorus, begins with the hearers’ astonishment at what appears to be Paul preaching the Gospel (m 1-22). It is an unsettling chorus
which depicts their surprise, "Ist das nicht der? Is this not he?", that it is indeed Paul.

After the inquisitive whisperings move throughout the choral parts in polyphonic style, the resolve of Paul's opponents is depicted musically through the sudden shift from fugal style to homophony in which the choir pleads for the confounding of all such deceivers (m 24-32). This sentiment turns to violent opposition as they shout "Weg, weg mit ihm! Away, away with him" (m 35-67).

The story is propelled forward by the ensuing recitative and chorus (#30): Paul reprimands the people for their rejection of eternal life in Christ then leaves with Barnabas to preach to the Gentiles. At the end of Chorus (#29) and prior to the reprimand (#30), Mendelssohn inserts the Lutheran Chorale Jesu Christe, wahres Licht (m 76-105; see pp. 129-133).

A contrast between these two sections of this movement is discernible: agitated rhythms of the violins and violas are replaced with a slower tempo, and the later section becomes more contemplative in a softer dynamic. A tranquil but pensive instrumental introduction (m 76-78) precedes the first stanza of the chorale. Each verse of the chorale is set chordally and separated by the instrumental "sighing" motives in the strings, and prayers ascending to heaven in the winds. Each verse, with thinning texture, created a prayer for those that do not know Christ, and asks God to illumine with the light of Christ the hearts and minds of unbelievers:

Jesus Christ, true light,
enlighten them that know Thee not,
and bring them to Thy flock,
that their souls might also be blessed.
Enlighten them that are blind,
bring hither them that have separated from us,
gather them that have strayed,
confirm them that are in doubt.

Other elements are used to advance the story while the chorale (#29b) seems to express Mendelssohn’s musical, theological, and philosophical ideals. As this scene develops, its similarity in structure to *St. Matthew* becomes increasingly obvious. Bach’s angry mob (the chorus–#36) decries Jesus’ guilt and condemns him; the ensuing chorale (#37) declares the innocence of Jesus and the importance of his salvation. Mendelssohn’s appreciation of Bach’s determination to increase congregational involvement is discernable in the structure of #29. The reference to Jesus Christ as the “true light” again strongly associates Schleiermacher, while the desire for the enlightenment of the blind and the gathering of the strayed implies the cultivation of a better community as espoused by Goethe and Schinkel.

**Interpretation**

The momentum of #29 and #30 impacts the success in communicating the contemplative character. A pause before the chorale emphasizes that the following faith statement of the believers interrupts the forward movement of the story; a pause after gives the listener time to adjust to the resuming motion.

The contrast between the chorus and chorale is abrupt and almost startling. The former agitation—the sound of gossipy whispering followed by angry shouting requiring detached articulation; the latter calm, *molto legato* in an ethereal, even angelic manner. A change in tempo, dynamics, and phrasing, with slower harmonic rhythm, slightly faster tempo; pulse (tactus) shifting from dotted quarter to eighth (the latter eighth is faster); the
short boisterous declamations *forte* becoming two-measure arch phrases—all within the limits of *piano*.

**Wir glauben all an einen Gott**

General Description

The last chorale (#36c) occurs within the context of Paul’s and Barnabas’s mission work. Upon arriving in Lystra, Paul heals a lame man who gets up and walks, an action convincing the gentiles that Paul and Barnabas are gods—Jupiter and Mercury. The Gentile chorus sings, “The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men,” leading the crowd to prepare a sacrifice in their honor. Paul and Barnabas are outraged—they rend their clothes and chastise the people (see pp. 134-148):

> Why do you do these things? We are men like you. The prophet said that all your idols are but falsehood. God dwelleth not in temples made by hands. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? Our God is in the heavens.

The chorus exuberantly reiterates Paul’s words in counterpoint in Bach’s style with strings *colle parte*. Woven into the imitative texture is the chorale with Luther’s text declaring: “We all believe in one God,” sung by the second sopranos and doubled by two horns, two oboes, and alto trombone. The other choral parts in this à5 texture paint the idea of God’s will directing the world, whereas the chorale, in its usual manner, is the foundational element—another demonstration of the three strong influences: Bach, Goethe and Schinkel, and Schleiermacher.

The chorus had represented the gentiles praising Paul and Barnabas, “O be gracious, ye gods! Heed our sacrifice with favor”; the subsequent chorale text suggests a
conversion of or the transformation of the gentiles into a community of believers. The first person pronouns “our” and “we” is the clue:

We believe in one God,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
who made himself a Father,  
that we might become his children.

The direct borrowing of the chorale text from Luther makes an even stronger statement of faith in refutation of false gods. The manner in which Mendelssohn weaves a chorale melody into a polyphonic fabric, demonstrates his familiarity of the technique used by Bach many times, including the opening chorus of the St. Matthew. The universal element, which seems to imply Schinkel and Goethe, is emphasized by the foundational nature of the chorale amid the imitative texture. Its inclusion of this element at this point in the libretto seems to refer to the ideal community—according to Luther’s and Mendelssohn’s perspectives, in which there is one true God, a God who does as he pleases on the Earth. The idea of dependence on this one true God is strongly connected to Schleiermacher’s theology.

Mercer-Taylor attributes a “special role” to #36 which transcends the mere use of the chorale melody: “With an extended opening recitative, a brief but complete arioso, and a substantial fugal closing section, it is the most structurally complex number of the piece.” It is the longest number of the work and the final fugue is the only occurrence of à5 writing and “…constitutes one of the oratorio’s crucial epiphanies, a radical reconsideration of the whole function of the chorale within the musical discourse.”

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51 This portion of the chapter is based on Peter Mercer-Taylor, “Rethinking Mendelssohn’s Historicism: A Lesson from St. Paul.” In Journal of Musicology 15 (1997).
At the beginning of the number, Paul made his first real theological point of the entire oratorio, warning the heathens away from the belief that God could live in temples made with human hands. In the arioso that followed, he explained that they, the people themselves, are God's true temple. Though the fugue, with its interpolated chorale, that is tacked on at this point appears motivated by neither dramatic nor musical concerns, it gains an entirely new relevance if we recognize its role as neither meditative nor dramatic in any conventional sense, but purely symbolic, as a musical illustration of the point Paul has just made. With the entrance of the familiar congregational hymn, it becomes possible to recognize the fugal web surrounding the hymn as a contrapuntal housing, so to speak, surrounding a musical utterance we have no trouble identifying with the act of Protestant worship. In none of the work's earlier chorales had the voices themselves attempted anything but a straight, chordal texture; the evolving stages of accompanimental complexity were the domain of instruments alone. But here, as the contrapuntal edifice surrounding the chorale achieves its final, most glorious form, the voices have reclaimed the accompanimental fabric as their own, and the instruments are left to do nothing but double them. In other words, where the previous chorales had been housed in increasingly intricate contrapuntal structures created by human hands—that is, by instruments—this is a structure constituted of humanity itself, of the human voice. With the confessional chorale standing, in a kind of liturgical synecdoche, for the act of worship, and the choral fugue representing the human temple in which it occurs, this number serves as a metaphor for the religious truth Paul has just put forth. The enabling force at the heart of this process, of course, is the ease with which the chorale can be interpreted—apart from its own aesthetic value—as a symbol for the act of worship.52

John Butt amplifies Mercer-Taylor's comments.

The inclusion of chorales in toto make a specific link between Paul's ministry and the essentially Pauline theology of Lutheranism; the chorales highlight a particular historical connection that renders a new Testament story specifically relevant to a living German tradition and identity. Mendelssohn thus risks generic impropriety in order to achieve a deeper theological involvement, one of particular cultural relevance.53

52Ibid., 226-27.

Interpretation

This final chorale (#36) illustrates how Mendelssohn uses this form to make his most important statements, i.e., the text brings the story to its emotional high point. The conductor drives upward to this height by conceiving the movement with its four elements: recitativo, aria, chorus and chorale, as an integrated whole. As each segues into the next, ambient changes in tonality, string techniques, lofting lyricism, all require distinct approaches. Paul’s remonstrations change from chastisement to affirmation that the listeners are holy temples of God. The recitative shifts from accents and detached abruptness to legato (m. 39).

The minor tonality (m.93) adds resoluteness to Paul’s statement: “But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.” The meter shift—dule to triple with a half-note tactus—is reminiscent of earlier practices. Gradually the strings become a supportive colpe parte (m.122), and the same in the winds (m.141). The power and sonority of this grand moment is substantially enhanced by organ (m.188).

After two iterations of the melody by Paul—in d minor and then a minor third higher—the chorus enters in m. 122. The choral writing is imitative, repeating the previously twice-proclaimed text of Paul. While there are no stylistic markings in the choral parts, the strings are marked non legato. Slight escalation from piano strengthens the final exclamation of text.

At the meter shift to triple (m.93), Mendelssohn indicates, con molto di moto, half note equals 112. The designated tempo requires conducting in three, however, a
sense of one larger, slower pulse suggests a large circular motion causing an anacrusic feeling on the second and third beats.

The non legato marking in the colle parte strings dictates similar articulation for the imitative voices, however, an interesting effect would be achieved if the chorale melody was sung legato. This voice needs to be dominant—the other voices playing a supportive role—and, given the low tessitura for sopranos, the effect can be achieved by assigning a few altos to the second soprano part.

The circular approach (conducting in one) mentioned above requires “off-the-voice” singing on beats two and three for the imitative voices, which will help balance the second sopranos who should sing full-voiced, and in a sustained manner throughout. The strong chorale text requires that each pitch be given equal weight. It is the other choral parts that will achieve arch phrasing influenced by the circular approach. Chorale singers are also encouraged to slightly accent each new text syllable even in the context of legato, again for text intelligibility. Ritardando is appropriate at the end of this movement—the conclusion of the scene. A pause of some length following the movement will help the audience discern the change in scenes as well.

While Paulus was widely acclaimed and praised, it received its share of criticism. Gottfried Wilhelm Fink, praised the work: “Wherever this oratorio has been performed, in Dusseldorf, Leipzig, Zwickau, England, everywhere it has been worthily honored by the lively participation of a large audience.” He called the oratorio, “the most attractive and important works of our most recent period of music.” Robert Schumann called Paulus, “a work of the purest kind, one of peace and love,” and one of “inner meaning,
pure Christian spirit, musical mastery . . .” Even Wagner, who would become Mendelssohn’s harshest critic, called the work a “classic,” and a “masterwork,” which was both “touching and uplifting.”

Most of the reservations expressed by Mendelssohn’s contemporaries were directed at his inclusion of chorales in a concert work. While some had praised the use of chorales, Fink believed “the chorales should be reserved for the church and avoided in concert music.” Nevertheless, the adulation given the work by the general public was apparent wherever it was performed.

