

Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke

BWV 84

Provenance

[Based on NBA KB I/7 – Werner Neumann – Bärenreiter, 1957, pp. 30-61]
[selected and translated by Thomas Braatz, 2010]

The Sources:

A. The autograph score is located in the BB (Deutsche Staatsbibliothek Berlin) Shelf # Mus. ms. Bach P 108.

This score existed as one part of a pair of scores which included BWV 144 (P 134) [*Nimm, was dein ist und gehe hin*]. Both scores were listed together in the catalogue of CPE Bach's estate from 1790.¹ The first was listed as: *Am Sonntage Septuagesimä: Nimm, was dein ist etc. In Partitur*. The second was: *Am Sonntage Septuag.: Ich bin vergnügt etc. Mit 1 Hoboe. Partitur und einige Stimmen*. In the library of the Berliner Singakademie, they were also listed in sequence as *S.a. No. 37* and *No. 38*. At the distribution of musical materials after Bach's death in 1750, it was CPE Bach who inherited these scores which remained in his possession until his death in 1790. It is probable that the next owner of these two cantatas was a manuscript collector from Hamburg, Georg Pölchau (1773-1836). The next owner of these and other Bach manuscripts was a Hamburg city councilor, Abraham Mendelssohn-Bartholdy² (father of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy), who then donated them (in 1811?) to Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758-1832). At the time of the latter's death in 1832, they appear to have been transferred to the Library of the Berliner Singakademie, which Zelter had directed for many years. In the library catalogue of the Singakademie they were listed as *S.a. No. 37* and *No. 38*, but when they were listed for sale in a catalogue, they were listed together as *Nr. 33-34* (here the four existing original parts are also mentioned). Eventually, in 1854, these cantatas were acquired by the Royal Library in Berlin, now the BB, where the librarian, Siegfried Wilhelm Dehn (1799-1858) entered them under the acquisition numbers: 2719-2720. The folder for the first cantata has a title written on it by an unknown hand: *Joh. Seb. Bach | Motette. | "Nimm was dein ist..." | Partitur*. The binding for the second has an inscription by Dehn: *Dom. septuages. | Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke*. Based upon the above information, it is clear that both autograph scores always remained

¹ *Verzeichniß des musikalischen Nachlasses des verstorbenen Capellmeisters Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach*.

² The NBA KB I/7 appears to list incorrectly in the text three times Abraham Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1776-1835) as Alexander Mendelssohn-Bartholdy.

together on their journey through various ownerships: CPE Bach – Pölchau – Abraham Mendelssohn-Bartholdy – Zelter – Singakademie – BB.

Returning now specifically to BWV 84 (P 108): it consists of 4 folio sheets with each sheet completed in sequence. Only the second and third sheets were numbered by Bach as 2 and 3. Each page has an average size of 33 X 20 cm. Although the paper has a moderately brown color, it is generally in a good condition with ink only occasionally having eaten through the paper. The watermark is the same as BWV 17 and BWV 35 and is listed as # 85 in the watermark catalogue (NBA IX/1).

The cover (folder) is also entirely in Bach's handwriting and reads as follows:

Dominica Septuages. | Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke | à | Soprano Solo è | 3 Ripieni | 1 Hautbois | 2 Violini | Viola | 3 Continuo | di | Job: Seb: Bach

There are 16 pages indicated as follows (r=recto=right side; v=verso=reverse or back side of page):

p. 1^r: Title at the top of page: *J. J. Doica* [a line above 'ica' indicates an abbreviation for 'Dominica'] *Septuagesimae Cantata*. Mvt. 1 mm 1-26, 3 accolades with 5 staves and 1 with 6 staves.

p. 1^v: Mvt. 1 mm 27-44, 3 accolades with 6 staves, 2 staves at the bottom were unused.

p. 2^r-4^v Mvt. 1 mm. 45-63, 64-78, 79-95, 96-113, 114-131, 132-150, each page with 3 accolades having 6 staves and 2 empty ones at the bottom.

