

Chapter 3.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF CHURCH SINGING

Singing and music in the worship service in historical perspective.

Two mainlines: Brief overview of history of church singing

The church, from its earliest roots, has always been a singing church (Vos & Pieterse 1997:57). Martin (1982:47) writes that “Christian hymnody owes a debt to both the Greek and Roman religious tradition of the world into which it was born and the Jewish community of faith that formed its matrix and cradle.” Unfortunately, from the earliest roots until now, there has always been much spoken or unspoken controversy about the content and form of singing.

Routley (1978:89) often refers to the “conversation” on church music, depicting the interactive process of church music that’s been going on for centuries now. This thesis is an effort to take part in this conversation on church music. The problem is that this conversation has been going on for centuries and centuries, in every country, in every church or denomination, in every language and ultimately in every genre of music. No study can fully take the whole conversation into account. Routley (1978:89) comments on the tendency that he names “popular” to “break into the conversation and makes gestures comparable to a person bursting into a room and stopping everyone present that he may assert himself.” This study is a way of asking permission to enter the room and listen to the conversation that’s already going on. It’s also a way of thinking about the conversation and asking questions about things one doesn’t agree with in the conversation. The aim is to make the conversation on church music even more beautiful and relevant.

There could be different reasons for including a historical overview in a thesis like this. **The aim of this study and especially this chapter is not to write a thesis on the history of church music.** The interest of this study in the history of church music is not a historical interest in the first place, but a theological and hymnological interest. The mainline in the development of church music will be followed insofar as it helps one to understand church music and especially the free song. Where did the free songs come from? What made generation after generation want to sing free songs? What made free songs different from other music at that time? Why do free songs play such an immense role in church and liturgy? The core issue is: why did the church through all ages sing free songs? Was there

a vacuum that had to be filled with something like the free song? Could that vacuum be the same vacuum that denominations and congregations are trying to fill with a variety of songs, styles and instruments in the twenty first century?

There are different possibilities for structuring this chapter. Either it can be structured by using the different time frames in history as basis for the discussion. Or one can use the major developments or stages of church music as a basis for a historical overview. This study wants to combine these two in a positive way by structuring the chapter to the broad phases in history, namely:

- Old Testament
- New Testament
- Early Church
- Middle Ages
- Reformation
- Post-Reformation
- Church music in South Africa

While this is a study in Practical Theology and not in Church history, the focus will not be on an detailed overview of each phase in history, but a theological interest in the development of church music itself, asking each time why people sang what they did. The aim is to follow the development and use of the hymn or free church song through the ages. In the end conclusions must be drawn on the use of the free church song that could be of great value in the rest of the thesis.

1. OLD TESTAMENT SINGING AND MUSIC

Mowinckel (2004:10) states that “[a]ll the words for ‘singing’ and ‘playing’ in the Old Testament really signify the musical expression as a whole, the unity of song and instrumental accompaniment”.

1.1 Ecstatic music

The earliest forms of singing and music are found in the Old Testament. Fourie (2000:5) states: “Wanneer ‘n mens deur die Ou en Nuwe Testament blaai, is dit opvallend hoe baie daar na musiek en sang verwys word.” At all the great occasions in the life of Israel, music and singing were part of it (Dt 31:19-30, 32:1-44, 1 Chr 16:1-36, 2 Chr 5:11-14, 20:21-22,

29:25-30, 35:15, Ezr 3:10, Neh 8:7, 12:27-47)(Fourie 2000:18-19). As early as Genesis 4:21 one reads about Jubal who was the father of the flute players. Through the Old Testament, people sang and made music. Wielenga (1933:238) feels that the first song in the Old Testament was sung in paradise when Adam awoke and saw the woman God made to him (G2 2:23). The second song in the Bible is a song of wrath where Lamech sings (Gn 4:23). Although one finds the songs of Adam and Lamech in the book of the Bible, the earliest clear reference to song and music in the old Testament was the antiphonal song that Moses sang with the people of the Lord in Exodus 15:1b-18 (cf. Martin 1982:48). Fourie (2000:8) indicates successfully that Exodus 15 actually consist of three songs, namely Exodus 15:1-12 (a song of victory), 15:13-18 (song of the nations) and 15:20-21 (song of Miriam). The song of Miriam is quoted in Numbers 15:21; this song was accompanied by at least tambourines while dancing with joy. We find another song in Numbers 21:17-18. Wilson-Dickson (1992:23) believes that Numbers 10:35-36 contains a song that was sung with the departing or returning of the ark to Jerusalem. The song of Deborah is found in Judges 5. Fourie (2000:19) classifies this song as an artsong (*kunsklied*) because it was “die ontwerp van een of ander ‘begaafde’”. With David’s return to Jerusalem, after he defeated Goliath, the woman welcomed David with a song (1 Samuel 18:6-7) accompanied by tambourines and lutes, while dancing with joy. This was the first controversial song in the Bible and led Saul to envy David and trying to kill David.

Strydom (1991:34, cf. Mowinckel 2004:9,10, Strydom 1994:13) mentions that all these songs were accompanied by **instrumental music and bodily movement**. Wilson-Dickson (1992:23, cf. Mowinckel 2004:9) states that all the singing mentioned above was a kind of ecstatic singing where the rhythmic instruments (the tambourine, cymbals, horn, trumpet, different kinds of lyres, flute and castanets) and percussion conveyed the ecstasy (cf. Mowinckel 2004:9). The song was a spontaneous and impulsive song composed by an individual that arouse from ‘n specific situation where the saving hand of God was seen and experienced. All these songs were spontaneous acclamations of faith, thanksgiving and worship. These songs, with their rhythmic beat, had the power to take possession of someone and enable the “release of emotions among a people willing to express them openly” (Wilson-Dickson 1992:29). Mowinckel (2004:10) adds that dancing was part of Israel’s song as a means to produce ecstasy, “a testimony to the ‘joy in Yahweh’, and a mark of honour to Him”. Mowinckel (2004:9) refers to Israel’s music as “rhythmical noisy music”.

It’s important to remember that there was no temple still and the singing and music were practiced outside of the walls of the ‘church’ as it is known today. Westermann (1981:22) concludes from the oldest songs (the Song of Miriam, the Song of Deborah and the Song of

the Seraphim in Isaiah 6) were not cultic songs. Westermann (1981:22) correctly summarizes the *Sitz im Leben* of the hymn as “the experience of God’s intervention in history. God has acted; he has helped his people. Now praise *must* be sung to him”.

It’s also important to remember that there were no ‘melodies’ as known today. All singing were free forms of cantillating or *heightened speech*. The main point is that whenever people wanted to give praise to God for something that He did, they sang a song to God. It was an **ecstatic song, freely composed and usually not very long**. Sometimes it was sung with accompaniment, and at other times without accompaniment.

1.2 Temple music

Gradually music in the Old Testament moved away from an ecstatic dimension to “liturgical music of a more contemplative kind, formal, symbolic and ritualised” (Wilson-Dickson 1992:30). The temple introduced a new era in church song and music, where the congregation was passive. “In de tempel was er geen gemeentezang” (Hasper 1987:15). Church singing and music were now entrusted to a specific group of people, which were the Levites and priests (Van Rooy 2008:14, cf. Hasper 1987:15). They were tasked “to make petition, to give thanks, and to praise the Lord, the God of Israel” (1 Chr 16:4). David was responsible for the planning of the first temple music. A huge group of people, consisting of singers, dancers, vocalists and instrumentalists were ordained for this task (1 Chr 15, 2 Chr 5). In the execution of their task they made use of a wide variety of instruments and songs composed for this day and occasion.

A description of the service on the great day of Reconciliation is found in the apocryphal book of Sirach 50:16-18 (200BC):

Then the sons of Aaron sounded
With the trumpets of beaten work;
Yea, they sounded and caused a mighty blast to be heard
For a remembrance before the Most High.
(Then) all flesh hastened together
And fell upon their faces to the earth,
To worship before the Most High,
Before the Holy One of Israel.
And the sound of the song was heard,
And over the multitude they made sweet melody

(Charles 1973:510)

A parallel text is found in the Talmud (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992:26). The use of instruments and singing at the temple on the great day of Atonement must be noted. Trudinger (2004:1, 20) concludes that (at least in the morning) “a psalm was performed by the choir of Levites” and that there is circumstantial evidence “that the psalms were sung in the afternoon Tamid”. The following description is found in the Mishnah tractate Tamid 7:3: “[t]he choir had at least twelve singers, all men, with supplementary boys ‘to add sweetness’, and that the instruments consisted of nine or more lyres (*kinnor*), kithara (*nebel* - though usually translated as ‘harps’ and ‘lyres’), between two and twelve cane pipes (*halil*) and cymbals (*mezaltzim*)” (Wilson-Dickson 1992:26-27). The description mentions the blowing of trumpets by two priests, the clashing of the cymbals and the singing of the Levites. Oesterley (1941:205) notes that during the service of the offering “the deepest silence prevails [...] everything is performed with reverence and in a manner worthy of the Divine Majesty”.

The Psalms had an important place and function in the temple service although scholars differ on the exact role the Psalms played and their exact place in song and music (see 1.4 for a detailed discussion on the place and role of the Psalms). Many other songs were sung as well (Wilson-Dickson 1992:27). Barnard (1981:586) is of opinion that all these instruments were not necessarily used for accompaniment during the temple service. He also notes that the singing in the temple was not done by the people (believers) but by **choirs dedicated for this work** (cf. Van Rooy 2008:14). The psalms did not have a beat in the modern context of the word, and the rhythm was determined by the rhythmic accent of the Hebrew words. The congregation often replied with responses like *Amen* or *Hallelujah* as in 1 Ch 16:36, Ne 8:7, Pss 111-113, 146, 148, 150 (cf. Strydom 1991:35. Hasper 1987:15).

It is interesting that singing and music in the temple were radical different from the singing before the temple was built. It moved from **singing by untrained individuals to the singing by trained choirs**; from impulsive singing to planned and even well-practiced singing; from short subjective songs to longer objective songs. It moved from outside to inside, from “open-air ceremonies to a liturgy celebrated in the cavernous acoustics of a large building” (Wilson-Dickson 1992:30). It moved from **ecstatic songs to a ritual kind of song**, where the priests sang and the people just responded with *amen*, *Hallelujah* or “*anenoe*” (meaning: answer us)(cf. Hasper 1987:15). It moved from singing by the people to singing by the Levites and priests (*ibid*). A new kind of singing arose, namely cantillating

where the priest cantillated the songs. This kind of singing were named psalmodizing singing (“*Psalmmodiërende sang*”). Later on cantica (like Exodus 15 and Judges 5) and hymns (free songs) were added to the songs sang in the temple (Strydom 1991:35).

It is a good question whether the singing in the temple by choirs totally replaced the ecstatic singing mentioned in the previous paragraph. Did one kind of song stop and has it been replaced by another kind of song, or did they exist parallel to each other for a period of time? It is argued that they existed for many years parallel to each other; the one as the formal song sung by the trained choirs of the temple in a meditative way; the other as the informal, ecstatic song sung by individuals or groups of people with instruments and dancing when saved or touched by God. Through singing in the temple God was worshiped; through the ecstatic singing outside the temple He was loudly praised. The same David that drew the plans for the temple worship and set up the choir to perform the singing and praising, was the one who danced ecstatically in front of the ark (1 Chr 15-16). It’s difficult to say whether both forms of singing were allowed or practiced in the temple. And if both were allowed, who sang those songs? What happened to the ecstatic songs people “wrote” when touched or saved by God? In 1 Chronicles 15-16 one sees a blink of both of them: at first David was dancing to ecstatic music in front of the ark and then a psalm, composed for this special day to be performed by Asaph and his associates (1 Ch 16:7). It is possible that the one was sung on the way to the sanctuary while the other was sung at the sanctuary itself. It is also possible that the first were short ecstatic songs sung by everybody, and that the latter was ‘n psalm sung by a trained choir (singing at the temple was mostly done by choirs of (cultic) priests (cf. Barnard 1981:82)?