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54 Smither, 165-66.
Chapter 5

*ELIJAH*

Approximately three months after the successful premiere of *Paulus*, Mendelssohn was contemplating another oratorio; however, ten years elapsed before *Elijah* appeared—arguably his most popular work. After failing in his attempts to collaborate with friend Karl Klingemann, he sought assistance again from Julius Schubring and expressed his desire for a sophisticated dramatic structure.

With regard to the dramatic element, there still seems to be a diversity of opinion between us. With a subject like “Elijah” it appears to me that the dramatic element should predominate, as it should in all Old Testament subjects, Moses, perhaps, excepted. The personages should act and speak as if they were living beings—for Heaven's sake let them not be a musical picture, but a real world, such as you find in every chapter of the Old Testament; and the contemplative and pathetic element, which you desire, ought to be entirely conveyed to our understanding by the words and the mood of the acting personages.\(^{55}\)

Schubring and Mendelssohn did not agree on some aspects of the libretto and by 1839 had stopped corresponding about it. The composer resumed his own efforts subsequent to an 1845 invitation for conducting at the 1846 Birmingham Festival. Aspiring to complete it in time for a premier at this festival, Mendelssohn again elicited Schubring’s cooperation. The complete libretto (originally in German) needed translation into English; William Bartholomew, an English friend, took on the task. Several adjustments reflected its being modeled on the King James version.

\(^{55}\)Smither, 167.
An orchestra of 125 and a chorus of 271 premiered the work in Birmingham’s Town Hall, 26 August 1846, and was reported in the London Times:

The last note of “Elijah” was drowned in a long—continued unanimous volley of plaudits, vociferous and deafening . . . Never was there a more complete triumph—never a more thorough and speedy recognition of a great work of art.

“No work of mine ever went so admirably the first time of execution, or was received with such enthusiasm by both the musicians and the audience, as this oratorio.”—as written by the conductor to his brother. In spite of the success, he soon began extensive revisions. Within one year performances occurred in Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna, New York, St. Petersburg, as well as others, all of which reflected Mendelssohn’s changes. Elijah’s fame spread widely and has continued unabated to the present day. Jack Werner stated that “…next to Messiah, Mendelssohn’s Elijah is the most popular work in [England].”

This assessment could be broadened to encompass western culture.

Formally, Elijah employs a structure similar to Paulus in that two Parts are divided into scenes which in turn separate themselves into movements. The Old Testament story of the Jewish prophet, recorded in I and II Kings, is augmented by excerpts from the New Testament as representations of Mendelssohn’s Christian ideals. The variety of roles for individuals created by the librettist include: two angels; Obidiah; a Widow (whose son is revived by the prophet); Ahab; Elijah’s servant boy; and Queen Jezebel. In emulation of Paulus, a similar variety is assigned to the choir: the People of

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56Ibid., 184.

Israel; Priests of Baal; Seraphim; Narrator; Words of God pronouncers (including the prophecies); and unidentified others. A synopsis of Part One begins with placing a curse (Einleitung); the overture (a break with common practice by introducing a prerequisite understanding of the story prior to the overture) introducing devastation and suffering; Elijah reviving the widow's son; Elijah confronting Ahab, a priest of Baal, and challenging him to a contest; Elijah praying fervently; reconciling of the people to God; and people getting relief from famine.

High drama is achieved in the confrontation between Elijah and Ahab leading to Elijah’s challenge that Ahab call upon Baal to show that Baal is sufficiently powerful to ignite a sacrificial fire. The contest will determine which is the true God, resulting in the people returning to Elijah’s God. His subsequent fervent prayer “revives the thirsty land” with a dramatic return of rain, upon which the people give thanks to God.

A summary of Part Two follows: Elijah confronting Ahab a second time; Queen Jezebel, Ahab’s wife, ordering Elijah’s execution; Obadiah warning Elijah about the danger and urging him to leave; Elijah lamenting his situation and lack of confidence; angels comforting him; his returning with renewed energy to again confidently proclaim God as Lord; Elijah’s ascending to heaven in a fiery chariot with fiery horses; and prophesying of Christ’s coming. The last scene, often criticized as anti-climactic and out of context, identifies Elijah as the fore-runner of the Messiah. Schubring defends the conclusion, “The oratorio can have no other than a New Testament ending . . . . Elijah
must help to transform the old into the new covenant—that gives him his great historical
importance."\textsuperscript{58}

To enhance clarity within this study, additional titling has been inserted:

## Part 1

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## PART 2

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<td>34. Chorus</td>
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\textsuperscript{58}Smither, 173.
Mendelssohn, disregarding the criticism received from some contemporaries for
his inclusion of chorales in *Paulus*, continued to limitedly use them in *Elijah*. According
to Feder:

For Mendelssohn the chorale was an indispensable expression of the Christian
congregation, and it did not seem anachronistic to him to include chorales even in
Old Testament contexts, since in this regard he did not think historically but as a
Protestant. For this reason Mendelssohn did not completely dispense with the
chorale in his *Elijah*, though he did not use it in its original form but rather
invented new melodies in the manner of chorales and had them sung to psalm
verses.\(^\text{59}\)

Seemingly, he was able to both placate his critics and effectively express is
aforementioned ideals in *Elijah* as in his first oratorio by including pseudo-chorales.
Consideration of each instance will provide evidence.

"For He, the Lord Our God"

General Description

The people, in response to the devastating drought, express their horror in #5, the
final movement of the first scene (see pp. 149-165): "[The Lord] mocketh at us; His
curse hath fallen down upon us; His wrath will pursue us, till He destroy us." Tremolo
strings picture the people’s fear; repeated choral pitches at high tessituras for the text “He

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\(^{59}\) Feder, 264.
mocketh at us" and \textit{sforzatos} by doubling instruments on the text "His curse hath fallen down upon us" illustrate their anguish; and frenetic scurrying in the music aptly depicts their panic.

An abrupt change, beginning with a pause written as a fermata over a rest in m. 67, is significant indication of a transformed perspective of the people. Further programmatic abruptness develops by altogether different music for the text:

For He, the Lord our God, He is a jealous God, and He visits the fathers' iniquities on the children to the third and the fourth generation of them that hate Him, but showeth His steadfast love to all the hosts of them that do love Him, and keep His commandments.

That Obadiah was right and that they had brought their misery on themselves by their idol worship is the seeming realization of the people—they are suffering the consequences of a jealous God. Simple homophony with instruments thinly \textit{colle parte} employing only oboes, clarinets, and strings represents the lack of God's mercies, while the full complement of instruments reflects the endowment of them to "those that love Him and keep His commandments."

By using a consistent eighth-note pattern, the strings at this point represent the persistent mercies from God ("mercy motive"), while winds and lower strings with sustained half and whole notes represent God's steadfast love. The homophonic chorale style in the latter, with fermatas over the last notes of the first three phrases, reinforces the chorale effect (this is an apt example of a pseudo-chorale). The complete text uttered, a quasi coda features imitative style reflective of God's continuing mercies.

Influences to include chorale-like material are readily observed in this scene in which the pseudo-chorale, although very different in appearance from its counterpart in
Paulus, accomplishes the same objectives. A unified statement of faith by the people in the story through a freely-invented form (not a traditional Lutheran chorale) creates an association with the Protestant chorale for the audience in order to encourage a personal involvement in the drama—a trademark of Bach. An ideal community, a la Goethe and Schinkel, and the concept of dependence on Christ as propounded by Schleiermacher are present in the text: “His mercies on thousands fall on all that love Him” (In other words, it is only by loving God that you will be saved from God’s curses).

Interpretation

Suggested interpretation of this movement in two sections necessitates achieving a contrast between frenetic and resolute qualities. A boisterous quality in the upper strings begins the movement, and although no accent is indicated on the first note, an aggressive start seems appropriate. Detached articulation, especially for the text “He mocketh at us;” accented singing with a crescendo to the “at” word; and a bright, even edgy, vocal tone are encouraged in order to create a more boisterous and mocking character – one which remains throughout the first section of this movement with no abatement of intensity to the fermata in m. 67 (the contrasting resolute section is not be foreshadowed). This fermata over the rest, integral in initiating the contrast, must be long enough to project a change of mood and thought; to rush the pause would destroy the drama inherent in a corporate change of mind.

In order to reflect the change in the second section, the character of the singing and playing in the second section must employ a different articulation. With similar conviction from the previous section, consonants remain crisp but within a legato context
that, when coupled with explicit dynamic indications, negate the inclusion of arch phrasing. Necessary further contrast beginning in m. 89 correlates with a textual change from them that hate to them that love God. A more legato approach, in which consonants are connected as much as possible is desirable for the choir employing a warmer, deeper tone – a comparable approach assumed by the doubling and sustaining instruments. As previously, explicit dynamics are provided, beginning in m. 107, however, arch phrasing is now desirable. Conclusion of movement and scene is signaled by a significant pause.

"Cast Thy Burdens" and "The Lord is God"

General Description

Included in the scene concerning the confrontation of Elijah and Ahab are two strategically placed pseudo-chorales (Ahab led the people away from Jehovah to worship Baal, resulting in Elijah’s curse). Elijah, in #10, issues a challenge: “gather the prophets of Baal, select and slay an offering, but put no fire under it; call upon your god, after which I’ll call on mine, and the god who sends the fire will be God.” In #11-#13, the chorus futilely cries to Baal, all the while Elijah mocks their unsuccessful efforts: “Call him louder. Perhaps he is on a journey, or is sleeping.” After three attempts by the chorus to get Baal’s attention, Elijah gathers the people, and in an aria (#14), asks God to show Himself and to turn the hearts of the people.

The following church style, à4 pseudo-chorale (#15; see pp. 166-168), proclaims that those who put their trust in God will never be put to shame. Its intent seems to be the inviting of listeners to become participants in the drama. Homophonic, with minimum ornamentation, and mostly a cappella, it closely resembles a traditional chorale.
Jack Werner points out that the quartet (#15), “Cast Thy Burdens Upon the Lord,” according to Mendelssohn, is “the only specimen of a Lutheran chorale.” From a hymnbook published in Meiningen, Germany (1693), “Meiningen Gesangbuch,” the melody “O Gott du frommer Gott,” has been altered and harmonized by Mendelssohn (see pp. 169-171). Subsequent publications of several hymnals have included the hymn, e.g., “Hymnal of the Canadian Church of England” (titled “Munich); Canadian Presbyterian Hymn Book (with Mendelssohn’s alterations in both); various hymnals of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America. Titled “Munich” by Lutherans, and “Devotion” by Presbyterians, the original composer is unspecified.\(^\text{60}\)

The text, as if it were excerpted from Schleiermacher’s treatise, simultaneously calms, reassures and proclaims:

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. He never will suffer the righteous to fall: He is at thy right hand. Thy mercy, Lord, is great; and far above the heavens. Let none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.

Although the inclusion of this pseudo-chorale does not advance the story, Mendelssohn, in a manner similar to Bach, inserted it in an apparent attempt to draw the listeners into the drama with text promoting Schleiermacher’s complete dependence on God. Its universal connotations also bespeak Goethe’s and Schinkel’s ideal community concept.

