

“Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel ...” 2 Sam 23:1

Psalms Were Used to Worship in the Temple



“Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.”
1 Chron 16:7-9

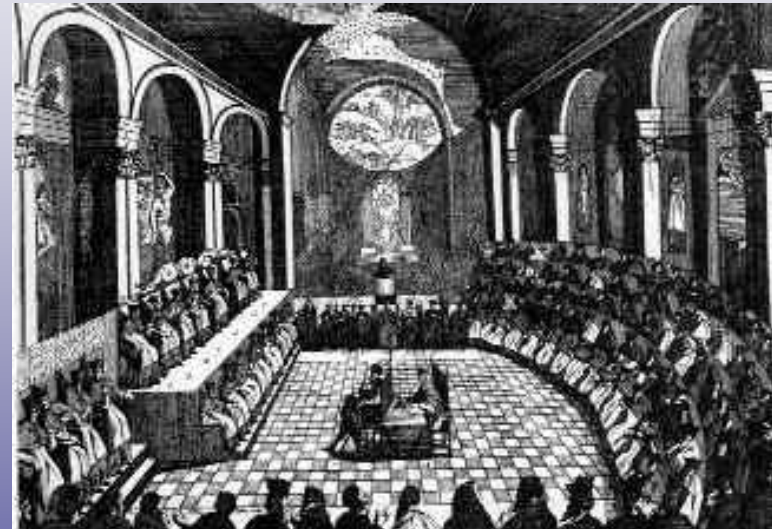
Psalms Were Used to Worship in the Synagogues of Babylon



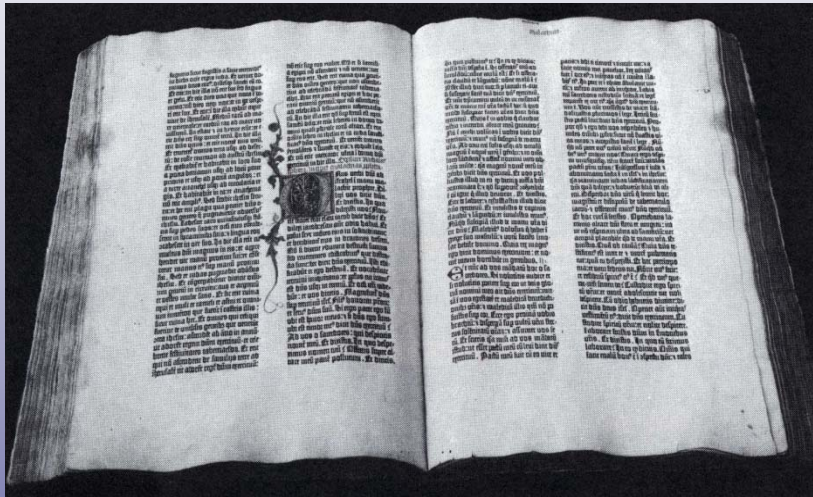
“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” Ps 137:1-3

The Early Church Sang the Psalms Primarily

- Eusebius (260-339) records a charge against Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch and a denier of the Trinity, that “He bans all psalms to our Lord Jesus Christ as if they were modern compositions of modern writers.”
- 381 AD Council of Laodicea prohibited the use of uninspired hymns and “private psalms”.
- 451 AD Council of Chalcedon confirmed the ruling of Laodicea in 381.



One of the First Printed Books was the Psalter



Gutenberg Bible, 1455



Fust & Schoeffer Psalter, 1456

The Reformation Divided



Calvin (1509-1564) and the Reformed Churches clung devotedly to the Psalter



Luther (1483-1546) and the Lutheran Churches began a revival in evangelical hymnody

Post Reformation Developments in England

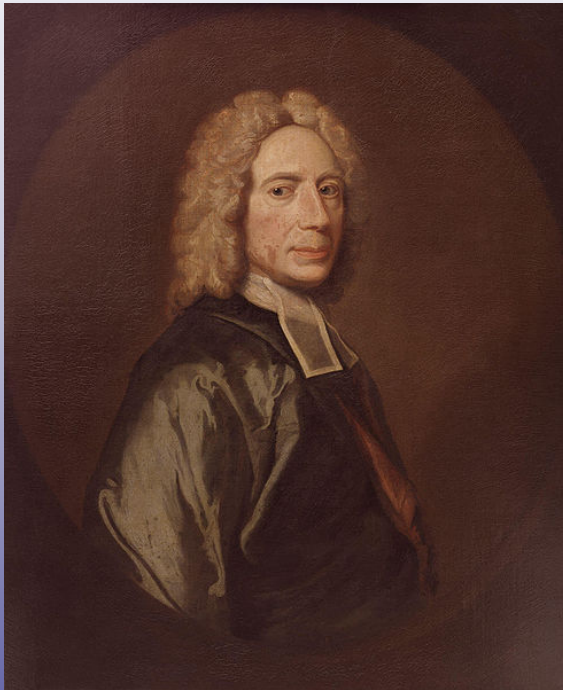


Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) went into battle for uniting England, Scotland, and Ireland, singing Psalms



Isaac Watts (1674-1748) paraphrased the Psalter to “teach David to sing like a Christian”.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)



Comments from Watts concerning the singing of Psalms as recorded in the preface to his *Hymns* (1707) ...