Hasper (1955:72) is of opinion that **singing in the temple and synagogue had much in common with general singing (folk-song)** in those times. He sees the ‘melodies’ mentioned in some of the Psalms to which they could be sung, as examples of folk-song melodies that could have been used with church singing. Strydom (1991:35), on the other side, indicates that “to the tune of” (eg. Ps 9) does not refer to familiar folk-melodies of the time as is often assumed because they didn’t sing to melodies as is known and understood today. The singing of a text was *Sprechgesang* and closely related to the text itself; thus each ‘melody’ was unique to the text and structure of a text. Although there is uncertainty about the meaning of indications like “to the tune of” (eg. Ps 9), it can be assumed that it indicated some kind of melodic pattern to which the song could be sung. This kind of singing or *Sprechgesang* found expression in Gregorian Chant and was named psalmodizing singing (*psalmodiërende sang*) in later times. Because there were no melodies (tunes), the chances are small that the indications in the Psalms referred to melodies.

Hasper (1955:13) concludes that psalms, already in the time of Israel, included songs that “niet in de tempelboeken waren opgenomen, en andere, die daarin nimmer opgenomen zouden worden.” In this regard Hasper (1955:29) explains that *rmz* (Psalms) has the meaning of “lofprijsing deur middel van sang” and not necessarily the singing of Psalms.

1.3 Use of music/song in the Old Testament

Singing and music were used for a variety of purposes and occasions in the Old Testament. **Religious life and secular life were closely related** to one another; eg. war was not only seen as a military event but also as a religious event. Music and singing were used for the following:

- Praise (Moses, Miriam, Deborah, Barak)
- Driving away of evil spirit (1 Sm 16:23)
- War / praising (2 Chr 20:2)
- Giving honour to people, like the king (1 Sm 18:7)
- Reminding of the Law (Dt 10:19)
- Reminding God of his grace (Ex 28:33)
- Celebrating victory (1 Sm 18:7)
- Crowning of a new king (2 Chr 23:13)
- Preceding prophecies (1 Sm 10:5)
- Expression to feeling (of despair)(Ps 137)
- Absence of music is sign of despair (Is 24:8-9a)

1.4 The place and role of the Psalms (see also 1.2)

There is wide agreement on the central and important place of the Psalms in the worship of Israel (cf. Vos 2009:1, Barnard 1981:80-82, Van Rooy 2008:25-26). Barnard (1981:81) calls it “n merkwaardige liedboek.” Prinsloo (1991:foreword) describes the Psalms as “die geloofsboek van die Ou-Testamentiese mens” and the “gesangeboek’ van die Ou-Testamentiese kultus”. The Psalms were not the only texts sung in the temple, but they had a central place in the temple (Wilson-Dickson 1992:27). Schuman (1998:169-170) ascribes the important place and role of the Psalms to the abundant use of the psalms in the New Testament, as well as the view of the psalms as the “gebedenboek van synagoge en kerk”. On the other side there is much controversy on the way the Psalms were utilized in Jewish worship. Schuman (2008:189, cf. Vos 2009:1) differs from Barnard and concludes that the psalms were not a “Gezangeboek”. Barnard (1981:81-82) says that many of the Psalms

had a place in the cult as well as on the feasts, and that these Psalms were sung by the temple singers and choirs of priests (cf. Strydom 1991:35). Vos (2009:1) rightly distinguishes four different levels of influence of the psalms on liturgy, namely “the psalms as a reader, a prayer book, a book of meditation and a book of songs”. The latter is important for the scope of this study.

The book of Psalms was compiled over a long period and only finished after exile and the rebuilding of the temple – therefore it could not have been a “Gezangeboek” in the first temple. Many scholars agree that the book of Psalms is closely related to the second temple (cf. Schuman 2008:189). The Psalms could be called “the hymn-book of the second Jewish Temple” that was erected after the exile (Martin 1982:49). Barnard (1981:81) states that there are indications that the book of Psalms had a fixed place in the second temple. Wilson-Dickson (1992:27, cf. Schuman 189) refers to the Talmud which gives a list of psalms appropriate for each day of the week. It still remains a question whether these psalms were sung or read on these days. The argument of Van Wyk (1979:120) that God gave us the Psalms as a book of songs for singing in the congregation, reveals a lack of knowledge and insight in the complex role, place and functioning of the Psalms as a book. Vos (2009:1) rightly remarks that “[t]he thesis that the Psalter was the ‘hymnal of the Second Temple’ has been refuted” and “[t]he Psalter entered Christian worship only towards the end of the second century, and then only in individual psalms”. Schuman concludes:

De psalmen zouden dus als totaalverzameling in de openbare liturgie nooit de voorname plaats ingenome hebben die toch in de lijn der verwachting lag, als viering van de weg door crisis naar hoop? Voor zover ze vroeger in tempel of synagoge al een plaats hadden gekregen, zou er geen sprake zijn van een dóórlopende recitering van het psalter, afgezien dan van enkele aparte series? En ook zou de officiële liturgie geen voorkeur hebben voor echt messiaanse psalmen? Zo is het naar mijn overtuiging inderdaad.

(Schuman 2008:191)

Martin (1982:49) writes: “How far some of these expressions of piety and doubt simply represent individual laments and thanksgivings or embody the corporate confessions and confidences of the community of Israel is not easy to say.” Most of the Psalms gives no indication of the time frame it represents. In the Psalms one finds examples of a multitude of human feelings and emotions like “lof [...], vreugde, droefheid, spanning, hoop, vertwyfeling” (Prinsloo 1991:foreword); Barnard (1981:81-82) remarks that no emotion is absent from the

Psalms. Vos (2004:252-253) rightly argues that the Psalms are more than “answers” (Von Rad 1966:366); they contain “reflections of pleading, struggles (Ps. 22), reproaches (Pss. 42, 43), complaints (Ps. 13), longings (Ps. 84) and other prayer-like emotions.” Vos (1994) rightly argues that the Psalms are poetry and prayer – thus Theopoetry.

Vos (2009:1) remarks that in the Hebrew text of the Psalter “most psalms bear clear titles”. More and more Psalm scholarship acknowledge “the fact that the canonical Psalter is the result of a complex process of collection as well as redaction” (Vos 2009:2). The headings of many of the Psalms indicate that they were in some way musically connected and interpreted (cf. Vos 2009:2): “For the director of music” (Ps 4, 5, 6, *et cetera*), “with stringed instruments” (Ps 4, 61, 67), “for flutes” (Ps 5), “according to gittith” (Ps 8, 81, 84), “according to sheminith” (Ps 6, 12), “according to alamoth” (Ps 46), “to the tune of” (Ps 9, 22, 45, 56, 57, 69), “a song” (Ps 46, 48, 66) and “a psalm of praise” (Ps 145, 147). Even on the interpretation of these musical terms there are great differences. It must be concluded from these headings that the psalms were sung accompanied by the Levites. Zenger (1997:28-29) concludes that melodies of known ‘folk-songs’ were sometimes used as basis (cf. Ps 9, 57). Although the phrase “to the tune of” remains problematic, it must be admitted that an association with songs (whether singing or Sprechgezung) from the normal day-to-day life was not avoided. Vos (2009:2) rightly concludes that the headings of the psalms often indicate a different *sitz im Leben* (referring to the second temple) than the original; some even suggests a “merely fictional cultic use of a psalm” (*ibid*). There could be no doubt that the titles of the psalms were added later (cf. Vos 2009:2).

Craigie (1983:28, cf. Van Rooy 2008:32) distinguishes four stadia in the forming process of the Biblical Psalter:

1. Composition of individual Psalms
2. Compilation of smaller units
3. Combination of smaller units into larger units
4. Compilation (with redaction) of the book of Psalms

Wilson-Dickson (1992:28) indicates that a number of musical responses (*anah* = to respond) developed over time where the soloist sang the melody or verse and the choir answered with a verse or part of a verse. It appears that only in a few of these schemes there were room for the participation of the people; the choir sang on their behalf (Wilson-Dickson 1992:29).

There is still **no agreement as to the place and use of the Psalms in the different eras of the Old and New Testament**, as illustrated by the great differences between various

scholars on this topic. Schuman (2008:191) argues that “the psalter als geheel [...] heeft van begin af aan behuizing gekregen en daarna behouden in kleinere kring. Het heeft nooit als gemeenschappelijk ‘gezangbuch’ gefunctioneerd, in tempel noch synagoge, maar veel meer als persoonlijk gebedenboek met een hoog meditatief gehalte”. It is argued here that the Psalms in its totality never functioned as a “Gezangeboek”. With Hasper (1941:9) we must conclude that Israel had much more liturgical singing than just the Psalms; the latter were compiled from various other collections that already existed.

1.5 Conclusions

The Old Testament doesn’t start with a commandment to sing. It was something that happened when people had an encounter with God. It’s not only a Christian phenomenon, but part of every culture and religion. The Old Testament depicts Israel as a singing people (Strydom 1991:34, Huysamen 1997:27). While they were working, they sang; when they went to the battlefields, they sang; when returning from the battlefields, they sang. When they sat in despair, they sang. Singing was not only part of their religion; it was part of their being.

Singing in the Old Testament had two mainstreams: Outside of the sanctuary, in daily life, one found the spontaneous singing of individuals (or groups around an individual) to God. With the building of the temple, religious singing was institutionalized as the task and responsibility of trained choirs and liturgical (cultic) singing became more advanced. These two mainstreams must have existed for many years alongside one another, as seen in the life of David (1 Chr 15-16). Singing in the sanctuary (the temple) was totally different from singing outside of the sanctuary. Why? Because the songs sung in the temple by means of heightened speech were written for trained choirs and musicians and not for plain believers. Hasper (1995) states:

[D]at er naast een meer eenvoudig zingen in de huizen (Mat 26:30) of in kleine en grote volksverzamelingen in den tempel in Jeruzalem, en tijdens en na de ballingschap in de synagogen, voor den eredienst een kunstgezag is geweest, die ver boven de capaciteiten van den gewonen man uitging. Volgens 1 Kron 23:5; 25:7 waren er tijde van David 4000 koorzangers onder leiding van 288 Zangmeesters. Wij hebben dus in den Oudtestamentischen eredienst kennelijk te doen met een zang, waarvoor vakkennis werd vereist en die derhalve [...] alleen kon worden toevertrouwd aan een priesterschap met daaruit voortgekomen of daaraan verbonden geoefende zangers; zangers, die jarenlange scholing onder strenge discipline achter den rug

hadden....

(Hasper 1955:103)

A wide variety of songs were available for singing. Apart from all the ecstatic songs 'written' by individuals, there were many songs written for a specific occasion or cause. Solomon himself wrote 1005 songs (1 Ki 4:32). David wrote a song "Praise the Lord" for the inauguration of the temple (1 Ch 16:7-36). Fourie (2000:21) makes a distinction between the following kinds of songs (translation provided: CJC):

- Devotional song
- Labour song (Nm 21:1, Is 1:10-11)
- Battle song (Ex 15:1-18, Ex 17:15-16)
- Song of lamentation / wailing (2 Sm 1:19-27, 3:33-34, Jeremiah, Job, Ps 137)
- Coronations song (Ps 2, 72, 110)
- Love song (Song of songs)
- Nature songs (Ps 8:4-5, 55:9, 107:29)
- Psalms (cf. Müller 1990a:37)
- Psalms of lamentations / wailing
- Hymns
- Penitential Psalms
- Psalms of innocence
- Imprecatory Psalms
- Psalms of thanksgiving
- Epiphany Psalms
- Festive Psalms
- Pilgrimage songs
- Royal Psalms

The songs sang in the Old Testament cover all the emotions and situations of everyday life, from joy and gladness to anger, frustration, worries, and unbelief. Thus the people of Israel did not only sing about religious affairs. **Their whole life was closely interwoven with liturgy and they sang about everything that happened to them**, whether it was good or bad. Thus singing was closely related to day-to-day life. Songs were 'written' by individuals who had an encounter with God (e.g. Miriam, David). Songs were also written by individuals who had a special gift or wisdom (as Solomon) to write songs. Songs were often sang spontaneously by an individual who had a specific encounter; songs were also written for

specific occasions like the inauguration of the temple.

