

Spiritual songs for "the small ones and the big ones" by Horst Gehann

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Horst Gehann's spiritual songs dedicated to "the small ones and the big ones", with the reminding that they are written for one or two voices with an organ or piano backing, are together in the Opus 2.

Written in both English and German, they are considered as a talent and inspiration example, regarding both the song line and the lyrics.

About the creation moment of these songs the composer himself wrote to me the following:

“All 12 songs were written in Bucharest between 1952-1958. The first 8 were composed for the children choirs in the Bucharest children choirs. Usually they were written for different occasions where was needed a song with a specific theme, as persons who organised the musical services needed. Verses of different poets were written this way. Last 4 songs were composed in my activity as music teacher at the Adventist Theologic Seminar from Bucharest for the end of year, as the absolvents asked. The style is simple and accesible. We can say that this short compositions contributed at the spiritual life in a time when it was risky to declare your belief. They spread from Bucharest to all the country.

Maby that they can remember our vallors in a time in wich the belief life is not put into danger by ideology but by the running after money.”

The 12 songs can be taken as a conclusive message of a child's life over an year, in which every song can express the experience of a world.

We could assume that they can significant the 12's apostles characters. We discover the eager Peter that must learn to have patience, John that loved Jesus "So Much", the impulsive Zebedei brothers who need to learn kindness.

The theme of the 12 songs can reveal us moments of Jesus' life when He found Himself on the mountain praying. Of course, a child's fantasy can discover other personal connotations in which they can find their own feelings.

The titles of the 12 songs are: *We thank you, When birds sing, Patience, May your life be like this, So much, Fall in prayer, Remember, God is my strength, Calling, Give us your help, On your altar Jesus, The divine scripture.*

Theologically speaking we find in the text a lot of domains in which the prime domain of interest is education.

Subjects like: gratitude, trust, knowing along with patience, remembering, praying, calling can be considered as essential messages in the Christian education of a child.

Beyond the poetic message of the lyrics as educators we can discover the necessary themes in a child's healthy education. Even if we sometimes overlook the role of a little song, I think that this song message can be in a teenager's life essential. Through the beautiful following of the melody a little song learnt in childhood can measure a lot more than a pile of "educational" talking. This is why I think that beyond their technical values, these 12 songs have a much greater value in their educational purpose.

To be great full, to be patience, to knowing how to bow in prayer, to be faithful, are beautiful and practical subjects but they come better with education, with forming the personality then with the poetical-philosophical art.

I think that this should be the main role in the child's song, and the artistic matter should come second. I hope to be in concordance with the authors of these beautiful songs when I say that education itself was their muse.

Poets that have inspired the musical creativity of Horst Gehann are: Elisei Dumitrescu, Vali Ghiorghita, Cornel Greissing, Arthur Irimia, Lucia Thomas.

The first song has as a title a calling: *We thank you* (Ex. 1). Written in E, in 6/8 measure, with a musical structure like A+b+A+c, in which the choir "C" is written in 4 temps measure. The soloist-choir alternance, in which the choir is represented by children can underline the composer's thought to dedicate these songs to the small ones and the big ones. The anaconda from the second measure has the purpose of placing the accent on the right place.

When birds sing (Ex. 2) song continues the structure of the first song. The tonality is kept, fact that underlines the possibility that the two songs are bond to one another by interpretation. The binary choir gives the soloist-choir alternance. Even the alternance between the birds singing and thanking the Lord puts us at the very beginning in the children's universe.

In this melody we need to mark the harmonies with a chromatic sense but which is resolved tonal every time.

The song *Patiance* (Ex. 3) drifts apart from the mentioned atmosphere but it preserves still the ternar elements of 6/8 measure. The melody of this song, written in D, obviously underlines the quiet atmosphere in which patiance is learnt. The harmonies are peaceful so the modulator inflexions create a symbiosis between tonal and modal.

May your life be like this (Ex. 4) can be considered as a conclusion of the patiance. Written in D, in the binar measure of 4, the work is great in it's melody in both armonic and chromatic way.

The ups and downs of these harmonies underlines the idea of "moral passivity" of the text:

"May your entire life be like this

And the doings that you leave behind

Such as an unstained flower

To be that clean

Every moment that you live."

The second stanza underlines the benefic result of patience:

"Because every voice that is heard

And every doing on your way

Is like a seed that grows beyond

The seed of goodness from now on."