This statement of faith emboldens Elijah to step forward (#16) to ask God to send down flames (see pp. 172-182; m. 1-7) dramaticized musically by the sudden change in texture, tempo, and mood of the music. The observers of the action, in terror, desperately attempt to avoid the flames, falling on their faces in a terrified, frantic manner, (m. 31-41),

\(^{60}\)Jack Werner, 54-56.
depicted by the intense sixteenth-note sforzatos in the strings. Abruptness signifies that the maelstrom has subsided, a homophonic pseudo-chorale becomes the voice of the survivors proclaiming the God of Elijah as the true God: “The Lord is our God. He alone is the Lord, and we will have no other gods before him.” The power of the text – the reinforcement of the concept of universality – uniquely uses full orchestration colle parte.

In this cresting, emotional moment, all characters, agree that Jehovah is the true God. While the statement of faith in this pseudo-chorale is pre-Christian, it bears unmistakable reference to the coming of Christ (more overtly suggested at the last scene of the work). Therein the listener is guided to make the connection between the God of Elijah to the God of the Christian faith. To set this pseudo-chorale in such a grand, unified manner, using a text declaring there is only one true God—the Christian God underlines the significance of a message resonating Mendelssohn’s dedication to the theology propounded by Schleiermacher. Interestingly, it demonstrates the parallel concept of the humanist ideal that ennobling of such relationships will culminate into the building an ideal community, a la Goethe and Schinkel.

Interpretation

The control of momentum within and between the movements becomes a primary concern in conducting this scene and the pseudo-chorales contained therein. Three elements of dramatic contrast comprise the scene: the desperate and boisterous pleas of the priests of Baal (#11-13, and first section of #16); the contemplative, prayer-like tone of Elijah’s aria (#14), and the ensuing pseudo-chorale, “Cast they burden upon the Lord” (#15); and the resolute pseudo-chorale “The Lord is God” (second part of #16).
Mendelssohn—to accentuate the shift to the meditative mood of the first pseudo-
chorale—scores it for a vocal quartet (possibly conceived as sung by angels since the
only other vocal quartet is designated *Die Engel*), in contrast to the chorus, which to this
point in the scene has represented the less-than-angelic priests of Baal. A pause before
and after effects the “otherworldliness” of the quartet.

From the Baal choruses to the pseudo chorale, contrast in articulation and
dynamics necessitates contrasting techniques: transforming a driving, detached quality—
each word is given the same weight—into a lyrical and legato style—arch shape to each
text verse; unrelenting *fortes* and *fortissimos* into consistent *pianos* and *pianissimos*. The
former can be achieved by strong, accented attacks on each word with emphatic conso-
nant Releases, even adding accentuated shadow vowels after voiced consonants. The
raucous effect resulting from its emphasis on consonant noise in the former mutates into
an angelic effect resulting from exaggerated connection of consonant sounds (wherein
final consonants of words are hooked to the initial consonants or vowels of the following
words) in the quartet.

Being both active and meditative, the other pseudo-chorale in this scene (#16)
contrasts with its surroundings. Prior to this chorale, the flinging of flames from heaven
had been represented by an incessant sixteenth-note motive in the strings along with
vocally “flickering” word-painting mellismas on “flame.” As the final flames are flung
down, the sixteenth-note motives in the strings are interrupted by choral and instrumental
homophony indicating an end to the frantic actions. As the priests of Baal gradually
realize that the rain of fire has ended and the consequences of the situation becomes
reality to them, a pause (fermata over a rest) is effectively inserted. The psychological profile of these moments have a pianissimo quickly growing into forte dramatizing how their fear of the fire is transformed into confidence in their new convictions.

Initial vocal color (m. 43)—quasi-whisper with more emphasis on consonants than vowels—at this dramatic crossroads suggests the retention of some fear. By the end of the next verse, the vocal color must suggest confidence, particularly for the words “O Israel hear” by having sharp consonants and energized vowels, quickly intensifying, remaining strong to the end despite the gradual decrease in pitch height. A steady increase in momentum to the statement “Our God is one Lord” is recommended, after which, a slight slowing will add to the grandiosity, universality, and conviction of the text.

“He That Shall Endure to the End”

General Description

“He that shall endure to the end” (#32; see pp. 183-186), another example of a pseudo-chorale, occurs in a scene in which Elijah is at his lowest emotional state. He feels that his work has accomplished nothing, and, in his famous aria “It is Enough,” asks God to let him die. Also included are several other well-known movements: the choruses “He Watching Over Israel,” and “Lift Thine Eyes;” and the alto aria “O Rest in the Lord” which leads immediately to the chorus (#32) in which the chorus has an unidentified role.

The comforting text of the preceding three movements is followed by one of the few from the New Testament (Matthew): “He that shall endure to the end, shall be
saved.

Elijah is not the only intended recipient of this comfort, however, since Mendelssohn engages the audience with the pseudo-chorale form to engender a contemplation of trusting God, resting in him, and looking to him for help—the essence of Bach’s, Schleiermacher’s, and Mendelssohn’s theology. The overtly universal quality of this statement of faith points again to Goethe and Schinkel who sought a greater good for the larger community.

**Interpretation**

Initially homophonic, #32 soon becomes and remains imitative. While it seems that Mendelssohn wanted to create a chorale-like feeling with its desired effects on the audience, this pseudo-chorale, with its imitative quality, least resembles the traditional chorale. Consisting of two phrases of four measures each, the melody, however, resembles a legitimate chorale *Stollen*. Following these two *Stollen*-like phrases, the movement uses imitation which focuses on the word “endure,” in a word painting manner.

A choral response to the previous aria, “O Rest in the Lord,” the pseudo-chorale (#32) should immediately follow with little time between the two. Since the intention seems to be that the aria is sung by an angel looking over Elijah, the choir’s undesignated identity within the pseudo-chorale, can be construed as being a multitude of angels looking over the him.

The continued evocation of comfort becomes the primary objective in interpretation with a warm, dark vocal color reflecting Mendelssohn’s intention—achieved with more vertical space and an elongated pharyngeal resonator. *Andante sostenuto*, requiring
a sustained legato (connected consonants) will enhance the “comfort” factor. Numerous
dynamic markings, including an indication of an arch shape over the first two-measure
phrase, leads one to assume that the pattern should persist throughout the movement.
Since speaking about the comfort element—predominant in this scene—is concluded
with this movement, and other actions not germane to this study follow, the insertion of a
pause to shift in direction is necessary.
Chapter 6

CHRISTUS

Mendelssohn’s third oratorio, Christus, Op. 97, an enigmatic work left unfinished by the composer’s death in 1847, did not appear in print until 1852 along with other unperformed works. His overall plan for the work was unknown leaving the editors to use their judgment which they exercised by dividing it into two parts: “The Birth of Christ”: recitative, trio of wise men, and chorus “There Shall A Star from Jacob”; and the “Passion of Christ”: alternating recitatives and choruses for the audience with Pilate, the procession to Golgatha, and chorale, Er nimmt auf seinen Rucken. The intended order of the fragments remains unclear. Mendelssohn, according to Larry Todd,

Seems not to have specified a bipartite division (versus, say, a tripartite ordering, with a third section for the Resurrection), and, furthermore, does not appear to have used the title Christus for what would have been his third oratorio.61

The title itself is not without mystery since it was Paul Mendelssohn, Felix’s brother who, in a letter three days after the composer’s death, stated that Felix had been working on an oratorio titled Christus—the first mention of the work.

Although Amtrud Kuzhals-Reuter attributes the initial efforts to the period following St. Paul (1836), the genesis of the work is left to speculation. Documents refer to a collaboration between Mendelssohn and Prussian envoy Josias Freiherr von Bunsen whose libretto “Erde, Hölle und Himmel,” may have been source material for sections of Mendelssohn’s work; i.e., the op. 97 fragments concerned with the birth and Passion of

61 Foreword to Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Christus, ed. R. Larry Todd (Stuttgart: Carus-Verlag, 1994), vii.
Christ could have been from the first part of ‘Erde.’” Although surrounded by conjecture, the musical merits have not been obviated, e.g., the often sung chorus “There Shall a Star from Jacob.” Information about earliest performances is known: the premiere occurred at the Birmingham Music Festival and was soon followed by performances in Vienna, 1853, and in Leipzig Gewandhaus, 1854, as a memorial concert for the composer.

Part One opens with a recitative introducing the three wise men and leads to them singing the traditional Christmas story in a TTB trio: “Where is he the king of the Jews? We have seen his star and have come to adore him.” Immediately following, a chorus refers to the shimmering morning star seen by the wise men, “There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth,” (from the books of Numbers and Psalms) in two sections: a chorus stating the prophecy that a Redeemer would come, and a chorale fulfilling it, “Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern/How Brightly Shine the Morning Star.”

Part Two, “The Passion of Christ,” consists largely of dialogue between narrator—who frequently speaks as if from Pilate—and the chorus which frequently responds as a turba, i.e., it shouts to Pilate “Crucify him,” or “give Barrabas to us.” The recitative, #11, describes the people leading Jesus to Golgotha followed by a chorus representing the lamenting daughters of Zion. The chorale, Er nimmt auf seinen Rücken, concludes.

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62 Ibid.
Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern

General Description

The chorus and chorale (#3; see pp. 187-204) indicate careful planning by Mendelssohn. Beginning in *legato*, the texture soon changes abruptly (m.32) as the text “and dash in pieces princes and nations” is programmatically set to angular discordance in depiction of the destruction of world powers by the coming Redeemer. The “gleaming star” motive (triplets in the upper strings) persists throughout, although its nature varies. Initially creating a calming shimmering effect, it soon becomes a contributing element to the ensuing tumult, and subsides to its original role. The movement progresses from calm to tumult back to calm; serenity to aggression to serenity, during which this motive symbolically seems to represent a consistent, persistent, omnipresence, even when its environment goes through dramatic upheaval. The original “calming motive” in the chorus (a series of notes rising through a triad into the sixth) begins the movement, persists amidst the upheaval, eventually catalyses a return to calmness beginning in m.40, and results in a *diminuendo* (m.76) producing an interesting architecture.

The shimmering star motive is repeatedly interrupted beginning in m.80 by the choir which sings unaccompanied. Calmness becomes more subdued by the chorale sung in a homophonic texture that is usually associated with the Bach Passions.

As bright the star of morning gleams,  
So Jesus sheddeth glorious beams  
Of light and consolation!  
Thy Word, Jesus,  
Radiance darting, truth imparting,  
Gives salvation.
Thine be praise and adoration!

Intending to draw the listeners into the drama by using Bach's technique of incorporating the chorale, Mendelssohn makes it apparent to them through the inclusion of this chorale that Christ is the fulfillment of the prophecy that a star would come out of Jacob and provides salvation to us.