Although we still have the lyrics of a multitude of songs in the Old Testament, we don't have any melodies (cf. Mowinckel 2004:4) – the melodies are immanent in the text. Therefore there are no Biblical melodies.

There are great differences to whether the psalms were really sung in worship services in Israel. The subtitle “to the music leader” suggests that it was sung in liturgy. The term “selah” invited the believers to join with the refrain “for his mercy endures for ever”. The singing of the Old Testament was mainly “Sprechgesang” (Fourie 2000:44). At a later stage in history this kind of singing was named psalmodizing (*Psalmmodiërende sang*). Strydom (1991:34) claims that the singing of Psalms played a great role in the temple cult, but that there are uncertainty as to whether the other songs (like Ex 15 and 1 Sm 2) were sung in the temple.

A variety of instruments were used separate from as well as in accompaniment to singing (cf. Strydom 1991:36); Barnard (1981:82) identifies 15 instruments while the rabbi's identify 36 instruments. Westermann (1960:\$1202) says that “die primitivste Art instrumentaler Begleitung ist das Händeklatchen und Füsstampfen.” In that sense **accompaniment was always part of Israel's music**. Many studies have been done on the instruments used by Israel. Fourie (2000:51) states that instrumental music “...voer die profeet tot ekstase.” Instrumental music was much more than the accompaniment to vocal music. Instrumental music itself was praise to God. It is said that music is not part of liturgy; it *is* liturgy! And all of creation (mountains, trees, fields, *et cetera*.) were invited to join in the music. “Die Instrumenten sind im Gotteslob mehr als nur Begleitung.” (Westermann 1960:\$1204). On the other side Strydom (1991:37) indicates that the general assumption is that Sprechgesang is done without accompaniment. That would mean that at least some of the Psalms were sung without accompaniment (instruments).

2. NEW TESTAMENT MUSIC

The New Testament starts with songs and ends with a song. It's like an inclusio where the whole New Testament is embedded into a song. The first song in the New Testament (the Song of the Angels) is found in Luke 2:14. Mary reacted to the good news of the birth of the Saviour with a song (Luke 1:46-55). Zagariah (Luke 1:67-79) reacted with a song. And the book of Revelation draws a picture of Jesus appearing in the sky, and the church reacts to that by singing songs (Rv 1:9-17, 5:1-14, 19:1-10). But although the New Testament starts

and ends with music, only a small amount of information on music and singing could be found in die New Testament (Calitz 2004:22).

Barnard (1981:108, cf. Strydom 1991:37) states that the worship service could be traced back by two lines in the New Testament, namely the Synagogue and the Upper Room. Vos & Pieterse (1997:10) rightly indicates the influence of the temple as well. Although one can greatly agree with Barnard and Strydom, it is argued here that there are at least four traditions or lines in the New Testament, which are the lines of the Synagogue, the Temple, the Upper Room and the early house churches or informal gatherings (cf. Foley 1992:69). Although the house churches took a lot from the synagogue, it wasn't a continuation of the synagogue, but a whole new way of being church, with a totally new liturgy because of the person, life and ministry of Jesus. Moule (1977:5; cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992:4) formulates it thus: "Christian worship was continuous with Jewish worship and yet, even from the first, distinctive". The life and work of Jesus Christ brought about a new dimension in the Jewish Religion of the Old Testament: this new dimension led to a new relationship with God as well as a new prayer (Barnard 1981:111-117).

2.1 The Temple and Synagogue

The temple and the synagogue were the two places where Jesus and His disciples used to worship (Strydom 1991:38). Not much need be said about the temple and the synagogue in the New Testament, as the traditions in the temple and synagogue were well preserved and it didn't really change from the time of the Old Testament. Most of the information regarding the temple and synagogue in the Old Testament could be repeated here. Wilson-Dickson (1992:33, cf. Barnard 1981:146) refers in this regard to the "long-established practice" of singing in the Jewish cult. These traditions were absorbed into Christian worship (Barnard 1981:106-107).

Werner (1959:24-25) writes: "The temple had developed a type of liturgy which, with its hierarchy, its sacrificial cult, and its rigid organization, entered a sharp distinction between the officers of the ritual and the community of the faithful, the latter being almost passive bystanders". The elaborated tradition and liturgy of the temple made the temple radical different than the synagogue. With the crucifixion of Jesus (cf. Jn 4:23-26, Heb 10:18), the destruction of the temple in 70 AD and the separation of the Christian community from the synagogue, the tradition of the temple and synagogue worship for Christians came to an end (Foley 1992:69, cf. Barnard 1981:107).

Hasper (1987:15) refers to singing in the synagogues and remarks that “synagogale zang miste de ondersteuning van de instrumentale muziek van de tempel, maar iedere voorganger trachtte bij de voordracht van een gewijde text in bloemrijke toonversieringen Gods lof uit te zingen.”

Wilson-Dickson (1992b:25, cf. Barnard 1981:84,101) indicates that many parts of the Jewish liturgy and song continued to be used in the Christian church as the Christian faith was seen as a completion of Judaism. He continues that “both church and synagogue had (and still have) in common the idea of baptism, the ‘Liturgy of the Word’ (which for the Christian is the first part of the Eucharist - readings, the singing of *psalms and hymns*, teaching and prayers), fasting and the encouragement to develop a personal life of prayer” (1992a:25). Barnard (1981:84,101,146) adds that the use of the Psalter as hymnal as well as the custom of singing from the synagogue were also incorporated in the Christian faith. Although many songs were taken from the synagogue, **Christians also composed many new songs** (“*vrye liedere*”) in celebration of their faith (Barnard 1981:146).

2.2 The Upper Room

From the very start of the New Testament, the Upper Room played an important role. Jesus and His disciples met in the Upper Room where they celebrated the Lord’s Supper (Mt 26:20-30, Mk 14:17-25, Lk 22:14-23, Jn 13:2-30, 1 Cor 11:23-26). It was also in the Upper Room where the disciples met after the ascension of Jesus (Ac 1:13-14). The Bible does not provide a description of the liturgy of the Upper Room. From the narrative of the Last Supper (Mt 26:20-30) it is known that Jesus and His disciples sang the “hymn” before they left the Upper Room for Gethsemane. Scholars differ on the meaning of the “hymn” in this narrative: Smith (1989:307) interprets the hymn as Psalm 115-118, while Hagner (1995:774) interprets the hymn as Psalm 113-118. The participle form of the verb means “to sing a song associated with religion and worship” (Louw & Nida 1989). Literally the passage reads: “When they had hymned” (Hendriksen 1973:912). This phrase can here also be translated with ‘When they had sung *The Hymn*’. Most interpreters feel that this phrase refers to Ps. 115-118 (cf. Hendriksen 1973:912; Louw & Nida 1989, Smith 1989:307).

Whether one can really draw a picture of singing in the Upper Room from the little information available, remains in doubt. There is no clear indication that the “one place” (Ac 2:1) where they were gathered, was the Upper Room. There is also no indication that the gatherings and liturgy of the first Christians in houses can be connected to the gatherings and liturgy in the Upper Room. It is argued that the gatherings in the homes of the first

Christians introduced a new way of assembly with a new liturgy. This liturgy had some things in common with the Upper Room; it also had new elements not associated with the Upper Room.

2.3 The house churches

The first Christians assembled in houses (Gehring 2004:1). Foley (1992:69) argues that the house churches started in 'borrowed' rooms and in the homes of believers, but eventually moved to houses or buildings that were set aside as gathering places. Acts 2:46 states: *"Every day they continued to meet in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts..."* (NIV). The Pauline congregations were a continuation of the gathering of Christians in houses all over. The living space of the church was the house. Klauck (1981:102, cf. Gehring 2004:7) sees the house church as the building block of the church, the support base for missional outreach, gathering place for the Lord's Supper, sanctuary for prayer, classroom for catechetical instruction and an opportunity to experience and exercise Christian brotherly love. Klauck (1981:15) works with the two Greek terms *oikos* and *oikia* in architectural and sociological sense, which could be translated as 'house' or 'household'. He arrives at the conclusion that a number of house churches existed in the Pauline communities like Rome and Corinth (eg. the house churches of Prisca and Aquila (Rm 16:3-4), Asyncritus (Rm 16:14), Philologus and Julia (Rm 16:15), Aristobulus (Rm 16:10) and Narcissus (Rm 16:11) in Rome).

Foley (1992:73) argues that there are "ample witness to the singing of the Davidic psalms in various Christian gatherings" but it is unsure whether these congregations had "a psalmist, cantor or any other that might be considered a permanent or official musician in the Christian community". The letters of Hippolytus and Cornelius as well as the Didascalia omit the reference to singers, psalmists or cantors (*ibid*).

Routley (1982:7) says: "It is everywhere agreed that Christians were singing hymns within the generation of Pentecost". Routley (1982:7) motivates it thus: "It cannot have been long before they devised ways of singing about the Resurrection and their Christian experience, and whoever wrote the Letter to Ephesians, and that version of it which went to Colossae, was aware of this and approved it (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16)"

One of the most important texts regarding singing in the New Testament, comes from Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19:

"Speak to one another with Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and

make music in your heart to the Lord.” (NIV)

This verse has been explained in detail under the Scriptural motive in the previous chapter. Here one must take note that the repertoire of songs in the earliest congregations did not only include Psalms. Wilson-Dickson (1992a:35) indicates that *psalmos* comes from the verb *psallo* meaning to “move by touch” and concludes that this could be a reference to the “*kinnor* and *nebel*, the plucked instruments of temple worship”, while *hymnos* (singing praise) could suggest unaccompanied voices (Ac 16:25). Spiritual songs or *odes* would then indicate an inspired song, spiritual song, sacred song or just a song. It is obvious from literature that the meanings of these different words are not so clear. All interpretation will be nothing more than good speculation. With Wilson-Dickson (1992b:25) one must conclude that the terminology in this passage does not really help one because a term like ‘hymn’ has a variety of possible meanings. At that stage the hymn as rhyming verses did not exist.

Another important text is found in 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 where Paul writes about orderly worship. In 14:26 he remarks that when the congregation meets, everyone has something to contribute. One will contribute a word of instruction; another a revelation; another a tongue, *et cetera*. **Some will contribute a hymn (*psalmon*)**. This word could indicate an Old Testament Psalm, or it could just as well indicate a hymn or song of praise. Thus it could mean that when the congregation gathers, some members could contribute a Psalm by reading a Psalm or even singing a Psalm. But it can also mean that when they gather, **some members could contribute a (new) song or hymn that they wrote**. Routley suggests: “We may confidently suppose, without going further into it, that Christians did have songs at their meetings, and that some of these were simply solos sung by somebody who had just composed them (1 Cor. 14.26) and some had refrains which could be joined in” (1982:7). Söhngen (1961:8, cf. Strydom 1991:44) concludes that **at least two Gattungen could be distinguished in the early Christian services**: on the one side there were fixed, well-known songs sung by everybody, and on the other side “Einzelgesänge, wie sie der Geist bald diesem, bald jenem, vielleicht hier und da auch einem bevorzugten Sänger eingab” Wilson-Dickson (1992b:25) comes to the conclusion that Paul could be referring to a “spontaneous praise in song under the influence of the Holy Spirit”. It is noteworthy that Paul, in this passage, gives some guidelines and warnings regarding the speaking in tongues (v 27) and the prophecies (v 29) but he gives no guidelines or warnings regarding the contribution of a hymn. If it had to be only one kind of song (like a Psalm) or if it had to be unaccompanied, surely Paul would have mentioned it with the other guidelines and warnings?