p. 5^r: Mvt. 1 conclusion mm. 151-158, 2 accolades with 6 staves, the last one only one-third used. After that the beginning of Mvt. 2 mm. 1-19^a with the title *Recit.* in 3 shortened accolades and 4 normal ones.

p. 5^v: Mvt. 2 conclusion mm. 19^b-21, 1 accolade with 2 staves, only 2/3 used. At the end the indication of the subsequent movement: *Aria Hautb e Violino*. Beginning of mvt. 3 mm. 1-50, 2 accolades with 3 staves and 3 accolades with 4 staves. Under this an insertion of mm. 40-44 with the indication *Hautb., Violino* [Soprano, Continuo].

p. 6^r: Mvt. 3 mm. 51-94, 5 accolades with 4 staves each and continuation of insertion from p. 5^v

p. 6^v and 7^r: Mvt. 3 mm. 95-136, 137-180 with 5 accolades having 4 staves each

p. 7^v: Mvt. 3 conclusion mm 181-232, 5 accolades with 4 staves and 1 accolade with 2 staves

p. 8^r: Mvt. 4 complete with autograph title: *Recit.* 4 accolades with 5 staves the last one only partially filled with the autograph indication: *Choral Volti* entered after it.

p. 8^v: Mvt. 5 complete with the autograph title written above it: *Choral.* 2 accolades with 5 staves, the second one only half-filled. At the very end: *Fine SDG.*

This is a composing score based upon the fact that it was written hurriedly and contained an extremely large number of corrections (*mit ihren überaus zahlreichen Korrekturen*)

B. A complete set of 12 original parts in the BB with the call number: Mus. ms. Bach St. 52 copied by one main copyist and two adjunct copyists.

1. *Soprano* (contains all 5 mvts. with a *Fine* after mvt. 5; other titles and markings are: *Volti, Recit., Aria, Aria, Rec.*)
2. *Alto* (only mvt. 5 has a title: *Chorale*)
3. *Tenore* (only mvt. 5 has a title: *Chorale*)
4. *Baßo* (only mvt. 5 has a title: *Chorale*)
5. *Hautbois* (contains mvts. 1, 3, 5 along with markings: *Volti, Recit tac, Aria, Volti cito, DCapo, Recit tac | Chorale*)
6. *Violino 1* (contains mvts. 1, 3, 4, 5 with markings: *Volti cito, DCapo, Recit, Chorale*)
7. *Violino 1* (Doublet) (same as *Violino 1*)
8. *Violino II* (contains mvts. 1, 4, 5 with markings: *Volti cito, Recit et Aria tacet, Recitat, Choral*)
9. *Violino II* (Doublet) (same as above except *Recitat* reduced to *Rec* and *Chorale* and *Fine*)
10. *Viola* (contains mvts. 1, 4, 5 with markings *Volti cito, Recit et Aria tacet, Recitat. primo, Chorale*)
11. *Continuo* (not transposed and not with figured bass, containing all mvts. with markings: *Rec, Recitat, Aria, Da Capo, Rec, Chorale* and *Choral* and *Fine*)
12. *Continuo* (transposed one whole tone downward with figured bass by Bach in mvts. 2 & 4, contains all mvts. with markings: *Recit, Aria, Da Capo* and *Choral*)

Johann Heinrich Bach³ copied the SATB+Oboe, 1st & 2nd violin and viola parts while David Salomon Reichardt⁴ did the continuo parts (with figures added by Bach later) and Anonymous IIIj⁵ the doublet of the 2nd violin part.

The continuo parts are replete with obviously uncorrected errors all of which are listed and explained on pp. 36-37 of the NBA KB I/7. Bach later added dynamics and embellishments particularly to the upper string instrument parts.