“Some of ‘em [Psalms] are almost opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel; many of them foreign to the state of the New Testament ... Thus by keeping too close to David in the House of God, the Vail of Moses is thrown over our Hearts. While we are kindling into divine love by the Meditations of His Tender Mercies, within a few Verses some dreadful Curse against men is proposed to our lips ... we break off our Song in the midst, our Consciences are affrighted lest we should speak a Falsehood unto God.”

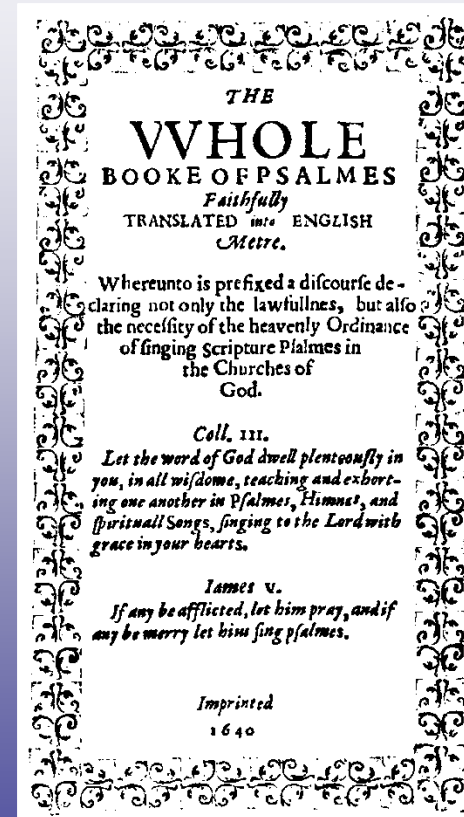
Watts did not see the Psalms as a fair representation of God or of Jesus Christ as represented in the New Testament.

First Printed Book in the New World was the Bay Psalter



Mayflower in Plymouth Harbor

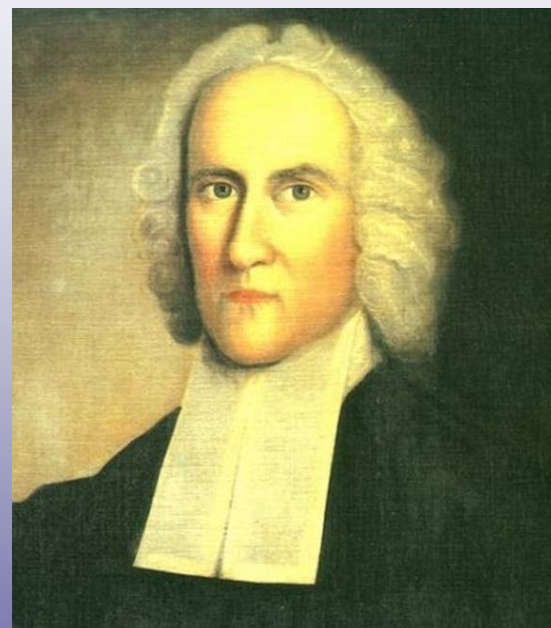
by William Halsall (1882)



American Presbyterianism



George Whitefield (1714-1770)
promoted the hymnody of Isaac
Watts in America



Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
abandoned exclusive psalmody to
promote the Great Awakening

Psalmody in America Today

- **Presbyterian Church in the USA (mostly Hymns)**
- **Christian Reformed Church (mostly Hymns)**
- **United Presbyterian Church (now united with the PCUSA, mostly Hymns)**
- **Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (mostly Hymns)**
- **Presbyterian Church in America (mostly Hymns)**
- **United Reformed Church (predominate Psalmody)**
- **Protestant Reformed Church (exclusive Psalmody)**
- **Heritage Reformed Church (exclusive Psalmody)**
- **Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (exclusive Psalmody)**
- **Presbyterian Reformed Church (exclusive Psalmody)**
- **Free Church of Scotland Continuing US (exclusive Psalmody)**
- **Small groups like us ...**

The Psalms Speak of Christ



“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.” Luke 24:44

Let's sing ...