2.4 Songs in the New Testament

A multitude of songs can be distinguished in the New Testament. Firstly, there were Psalms. Secondly, there were different Lucan hymns (*cantica*): the song of Mary or *Magnificat* (Lk 1:46-55), the song of Zechariah or *Benedictus* (Lk 1:68-78), the *Gloria in excelsis* (Lk 2:14) and the song of Simeon or *Nunc Dimittis* (Lk 2:29-32). When these songs are translated back into Aramaic, the “characteristic rhythms and structure of Hebrew Psalms are revealed, suggested that they were chanted in the same way” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:27). The New Testament also mentions the song of praise that Jesus and His disciples sang (Mk 14:26) which could refer to the Hallel (Psalm 115-118). There are other songs as well: the hymns that Paul and Silas sang in the night (Ac 16), the song of love in 1 Cor 13, the song in Rm 8:31-39 and the different songs of Revelation (Rv 4:11, 5:9, 5:13, 11:15c, 11:17-1, 12:12, 15:35, 19:1 and 19:9) - often with their ‘Alleluia’, suggesting a refrain in reaction to Jewish Psalmody (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:27).

2.5 New Testament Imperatives

The New Testament does not only inform believers on the way believers sang in New Testament times; it also gives them the command to sing. Different words are used for the songs the believers are encouraged to sing:

- Ephesians 5:17-19: Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
(ψαλμοις και υμνοις και ωδαις)
- Colossians 3:16-17: Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
(ψαλμοις και υμνοις και ωδαις)
- James 5:13: Songs of praise (ψαλλετω from ψαλω)
- 1 Corinthians 14:15, 26: Psalm (ψαλω and ψαλμον)

Whether one can make any clear case from these words, falls to doubt. One can only assume that different songs were sung; with or without accompaniment.

2.6 Conclusions

Janse van Rensburg (2004:51) correctly warns on the one hand that “[o]ns sal dus nie onkrities ’n beroep op Ou-Testamentiese Skrifgedeeltes (byvoorbeeld Dawid se dans voor die ark uit) kan maak om daaruit vir die erediens liturgiese afleidings te maak, sonder om die “Gattung” van die betrokke Skrifgedeeltes in aanmerking te neem nie” but continues on the other hand that “[d]it neem egter nie weg nie dat die Skrif duidelike beginsels stel wat vir ’n

gereformeerde aanbidding ononderhandelbaar is. Die Skrif spreek byvoorbeeld duidelike taal oor vreugde, ootmoed, orde, stilte, eerbied en ontsag as beginsels vir ons ontmoeting met God. Ons sal gevolglik moet leer om met Skrifbeginsels te werk eerder as om na Bybelverse of bloudrukke vir die liturgie te soek”. In this regard, some conclusions (principles) could be drawn from the New Testament:

- As in the Old Testament, music and singing were part of the daily life of the believers in the New Testament. They sang when they received good news, when they gathered, when they were in danger, *et cetera*.
- Often they reacted to a revelation of God with singing and music.
- Not only believers sang; Jesus himself sang and the angels sang.
- Singing is not only part of this life; it is also part of the next. In the Book of Revelation the multitude before the throne still praises and worships God.
- Music differed from the temple to the synagogue to the house church.
- **Songs were often ‘written’ by individuals who had an encounter with God.**
- Music and singing is the reaction of somebody being filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:17).
- **The New Testament gives no prescription concerning the content of singing.**
- The New Testament gives no prescription as to the accompaniment of singing.
- Although the lyrics of a multitude of songs in the Old Testament are known, there are no melodies. Therefore there are no Biblical melodies.
- A variety of songs were sung in the New Testament. Although Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 refer to “Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”, it is not as clear as to what these terms referred to. It is concluded that the word “Psalms” technically refers to the Psalms and traditional Jewish songs; the word hymn refers to new songs derived from the Greek-Hellenistic world. But it is clear that in time these terms were used as synonyms.
- Singing had to be an action of the heart as well as an action of the mind. It includes not only emotions but also cognitive involvement (1 Cor 14:15)
- **Singing of a Psalm (maybe individual singing) was one of the gifts that one could bring to the worship service** (1 Cor 14:26).
- Believers who were glad were encouraged to sing a song of praise (ψαλλετω) to God (Ja 5:13).

The New Testament does not provide a model for church music today. What one can say is that different lines of singing existed alongside one another. Although there were great differences between some of these lines (e.g. the temple and the synagogue), these lines

seemingly existed without tension. The ease whereby different terms are used in the New Testament leaves the impression that the writers of the New Testament either took some information as a given or they didn't think that some of the detail regarding church music was such a big deal. With Lietzmann (1961:11) it can be concluded that at least three groups of songs existed in the New Testament church:

- Songs taken from the synagogues
- Songs with their roots in the worship of Israel
- New songs, focused on Christ.

With regards to the free song, the following could be concluded:

- The song of the believers differed from context to context. The song in the synagogue differed from the song in the house churches.
- A (new or old) song was one of the contributions that a believer could make within the house churches. These songs were above all mentioned as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus the repertoire of songs were expanded and enlarged from week to week as members contributed a new song. In such a way new (and certainly contemporary) songs continuously found their way into the house churches. These songs were sung in addition to the fixed repertoire of songs already available to congregations.

3. MUSIC IN THE EARLY CHURCH

This era can be divided in two smaller eras, namely the era before the state religion (313-392 AD) and the era of the state religion (after 325 AD). Hasper (1987:18) remarks that “[v]an de eerste eeuw af heeft de Kerk in aansluiting aan die Synagoge coor zang in de eredienst zowel de Psalmen Davids als ook vrije liederen gebruikt. De vrije liederen waren of uit de Schrift genomen of op de Schrift gegrond”.

3.1 The pre-Nicene era

Information about worship and especially singing in the 300 years after Christ is very scarce and vague. Strydom (1991:45) mentions the following sources of information on this period:

- The Didache
- First letter of Clemens
- Letter of Pliny
- First apology of Justin, the Martyr

- Disciplina Arcani
- Hyppolytus

In this regard Strydom (1991:47) mentions that the *Sanctus* (Is 6:3) was already mentioned in the *Didache*⁴ as part of liturgy. When Pliny the Younger wrote to Emperor Trajan about the Christians, he remarks: "...that they were wont to assemble on a set day before dawn and to sing a hymn among themselves to the Christ, as to a god..." (Bettenson 1993:3-4, Hasper 1987:12, Wilson-Dickson 1992a:39). A fragment of a Christian hymn (Greek) was discovered in the Egyptian city Oxyrhynchus with a part of a hymn, which contains a call to all creation to praise the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Hasper 1987:12-13). In this regard Strydom (1991:48) concludes that Christians sang when they met and that their singing was probably antiphonal. The Apology of Justin the Martyr (Bettenson 1993:3-4) reveals that the worship service had two parts: the service of the Word and the service of the Table. Strydom (1991:49) concludes with regards to the service of the Word that "Psalms en himnes het waarskynlik 'n plek gehad."

Due to the horrific persecutions under the Roman emperors like Nero, the Christians started to flee to Greece, Egypt, Syria and all surrounding countries. As they fled, the Christian faith spread to all these places. By 200 AD, under the influence of Bishop Irenaeus (about AD 130-200), who "insisted that salvation was only possible through the one church and outside that church there can be no salvation" (STRUIK 1988:26), the Christian leaders tried their best to promote and strengthen a catholic or universal church (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:38; STRUIK 1988:26). Because of the persecutions and difficult situation of many of the congregations, the ideal of a universal, catholic church became even greater. Persecution and heresy only strengthened this ideal (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:39). "The early church fathers strove to define the faith in order to excommunicate heretics [...] by establishing agreements on forms of worship, selecting and canonising the writings of the New Testament and by proposing a creed which all Christians could confess" (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:39).

The use of instrumental music and dancing in debauchery from the fourth century in the Roman world led to a **negative valuation of instrumental music in the worship service** (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:39). It can be concluded from this that accompaniment or at least

⁴ "The Didache ... is the common name of a brief early Christian treatise (dated by most scholars to the late first/early second century). "*The Didache of the Twelve Apostles*" had been written and widely disseminated by about the year 100, and became increasingly important in the second and third Christian centuries. It is an anonymous work not belonging to any single individual, and a pastoral manual "that reveals more about how Jewish-Christians saw themselves and how they adapted their Judaism for gentiles than any other book in the Christian Scriptures." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Didache>, 31 Jul 2010)

certain forms of accompaniment would have been avoided in certain eras and especially in certain places or situations due to its association with the sinful world. Barnard (1981:169) concludes that the practice of singing in the Synagogue was continued in the early church, and that Psalms had high priority as songs in the early church. Barnard (1981:169) remarks that the singing of Psalms played a great role until the fourth century when the role of the hymn increased; especially in the Eastern Church. Adam (1985:81) remarks that Psalm-singing changed from responsorial, where the choir or cantor alone sang the ongoing text while the community sang unchanging and repeated responsoriums (*refrains*) - like *amen* or *alleluia* or “Glory be to the Father....” Later it developed into **antiphonal psalmody** (two altering choirs). Gelineau (1978:445) states that there are no real proof that the early Christians sang Psalms. Marcion (85-160), Paul of Samosata (200-275), Arius (256-336) and others used the hymn as vehicle for their theological campaigns (cf. Fourie 2000:135). When Paul of Samosata was dismissed as bishop of Antioch in 268, he replied: “En hoeveel psalmen en liederen, door gelovige broeders, van het begin af gemaakt, bezingen niet het Woord Gods, Christus, waarbij zij Hem God noemen” (Hasper 1987:12). The church, in the form of a contra-procession (cf. Fourie 2000:136, Strydom 1991:60), also utilized the hymn until the Council of Laodicea (360-381) **prohibited all non-Scriptural hymns** (cf. Strydom 1991:60). Hymns like Fos Hilaron were preserved (Strydom 1991:60, Fourie 2000:136).

3.2 The Nicene era

Emperor Constantine (AD272-337) brought a fundamental change in the political status of Christians (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:40, cf. Wegman 1976:49). Strydom (1991:54) distinguishes four great decisions that were made in this time that impacted the church:

- The *edict of Toleration* (issued in 311 AD by Galerius) which ended the Diocletian persecution of Christians (cf. Wegman 1976:49).
- The *edict of Milan* or *Edictum Mediolanensium* (signed by Constantine and Licinius in 313 AD) guaranteed freedom of religion for Christians.
- The *Council of Nicea* (called together by Constantine in 325 AD) gathered to discuss ecumenical problems. It was the first time an emperor called the church together and used the power of state to give effect to the Council’s orders.
- The Christian faith became *state religion* under emperor Theodosius (379-395) (cf. Wegman 1976:50).

After the vision Constantine had before the battle with Maxentius, and his following conversion to Christianity, he issued the Edict of Milan in 313 AD and thus granted

Christians the freedom of worship. In 328 AD he built the well-known city Constantinople, named after himself. Constantinople became one of the bastions of Christianity with other cities like Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria and Rome. Christianity became state religion; not only did it receive a new status but also a new character. Worship services were conducted “in splendid new buildings and with great ceremony” (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:40, cf. Adam 1985:81). Wegman (1976:50) remarks that “[v]ervolgens kon in deze publiek erkende Kerk een eredienst tot ontwikkeling komen, die een lust was voor het oog”. Christians in different countries started to worship in different ways and in different languages: Greek was no more the universal church language. Different liturgical traditions arose. Western churches started to use Latin as language for worship; Eastern churches mostly used the vernacular - Arabic, Greek or Coptic.

The *Apostolic Constitutions* is a collection of eight books dating from the late fourth century with “treatises on Early Christian discipline, worship, and doctrine, intended to serve as a manual of guidance for the clergy, and to some extent for the laity” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apostolic_Constitutions, 2 July 2009). The Apostolic Constitutions mentions clearly that readings from Scripture were alternated with Psalmsinging (Strydom 1991:55). Maxwell (1982:29) notes that the *psalmus responsorius* at this stage was already ‘n fixed part of the liturgy. Singing was still in the form of **Sprechgesang** with a certain verse of the Psalm being used as a **antiphon** by the congregation. This kind of singing was a form of chanting and closely related to the psalmodizing (*psalmodiërende*) singing of the Synagogue. The Apostolic Constitutions prescribed certain Psalms for certain days of the week as well as for certain feasts (cf. Strydom 1991:56). Maxwell (1982:29) indicates that the *Kyrie eleison* (*Lord have mercy*) was already imbedded in the litany (prayer) of the congregation.