Musical, theological, and philosophical influences on Mendelssohn are evidenced. Bach seems present within the meditative chorale, however, now it assumes a universality (by the use of the pronoun "we") as a representation of superficial congruence between Schleiermacher's core theology (Jesus provides salvation) and the "Goethe and Schinkel" concept that people responding to people will idealistically initiate a world renewal – producing an ideal community.

**Interpretation**

In R. Larry Todd's critical edition used for this study, the three movements—recitative /trio/chorus—comprise the complete Part One with each movement uninterruptedly flowing into the next. Within the choral movement, the chorus segues into the chorale without pause. Momentum of and within movements, therefore, is self-evident.

Two contrasting vocal colors and articulations emerge and should be adopted by doubling instruments: *legato* and shimmering tone to begin and close, and *marcato* in the middle section ("and dash in pieces princes and nations") in which singers need an edgy tone with a brighter sound produced by more focus on the nasal resonator. A beautiful tone with careful emphasis on vowels is primary in the first section, replaced by
explosive attacks on consonants creating the agitated middle section. These contrasts coexist and even collide (m.40) upon return of the “comfort motive” in the choral basses and celli. The mood changes upon arrival at the chorale; a slightly slower tempo is simultaneous to the sudden disappearance of the shimmering motive, dramatized by a shift to half notes in the mostly a cappella chorale. The effect is enhanced by molto legato—even more so than the beginning—and crisp articulation of the consonants.

Arch-phrases in each verse of the chorale provide contrast to the mid-section with its hammering effect. While the early arches consist of four bars, the arch of the last phrase (m.99) is extended for twelve bars giving additional accentuation to the crux of the message: Jesus gives salvation. Each crest within the four-bar phrases consistently occurs on the downbeat of the penultimate measure. Crescendo is employed to drive through the seven measures of the final twelve-bar phrase. An active release, complete with shadow vowel, connects m.105 to the final statement in m.106. Despite the indication of decrescendo in the orchestration (m. 105), the zenith of the choir’s crescendo comes on the downbeat of m. 106 – achieved only by taking a breath that anticipates m. 106. (The final consonant in m. 105 is released in a manner that suggests continuation.) Tempo broadening is necessary in the last four bars to enhance the sense of awe within of the chorale, and to provide finality.

Er nimmt auf seinen Rücken

General Description

Prior to the concluding chorale, Er nimmt auf seinen Rücken, the lamenting daughters of Zion are represented in a chorus:
Daughters of Zion weep for yourselves and your children! For surely the days are coming when they shall exclaim to the mountains: fall down on us! And to the hills: hide us!

The composer's intimate acquaintance with St. Matthew becomes apparent in the chorale (see pp. 205-206), scored TTBB with thin *colle parte* instrumentation: two bassoons, two violas, cello, and bass, the setting is in the earlier homophonic style similar to *Paulus*. *O Welt, ich muss dich lassen*, the well-known contrafacta of the secular tune, *Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen* serves as the melody:

He leaves his heav'nly portals, 
endures the griefs of mortals, 
to raise our fallen race; 
O love beyond expressing, 
he gains for us a blessing, 
he saves us by redeeming grace!

When thou, O sun, art shrouded,  
by night or tempest clouded,  
thy rays no longer dart,  
though earth be dark and dreary,  
if, Jesus, thou art near me,  
'tis cloudless day within my heart.

Again, Bach's presence can be felt since he set the same melody to the text *Wer hat dich so geschlagen*, for *St. Matthew Passion*:

Undoubtedly the thirty-eight-year-old composer would have had in mind Bach's masterpiece . . . Mendelssohn would have viewed his final oratorio as reflecting the traditions of the Passion and the oratorio, as a further synthesis of Bachian . . . elements that he had first explored in *St. Paul* and *Elijah*.63

Schleiermacher's influence is seen due to the subtext which reflects his theology of dependence on Christ and salvation through grace. The universality—implied by the

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63Ibid.,viii.
use of personal pronouns—envelops the listener within the drama, e.g., “Raise our fallen race” (an example which also alludes to Goethe’s and Schinkel’s desire for community enhancement).

Interpretation

Momentum becomes a concern due to a pause which seems to step the chorale outside of the drama. Since it is the final piece of the scene (and the work), the initiation of finality begins at that moment. In deciding how to bring this into a performance, two approaches might be used: a continuation of the lament in the previous chorus, or, an expression of the joy as a consequence of salvation through Christ’s death. Had the scene been completed, the drama would have culminated in a crucifixion scene, followed by an insertion of a chorale, after Bach’s model, explicating the resultant rewards for believers. This interpreter would use the chorale to develop the previous lament while gradually infusing optimism to represent the progression from sorrow to joy.

In order to create the necessary contrast, several techniques could be employed: changes in tempo, articulation, vocal color, dynamics, and phrasing. No tempo indication is given for the chorale. However, the composer indicates *Andante con moto* for the previous chorus. An obvious contrast is created between the style of the preceding chorus and the chorale: the former in somber slowness and the chorale somewhat faster; sustained *legato* contrasted by strong articulation. As in other chorales, the arch phrase prevails. The contrast between these two movements is produced on a lesser scale between stanzas.
Two stanzas, each consisting of six phrases concluding with fermatas, should be treated similarly to chorales in earlier oratorios, although the second stanza permits a variation in phrasing. Bach's stylistic restraints limited him to a single affection with each movement, Mendelssohn, reflecting his time, pursued the concept of multiple affections.

Freedom of interpretation is granted due to the scarcity of dynamic indications. (The previous chorus concluded with piano in string's final eight bars, pianissimo in the winds in their last two measures.) A firm mezzo forte could start the first stanza and develop an over-all arch within the constraints of the dynamic, cresting in the fifth measure closest to a forte. Similar smaller arches within the six phrases, cresting on the downbeat of the last measure, occur in all but the third phrase where it crests on the third beat of the penultimate measure. A softer dynamic in the second stanza pervades the first three phrases while the final three phrases create a steady crescendo, driving to the final statement: "'tis cloudless day within my heart." Within these phrases a stepwise increase occurs: mezzo piano, mezzo forte, forte, without decay approaching or on the final note.

Vocal color is dictated by the text, with contrast from the previous movement and between stanzas prevailing. A dark color for the previous chorus and most of the chorale's second stanza differs from a brighter one for the first stanza and the last three measures—reflecting a transformation of lamenting to hopefulness.

Without knowing Mendelssohn's intentions concerning structure, much of the above interpretation is predicated on the structure suggested by the editors. All such
suggestions are secondary to the precedent provided by *Paulus and Elijah* concerning the manner in which musical, theological, and philosophical ideals are presented. His deeper intentions are discernable in the careful construction of his architecture, musical language and placement of chorales. The efforts of the editors to organize Mendelssohn’s fragments into a coherent structure are commendable in that they demonstrated an understanding of the purpose of the chorales in relation to the entire drama.
Chapter 7

"REFORMATION" SYMPHONY

After Beethoven, creativity within the symphony went dormant in Germany until Mendelssohn revived it by producing five full symphonies and twelve string sinfonias.\(^{64}\) He also had begun conceptualizing *Hebrides* Overture. One of the best among the former, "Reformation," was composed and completed for the 1830 celebration of the tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession,\(^{65}\) the reasons are unclear why it was not performed there. Two years later it was rehearsed at the Conservatoire Paris in 1832; again not performed there or elsewhere in France. Finally, it premiered in November 1832 in Berlin.

By the time of its delayed premiere, Mendelssohn had "rejected the symphony as a 'jugendliche Jugendarbeit' (childlike juvenilia) and in 1838 instructed his friend Julius Rietz to burn the manuscript."\(^{66}\) Fortunately, his friend did not comply, hence it was preserved and published posthumously in 1868 as Symphony No. 5, Opus 107. In order of endeavors in the genre it was actually his second with the composer's "Reformation" title.

According to Grey, it is unclear whether Mendelssohn attempted to have this work performed for these Berlin festivities; however, Judith Silber contends that the work


\(^{66}\) Ibid., 85.
was definitely composed with the festivities in mind. Silber asserts that Mendelssohn rightfully assumed that he might be commissioned for the event. When last in Berlin, he had been commissioned to write a cantata for the three hundredth anniversary of Dürer’s death (1828). The reception given the cantata prompted a second commission that same year by Alexander von Humboldt for a conference of naturalists. These successes were soon followed by his triumphant performances of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*. Mendelssohn’s star was clearly on the rise in Berlin, the city that would host the tercentenary festivities.

Silber offers since Mendelssohn had been a Lutheran who understood its significance, it would be “hard to imagine that Mendelssohn would set out to compose so ambitious an occasional work as the ‘Reformation’ Symphony without some concrete hope of having it performed.” He had began work on it in December 1829 with the hope of finishing it in January, however, its fruition was not until May 1830 – long after his chances of a commission had evaporated. (Eduard Grell, another pupil of Zelter, wrote a motet in Palestrina style for ceremonies at the Berlin University, as well as a larger work with chorus and orchestra.)

There has been much speculation as to why the performance of the symphony was passed over for the tercentenary celebration; his Jewish heritage is certainly at the heart of all conjecture. Silber writes that while Mendelssohn was raised a Lutheran, “he was

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still thought of as Jewish, especially in Berlin, where his family and Jewish forbears were quite well known.^^

Silber contends that anti-Semites precluded favorable consideration of a commission for the tercentenary celebrations in Berlin, yet other factors may have been considered, e.g., the event may have felt that a symphony was inappropriate. While Grey points out that there is no direct evidence supporting Silber’s anti-semitism theory behind Mendelssohn’s failure, he believes

Mendelssohn’s effort to make a serious musical contribution to this official occasion of national and religious import was not reciprocated, [and] could be interpreted as a serious blow... to affirm his membership in the German Protestant bourgeoisie and to contribute to the shaping of its collective identity.^^

Her contention appears to have been well founded if judged by the actions taken concerning the Singakademie. Two years later in 1832 a similar bias had resulted in another disappointment for Mendelssohn when, subsequent to Zelter’s death, a replacement was sought to lead the Berlin Singakademie. A blatant anti-semitic argument was used against Mendelssohn’s nomination.

The Singakademie, from its almost exclusive devotion to sacred music, was a Christian institution, and on this account it was an unheard-of thing to try and thrust a Jew boy upon them for their conductor.^^

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^^Ibid., 322.

^^Grey, 417.

