

## A BACH ROAD JOURNEY

In 1705, when he was twenty years old, J.S. Bach took a six-week leave of absence from his job as music director at the Lutheran Church in Arnstadt, Germany and walked two hundred miles to Lubeck to hear an organ recital by his hero Dietrick Buxtehude the greatest organist of his day. I was struck by this commitment and passion for music on Bach's part. I started speculating about what might have gone through his mind on this journey. First I guessed he might have been thinking about his career and his contributions to music inventing the well-tempered scale and such. Getting a little more whimsical, I saw him looking into the future, comparing himself to other composers maybe getting a little jealous of Handel. Listen carefully to the melody in the last two lines of the chorus. The song changes key every measure as it works its way around the circle of fifths. You can listen to the song here: <https://youtube.com/shorts/q8zT6WUlfWo?feature=share>

## THE ROAD TO LÜBECK

### Guitar Intro

**G** **C** **Am**  
Two hundred miles along this road,  
**D** **G**  
A journey of faith I have trod.  
**G** **C** **Am**  
The stars are spread up above my head,  
**D** **G**  
Like notes on a manuscript from God.  
**G** **C** **Am**  
In your name, my Creator, I will compose  
**D** **G**  
Hymns and cantatas for thee.  
**G** **C** **Am**  
Sonatas and suites and other musical treats  
**D** **G**  
For Germany's nobility.

**D** **G**  
But there are times when the notes are discordant  
**C** **Am** **B7**  
And the intervals do not agree.  
**E** **A** **D** **G**  
I am fast on the trail of a well-tempered scale  
**C** **D** **G**  
That will sound good in every key.

I am blessed to be born in a golden age.  
There are many composers like me.  
Vivaldi and Handel and Pachelbel,  
And Dietrich who I'm going to see.

And Handel will write *The Messiah* –  
More famous than any by me.  
But I'll keep on like this 'round the circle of fifths  
And I'll just be the best I can be.

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