At this stage, **psalms, hymns and antiphons were already part of church singing** (Deddens 1976:96). These were already part of the morning service as well as the afternoon service. The Apostolic Constitutions mentions the following as part of church music in the fourth century (cf. Strydom 1991:59):

- Psalm-singing
- *Gloria in excelsus* (Lk 2:14)
- The *Sanctus* (Is 6:3)
- *Nunc Demittis* (Lk 2:29-32)

The era after Constantine gave birth to a new way of singing, later known as the Ambrosian

hymn (cf. Reich 2003:766). Already before the time of Ambrose (337-397) a Syriac gnostic, Bardaisan (154-222) used “metrical hymns of great poetical and melodious beauty” (Frost 1962:4) to give expression to their thoughts. The **Ambrosian hymn** was characterized by a repetition of the same strophic structure, each stanza having the same number of syllables and the same melody (the stanzas were *isostrophic* and *isosyllabic*). The great heretic of that time, Arius (256-336), a presbyter from Alexandria, used songs to proclaim his theological convictions. When confronted by Theodosius the Great, they started street marches and processions, singing their philosophy (cf. Strydom 1991:60). John Chrysostom (347-407), archbishop of Constantinople, reacted with contra-processions, while singing hymns. This led to the inception of **numerous new songs (hymns)** like *Fos hilaron* (cf. Strydom 1991:60). “It is estimated that about 35 000 hymns in all were composed” (Adam 1985:82). The Council of Laodicea intervened and prohibited all *idiotikoi psalmoi* or *psalmi idiotici* (private psalms or compositions by individuals in imitation of the Biblical Psalter (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gloria_in_Excelsis_Deo, 7 July 2009) in the worship service (cf. Strydom 1991:60), **indicating that these new songs were sung in the worship service**. Hasper (1987:18) describes these *psalmi idiotici* as “vrije liederen die de grondwaarheden van het Christendom voor de geest der minder ontwikkelde bevattelijk maakten”.

The term ***kontakia*** (from the Greek *kontakion* or *kontakos*) became used for a specific “form of hymn performed in the Eastern Orthodox Church” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kontakia>, 2 July 2009). The *kontakia* referred to “‘n versameling liederen wat as ‘n soort poëtiese preek deur die priester gesing is, met herhalende refrein, waarskynlik gesing deur die gemeente” (Strydom 1991:60). In course of time the music **developed into a music too difficult for the congregation and therefore trained choirs had to sing on behalf of the congregation**. In this way the *Akolouthia* (from the Greek: *akoloutheo*) and *Canon* (a structured hymn used in a number of Eastern Orthodox services) were introduced in the Eastern church (cf. Strydom 1991:61).

The development in the East had an influence on the tradition in the West, mainly through the exposure of Hilary of Poitiers (300-368), while being banished to Phrygia, where the anti-Arianism hymns had a great influence on him. But it was Ambrose (340-397), bishop of Milan, who composed several hymns with four-line stanzas (cf. Kloppenburg 1998:267); some of them still known today (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambrose>, 7 July 2009):

- *Deus Creator Omnium*
- *Aeterne rerum conditor*
- *Jam surgit hora tertia*

- *Veni redemptor gentium* (a Christmas hymn)
- *Te Deum*
- *Jam Christus astra ascendante*

Wilson-Dickson (1992b:36) refers to the first four of these as the authentic work of Ambrose. This kind of singing received the name **Ambrosian Hymn**. They were composed in metrical stanzas unlike biblical poetry and didn't use words directly from Scripture. Van der Leeuw (1948:40) describes this kind of music as the "vrije beweging der polyphone muziek" in contrast to the "cantus firmus, d.i. onveranderd gezang" of Gregorian chant (cf. Müller 1990a:36). "The hymn remains in regular use in the Catholic Church in the Office of Readings found in the Liturgy of the Hours, and in thanksgiving to God for a special blessing (eg. the election of a pope, the consecration of a bishop, the canonization of a saint, the profession of a religious, the publication of a treaty of peace, a royal coronation, etc) either after Mass or Divine Office or as a separate religious ceremony" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Te_Deum, 7 July 2009). **Thus the Hymn had the function of expressing something in some situation that was not part of the ritual of the normal worship service.** In any unique, local situation or event, hymns were used as means of singing. It's important to note that the hymn started fulfilling a role that was not covered by the formal song of the church. Ottermann (1993:74) remarks that the antique church took over the Greek hymn only from the fourth century onwards due to the dangers of association.

3.3 Conclusions

- Although Gregorian chant was commonly accepted and utilized in the early church, especially due to the fact that it was sung in the monasteries about nine times a day (as indicated by the Rule of St. Benedict), it did not satisfy all needs.
- When Arius utilized the hymn as carriers of his dogma, it had great influence and effect on the people, illustrating the power of the hymn to convey true or false dogma.
- The church had to react with hymns within their unique context. There was power in the use of hymns. Thousands of new hymns were composed to address the context and situation. **Thus the church reacted to the crisis by utilizing a similar form of music.**
- Hymns also served a second function: they were used in situations that were not "covered" or included in the formal day to day song of the church. Hymn-singing became popular; the Council of Laodicea (360-381) had to intervene and prohibit all *idiotikoi psalmoi* (Barnard 1981:189, Strydom 1991:60, Fourie 2000:136). From the

fact that a Council had to intervene, one can conclude that hymns were used widely.

- It is argued here the popularity of the *psalmi idiotici* illustrates the **need for an easier song carrying the central truths of the Bible (Christendom) in a way that could be digested by a large group or population within the church.** Hasper (1987:18) rightly indicates that the free hymn was often expelled from liturgical use.

4. The Middle Ages

The middle-ages indicates a period of nearly 1000 years and roughly starts with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the election of Pope Leo the Great (ca. 400-461). The start of the Reformation as well as the rise of humanism marks the end of the Middle ages (cf. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MiddleAges>, 7 Jul 2009). The term *Middle Ages* or *medium aevum* dates from the 15th century, indicating the period between “their new classical age and the original one” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:29). This era was introduced by a slow decline of Roman control and growing control and power on the side of the church. By the end of the 5th century, Roman institutions were crumbling. This era is also known as the *medieval period*. It is often divided into the early, high and late Middle Ages.

Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) could be credited as the one who initiated the major changes in the beginning of the Middle Ages (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992b:31; STRUIK 1988:220). Strydom (1991:63) notes that many modern scholars agree that Pope Gregory the Great was not solely responsible for the whole renewal process; rather it was the culmination of a long process associated with him. In his effort to strengthen the Roman Church, he strove for **uniformity in the style of church music** (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:43). In this strive *Gregorian Chant* or *Cantus Romanus* played a major role. “The different Latin liturgies (Mozarabic, Gallican, Ambrosian, Celtic) were gradually absorbed into the Roman, with an inevitable effect on the melodies that characterized them” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:32). It falls to doubt whether Gregorian Chant can really be attributed to pope Gregory the Great (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992b:32; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregorian_chant#History, 7 July 2009). Pope Gregory I promoted a unified manner of singing by establishing Roman *schola cantorum* everywhere, with the result that “Germanic versions of choral singing persisted for centuries” (Adam 1985:83).

Gregorian chant could be described as “onberymde, resiterende Latynse Psalmsang” (Strydom 1991:64) or “eentonige sing-praat of dreunsang” (Calitz 2004:24). Two simple concepts lay at the foundation namely “the heightened speech of cantillation and the free

composition of songs setting scripture or sacred poetry” (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:55). Van der Leeuw (1948:40) describes Gregorian Chant as “chorale muziek, dwz. eenstemmige koorzangen, welke melodieën zich zonder de ons bekende maatindeling, dock in een bepaald rythme en - gewoonlik - in de ons reeds bekende kerktoon-aarden bewegen”. Hasper (1987:19) adds that it was always done without accompaniment.

At the beginning of the fourth century, Egeria, a Spanish nun, attended a worship service in Jerusalem while on a pilgrimage. Schuman (2004:141) dates Egeria’s visits between 381 and 384 or early fifth century. She describes the worship service: “And hymns and antiphons are sung; and after each hymn or antiphon a prayer is offered” and “among all these details this is very plain, that Psalms or antiphons are always sung; those at night, those in the morning, and those through the day....” (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:45, see also Wegman 1976:65, Schuman 2004:141). Although Egeria often referred to psalms and hymns that were appropriate for the day, she did not give the detail (Schuman 2004:144). Wilson-Dickson (1982a:46) concludes: “The reference to hymns here may mean a distinct type of music somewhat different from Psalms - such as the hymns of Ambrose of Milan”. Wegman (1976:65) notices the singing of “morgenhymnen” (Ps 148-150) and the “vesperhymnen” (Ps 130-141). Wegman (1976:66) describes singing as “een vaste psalmreeks, aangepast aan het moment van de dag; bekende hymnische teksten; korte responsen en aanroepingen, die door de gelovigen gemakkelijk kunnen worden onthouden”. From the description of Egeria, it can be concluded that Psalms as well as hymns played an important role in liturgy; the congregation took part and responsorial singing had an important role (cf. Calitz 2004:25). Egeria referred in this regard to the “ymni”; Wegman (1976:67) concludes “het is waarschijnlijk, dat hier sprake is van *gezang* in de eredienst”.

Gregorian chant had much in common with the Old Testament way of singing in the Temple (*Sprechgesang*) or the *cantillation* of the Synagogue. Wilson-Dickson (1992b:35) remarks that the Middle Ages owed more to the Synagogue. Melodies were based on the eight different modes of Greek music - in later times often called *church mode* (Strydom 1991:64). These modes can be compared to the two modes used in Western music, namely the *major* and the *minor*. Worship in the Middle Ages was done without accompaniment. (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992b:36).

The new status of the Christian faith and religion was not acceptable to all. Many believers proposed “extreme ascetism and worldly deprivation” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:32). Antony (about 251-356) was probably the first person to turn to a life of deprivation (Cunningham & Egan 1996:145). Benedict of Nursia (480-547) had the greatest influence on the shaping of

the monastic tradition; some elements were even continued in the protestant churches. A monk's day consisted of a series of services (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:33):

- *Matins* (morning) - before daybreak
- *Lauds* (praises) - at dawn
- *Prime* (at the first hour) - at 6 am
- *Terce* (third hour) - at 9 am
- *Sext* (sixth hour) - at mid-day
- *None* (ninth hour) - at 3 pm
- *Vespers* (evening) - about 6 pm
- *Compline* (completion) - end of the day

Wilson-Dickson (1992b:33) states that "these services are linked together by their common basis in the biblical psalms, in such a way that the whole cycle of 150 psalms is sung every week". During the Matins nine Psalms were sung. During each of the Lesser Hours (6 am – 3 pm) a hymn, as well as three psalms were sung. Hymns could be described here in the broader definition of Augustine as a song of praise to God. One of the major differences regarding a hymn was that it did not use the words of Scripture. It was freely composed in regards of music and words (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992b:35).

In the next few hundred years, many new forms of singing developed in response to Gregorian chant.

- **Cantillation** refers to the chanting of Biblical verses or passages in the Synagogue where a form of heightened speech was used. "At its simplest, it translates into musical shapes which follow the natural rise and fall of the voice when reading" (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:36). Cantillation reflects the grammatical shape of the text rather than the emotional meaning of the text. Four parts could be distinguished in the mode of the cantillation, namely the *intonation* (sung by the cantor or priest), the *tenor* (the note where the other singers will join in), the *mediant* (indicating the half-way point) and the *termination* (the end).
- **Antiphons** (from the Greek *anti-phone*, meaning 'sounding against') developed as a form of Psalm-singing in the Vespers and Mass. Antiphonal Psalmody could be described as "the singing or musical playing of psalms by alternating groups of performers" (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiphons>, 8 Jul 2009). This form was often used in the psalm-singing of the Lesser Hours. An antiphon is a short refrain freely composed, deriving its words from one of the psalms or from another passage of Scripture (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:35). These refrains were sung as an antiphon in

response to a Psalm. Thousands of these short refrains were composed in the Middle Ages.