^^Ibid. 323.
Ein feste Burg

General Description

Limited evidence is available to explain how Mendelssohn intended to make a contribution to German culture through Reformation. Of primary consideration is his inclusion of "Ein feste Burg" which permeates the fourth movement. Grey explains that the chorale had become

not only emblematic of Luther as an individual (who composed both melody and text), it also attained the status of something like a national anthem in preimperial nineteenth-century Germany. By including 'Ein feste Burg' in his symphony, Mendelssohn brought the genre of the symphony "near the realm of church music, achieving a generic hybrid that he would explore more extensively in the Lobgesang Symphony."\(^{71}\)

The first movement slow introduction initiates a "variety of sacred materials, both directly and by stylistic allusion" (see pp. 207-209)\(^{72}\) to set up the "battle" that eventuates into the Protestant victory represented by the appearance of Ein feste Burg in the final movement.\(^{73}\) The spiritual, and often physical, battle between the Reformers and the established Roman Catholic Church becomes the subtext for the first three movements. Representation of the two sides: the Protestant side by a repeated-note fanfare (m.23) serving as "a call to arms for militant reformers;" the Catholic by the Dresden Amen.\(^{74}\)

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\(^{71}\) Todd, "Mendelssohn," in The Nineteenth-Century Symphony, 86.

\(^{72}\) Grey, 418.

\(^{73}\) Ibid., 418-19.

\(^{74}\) Originating as a liturgical clausula composed by J.G. Naumann for Catholic services in eighteenth-century Dresden, the "Dresden Amen" was later used by Wagner as the "Grail" motive in Parsifal.
The concept of programmatic representation was a new arrival in the time of Mendelssohn. Todd attributes *Reformation* as “Mendelssohn’s first symphonic foray into programmatic music . . . . [It] impresses as a celebration of the Reformation and of Luther’s triumph over the abuses of the Catholic Church.” Grey proclaims that it “celebrates the ‘idea’ of a reformed Christian church, evokes its history, and portrays its protagonists.”

The very initial ascending imitative motive is a nineteenth-century convention—often used often by Liszt as a symbol of the cross—and was “generally understood to denote a sense of religious devotion and exaltation.” This motive had its genesis in the intonation formula found in Gregorian psalm tones and canticles: a rising major second followed by a minor third (D-E-G-F#). Its chromatic resolution used in earlier Baroque music, later in Haydn and Mozart (his “Jupiter” motive), had continuously carried “vaguely ecclesiastical connotations.”

If the music of the slow introduction is possibly meant to convey something Catholic or a juxtaposition of Catholic and Protestant symbols, the finale obviously leaves no doubt as to the triumphantly Protestant outcome of events, with the opening phrase of Luther’s chorale massively hammered out in whole notes by the entire orchestra in its final measures.

The rigors of battle (and first-movement form) yield to a moment of relaxation and popular celebration (the Scherzo); but the spiritual need or longing of the people remains and will be fulfilled only by the promise of a new creed, that of the Reformed Protestant Church (the finale). (By using “Ein feste Burg” as the musical emblem of this historical goal, Mendelssohn inevitably identified that new religious creed, for his nineteenth-century listeners, with that of a new national sovereignty). Although Mendelssohn himself disdained a flag-waving chauvinistic brand of nationalism, his finale nevertheless celebrates a new popular national consciousness, just as the occasion for which he conceived it was as much a celebration of national aspirations as of religious history.75

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75Grey, 420, 424.
Mendelssohn brought upon himself a maelstrom of criticism, much the same as after *Paulus*, by including a form that was unacceptable to many of his colleagues. The appearance of which aroused much criticism of the work for its “formal unconventionality.” Eric Werner disliked the “brilliant coda” for in it he perceived reminiscences of Weber’s *Freischütz*; Wulf Konold disliked the “sense of force or contrivance” in the movement’s combination of chorale-variation and sonata-form; Carl Dahlhaus remarked, “it is more appropriate to an overture than to a symphony, which thereby turns into an oversized overture.” Grey responds:

The incorporation of traditional, popular, or nationalistic material of this sort marks the symphony as an occasional piece rather than a piece of “absolute music.” Of course, the genesis of the symphony bears out this association: it was, indeed, conceived as an occasional piece. But at the same time, its subsequent history forces us to reconsider the grounds of this distinction: the “occasion” fell through, yet Mendelssohn still completed the work and tried to perform it on its own merits.  

Despite the criticisms, the symphony has earned a place among other masterworks in the genre. The work, especially its final movement, is particularly important in illuminating the musical, theological, and philosophical ideas of the composer; all the major influences on Mendelssohn are poignantly present in it.

The scope of this study is henceforth restricted to the fourth movement with its two parts (author’s titling): Part One being divided into a slow introduction followed by a march; Part Two a sonata-form finale. The manner in which the chorale *Ein feste Burg* serves various purposes remains our sole focus, while the overriding concern in

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76Grey, 425.
conducting the final movement will be the treatment of the chorale melody whenever it appears.

The end of the battle, which had been on-going during the first three movements, is announced by the sudden shift to major tonality, and victory is triumphally pronounced by the flute intoning the opening phrases of the Stollen (see pp. 210-213). The strings’ first appearance begin a thickening that evolves into the opening statement of the Abgesang which is culminated by the brass punctuating the final phrase. This gradual thickening, with its concomitant increase in dynamics and aggressive articulation, metaphorically represents the increase in strength of the Reformation message.

The basses and celli have created a bridge from the third movement to Fourth Movement Part A by sustained tone on g (see p. 210).

The opening, complete statement of the chorale melody stands as an emblem not only of the Protestant faith but also of congregational singing, itself an emblem of the collective bourgeois social-religious identity that Mendelssohn’s symphony celebrates, beyond the specific deeds of Luther and Melancthon. The ensuing fast march allegro vivace (Part One B) uses this melody as the subject for a chorale fantasy. The head-phrase of the chorale is passed among the instruments in a kind of musical communion, as it were, and generates a new rhythmic momentum that eventually thrusts the listener altogether from the world of sacred ritual into that of civic pomp and circumstance, with the opening of the sonata-form proper (Allegro maestoso, m. 63; see pp. 214-216).

\[^{77}\text{Ibid.}\]
\[^{78}\text{Ibid.}\]
The transparency of the chorale melody—broadly and strongly pronounced by clarinets, trumpets and oboes progressively—is in contrast to the thick texture of incessantly driving eighth notes in the strings.

Within Part Two, the exposition of the sonata form, Mendelssohn introduced two motives—first three pitches of the *Stollen* (m.92, quarter notes; see pp. 217-220) and the first three pitches of the *Abgesang* last phrase (m.84-5, *sforzato* half notes; see pp. 215-216). Within the development (mm.166-99; see pp. 221-225), the entire *Abgesang* is fully stated and concluded by a repetition of its final phrase. Within the recapitulation (mm.199-228), exposition motives reappear and culminate (m. 229; see pp. 226-235) into the "final apotheosis of 'Ein feste Burg.'"

Silber suggests:

Accepting the broad outline of a narrative suggested by the title, and interpreting the details provided by the music, one may say that the work depicts, in order, the Catholic church, a struggle, and then the victorious emergence of Protestants . . . . [It represents] an unmistakable historical event—in this case, the Protestant Reformation—without the use of words.²⁹

Grey states that:

the merging of spiritual and civic life, ethics, and values ideally represented by the very kind of occasion for which the symphony had been intended…"

and expands by suggesting its genesis sprung out from Mendelssohn's desire to participate in the larger social community of his time and place, and to participate in defining the collective identity of the community in terms of its history, culture, and values.

²⁹Silber, 25.
Grey’s analysis draws attention to the parallel intentions between Bach and Mendelssohn (to elevate community values by drawing the listeners into the drama): the former’s technique employed text, the latter used melodies evoking well-known texts.

Schleiermacher’s influence on Mendelssohn’s design of “Reformation” becomes apparent through the selection of this specific chorale with its foundational triumphalism.

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing;  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right man on our side, the Man of God’s own choosing:  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;  
Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.

Dependence on Christ alone was the core of Luther’s argument with the church and became the crux of Schleiermacher’s theology which was adopted by Mendelssohn. One of Luther’s arguments with the Roman church was the dependence on the papacy—along with its institutionalized intermediary procedures—perpetuated as the only path to salvation. Luther proclaimed that the grace of Christ is sufficient for salvation without any other. The people’s acceptance of Luther’s concept, “the priesthood of believers,” freed them from this corporeal dependence. Centuries later, Schleiermacher’s pronouncement of the same resulted in Mendelssohn claiming it as his own—an ownership that seemingly grew into an urgency that needed expression in music, with or without text.
The Enlightenment focused on rational response as preeminent in life. The prevailing sentiment of Protestant Germany during Mendelssohn’s time was that the Reformation strove to exceed the rational mind through the inclusion of God as the precipitant in the equation – by also with ennobling the heart. The neoclassicism of Goethe and Schinkel congruent with the basic concept, however, did not see the necessity of the inclusion. Perception of this difference seems to have moved Mendelssohn closer to Schleiermacher in the conviction that aesthetic and moral response alone was insufficient. His urge to promote an aggressive and determined progression of faith with concomitant missionary urgency, is aptly depicted in a march (Part One B, m.25) conceptually similar to the popular hymn “Onward Christian Soldiers.”

**Interpretation**

Paramount in conducting is highlighting the chorale whenever it appears (beginning in the development). Mendelssohn’s developmental technique employs dramatic shifts: full texture dropping to strings only (m. 163), dynamics suddenly decreasing from *fortissimo* to *piano* to *pianissimo*, pulse changing from quarter to half notes. Bassoons and celli state the *Abgesang* phrase *dolce*, clarinets take over and remain *dolce* – all are lightly accompanied by strings. Contrasts are effected in this new treatment of the chorale melody with softer dynamics and *molto legato*. The conclusion of the development is initiated (m. 185) by the violins and upper winds and blossoms into full instrumentation repeating the *Abgesang* closing phrase.

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80Luther’s theology, adopted by Bach and codified by Schleiermacher, stated that change begins in the heart.
All this changes upon the move to the recapitulation (mm.199) when the two three-note motives from the exposition return. The detached articulation employed in the exposition should be continued through the fugato section to reinforce the effect of the imitative entries arriving in ever closer succession. The winds proclaim the chorale melody in triumphant homophony (m. 229). Sharp articulation with decay and persistent down bows from m. 306 to the end would better pronounce the melody.

The customary treatment of themes from the exposition results in the chorale melody being superseded by the return of Theme Two (m. 246), now with a re-emphasis on the quarter note instead of the half. The full-textured, whole-note homophonic statement of the Stollen, by appearing one last time (m. 306), brings everything to an end. Mendelssohn requires fortissimo and even sforzato on the first four notes. Convincing finality is achieved by a horns, trumpet and tympani fanfare of triplets. A ritardando announces the conclusion, and the timpani, with crescendo through the cut-off, punctuates the finality.

The focus on “Ein feste Burg” in this final movement is conclusive evidence of the influences of Bach, Schleiermacher, Goethe and Schinkel on Mendelssohn. This also provides strong argument that Mendelssohn composed the whole work around the extra-musical associations of the most famous of Lutheran chorales. This endeavor thus becomes a successful bridge between the church and concert hall.
Chapter 8  

**LOBGESANG**

Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 2 – known as “Lobgesang” and “Hymn of Praise” and referred to by Mendelssohn as a symphony-cantata—has often been compared to Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Op. 125, given their similarity in formal structure. Commissioned by the town council of Leipzig for the 400th anniversary of Gutenberg’s invention of printing, the symphony-cantata, unlike his “Reformation” Symphony, demonstrates Mendelssohn’s intention to “transcend the mortality of a purely occasional work”—no specific reference to Gutenberg or to his printing press occurs in the selected texts. According to Karl Dahlhaus, “the ‘Lobgesang’ is related to a category of composition prevalent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: the large-scale commemorative or occasional work with a strong sense of public involvement and educational intent.”