The song *So much* (Ex. 5) written in G, and in 6/4 measure puts us in the middle on Christ's loving territory. The chromatic melody with a modal structure underlines the esthetic theme of eternal love. The slightly undulated movement remind us of a mother's "rocking hands". The peace atmosphere of christian love is underlined precisely by this rocking.

Fall in prayer (Ex. 6) is surprising by the fascinating harmonies and the beautiful bonding between music and lyrics. The idea of personal praying is underlined with the changing of the 3 halves measure in a binar measure of 4 terms. The melodic lines underline three descending motives the idea of bending in prayer. The chromatic harmonies underline the inner universe created by a prayer. *"Fall in prayer God once said Your wish present to Me..."*

Remember (Ex. 7), by its number seven underlines the importance of the resting day, that we find in the 4th commandment. The symbolic number seven is taken as a marking signal that indicates the moment or resting for all God's creatures. The ascending alternance written in 4 halves through the motive of the 3 notes f-f-f; g-g-g; c-c-c; suggests the climbing steps to reaching the level of Sabat's adoration.

God is my strength (Ex. 8), written in b, and the binar measure of 4 terms, replaces in our memory the structure of the protestant coral. The jump of a sixth rebrings to our memory the structure of the Lutheran Choral, d-c-d-e-d-c-h.

The song *Calling* (Ex. 9) is split in two big sections A+B, in which the final cadence rebuilds the initial motive from A. The soloist-choir-soloist alternance has the role of the evangelist (the soloist) and the choir of the old preclasic orator. The modulation from the initial tonality of e to the homonym of E and then returning to another e, can signify the returning of the big ones in the small one's world.

Give us your help (Ex. 10) with the underline written in german that this song is a message to the big ones, in how they should intrust themselves into God's hands when they're trying to shape up they're children'd characters. The big final underlines the educative role of the song. The following passages, underlined by the surprising harmonies of the background suggests the peaceful atmosphere in which every person can put they're trust in God.

On your altar, Jesus (Ex. 11) is the most elaborated piece from the 12. Written for solo voice, choir and organ in d and the measure of 6/4 has the structure of a canon, in which every voice

stands up for itself. The organ has the role of bonding the two very different voices: kids and adults. The piece ends with a coda on the word Amin.

The last piece called *The divine scripture* (Ex. 12) is bond to the piece before. It has the role of a final conclusion in which the idea of the young's and the adult's both should live with the word of the Scripture is underlined. It is the ideal conclusion in the educational purpose of the 11 songs, that conclusion that the Scripture is "A Light on the way, always and everywhere". Also, an instrumental passage ends like an ideal conclusion.

Conclusions:

Horst Gehann's spiritual songs dedicated to "the small ones and the big ones" can be considered to be a little education treaty through music. The musical and poetic means are used by slightly educate kindly and patiently. Trough their musicality and the beautiful bonding of children voices with the ones of their parents these songs can be a model of education through Hymn. Like this, the educative and religious song's role in a family's life is deeply underlined.

Ex. 1

1. WIR DANKEN DIR
SĂ-ȚI MULȚUMIM

Horst Gehann

1. O Hei-laud, wir bic-ten dich,
1. I - su - se, cu gin - dul spre

Wir dan - - - ken dir!
Să-ți mul - - - ți-mi-m.

Und HE-ai

etc...

Ex. 2

2. WENN BERG UND TAL CIND PĂSĂRILE CIRIPESC

1. Wenn berg und tal - im gan - zen land Aus bli - zen träge ein
1. Cind pă - să - ri - le cî - ri - pesc si - n codrii te - ii

fest - gewand, Und wenn der blu - men zar - ter duft Die schmeccerlin - ge
în - flo - resc Cînd vî - tul poar - tă pi - nă - u nori par - fum su - av de

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 6/8. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both the right and left hands.

etc...

Ex. 3

3. GEDULD! RĂBDARE

1. Meide in al - len din - gen Zehrende un - ge -
1. Fi răbdă - tor în toa - te De - i soare sau îde - i

duld! - Al - les wird wohl ge - lin - - gen Nur mit ge - duld! -
nor - Să vrei doar și - se pop - te Fi răb - dă - tor!

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The time signature is 6/8. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both the right and left hands.

etc..

Ex. 4

4. SO SEI DEIN LEBEN!
 AȘA SĂ-ȚI FIE VIAȚA

1. Und al-so sei dein ganzes leben in worten, ta-zen,
 1. A - șa să-ți fi - e viața toată și fapta ce pe

die du säest : Wie blumen, die zum lichte streben, Die zarten ket-chen kercherke-ben -
 drum să - desti, încît ca floarea ne-pă-ta-tă Să fie tot a-șa cu - ra - tă

etc...