- A **Melisma** is the “singing of a single syllable of text while moving between several different notes in succession” in contrast with syllabic music where every syllable is sung to one note (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melisma>, 8 July 2009). This developed in time as a custom to sing the last syllable (*jah*) of “Ha-le-lu-jah” as different syllables; sometimes even up to 45 syllables and notes (cf. Calitz 2004:27). This was named a **sequence** (*sequentiae*). For the first time the music was not only the carrier of the words but **an expression in itself**. Augustine referred to this kind of singing as a *jubilus* - a form of jubilation in the Lord (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:68). He described it as “jubel alz zingen van het hart, wat niet met woorden kan worden gezegd” (cf. Soeting 1978:3). In course of time new words were combined with the melodies to form new ‘songs’. The **more than 6000 sequences** composed in this time gives witness to the popularity of sequences in church music; so much so that the Council of Trent (1562 AD) banned all sequences except five from use in the worship service (Strydom 1991:67). Some sequences are used even until now (cf. Strydom 1991:67): *Veni, sancte Spiritus, Victimae paschale laudes, Stabat mater dolorosa, et cetera*. Important is Strydom’s remark that these songs were sung on feast days by the congregation; this was their only contribution in the worship service (Strydom 1991:67). **The popularity of the sequences emphasizes the growing hunger of the congregation to take part in die song of the church; something that has been withheld from them for many centuries.**
- From about 900 AD the use of **tropes** (from the Greek word *tropos*, meaning to alter or change) became general. New melodies that were created through melismas were combined with new syllabic texts, thus creating new songs. These new “songs” (tropes) were often sang before or after the original song as an addition to or explanation of the original song (e.g. the *Quem Quaeritis*). Strydom (1991:68) notes that “baie van die gewilde geestelike volksliedere, spesifiek die Kers- en Paasliedere, van die laat-Middeleeue was eintlik troperinge met ‘n volkse karakter en in die volkstaal”. Three types of tropes can be distinguished: new melismas without text, new text to an existing melisma and a new verse or verses consisting of text and music ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trope_\(music\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trope_(music)), 14 Jul 2009). *Troping* became an **important way of adding one’s own voice to the existing body of liturgical music**. Wilson-Dickson (1992b:48) remarks that “troping was one of the most favored ways of adorning Christian music and of heightening its solemnity.”

- The Middle Ages, especially after Charles the Great, saw the birth of a multitude of **Latin hymns**. Strydom (1991:68) mentions the work of Petrus Diaconus and Rhabanus Maurus in this regard. Strydom (1991:69) remarks that the monastery mysticism created the ideal space for the birth of hymns.
- Strydom (1991:69) mentions that in the late Middle Ages, multitudes of spiritual folk-song (*geestelike volksliedere*) were composed; most of these songs were Christmas and Easter songs. Van Andel (1968:51) saw two possible reasons for this, namely the level of spiritual decay as well as the increasing tendency towards nationalism and an interest in one's own language. A new tendency to spiritualize secular love songs arose.

One of the major beacons of the Middle Ages was the development of a notation system or modern musical notation, as known today. Guido D'Arezzo (c995-1050), an Italian monk, developed a new system whereby one could sing through sight-reading. That means that the melody of a song could (for the first time) be captured on paper. All methods of notation up to this point, where signs were placed above the text, could only remind the singer of what he already knew. In Guido's system, each sign stood for an actual note. The importance of this development can hardly be over-estimated. It opened the door for new kinds of music that could be carried on from generation to generation. For the first time a piece of music was fixed in a certain sense and the author of the music could be remembered with that music. Wilson-Dickson (1992a:73) remarks that with the improvement of the notation system came also a loss where performers could be less and less creative.

The development of the modern notation system opened the door for new genres of music and singing in the worship service. The major shift after the system of notation was a shift towards polyphony in the church's "pursuit of the 'embellishment of harmonic art'" (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:53). The following must be mentioned in this regard:

- **Organum** refers to "a plainchant melody with at least one added voice to enhance the harmony" (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organum>, 14 July 2009). In some instances, a bass voice could be added parallel to the original chant. More complicated organums consisted of two parts with more independent from one another, often with interpolations and additions (e.g. the Winchester Troper).

- The **motet** (from the French *mot*, meaning 'word'), implied that new words were added to the second, third or fourth voice of the organum, thus implicating a form of troping. Motets became especially popular in secular ceremonies. In the course of time motets found their way into church. A Papal bull was issued by Pope John XXII in 1323 banning the use of motets from the worship service:

Certain disciples of the new school [...] prefer to devise new methods of their own rather than to singing in the old way. Therefore the music of the Divine Office is disturbed with these notes of quick duration. Moreover, they [...] deprave it with discants and sometimes pad out the music with upper parts made out of profane songs. The result is that they often seem to be losing sight of the fundamental sources of our melodies in the Antiphoner and Gradual [...] The consequence of all this is that devotion, the true aim of worship, is neglected, and wantonness, which ought to be shunned, increases. We hasten to forbid these methods....

(Wilson-Dickson 1992b:52-53).

- The **conductus** (from Latin *conducere*, to escort or lead) refers to a new method of singing where a totally new song was written in one or more voices, with all voices singing the same text. The conductus was performed or sang while the lectionary was carried from its place of safekeeping to the place from which it was to be read. The conductus consisted of a *tenor* (the main melody) and a second melody against the tenor, with the possibility of a third and fourth voice against that.

At the end of the 13th century, polyphonic music found its way to the Ordinary of the Mass; leading to the unchanging texts of the centuries being changed and sang in a polyphonic way by the choir. The 14th century distinguished between *Ars nova* (new art) against *Ars antiqua* (old art). Adams (1985:83) remarks that "The links between polyphony, on the one hand, and Gregorian chant and liturgy, on the other, were gradually weakened, and the "new art" found increasing favor at worldly celebrations." Pope John XXII published the Constitution *Docta Sanctorum Patrum*, condemning excesses and called for a return to the original liturgical music.

4.1 Conclusions

- From a musical perspective, The Middle Ages were characterized, by the evolution of church music to a high level of Gregorian chant conducted by trained choirs. From a liturgical perspective, it was a process of devolution, taking away the task and privilege of the congregation to take part in singing. The latter illustrates again the **danger of liturgical music raising to such a high standard (of art song) that it becomes removed from the ordinary believer and church member.**
- Kloppenburg (1998:266) indicates that the hymns of the Middle Ages serve as a mirror for the theology and faith experience of the Middle Ages, with elements like personal piety, “Mariadevotie” and a dogmatic re-thinking about the Trinity.
- Liturgical music was never static but always in a process of change, growth and renewal. **Every new form of music was followed by another new form**, creating new possibilities (and dangers) for church music. Church authorities had to intervene at various stages in history.
- The melismas and sequences played a role in giving the congregation at least a part where they could join in. For a long time it was the only song they sang in “church”, explaining the popularity of the melismas and sequences.
- The development of the modern notation system again led to great heights in the musical value and standard of church music; unfortunately it again took away the participation of the congregation. As in the time of the Old Testament and New Testament Temple, **singing became the role and responsibility of trained choirs, degrading the congregation to passive onlookers.** This was just another example of the tension between artsong and folk-song, a tension that existed from the Temple to this moment.

Wilson-Dickson (1992b:55) rightly summarizes the Middle Ages thus: “Behind the Christian music of the Middle Ages lie spiritual and musical developments in sharp contrast. The musical changes were creative, stimulating and positive, but they occurred alongside a depressing and shameful spiritual decline”. This contrast between the spiritual and musical value of music in the Middle Ages clearly shows that **music of high musical value does not necessarily contribute to spiritual growth. Church music has spiritual value when ordinary church members can partake in it.** Often music of a lower or even low standard contributed more to spiritual growth (eg. the Revival songs of the 1800's).

5. THE REFORMATION

In many ways, John Wycliffe (1320-1384) was seen as the precursor to the Protestant Reformation. Wycliffe was followed by others who had similar dreams for the church; Jan Hus, Menno Simons, Philipp Melanchthon, Thomas Müntzer and others. The Reformation itself started when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the All Saints' Church in Wittenberg (1517). Although the Reformation was meant to be a reform-movement within the Roman Catholic Church, it led to a series of schisms. The atmosphere of the Renaissance as well as the invention of the mechanical printing press played a major role in the widespread acceptance of the Reformation. Printed pamphlets and tracts helped in spreading the news and doctrines of the Reformation in a short time. Obviously the Reformation had a huge impact on the role and character of church music. The Reformation is considered to have ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestant_Reformation, 21 July 2009).

5.1 Martin Luther (1483-1546)

“Luther’s background as an Augustinian monk had taught him the value of a devotional life of prayer and also gave him a deep love of music” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:60). He was familiar with the traditional Gregorian chant as well as the polyphonic music of his day. Söhngen (1961:18) wrote “das Luther [...] der ganzen Fülle der Musik: dem Gemeindelied, dem Chorgesang, dem Orgelspiel und dem Altargesang im Gottesdienst Raum schafft, und auch freie geistliche Dichtung für den Gemeindegang zulässt.” Hasper describes Luther’s song as both ecumenical or catholic in positive sense.

Luther proposed a dualistic system through his *Formulae Missae* (1523) and the German Mass (1526). Luther was of opinion that the *Formulae Missae* (Latin Mass) could be used “in the cathedrals and abbeys where such solemnity was appropriate and where the majority of the participants understood the language” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:60). The Latin Mass could include the following (Strydom 1991:86):

- Introit Psalms in their original Psalm-form
- The *Kyrie* followed by the *Gloria*
- The Gradual and *Alleluia*
- Singing of the Credo
- The *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*
- The *Agnus Dei*

- Optional singing

Luther encouraged the singing of as many songs as possible by the whole congregation in the vernacular.

The German Mass, on the other hand, was radical different from the Latin Mass (cf. Strydom 1991:86). The emphasis in the German Mass was on the local congregation where everybody could understand the language of the songs, readings and prayers. For this reason all the Latin parts were replaced by **German chorals**. Often the worship services contained a mixture of German and Latin where the congregation sang in German and the choir responded in Latin (cf. Strydom 1991:86). The formal type of the German Mass still used Gregorian chant at its basis, although Luther suggested that polyphonic music could be used as adornment at certain parts. The major difference was that the whole worship service was a corporal act and the whole congregation took part. Luther emphasized the participation of the congregation in music as well. **Thus singing was again congregational singing** (cf. Strydom 1991:90). A wealth of new hymns were written by Luther himself (Cross & Livingstone 1997:810). It is clear that the German songs and chorales were essentially part of the liturgy.

Hasper (1987:23) concludes that Luther had mainly two kinds of vocal music:

- Psalmody of the text of psalms
- Polyphonic singing of choir or congregation

In course of time all the Ordinarium pieces were translated into and replaced with German chorales (Strydom 1991:87).

- *Kyrie: Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit.*
- *Gloria: Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr.*
- *Credo: Wir glauben all an einen Gott.*
- *Sanctus: Jesaja dem Propheten.*
- *Agnus Dei: Christe, du Lamm Gottes, or O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig.*
- *Pater noster: Vater unser im Himmelreich* (Omitted in some sources like http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_Mass, 31 July 2010).