Grey believes that, as a “hymn of praise” using various psalm texts, the work “still remains extremely general, autonomous of any particular context—a kind of all-purpose Protestant Te Deum.”

Met with tremendous enthusiasm, *Lobgesang* was for a long time Mendelssohn’s most popular piece. In Schumann’s review of the premiere at Leipzig’s Thomaskirche, he reported that “there broke forth in the audience a whispering which counts for more in the church than loud applause in the concert-hall. It was like a glimpse into a heaven of

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82 Grey, 428.
Raphael’s madonna’s eyes.” Its fame wide-reaching, it was the concluding work on a music festival in Birmingham in September 1840. (The “Hymn of Praise” title is a consequence of translation.) Sir George Grove regarded the symphony as being “as characteristic and important a work as any in the whole series of Mendelssohn’s compositions.”

Its similarity in structure to Beethoven’s work contributed to the type of criticism it received. Wagner called it the most idiotic simplicity; Eric Werner believed it was Mendelssohn’s “least inspired work, and justly forgotten.” Mendelssohn’s symphony-cantata experiment was eventually overshadowed by his later Elijah, and relegated by many to the category of failed attempts to match the monumental effort of Beethoven’s Ninth. Despite all critical comments, it includes many meritorious aspects—his brilliant compilation of texts and the special role of the “Nun danket alle Gott” chorale.

**Nun danket alle Gott**

**General Description**

Structure in *Lobgesang* consists of four large movements: three instrumental and the fourth choral divided into nine sections (henceforth referred to as cantata). Werner’s criticism that it lacked thematic unity is obviated by the use of the two-measure motto as unifying element from the beginning to the end: initially stated by three trombones at

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84 Ibid., 21-22.

85 Motto is differentiated from motive in that it is longer.
the beginning of the work (see. pp. 236-238), later in the bridge, development, and coda of the *allegro*; again in the scherzo trio; the second section of choral movement; and ultimately, within the last ten measures where it provides convincing finality.

Curtis addresses Werner's criticism about lack of unity by suggesting that the motto is present many more times, but in a transformed state:

The themes [other than the motto in its original form] which Mendelssohn use... have, on the surface, quite different melodic contours. Careful analysis, however, reveals that they are transformations of the motto. Moreover, the final statement of the motto at the end of the symphony-cantata is different from all earlier statements, a difference that can be explained by the evolutionary transformations of the motto throughout the piece.86

Contrary to Eric Werner's assessment, the "Lobgesang" does possess more thematic integration than meets the ear. When transformations of the motto there are taken into account, the relationship of the symphonic and cantata sections becomes more clear and can be seen as an expression of Mendelssohn's central ideas: praise of instruments and voices and the advent of the light of knowledge into the world.87

By using this thematic transformation as a unifying technique, Mendelssohn demonstrated how much of an innovator he had become. (This variation technique became more popular later in the century, e.g., Wagner, Liszt, and Berlioz.) It is observable within *Paulus* (albeit less overtly) and *Elijah*, with recurring motives of *Wachet auf* in the former, and identifying motives *a la* Wagner or Berlioz in the latter.

The utilization of Luther's translation of the Old Testament reflects "the theme of the celebration—printing as a victory of the human spirit and of Divine light over

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86Ibid.

87Ibid., 25.
opposition and darkness." Mendelssohn, in order to provide textual unity, begins and concludes the cantata: *Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn! Halleluja, lobe den herrn!*

While to many the expression of Mendelssohn’s Christian faith is obvious through his selection of texts, Grey contrarily suggests:

The central portion of the text (nos. 6 and 7 of the score, assembled from verses of Ephesians, Isaiah, and Romans) points more directly to the symbolic significance of Gutenberg’s achievement, while also forming the dramatic crux of the vocal movements. The imagery of night and darkness yielding to day and light celebrates the universal dissemination of the printed word as an act of enlightenment. With this gesture Mendelssohn paid homage to the legacy of his grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn, and to a tradition of rationalist, universalist ethics that surely must have meant more to Felix, finally, than any details of a specifically Lutheran dogma. If the texts here conceal a potential conflict between the claims of the (scriptural) Word, on one hand, and those of humanistic letters and learning, on the other, as the source of enlightenment, this very conflict is itself of symbolic significance for Mendelssohn’s own situation.

Mendelssohn, from his earliest days, was immersed in Lutheranism. Readily available evidence—the early baptism (albeit controversial), the availability of his own words about his admiration of Bach’s essence and Christian expression, the letter from his sister Fanny—fully qualified to illumine on his friendship with and acceptance of Schleiermacher’s theology—all bring profound question to the validity of Grey’s assessment. Mendelssohn’s selection of the following texts and his effective setting of it in the sixth and seventh sections, give his religious convictions adequate representation and bring the cantata to its dramatic apogee—all seem to provide convincing refutation.

Tenor (#6): The bonds of death had closed around us, the sorrows of hell prevented us,

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88 Town, 20.

89 Grey, 428.
we wandered in darkness.
But He spake: Awake!
Awake, thou that sleepest,
arise from the dead,
I will enlighten thee!

We called through the darkness:
Watchman, will the night soon pass?
But the watchman said:
Though the morning cometh,
so also doth the night;
though you enquire,
ye shall return
and enquire again:
Watchman, will the night soon pass?

Soprano: The night has departed.

Chorus (#7): The night has departed,
the day is at hand.
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness
and put on the armour of light,
let us gird on the armour of light!

Chorale (#8): Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom this world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and Him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the One eternal God
whom earth and heaven adore
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.
On the surface, the texts seem to make no reference to a specific type of belief system, however, the references to Christ—the subject of the allegorical Watchman’s search for the Bridegroom (Christ) in the night, (the Church his Bride); the “He” who will give light (Ephesians, Ch.5); the “armour of light” to be put on (Romans, Ch. 13)—are unmistakable.

As Grey, Botstein, etc. have pointed out, the main theme of the *Lobgesang Symphony* is the passing of darkness to light—a limited interpretation that does not consider Mendelssohn’s deeper theological leanings. (Any active Protestant at the time would know the contexts from which Mendelssohn drew the texts for this work, and would know the explicit reference to Christ in them.) While Mendelssohn undoubtedly celebrates the fact that Guttenberg’s printing press facilitated passing the light of knowledge, the work is a reflection of Mendelssohn’s Christian faith—as indicated in part by his dedication to God as Luther’s quote at the head of the work suggests: “But also I would like to see the Arts, especially Music, in the service of Him who has given and created them.”

The chorale (#8) provides further evidence. Its insertion—reflecting Bach’s influence—is a song of praise by the church which gives thanks for all these “wondrous things that Christ hath done.” The implication that the benefit of Christ’s light is universal, as stated in the chorale’s text “in whom this world rejoices,” bespeaks the community element of Goethe’s and Schinkel’s philosophy, but resonates more with Schleiermacher’s concept of dependence on Christ.
Interpretation

Structure of the cantata reveals three groupings of sections (herein labeled scenes): scene one (sections 2-5) scene two (sections 6-8—the focus of this study) and scene three (sections 9-11). Scene two – conceptually similar to an opera—features a tenor soloist who asks three times “will the night soon pass?” (see pp. 239-242) A soprano solo announces that it has passed. Full-textured orchestra, complete with concertante organ, and choir immediately respond with joy, in a lengthy and bombastic chorus of thanksgiving on the same text as the soprano: “The night has departed, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light!”

The presentation of Mendelssohn’s vision of perpetual light becomes the primary objective in the chorus. A bright tone color—vocal and instrumental; articulation—crisp with detached quality and slight accent on each new text syllable; dynamics—almost constantly forte; phrasing—a growing inertia constantly moving. Finishing strongly, the chorus immediately segues into the chorale which is both active and contemplative—the cut-off gesture for the former functions as the preparatory gesture for the latter.

The perpetual forward momentum of the chorus culminates in the famous Nun danket alle Gott (#8), which, based on his knowledge of Bach’s works, was intended to engage the audience. The fact that Mendelssohn elected to set the first stanza a cappella (see p. 243) and the second with full instrumentation (see pp. 244-250) raises a question about his purpose. That the two stanzas were Mendelssohn’s microcosm of the work’s
overall two-part structure—praising God with instruments (symphonic part), and voices (cantata part)—is a possible explanation.

Interpretational concerns of the first stanza—marked Andante con moto, eighth note equals 84—follow: quarter note, serving as basis of the pulse, informs the conducting (in four); vocal color and articulation from the previous movement continues; and a four-bar arch is employed—each two-bar sub-phrase is marked with a fermata in the score, and as with other chorales in this study, a breath is recommended after every other fermata; dynamics are explicitly indicated in the score.

Immediately following the first, the second stanza adds to the voices flutes, oboes, clarinets, organ, and strings, and while marked Un poco più animato, eighth note equals 108, is also conducted in four. Three measures of instrumental arpeggios with crescendo prepare the entry of the voices—unison at the octave throughout. Mendelssohn has highlighted the arched four-bar phrases with his dynamics: each new four-bar phrase begins softly, crests, and diminishes. While most of the writing for the strings and winds is under one or two-beat slurs, the oboe, which doubles the melody of the chorale, is the exception with no slurs—important in differentiating the chorale from the constant slurred arpeggios. Differentiation is enhanced by detached articulation of the singing, with accents on each new text syllable followed by a slight decay. Given the nature of the text as a vibrant hymn of praise and universal statement of faith, the vocal color is bright, with much resonance. A significant pause follows this movement since it is the end of the scene, and because the last two movements are essentially summative.
While the fame of the “Lobgesang” Symphony was short-lived compared to other masterworks in this study, it well represents the influences at work on Mendelssohn. His symphony-cantata experiment, if not fascinating for its conception, provides further elucidation about Mendelssohn’s ideals. While both the *Lobgesang* and Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* picture the ideal community and the ennobling of human relations, Mendelssohn’s work incorporates a very strong Christian element, especially through the inclusion of “Nun Danket alle Gott,” and its surrounding texts.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to provide a basis for more informed performances of Mendelssohn’s oratorios and symphonies—a clearer understanding of his motives for including the chorale form is a logical beginning. Recent debate by Botstein, Sposato, and others about Mendelssohn’s religious proclivities aroused curiosity, which resulted in exploration of the impact of key influences which invoked within Mendelssohn a need for expression, most observable through the chorale. Such an understanding compels one to interpret accordingly.