³ Johann Heinrich Bach, born August 4, 1707 in Ohrdruf, a Thomaner from 1724-1728, and later a musician and cantor in Ohringen where he died on May 20, 1738. He copied parts for Bach from December 26, 1724 to August 31, 1727 and was Bach's main copyist from January 1, 1726 to August 31, 1727. He also copied out all the parts for Johann Ludwig Bach's cantatas: JLB 1-17 and segments or good portions of BWV 1, 3, 4, 6, 13, 15 (actually JLB), 16, 17, 19, 27, 28, 32, 34a, 35, 39, 42, 43, 45, 47, 49, 52, 55, 56, 58, 69a, 72, 74, 79, 84, 85, 88, 92, 98, 102, 111, 121, 122, 123, 126, 129, 151, 168, 169, 175, 187, 193, 207, 232/III, 245, 1014.

⁴ David Salomon Reichardt, born August 27, 1710 in Borna, a Thomaner from July 4, 1726 to 1733 (date of death unknown), copied mainly continuo parts and sometimes solo or 1st oboe and 1st violin parts. He helped with the copy work involving three of Johann Ludwig Bach's cantatas: JLB 13, 16, 17 and assisted with BWV 19, 35, 45, 49, 56, 82, 84, 88, 102, 187.

⁵ Anonymous IIIj copied for Bach from January 9, 1726 to April 13, 1727 only occasional parts in BWV 19, 27, 56, 82, 84, 98, 169, 207, 232/III.

Bach's text compared to Picander's

Am Sonntage Septuagesimä

Aria

Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke,
Das **mir der liebe Gott beschert**.
Soll ich nicht reiche Fülle haben,
So dank ich ihm vor kleine Gaben
Und **bin auch nicht derselben wert**.

Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Stande,
Den **mir der liebe GOTT beschehrt**.
Was soll ich viel nach grossen Dingen
Mit Ungeduld und Mühe ringen,
Ich bin ja! nicht der kleinen werth.

Recitativo

Gott ist mir ja nichts schuldig,
Und wenn er mir was gibt,
So zeigt er mir, daß er mich liebt;
Ich kann mir **nichts bei ihm verdienen**,
Denn was ich tu, ist meine Pflicht.
Ja! wenn mein Tun gleich noch so gut geschehen,
So hab ich doch nichts Rechtes ausgericht'.
Doch ist der Mensch so ungeduldig,
Daß er sich oft betrübt,
Wenn ihm der liebe Gott nicht überflüssig gibt.
Hat er uns nicht so lange Zeit
Umsonst ernähret und gekleidt
Und will uns einsten seliglich
In seine Herrlichkeit erhöhn?
Es ist genug vor mich,
Daß ich nicht hungrig darf zu Bette gehn.

Im Schweiß meines Angesichts
Mit saurer Müh und Noth
Verdien ich zwar mein täglich Brod,
Und doch **verdien ich nichts**,
GOTT schenckt es mir aus lauter Gnaden;
Es ist ein wenig; was kan es schaden,
Bin ich doch stets vergnügt dabey.
Der Seegen GOTTes macht reich,
Und hab ich gleich
Nicht immer überley,
So hab ich doch zu meiner Sättigung
Noch allezeit genug.
Hat GOTT dem Nächsten mehr beschieden,
Ich gönne es ihm: Er hab es auch mit Frieden.

Aria

Ich esse mit Freuden mein weniges Brot
Und gönne dem Nächsten von Herzen das Seine.
Ein ruhig Gewissen, ein fröhlicher Geist,
Ein dankbares Herze, das lobet und preist,
Vermehret den Segen, verzuckert die Not.

Lieber GOTT, es ist das Deine,
Theile du Jedem deinem Groschen zu.
Was mir nöthig, gibst du mir,
Vor die Gabe **danck ich dir**,
Und gönne dem Nechsten von Hertzen das Seine. Da Capo.

Recitativo

Im Schweiß meines Angesichts
Will ich indes mein Brot genießen,
Und wenn mein Lebenslauf,
Mein **Lebensabend** wird beschließen,
So **teilt mir Gott den Groschen aus**,
Da steht der Himmel drauf.
O! wenn ich diese Gabe
Zu meinem **Gnadenlohn** habe,
So brauch ich weiter nichts.