It is noteworthy that Luther included German songs at certain points, as well as the whole corpus of 150 Psalms, especially during the Greater Hours (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:61). The following were included by Luther in the worship service:

- His German Mass included some **German songs as well as Gregorian chant and Ambrosian hymns translated into German.**

- The **150 Psalms** were included in the Daily Office, especially during the Greater Hour.
- Hours of Vespers, Compline and Matins (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:61).
- **Melodies familiar to ordinary people** (folk-song).
- **Hymns written by Luther himself.**

Strydom (1991:89) distinguishes the following categories of songs in the Lutheran choral:

- Ordinarium pieces (Ordinary of the Mass)
- Song based on a Psalm or part of Scripture (e.g. *Ein feste Burg* (Psalm 46), *Aus tiefer Not* (Psalm 130), *et cetera*). Only 6 Psalms are attributed to Luther (Hasper 1987:24). Luther thus used the meaning of a text and not necessarily the exact words of the text. Hasper (1987:24) remarks that the psalms were sung in by means of psalmodizing. In course of time the psalmodizing of the psalms fell in disuse.
- Translations of Latin hymns, sequences and antiphons
 - *Veni, creator Spiritus: Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist*
 - *Veni, redemptor gentium: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*
 - *Media vita in morte sumus: Mitten wir im Leben sind*
- **Free hymns** (thus paraphrasing parts of Scripture)(cf. Wegman 1976:252)
 - *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her*
 - *Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ*
 - *Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*
 - *Nun freut euch lieben Christen g'mein*

Wilson-Dickson (1992b:62) remarks that singing in the Roman liturgy was still closely related to Gregorian Chant and that the singing of the congregation was mainly unison singing without accompaniment. Polyphonic pieces were done by the choir as an adornment. The music of the songs were either borrowed from the Gregorian chant and old Latin hymns with its focus on *Sprechgesang (musica ecclesiastica)*, or from the world and context of folk-song (*musica vulgaris*) (cf. Strydom 1991:90). **Again the combination of profane and sacral is obvious.** Organs were mainly used to support the choir in their polyphonic singing in contrast the unison and unaccompanied singing of the congregation.

Strydom (1991:87) indicates that the Gradual, which was sung after the reading of the Epistle, as a responsorial Psalm were replaced by the Gradual as a chorale. The Gradual was often sing in alternation (*alternatim praxis*) between the congregation and the choir. This became the climax of the Lutheran worship service. In 1587, forty five Gradual

chorales had already been composed. Harnoncourt (1974:299) remarks that "[t]he sources justify the assumption that in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries German hymns were widely and enthusiastically used in the life of the communities. In the ritual accompanying the sermon and in the blessings on the major feasts and during pilgrimages specific hymns had an established place in the course of liturgy". Wilson-Dickson (1992b:62) notes that a stream of books followed in the years after Luther's 95 theses: *Etlich Christlich Lieder* (1524), *Enchiridion geistlicher Gesange* (1529), *Geistliche Lieder* (1533), *Geystliche Lieder* (1545) and others.

Wilson-Dickson (1992a:137) remarks that "the Lutherans managed to hold a precarious balance between the congregational singing characteristics of the early church and an expression of faith through the art-music of experts." With the Reformation (and the Renaissance) came the consciousness of the rhetorical power and character of music - something that was greatly explored in the Lutheran movement. **Music was thus not only used for its symbolic power, but also for its rhetorical power.** Selander (2001:204) states: "It is well known that according to Luther, congregational singing had an important place in spreading the Lutheran interpretation of the Christian faith". Strydom (1994:65) rightly remarks that Luther's approach was "eg eietyds, intiem verweefd met die lewe van elke dag" and there was **no dualism between sacral and secular music**. "Wegman (1976:252) summarizes: "Toch is de weg van Luther op den duur algemeen aanvaard: het valt op te maken uit de vele liedbundels, die in de verschillende kerken zijn geredigeert. Het Nederlandse Liedboek van 1973 is er tot nu het laaste bewijs van". Kruger (2002:31) concludes that congregational singing had a fourfold purpose for Luther, namely the singing of God's praises, promoting commitment and piety, proclaiming the gospel and educating the youth.

5.2 Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531)

In Switzerland, the Reformation was led by Ulrich Zwingli. It's important to note that the reformers differed greatly from one another regarding the worship service, sacraments (especially the Eucharist), society, church music and singing, *et cetera*. In contrast to Luther, Zwingli saw society as negative and evil; there was a **total breach between church and society**. This dualistic framework characterized Zwingli's work and music (cf. Strydom 1991:79).

Zwingli was himself a good musician, capable of playing the violin, harp, flute, dulcimer, hunting horn and other instruments (cf. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwingli>, 15 July 2009;

Wilson-Dickson 1992b:64). Zwingli was skilled in the *musica artificialis* (Strydom 1991:76). Zwingli composed a number of songs; some of them have been preserved to this day: the *Pestlied*, an adaptation of Psalm 65, and the *Kappeler Lied* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zwingli>, 15 July 2009; cf. Strydom 1991:76). These songs were not intended for use in the worship service.

Zwingli omitted music from the worship service. Some scholars feel that Zwingli was opposed to any form of music in church; others feel his opposition was mainly aimed at certain practices like the medieval Latin choral and priestly chanting and not at the hymns of evangelical congregations or choirs (cf. Luth 1984:51). Whatever the interpretation of his opposition: **for Zwingli music was not an essential part of the liturgy** (cf. Strydom 1991:79). He made no effort to encourage congregational singing (cf. Luth 1984:52). Fourie (200:172) even mentions that Zwingli did not only prohibit music in the worship service but also during family devotions. Strydom (1991:80) indicates that Zwingli expressed himself at more than one occasion negatively about singing and the organ in church. Zwingli saw music (and art) in church as a disturbance. Barnard (1981:284) remarks that the poor quality of music in the Roman worship service as well as its artificial form could have been the reason for Zwingli's reaction, but concludes: "Die eintlike rede lê egter veel dieper, naamlik in sy begeerte om stilte voor en rondom die Woord te skep. Niks mag die aandag daarvan afgelei het nie en die Woord moes met sy groot krag spreek."

Strydom (1991:81), on the other hand, notes that Zwingli reacted positively to the news that the congregation in Straatsburg started singing Psalms in German. He also declared in a sermon on Psalm 92:1 that congregational singing is "goed en prysenswaardig" (Luth 1984:51).

It's difficult to come to any clear conclusions regarding Zwingli's attitude towards song and music in the worship service. It would be mere speculation to say that Zwingli would have imported congregational singing if he lived longer (cf. Strydom 1991:82). From the fragments of information available, it is clear that Zwingli did not see church music and singing as a high priority; on the contrary, he did not make any effort to encourage congregational singing. On the other hand: one doesn't have enough information to say that Zwingli was principally opposed to congregational singing. Just like Calvin, and contrary to Luther, Zwingli avoided a blending of profane and sacral. It is also possible that Zwingli's musical skills in the *musica artificialis* influenced his opinion on congregational singing and gave him a low appreciation of his experience of church music.

5.3 John Calvin (1509-1564)

The Reformation in France was led by John Calvin. Two major phases can be distinguished in his ministry, namely Geneva and Strasbourg. One of Calvin's major contributions was the restoration of the singing of Psalms as a congregational act. In his famous work *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536) he speaks of the importance of the singing of Psalms⁵ (cf. Hasper 1987:11). Calvin wrote the following: "it is a thing most expedient for the edification of the church to sing some psalms in the form of public prayers by which one prays to God or sings His praises so that the hearts of all may be roused and stimulated to make similar prayers and to render similar praises and thanks to God with a common love." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genevan_psalter#Origins, 16 July 2009).

When Calvin arrived in Geneva with Farel, there was no such thing as congregational singing (cf. *La Maniere et Fasson*, cf. Kruger 2002:31). On 16 January 1537 Calvin and Farel presented their *Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte a Genève* (Articles on the Organisation of the church and its worship at Geneva)(cf. Kruger 2002:31). In this document they proposed that Psalmsinging be imported in the worship service as Paul encouraged singing. The proposal was refused. After being banned from Geneva, Calvin was invited to lead a congregation of French refugees in Strasbourg where he was greatly influenced by Martin Bucer. Here he was exposed to congregational singing of the German-speaking congregation which made a major impact on Calvin (Barnard 1981:316-317, cf. Fourie 2000:181).

In 1539 Calvin published his 1st Psalter (*Aulcuns pseaulmes et cantiques mys en chant*), containing 22 songs: 19 Psalms as well as hymns like the *Song of Simeon*, the *Ten Commandments* and the *Apostolic Creed* (cf. Strydom 1991:96). Melodies from the German-speaking congregation, including a few melodies composed by Matthias Greiter, were used. The Genevan Psalter also saw editions in 1543, 1551 and 1562.

Back in Geneva, Calvin published his Service Book (*La Forme des prieres et chantz ecclesiastiques*)(The Form of Prayers and Church Hymns) in 1542 (cf. Strydom 1991:96). This book contained the 12 Psalms of Clement Marot from the original Strasbourg Psalter as well as a few hymns that Calvin composed (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Calvin, 16 July 2009). Strydom (1991:96) states that this book contained 30 Psalms by Clement Marot and five by Calvin, as well as other hymns like the *Song of Simeon*, *Prayer of the Lord*, *Articles of*

⁵ At the end of Calvin's service book (1539) is written: "Psalme et chanson ie Chanteray a un sel Dieu, tant que seay" meaning I will sing Psalms and hymns to God as long as I live. (Hasper 1987:11)

faith, the Ten Commandments, et cetera. It is noteworthy that only some melodies were taken over from Strasbourg; some of them being modified. Some songs had new melodies, created by Calvin himself.

Calvin's *La Forme des prieres et chantz ecclesiastiques* was published in 1545 in Strasbourg (Strydom 1991:96). In this publication Calvin dealt more in detail with congregational singing. Lenselink (1959:158) concludes that Calvin was greatly influenced by Bucer's *Grund und Ursach* and his *Gesangbuch* (1542). The 49 Psalms of Clement Marot were included in this publication, as well as Marot's composition of "Our Father" and the Decalogue. It also included earlier hymns of Calvin like the *Song of Simeon* and the *Apostolicum*. Marot left Geneva and died soon after in 1544. He was succeeded by Theodore Beza (1519 – 1605) and later by Louis Bourgeois (c. 1510 to 1515 – 1559 or later).

A new publication of the Psalms of Marot appeared in 1549 in Lyons. "The powerful influence which the book exercised on contemporaries is universally acknowledged [...] They were sung in the court and in the city, and they are said, probably with exaggeration, to have done more than anything else to advance the cause of the Reformation in France" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clement_Marot, 16 July 2009). It contained the 49 Psalms of Clement Marot as well as a table for seventeen weeks (Sunday morning and evening, Wednesday). Every Psalm could thus be sung trice a year. The 1551-Psalter contained 125 Psalms and the 1562-Psalter contained all 150 Psalms. Brienen (1987:110-112) indicates that either the whole Psalm was sung, or parts thereof (six to ten verses) were sung continuous; thus singing through the Psalms every six months. The 1551 Psalter contained the 49 Psalters of Marot as well as 34 Psalms by Beza (the melodies were composed by Bourgeois). Some of the old melodies were changed and a few (12) new melodies were composed (cf. Strydom 1991:98). The complete Geneva Psalter appeared in 1562, containing 150 Psalms, the Decalogue and the Song of Simeon. It also contained 40 new melodies (cf. Strydom 1991:98).

A comparison between the liturgies in Strasbourg (*Pseudoromana* 1542) and Geneva (*La Forme* 1542) reveals great differences due to the different situations in these two congregations. The liturgy in Geneva contained only Psalm singing after the absolution and during the Eucharist.

