

# Choral: Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele

## Rejoice greatly, o my soul

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Robert Schumann, 1848

Robert Schumann did not tell us the source of his choral melody nor of his setting.

He admired **J.S. Bach**, who used this choral melody several times,

e.g. for the final chorus (**see below**) of his cantata **BWV 32**

"Liebster Jesu, mein Verlangen" (Beloved Jesus, my desire)

A feasible simplification of this chorus seems very close to Schumanns piano version:

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The music features a melody in the upper voice with a fermata over the final note of the first phrase, and a supporting bass line with a similar fermata.

The second system of the musical score continues from the first. It features the same two-staff structure with treble and bass clefs. The melody in the upper voice continues with a fermata over the final note, and the bass line provides harmonic support.

The third system of the musical score concludes the piece. It maintains the two-staff structure. The melody in the upper voice ends with a fermata, and the bass line concludes with a final chord.

Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele,  
und vergiß all Not und Qual,  
weil dich nun Christus, dein Herre,  
ruft aus diesem Jammertal.  
Aus Trübsal und großem Leid  
sollst du fahren in die Freud,  
die kein Ohr hat je gehört,  
die in Ewigkeit auch währet.

Rejoice greatly, o my soul,  
and forget all misery and torment  
since Christ your Lord  
calls you from this valley of misery!  
From affliction and sorrow  
you will journey to the joy  
no ear has ever heard  
that awaits you in eternity

In creating his chorale/Psalm melody for the Geneva Psalm 42 “Ainsi que la biche rée” in his collection of Psalms in “Pseaumes octante trios de David” (Gene, 1551), Louis Bourgeois took a secular song “Ne l’oseray je dire” contained in “Manuscrit de Bayeux” (circa 1510) and transformed it into a sacred chorale/Psalm melody. This chorale melody "Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele" was then used by several composers and also by Johann Sebastian Bach in several of his cantatas.