The understanding of how Mendelssohn intended the chorale and pseudo-chorales to relate to their surrounding musical material assists conductors in preparing performers to better express his intentions in a manner comprehensible to the listeners. This study has provided evidence that these forms were intended (not as interruptions to the story) as the primary vehicle for his statement of musical, theological, and philosophical ideals, as a result of the influence of Bach, Schleiermacher, Goethe, and Schinkel. Of paramount importance to Mendelssohn, was his desire to influence the listeners by drawing them into the drama and thereby inciting the internal changes aspired to by Luther, adopted by Bach, and codified by Schleiermacher.

The strong influences of Bach and Schleiermacher emerge in Mendelssohn’s compositional methodology in his employment of these two forms. At least by the age of ten, Felix and Fanny had attended rehearsals of the Berlin Singakademie where they listened to Bach’s music. Soon thereafter, they joined as singers. Mendelssohn was introduced to Schleiermacher at approximately this time and they became friends. The
theologian described two necessities: the relationship with Christ must be one of complete dependence, and the urgency for this in all people—Jewish persons included. It is this urgency that becomes apparent in Mendelssohn’s musical decisions. Mendelssohn’s performances of *St. Matthew Passion* throughout Europe began the international revival of Bach’s music. Even though he was considered a force in this revival, it became only one of the motivating factors in Mendelssohn’s life—the other being the communication of Christian convictions. The crux of Schleiermacher’s theology is found in the first chorale of *St. Matthew Passion*.

O guiltless Lamb of God slaughtered on the tree of the Cross
Always found patient, Albeit Thou was despised!
All sin hast Thou borne else we must have despaired.
Have mercy upon us, O Jesus. (No. 1)

Analysis of Mendelssohn’s oratorios and symphonies illustrates how Mendelssohn’s employment of chorales and pseudo-chorales served well his purpose of more fully engaging his audiences in the sacred drama and communicating his Christian ideals espoused by Schleiermacher—in a manner similar to what he ascertained from his study of Bach’s works, and especially the *St. Matthew Passion*.

Various scholars have asserted that extra-musical factors were the motivation for the creation of these works. Their conclusions seem to have been predicated mostly on the contention that Mendelssohn subscribed to and projected the philosophy of Humanism (as espoused by his grandfather and father) rather than to a religion (as espoused by Bach and Schleiermacher). The evidence provided by this study shows that these contentions demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the religious influences so important to Mendelssohn.
The inspiration received from studying Bach’s works and the recognition that therein existed an expression of faith, caused Mendelssohn to analyze, understand, and, to some extent, replicate Bach’s approach to composition. Likewise, the commitment of Mendelssohn to Schleiermacher’s teachings cannot be overestimated in this debate. The consequence of this confluence—Bach and Schleiermacher—strongly argues that Mendelssohn’s music became a statement of his Christian faith, thereby casting a cloud of doubt upon the validity of the theories of others concerning extra-musical motivations. All of the chorales in the oratorios and symphonies discussed in this document provide evidence to this, especially considering their contemplative role and the fact they could have been omitted without altering the librettos.

Mendelssohn’s intellect was inspired and challenged by Goethe and Schinkel, i.e., the neo-classical premise that aesthetic response to art would incite a desire for an ideal community. While Mendelssohn adopted the chorale as the musical parallel to the neo-classical models of Goethe and Schinkel, it became apparent that Mendelssohn’s election of the spiritual over the intellectual approach demonstrated his evaluation of the former (Bach and Schleiermacher) as being transcendent over the latter (Goethe and Schinkel). This choice speaks of his estimation of the neo-classical theory’s inability to effectuate the ideal community through an aesthetic experience alone.

The privileged life, the early conversion to Christianity, the early frequent exposure to the music of Bach, the gift of the score for St. Matthew Passion, the early friendship with Schleiermacher, the opportunity to study and perform the St. Matthew Passion, the early friendship with Goethe, and the awareness of a Neoclassical trend in
art, all were undeniable formative influences on Mendelssohn as he strove to find his own method of speaking to the people. Botstein and others have examined the confluence of Bach, Goethe, and Schinkel, Mendelssohn's father and grandfather, added an insignificant Christian espousal, and thereby arrived at conclusions concerning Mendelssohn's religiosity without mention of his use of chorales or pseudo-chorales. The addition of Schleiermacher to this mix is the clarifying factor in all such postulations.

In attempting to find Mendelssohn's position concerning neoclassicism and religion, one needs to develop a greater appreciation of the Schleiermacher theology and its impact on the young man. Thus will one achieve an insight into the methodology demonstrated in Mendelssohn's expression of convictions by the use of chorales and pseudo-chorales.

A valid performance of any work is predicated upon the premise of honoring the composer's intentions—comprehending the motivation within the compositional methodology. Determining the formal structure, dividing it into logical segments usually according to text in the choral works, along with ascertaining the momentum within and between the segments, establishes an effective communication with the listeners. This is the beginning of honoring these intentions; the creative application of musical techniques—phrasing, vocal color, articulation, dynamics, and tempi becomes the second phase.

This study has demonstrated that the chorales and pseudo-chorales affect musical interpretation of surrounding elements. The limitations of this study, however, precluded
thorough investigation of the motivation behind the non-chorale movements. An in-depth analysis and report on this topic would be a fascinating subject for further research.
Example a. From the voice of Jesus (women's chorus), no. 13, mm. 19–32.

Arise and go into the city.

Example b. From the chorus (SATB) in no. 14, mm. 30–33.

Rise up! arise! rise and shine.

Example c. From the chorale (SATB) in no. 15, mm. 1–14.

Sleepers, wake! a voice is calling, it is the watchman on the walls.

Example d. From the words of Jesus (soprano solo) in no. 18, mm. 4–8.

Ananias, arise! and enquire thou for Saul of Tarsus.
Con moto.

Saul Motive

Con moto.
Saul Motive
CORO.

Allegro moderato. 4, 104.

Oboi.

Corni in C.

Corni in B' alto.

Trombe in C.

Trombone Alto.

Trombone Tenore.

Trombone-Basso.

Timpani in C.G.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Violoncello e Basso.

Allegro moderato.
RECITATIVO e CHORAL.

Recit.

And the stealghten'd thrush, or kalm, or gle - der und er's den la - nd: Herr, be - kal - le them die - se.

Recit.

And they stoe - ed 'kin, and he kneeld down and cried a - loud: Lord! Lay not this sin to their
CHORAL. Aus.


Lord, I yield my Spirit, who breathed in thine own, tell ohe! My life I has from Thee in. Thee.


Lord, I yield my Spirit, who breathed in thine own, tell ohe! My life I has from Thee in. Thee.

And Death be come my chiefest gain. In Thee! live. In Thee! die. Content, for Thou art ever nigh.

And Death be come my chiefest gain. In Thee! live. In Thee! die. Content, for Thou art ever nigh.
Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Tenore Solo.

Violoncello e Basso.

Flauti.

Oboi.

Clarinetti in A.

Fagotti.

Corni in A.

Corni in D.

Trombe in Es.

Tromboni Alto e Tenore.

Trombone Basso.

Timpani in Fis. D. A.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Tenore.

Soprano I-II.

Alto I-II.

Violoncello e Basso.

E ngiorno, quando ebbi inoglione, e avendo in disparte la voce che mi parlò, e che mi insegnò a suonare il violino, e che mi dette la chiave di tutte le note.

And up he journeyed, and came near to Damascus, and was suddenly there above a.
Adagio.

Saul! Saul! was vor. folgt dir nicht?

Saul! Saul! why did you call for me?
Herr, wer bist du?
Lord, who art thou?

Herr, wer bist du?
Lord, who art thou?

Herr, wer bist du?
Lord, who art thou?

Herr, wer bist du?
Lord, who art thou?
And he said, trembling and as "trem."
CORO.

Molto Allegro con fuoco, " ass.

Flauti.

Oboi.

Clarinetti in A.

Fagotti.

Serpente e Contrafagotto.

Corni in A.

Corni in D.

Trombe in D.

Tromboni Alto e Tenore.

Trombone Basso.

Timpani in D.A.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Organo.

Violoncello.

Basso.

Molto Allegro con fuoco.
Coil moto. 

Clarinet II in A.

Fagotti.

Corni in D.

Corni in A.

Trombe in D.

Tromboni Alto e Tenore

Trombone Basso.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Violoncello e Basso.

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimmen

der Wächter, sehr hoch auf der Stau.

Sheep, Adrian von der Stau

it is the watchman on the wall, the
Lies nicht, Lies nicht; der ist Jesus.

Is this he, is this he who is Jesus.

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem

Savior, Savior, Jerusalem

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem.

Is this he, is this he who is Jesus.

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem

Savior, Savior, Jerusalem

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem.

Is this he, is this he who is Jesus.

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem

Savior, Savior, Jerusalem

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem

Jesus, Jesus, Jerusalem.

Is this he, is this he who is Jesus.
Al-le, die dein Na-men en ru-fen!
All, call your name! 
Adagio.

The piece begins with a gentle, slow melody. The instruments play softly, creating a serene atmosphere. The harmony is rich and warm, with the strings providing a steady, soothing accompaniment. The middle section features a more complex melody, with the woodwinds taking the lead and adding a layer of depth and richness to the composition.

The tempo remains slow and steady throughout, with the rhythm providing a sense of calm and relaxation. The piece ends with a gentle fade, leaving the listener with a feeling of peace and tranquility.
Heard, let us seek such a sight.

Ear, to find their bliss and salvation there.

O'er, let us seek such a sight.

Org.

Ped.
bring' her die sich von uns ge trennt,
la - min - those who blind - ey seen.
Oh! call the mood; ver - kind - ey home.

bring' her die sich von uns ge trennt,
la - min - those who blind - ey seen.
Oh! call the mood; ver - kind - ey home.

bring' her die sich von uns ge trennt,
la - min - those who blind - ey seen.
Oh! call the mood; ver - kind - ey home.
The hearts not ray that ' a ' nice even, 

The hearts not ray that ' a ' nice even, 

and

and

and
RECITATIVO, ARIA e CORO.

Violino I.
Violino II.
Viola.
Tenore Solo.
Violoncello e Basso.

Kleister, und springen in, langes Volk, schrie - en und sprachen: Ihr Männer,

was macht der da?
Wir sind euch ärger, die Mutter glaubt, wir
do du die, thing...

Adagio. Recit.

Ihr,
und preisige euch aus, was du, was, und die euch, hab, ren soli

wer, jet, to you, in peace and ear, next, now, that we should turn a way
Allegro assai moderato.

Text:

"We not the night, thus the God's Tem. pel said, and thus her..."
For known ye not that ye are his Temple, and the Spirit dwelleth in you.
Dan der Tem - pel Gettes ist heyl.
For the Tem - ple of God is he.