Wenn ich des Lebens satt,
Und dort wie Israel von Arbeit matt,
Wirst du mich aus Egypten Land
Nach Canaan versetzen.
Wie wird der **Abend** mich ergötzen,
Wenn ich von deiner milden Hand
Den **Gnaden-Lohn** empfangen,
Und deinen Himmel selbst erlange.

Choral

Ich leb indes in dir vergnügt
Und sterb ohn alle Kummernis,
Mir gnüget, wie es mein Gott füget,
Ich glaub und bin es ganz gewiß:
Durch deine Gnad und Christi Blut
Machst du's mit meinem Ende gut.

Sing, bet und geh auf GOTTes Wegen,
Verricht das deine nur getreu
Und trau des Himmelsreichem Segen,
So wird er bei dir werden neu.
Denn welcher seine Zuversicht
Auf GOTT setzt, den verläßt er nicht.

A comparison of Bach's libretto on the left above and Picander's (Christian Friedrich Henrici (1700-1764) published version of his cantata text given here on the right above should make it clear that there is a connection between the two libretti, but that either one is not a close copy of the other. It becomes very difficult to maintain that this cantata belongs to the Picander cantata cycle since it is difficult to establish which source may have influenced the other: did Bach simply revise Picander's poetry much more than usual (to the point that only some phrases and images were maintained in Bach's final version of this text) or did Picander obtain his inspiration from Bach's text which in turn may have been based on another source by an unknown librettist, or did Bach or Picander base their version on Erdmann Neumeister's cantata text from his book⁶ of such texts published in Gotha in 1711, a text which begins similarly with "Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Stande, | in welchen mich mein Gott gesetzt..."? An examination of the chronology involved also cannot shed very much light on this matter, but it does remain as viable starting point. Here is what has been established by Bach scholars thus far: Some version of Bach's libretto must have been available in the form of the usual

⁶ The text in question here is Neumeister's *Geistliches Singen und Spielen*, Gotha, 1711, which is a cantata cycle dedicated to Georg Philipp Telemann who composed the music for this cycle. In Neumeister's text this cantata libretto is set for Jacob's nameday and not for Septuagesimae.

cantata booklets that were published in advance of the first performance of BWV 84 which is now generally agreed to have taken place on February 9, 1727. This would place the first printed version of this cantata text as part of the cantata booklet sold to members of the congregation to some point in January and probably not before that time.

The fact that Picander published his libretto for BWV 84 for the first time at least a year later than the first performance of Bach's version of this text in early February, 1727, has not kept some experts from speculating that Bach and Picander, during the period preceding the first performance, worked collaboratively on the Bach version of the libretto and that Picander kept on modifying (improving?) the libretto until it was finally published a year later in his *Cantaten | Auf die Sonn- | und | Fest-Tage | durch | das gantze Jahr, | gefertigt | durch | Picandern. | Leipzig, 1728*. A year later in 1729, the same text appeared in a second edition without any changes and then finally in the third part of a collection of his poetry in *Ernst- Schertzhaffte und Satyrische Gedichte*, Leipzig, 1732.

The questions that must be raised here are: Was there a collaborative effort by Bach and Picander, an effort that culminated in such a wide divergence between both libretti as has not yet been observed elsewhere in any other Picander texts that Bach set to music? or is it also possible that Bach or some other unknown librettist is responsible for what might appear to some as a better version of the text than that supplied later by Picander despite his attempts to improve it over time?

For the final chorale, Picander chose the final, seventh verse of Georg Neumarck's chorale, "Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten" while Bach, maintaining the use of the same chorale melody, has chosen the 12th verse of the chorale, "Wer weiß, wie nahe mir mein Ende" by Ämilie Juliane von Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt and first published in 1686. This is a chorale text which was still missing in the Wagner hymnal, Leipzig, 1697 and possibly one still not widely known among the members of Bach's congregation.