Ex. 5

5. GOTTES LIEBE
 AȚI DE MULȚ

1. Wie hat doch Gott von e-wig-keit Die welt so sehr ge-
 1. A - țit de mult El ne-a iubit, Părin-te-le Cel

liebe, - Dass er zum o-pfer ist bereit, Den sohn zum sterben gibt! 2. Aus
 nic, - în cît pe cru-țe sa jertfit Pe u-nicul - său fiu. 2. Din

1,30'

Dal segno

etc...

Ex. 6

6. BEUG DICH IN EHRFURCHT. TE PLEACĂ-N RUGĂ

1. Beug dich in ehrfurcht vor dem Herrn, Du kannst ihn ganz ver- trauen! Der Heiland hört dein kündlich
1. Te pleacă-n rugă, Domnu-a zis, Dorința ta i-o spu-ne, Căci cenz pu- ruri e des-

flieh, Du wirst den himmel offen seh'n - Hab ihm ver- trauen! 2. Ob jung, ob
chris, și tot pri- mi - vei cum stă ser's, Priu rugăciu- ne. 2. Dacă ești

150

etc...

Ex. 7

7. GEDENKE! ADU-ȚI AMINTE

1. Gedenke, dass zu jeder frist Res Herrentag geheilige ist! Und werke und gedanken soll'n
2. Adu-ți a- minte a pă- zi! A Domnului sfintă ză! și glud și făptu-irea sfin-

heilig sein und rein! Mit loben und mit dancken Magst du deuthem dich weih'n! 2. Gedanke zun.
fite să le ai să cauti mințu-rea și Lui să te pre- dai. 2. Adu-ția- fel.

135

etc...

Ex. 8

8. GOTT IST UNSER SCHIRM
DOMINUL E TĂRIA MEA

1. Gott ist unser schirm und schutz, Gott, das ziel der lobgesänge!
1. Domnul e tă-ri-a mea cîntul la-u-de-lor mele

Er befreit, dem feind zum cruz, Aus gefahren und gedränge.
El m-a scos cu mî-na sa Din primejdii mari si gre-le.

1,05

NU

etc...

Ex. 9

9. BERUFUNG
CHEMARE

Solo

Sondern nach
După cum

dem er auch berufen, und het- lig ist, seid auch ihr geheiliget in allem wandel.
Cel ce v-a chemat este sfînt — fiți și voi sfînti în toate lucrarea voastră.

etc...

Ex. 10

10. GEBET
DĂ-NE AJUTORUL TĂU

O, Mei - - - - - scer! 1. Wenn du uns rufst zu lichten Höhen wissen wir, dass wir
 O, Doam - - - - - ne! 1. Când Tu ne cheui spre slava-albastră, știu, că nu stă-n pu-

nicht besche - hen Wenn wir auf uns nur bau - en, Wenn wir auf eig - ne krafte ver - erau - - - -
 te - rea noastră ca - n via - ță in tot ceasul să ne - ndrăptăm spre tin - tă pa - - - - -

etc...

Ex. 11

11. WEIHE
PE-ALTARUL TĂU ISUSE

1. Als opfer, nimm uns, Je - su Auf deinem al - tar an - Und
 (2. Wie) fackeln hilf uns bren - nen, Wie lichte von deinem lichte Und
 1. Pe - alta - rul Tău, I - su - se, Ca jertfe ne pre - dăm, Ne - a -
 (2. Să) fim făclii a - prin - se Ca pil - da ce ne - ai dat; și

1. Als opfer, nimm uns, Je - su Auf deinem altar
 2. Wie fackeln hilf uns brennen, Wie lichte von deinem
 1. Pe - altarul Tău, I - su - se, Ca jertfe ne pre -
 2. Să fim făclii a - prin - se Ca pil - da ce ne - ai

etc...

Ex. 12

12. O, HEILIGE SCHRIFTEN
DIVINA SCRIPTURĂ

chor 1. O hei-li-ge schriften, o e-wi-ges wort Du schatz aus ur-
cor 1. Di - vi - na scriptu - ră su-bli-mul cu-ysul Co-mpară de

denk-li-chen zei - - - zen! Dein licht sei uns wei-ser an jeg-li-chen
praf pe ye-ci - - - e Un far pe că-ra-re lu-mi-nă pur-

etc...