Deer seid ihr, deer seid ihr, denen Tem - pel Gettes ist heyl.
which Temple ye are, which Temple ye are, for the Temple of God is he.
A. her un. -ser Gott ist im Him. - mel, er schafft Al. les was er will, erschaffet Al. les, erschaffet Al. Mel unser God a - bidd. et in Hen. - mel, er will di. rett. etw all the world! er will di. rett. etw, bia will di. rett. etw.
Gott ist im Himmel, in Himmel, in Himmel.
Befürchtet Gott in Himmel, Himmel, Himmel.

Der sich zum Vater geheben hat,
Who made the skies, the earth and sea.

Unser Gott ist im Himmel, in Himmel, in Himmel.
Befürchtet unser Gott in Himmel, Himmel, Himmel.

Unser Herr, unser Gott, unser Gott in Himmel, in Himmel, in Himmel.
...er schaffet Alles, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel.

Alles, Alles, er schaffet Alles, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel.

will, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel, aber unser Gott ist im Himmel.

...
RECITATIVO. Allegro.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano Solo.

Violoncello e Basso.
Flauti.
Oboi.
Clarinetto in B.
Fagotti.
Corni in C.
Corni in F.
Trabocchi in C.
Trombone Alto.
Trombone Tenore.
Trombone Basso.
Ophicleide.
Timpani in G.
Violino I.
Violino II.
Viola.
Soprano.
Alto.
Tenore.
Basso.
Organo.
Violoncello e Basso.
Aber der Herr sieht uns nicht, er spöttet uns, und
Denn der Herr sah es nicht, er meinte es uns. Seine Augen

Sonntagsgesang (1782) von G.F. Handel

A. Aber der Herr sieht uns nicht, er spöttet uns, und
Yet did the Lord see it not, He meended at us, His eyes hath seen us.

B. Aber der Herr sieht uns nicht, er spöttet uns.
But the Lord saw it not, He mocked at us, His eyes hath seen us.

C. Aber der Herr sieht uns nicht, er spöttet uns, er spöttet uns
But the Lord saw it not, He mocked at us, His eyes hath seen us.

D. Aber der Herr sieht uns nicht, er spöttet uns
But the Lord saw it not, He mocked at us, His eyes hath seen us.
Der Fluch ist. Her uns ge. hom. men. 
Hie euer hoch. fallen down up. en. na.

Der Fluch ist. Her uns ge. hom. men. 
Hie euer hoch. fallen down up. en. na.

Der Fluch ist. Her uns ge. hom. men. 
Hie euer hoch. fallen down up. en. na.
```
Dein ist der Herr dein Gott, ich bin der Herr, der da heimsuchet den Vater Meines, dass an den
Grave.
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For He is the Lord our God, He is a Jealous God and He will visit all the
Grave.
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For He is the Lord our God, He is a Jealous God and He will visit all the
Grave.
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For He is the Lord our God, He is a Jealous God and He will visit all the
Grave.
```
Kindern, bis auf dritte und vierte
Glied foer der mich hast
...sen.
Und ihn e. Herr.

children to the third and the fourth generation of them that have
Him. His mar. cire on

Kindern, bis auf dritte und vierte
Glied foer der mich hast...sen.
Und ihn e. Herr.

children to the third and the fourth generation of them that has
Him. His mar. cire on
Flauti.
Clarinetto in B.
Fagotti.
Corni in Es.
Violino I.
Violino II.
Viol.
Soprano.
Alto.
Tenore.
Basso.
Organo.
Violoncello e Basso.

No. 15. QUARTETTO.
Più Adagio. L. e. n.
Let none he made a. ska. med,
that wait sp. en Thau!

Let none he made a. ska. med,
that wait sp. en Thau!

Let none he made a. ska. med,
that wait sp. en Thau!

Let none he made a. ska. med,
that wait sp. en Thau!
An interesting feature of this number is that Mendelssohn adapted the melody—"the only specimen of a Lutheran Chorale in this old-testamental work", as Mendelssohn described it—from one in a hymn-book published in Meiningen, Germany, in 1693, called the "Meiningen Gesangbuch", where it is set to the hymn, "O Gott, du frommer Gott". Mendelssohn altered the melody to fit the words of the Quartet, and added his own harmonization. The tune was originally as follows:

\[ \text{Music notation image here} \]

A varied version of this old Chorale, with the same title, is to be found in J. G. C. Stoert's Choralbuch, published in Stuttgart in 1710, where it appears thus:

\[ \text{Music notation image here} \]
Incidentally, the hymn-tune is included as No. 185 of the "Hymnal of the Canadian Church of England", where it is called "Munich (Bremen)", the source being stated as "Meiningisches Gesangbuch, 1693". It also appears in the Canadian Presbyterian Hymn Book, and in the old and new editions of the Evangelical Lutheran Hymnals of North America. In the two latter hymn books the source of the tune is given as "Neuvermehtes Gesangbuch, published in Meiningen, Germany, in 1693", and "J. G. C. Stoerl's Choralbuch, 1710", respectively. The Presbyterians call the tune "Devotion", the Lutherans call it "Munich". The actual composer of the tune, however, remains a mystery. The version given in these Canadian collections (Ex. 7) is based on Mendelssohn's amended form of the tune. It may be interesting to compare it with Mendelssohn's version (Ex. 8):
No. 16. RECITATIVO con C630.

Recit.

Flauti.

Obbl.

Clarinetto in B.

Fagotti.

Corni in Es.

Cori in E.

Trombe in E.

Trombone Alto.

Trombone Tenore.

Trombone Basso.

Timpani in Es.H.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso Solo.

Oboi.

Organo.

Violoncello e Basso.
Allegro con fuoco.
Die Flamme fraß das Brand.
Die Flamme fraß das Brot.

Fen - er
fire
descends!

The flames come, his
off
Der Herr ist Gott, der Herr ist Gott...
Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.

Unser Gott ist ein einziger Herr, und es sind heilige andere Götter sein, dem ihn.
NO 32. CORO.
Andante sostenuto. J. en.

Flauti

Oboi.

Clarinetti in II.

Fagotti.

Violiino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Organo.

Violoncello e Basso.

Andante sostenuto.
Recitative: O Lord, how long shall I cry, and you will not hear? O Lord, how long shall I cry, and you will not save me? Night follows round me, O Lord! Be Thou not far from me! Be not far from me, for I am not in a good state.
CHOR.

Allegro moderato.

Flauti.

Oboi.

Clarinetti in B.

Fagotti.

Corni in E ♯.

Tromboni Alto e Tenore.

Trombone Basso.

Timpani in E ♯.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Violini.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Violoncello.

Basso.

Es' wirt ein Stern aus je. cob auf geh ünd ein Scop ter una. ra ai.
auf, geht ein Stern aus Israel kommen, es wird ein Stern aus Jacob auf.

auf, geht ein Stern, und ein Stern aus Israel kommen, ein Stern.

auf, geht ein Stern aus Israel kommen, es wird ein Stern aus Jacob auf.

auf, geht, es wird ein Stern, es wird ein Stern aus Jacob auf.
der wird sehr schmettern
Fürsten und Städte,
Es wird ein Stern, es wird ein Stern aus Jacob auf - rühm, auf - rühm, es wird ein Stern, es wird ein Stern aus Jacob
Glauz geht auf von Herzen, uns Licht und Trost zu geben!
Dein Wort, Jesu, ist die Klarheit, führt zur Erneuung.
Wer kann dich gegen er. be. ben?

Wahr. keit und zum Le. ben. Wer kann dich gegen er. be. ben?

Wahr. keit und zum Le. ben. Wer kann dich gegen er. be. ben?
Fagotti; Tenore I.; Tesore II.; Bass'o I.; Basso II.

**CHORAL.**

Er nimmt auf sein. Her. che die La sten, die mich drü. schen bis- zum Er. lie-gen

Er nimmt auf sein. Her. che die La sten, die mich drü. schen bis- zum Er. lie-gen

Er nimmt auf sein. Her. che die La sten, die mich drü. schen bis- zum Er. lie-gen

Er nimmt auf sein. Her. che die La sten, die mich drü. schen bis- zum Er. lie-gen

Schwer, er wird ein Fluch, da-ge-gen er. wirbt er mir den Se.-gen, und o wie gae. den. reich ist der!

Schwer, er wird ein Fluch, da-ge-gen er. wirbt er mir den Se.-gen, und o wie gae. den. reich ist der!

Schwer, er wird ein Fluch, da-ge-gen er. wirbt er mir den Se.-gen, und o wie gae. den. reich ist der!

Schwer, er wird ein Fluch, da-ge-gen er. wirbt er mir den Se.-gen, und o wie gae. den. reich ist der!
Wo bist du Sonne, blend, die Nacht hat dich vertrieben, die Nacht, den Feind, Pfeif, Pfeif.

Wo bist du Sonne, blend, die Nacht hat dich vertrieben, die Nacht, den Feind, Pfeif, Pfeif.

Hin, du Herr, sonne, wenn Jesus, mein, von, noch hell in meinem Herzen scheint.
Andante.

Flauti.

Oboi.

Clarinetti in C.

Fagotti.

Corni in D.

Tromboni Alto e Tenore.

Trombone Basso.

Trombe in D.

Timpani in D.A.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Violoncello.

Basso.

Andante.
CHORAL: Ein' veste Burg ist unser Gott.
Andante con moto.
Allegro maestoso.
Più animato poco a poco.
No. 1. SINFONIA.
Maestoso con moto.

Flauti.
Oboi.
Clarinetti in B.
Fagotti.
Corni in F.
Corni in B.
Trombe in B.
Tromboni Alto.
Trombone Tenore.
Timpani in B.

Violino I.
Violino II.
Viola.
Violoncello.
Basso.
Hüter, ist die Nacht bald hin?

Die Nacht ist ver, ver, ganz.
No. 7. Allegro maestoso e molto vivace. 

Flauti.

Oboi.

Clarinetti in A.

Fagotti.

4 Corni in D.

Trombe in D.

Tromboni Alto, Tenore.

Trombone Basso.

Timpani in D.A.

Violino I.

Violino II.

Viola.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenore.

Basso.

Organo.

Violoncello e Basso.

Allegro maestoso e molto vivace.
Nacht hat vergangen, der Tag

Die Nacht ist vergangen, der Tag
N° S. CHORAL.
Andante con moto. n. m. 64.

Soprano I. II.

Alto.

Tenore I. II.

Basso.

Nun den hei ße Gott mit Herzen, Mund und Klaßen, der.

sich in aller Not will güßeig uns wenden, der so viel Güttes.

Selig, von Kindesbeinen an uns kleeft in seines Hofs, und Alles wohl.
Un poco più animato.

Flauti.

Obò.

Clarinetti in C.

Timpani in G.D.

Violino I.

Violino II.

viol.

Soprano III.

Alto.

Tenore I.II.

Basso.

Organo.

Violoncello.

Basso.

Un poco più animato.
Gott, dem Vater und dem Sohne

Gott, dem Vater und dem Sohne
der Nacht und Däm. bei schled
danket unser Lied...
REFERENCES

SCORES


SCHOLARLY LITERATURE