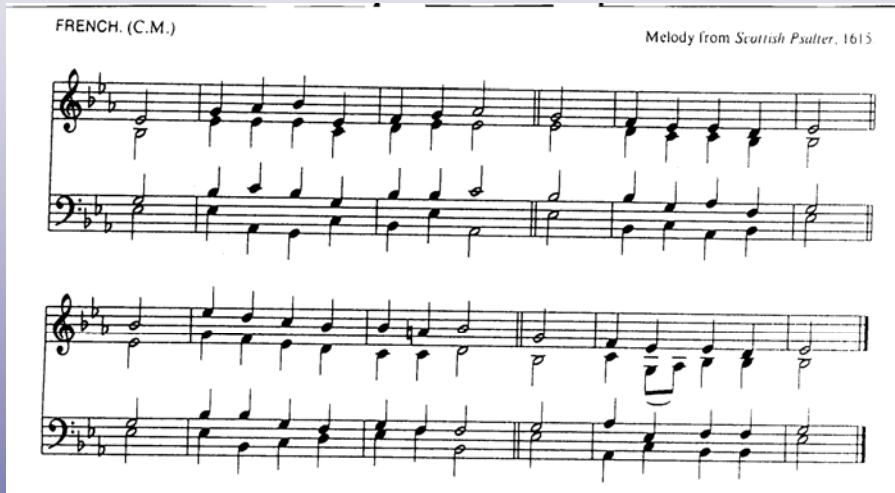
Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.

Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

James 5:13

Let's sing ...

Psalm 1:1-6, Tune: French (CM, *E-flat*)



THAT man hath perfect blessedness

who walketh not astray

In counsel of ungodly men,

nor stands in sinners' way,

Nor sitteth in the scorner's chair:

2. But placeth his delight

Upon God's law, and meditates


On his law day and night.

And following ...

Let's sing ...

Psalm 128:1-6, Tune: Tiverton (CM, F)

TIVERTON. (C.M.) JACOB GRIGG, d. 1768, in John Rippon's *Selecton of Psalm and Hymn Tunes*, c. 1795



**BLESSE'D is each one that fears the Lord
and walketh in his ways;**

**2. For of thy labour thou shalt eat,
and happy be always.**

**3. Thy wife shall as a fruitful vine
by thy house' sides be found:
Thy children like to olive-plants
about thy table round.**

And following ...

Let's sing ...

Psalm 19:7-14, Tune: Crediton (CM, G)



7. God's law is perfect, and converts
the soul in sin that lies:

God's testimony is most sure,
and makes the simple wise.

8. The statutes of the Lord are right,
and do rejoice the heart:

The Lord's command is pure, and doth
light to the eyes impart.

And following ...

Let's sing ...

Psalm 72:1-8, Tune: Effingham (CM, F)

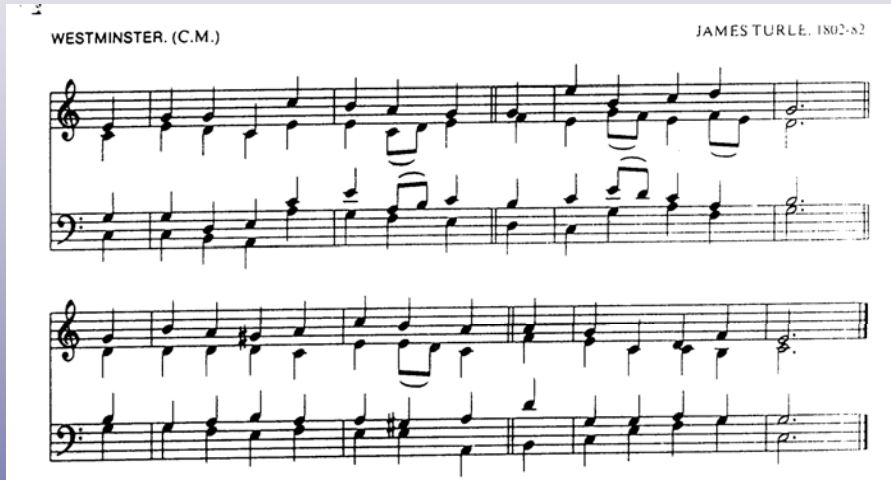


- O LORD, thy judgments give the king,
his son thy righteousness.
2. With right he shall thy people judge,
thy poor with uprightness.
3. The lofty mountains shall bring forth
unto the people peace;
Likewise the little hills the same
shall do by righteousness.

And following ...

Let's sing ...

Psalm 48:1-10, Tune: Westminster (CM, E)



GREAT is the Lord, and greatly he
is to be prais-ed still,
Within the city of our God,
upon his holy hill.

2. Mount Sion stands most beautiful,
the joy of all the land;
The city of the mighty King
on her north side doth stand.

And following ...

Let's sing ...

Psalm 27:1-6, Tune: Jackson (CM, A)



THE Lord's my light and saving health,
who shall make me dismay'd?

My life's strength is the Lord, of whom
then shall I be afraid?

2. When as mine enemies and foes,
most wicked persons all,
To eat my flesh against me rose,
they stumbled and did fall.

And following ...

Let's sing ...

**How is it then, brethren? when ye come together,
every one of you hath a psalm,
hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation,
hath an interpretation.**

Let all things be done unto edifying.

1 Corinthians 14:26