The liturgy in Strasbourg, on the other hand made provision for more congregational singing:

- After the absolution (each strophe ending with the *Kyrie*)

- The singing of the first part of the *Decalogue*
- The singing of the second part of the *Decalogue*
- Singing of *Apostolicum* while preparing the table
- Singing of Psalm 138 while giving out the bread
- Song of Simeon

The great difference between the two liturgies, especially regarding the role of congregational singing, could be ascribed to the local situation of the two congregations; thus **indicating the influence of the context of a congregation on its liturgy**. Strydom rightly indicates that the congregation in Geneva has never been exposed to congregational singing and had to learn it *de novo* (1991:101). The singing in Geneva was thus:

- In unison
- Without accompaniment
- Psalms
- Only a few hymns (like the *Song of Simeon* and the *Apostolicum*)

With regards to alternating singing, Strydom (1991:101) suggests “dat dit onwaarskynlik is in die Genève-periode, alhoewel hy dit hoogswaarskynlik wel toegepas het tydens sy bediening in Straatsburg”. Wilson-Dickson (1992a:138) concludes that “Calvin also acknowledged music’s ‘well-nigh incredible power to move us whither it will’, but saw it as a serious treat to Christians who wished to keep on the narrow path of eternal life.” Hasper (1987:30-31) emphasizes Calvin’s love for church music and singing on the one hand, but also remembered the “bezorgdheid der kerkvaders die van een ‘dodelijk en satanisch gif’ spraken...” **Calvin’s preference was for vocal music in unison or polyphonic, but without accompaniment**. Kloppenburg (1998:278) differs and refers to the “streng-calvinistiese tradisie die slechts aan de eenstemmige gemeentezang een plaats toekent in de eredienst (aanvankelijk was selfs het gebruik van het orgel verboden)”.

Hasper (1987) concludes that Calvin was not against organ accompaniment in the worship service (as is often said); rather he reacted against the organ as an instrument of amusement within the worship service. Hasper summarizes it thus: “Calvijn liet tijdens de kerkdiensten het orgel zwijgen omdat het in de eredienst geen functie had en er ook niet geschikt voor was”. **The latter stands in sharp contrast to the use of the organ in many worship services as *the* (only) instrument of accompaniment.**

Hasper (1987:119) summarizes Calvin’s principle to liturgical singing as “volkszang in de

moedertaal". Calvin made great effort to include the Old Testament Psalms as the hymnal of the Christian congregation, because all human emotions are included in the Psalms Barnard (1981:81-82). According to Hasper (1987:121-122, cf. 1955:24), two principles could be learned from Calvin:

- The inclusion of the whole book of Psalms in the hymnal or repertoire of songs.
- The involvement of the congregation itself in the act of liturgical singing.

5.4 Reformation in the Netherlands

Following the reformations of Zwingli, Bucer and Calvin, new congregation grew in London and at the Frankenthal monastery in Pfalz in the 16th century. The Genevan Psalter was sung in German (translated by Andreas Lobwasser) in the local German congregation. Petrus Datheen published his Dutch metrical Psalter in 1566 (as part of his Service Book), containing a Dutch reproduction of the whole Genevan Psalter. The melodies were borrowed from the Genevan Psalter, and the words were direct translations of Marot's and Beza's French translations. The Dutch Psalter was revised in 1773, adding some non-paraphrased hymns to the collection. It was again revised in 1985. Congregational singing in Datheen's liturgy (1566) was as included (cf. Deddens 1986:130, Strydom 1991:110):

- Singing of the Decalogue (optional)
- Hymn preceding the sermon
- Singing of a Psalm

Strydom (1991:114) describes the development of the Dutch Psalter through the following stages:

- The *Souter-liedekens* (literally: Psalter-songs) appeared in 1540 as a Dutch Psalter, probably by the hand of Willem van Zuylen van Nijvelt. This Psalter was unique in the sense **that it used folk-song melodies** (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Souterliedekens>, 16 July 2009). At many songs it had the hint 'sung to the tune of...' and included the actual music (melody) with the texts. This Psalter (with its folk-song melodies) became very popular in Protestant and Catholic congregations (cf. Strydom 1991:114).
- *Jan Utenhove* published a formal Psalter in 1551; it was printed in London in 1566. This Psalter contained the following (Strydom 1991:115):
 - 150 Psalms

- *Song of Mary*
 - *Song of Zechariah*
 - *Song of Simeon*
 - The Ten Commandments
 - The Apostolic Creed
 - *Our Father*
 - Pilgrimage song (*Bedevaartslied*): “*O Godt die onse Vader bist*”
- Lucas de Heere (1534-1584) translated the hymns of Clement Marot and published a Psalter with 37 songs in 1565 (cf. Strydom 1991:115); this was banned five years later.
 - Petrus Datheen published the *Psalter of Datheen* in 1566. Some of the hymn tunes were borrowed from the Genevan Psalter and were (literal) translations of Marot’s and Beza’s French translations in order to express the unity with the church in France. This Psalter was approved by the Synods of Wesel (1568), Dordrecht (1574 and 1578); the synod of Dordrecht prescribed this Psalter. The Psalter of Dathenus contained the following (Strydom 1991:115):
 - Psalms
 - Canticles of Mary, Zechariah, and Simeon (songs from the Bible excluding the Psalms)
 - *Apostolicum*
 - Ten Commandments
 - Our Father prayer
 - “*Bedesang*” of Utenhove
 - Translation of Latin hymn (*Christe, qui lux es et dies* (*Christe, die du bist dach ende licht*)).

The Psalter of Datheen became very popular. Some scholars attributes the popularity of this Psalter to the person of Datheen (cf. Zevenbergen), others to Datheen’s use of the Genevan Psalter melodies, and still others to Datheen’s unique rhyming. This Psalter was sometimes referred to as “de stroefzingerende berijming van Datheen” (Strydom 1991:117). Van der Leeuw (1948:194) remarked: “Van Datheen’s berijming valt zeer weinig goeds te zeggen; onbeholpen versificatie, volstrekt gebrek aan rhythmisch besef, overvloedig gebruik van stoplappen en algehele afwezigheid van dichtelijke gave maken zijn berijming tot de grote ramp in de geschiedenis van het nederlandse kerk- en volkslied”. For some (unknown) reason, this Psalter was used

for more than two centuries (cf. Fourie 2000:226) and approved by synod after synod. This Psalter was revised in 1773 and non-paraphrased hymns were added to the collection. It was recently revised in 1985. Bosch (1996:60) concludes with regards to the spiritual song (in contrast to the church song):

Voor de zang thuis leenden zich andere liederen beter dan de Psalmen van Datheen. De sacrale sfeer van woorden, gecombineerd met een zangstijl die in kleine kring weinig tot zijn recht kwam, beperkte de functie van de oude Psalmen tot de samekomst van de gemeente. Op veel wêreldser melodieën konden liederen gezongen worden die een heel andere functie vervulden, geestelijke liederen waarmee mensen uiting konden geven aan het geloof dat in het leefde, of aan de bekommernis dat zij dat geloof niet op de juiste manier beleefden.

(Bosch 1996:60)

- Philips of Marnix, lord of Saint-Aldegonde (1538-1598), also famous for writing the text of the Dutch national anthem, translated the metrical Psalms into Dutch (*Het Boeck der Psalmen met de Hebreische spraecke in nederduytschen dichte op de ghewoonlycke francoische wyse overghisett* -1580)(cf. Fourie 200:221). His translation was much better than the translation of Datheen. Notwithstanding this, the translation of Datheen was used for many years as the 'official' Psalter because "[z]e ware a.h.w. geheiligd door het bloed van de martelaren die veelal met een door hem berijmde psalm op de lippen de dood waren ingegaan" (Van Andel 1968:151). The Psalter of Marnix "zorgde voor een nieuwe Psalmberijming die in dichterlijkheid dié van Dathenus verre oortrof, (ed: 1580, 1591, 1617), maar door allerlei omstandigheden niet werd ingevoerd, waardoor de kerken eeuwenlang met een verdrietige berijming bleven zitten" (Abraham Kuyper, quoted by Fourie 2000:222).

Strydom (1991:117) remarks: "Tog was daar vroeg alreeds vertoë vir die sing van vrye liedere, veral vanuit die Lutherse repertorium." Strydom (1991:118) mentions also that the synod of Middelburg (1581) made an exception by allowing the congregations in Overijssel to compose a collection containing "eenige der lichste psalmen dauids [...] ende daer by eenige oostersche vutgelesen gesangen, om alsoe de boeren aldaar te gewennen tot het gebruyck der psalmen dauids." The Synod of Dordrecht (1574) ruled that only the Psalter of Datheen ought to be sang in the worship service. The hymn of Utenhove was optional.

Luth (1986:161) mentions that synod after synod ordered that only Psalms ought to be sung. Luth concludes from this that other songs must have been sung and imported into the Worship Service. He mentions the existence of other songbooks in this time, and notes that songs like *Agnus Dei* (Decius), *O Lam Godes unschuldich* must have been sung in many congregation, especially in the northern parts of the country.

Wegman (1976:252) concludes: “De Reformatie heeft aan de psalmodie, de strofische vertaling van de psalm en aan het lied in de gemeente sterke impulsen gegeven. Het lied is niet alleen acclamatie, maar ook prediking”. This led to a new appreciation of the music as well as the text (Wegman 1976:252).

Bosch (1996:71) refers to a description⁶ from 1744 describing the decline in attention for the Christian song namely “...dat men zich bijna schaamt, in de gezelschappen en onderlingen bijeenkomsten, (inzonderheid in die der hedendaagsche jeugd) van het zingen van geestelijke liederen te spreken.” The growing need and urge for other songs that found expression through the hymnal *Evangelische Gezangen* must be seen against the background of the Psalter of Datheen and a growing dissatisfaction with church singing. Ministers like Ahasverus van den Berg played a great role in giving the hymn a place in church music (cf. Bosch 1996:356, Schuman 1998:166).

5.4.1 Conclusions:

The following remarks concerning singing in the Netherlands during the Reformation, could be made:

- “Een reformatische Gemeente is een *zingende* gemeente. Die Reformatie kent geen ‘stille mis’; in ieder kerkdienst word er gezongen voor Gods aangezicht”. (Kloppenburger 1998:266). Thus singing in the worship service was the calling and responsibility of the congregation. “Alle aanwezigen maken deel uit van the *performing audience*” (Kloppenburger 1998:266).
- Congregational singing was always done unaccompanied.
- With regards to the form of the reformed song, Kloppenburg (1998:266) summarizes “het is geen recitatief of aria, geen motet of cantata, maar het heft de eenvoudige, gemakkelijk te memoriseren opbouw van het volkslied: een strofisch gezang met een steeds herhaalde melodie en vaste ritmische structuur.”
- Singing was led by a precentor (cantor), indicating the pitch, rhythm and pace.

⁶ Bartholomeus van Leuvenig, *Stichtelijke gezangen en overdenkingen met eenige voorafgaande overdenkingen over christelijk zingen*, Amsterdam, 1744, aenm., xiv, xv.

- Often the singing was supported by school children.
- Singing took place before the worship service as well as after the sermon (often in the order that Datheen indicated)
- The purpose of singing was “lofprijsing, verkondiging en die versterking van die geloof” (Strydom 1991:117).
- The inclusion of hymns like the *Bedesang van Utenhove* and the translation of a Latin hymn (*Christe, qui lux es et dies (Christe, die du bist dach ende licht)*), **confirms the need for a songbook containing more than just the Psalms**. The inclusion of these hymns in the Psalter of Datheen opened the door for other hymns to find their way to future Hymnbooks in the reformed tradition.
- The decision of multiple synods that only Psalms ought to be sung indicates a **growing tendency to include other songs in the worship service**, as well as a possible tendency to neglect the Psalms.
- The exception concerning the inclusion of other songs by the synod of Middelburg indicates the **complexity of the local situation (or culture) in a ‘national’ hymnbook**.
- The **song sang at home differed greatly from the song of the church**. In the church the official Psalter of Datheen was sung; at home another kind of song was sung to a melody closer to life (cf. Bosch 1996:60).

5.5 Reformation in England

Henry VIII (1491-1547) made great effort to suppress the influence of the Protestant Reformation in England: he even commanded the burning of Lutheran books in Cambridge in 1522. The divorce of Henry VIII from Catharine of Aragon led to a break between England and the Roman Catholic Church as well, leading to a separate church (*The Church of England*) independent from Rome. Henry VIII made great effort to dissolve the monasteries which maintained the Roman traditions of liturgy and music. Only a few historical centers of Christian culture survived: these included the Chapel Royal at Windsor. Wilson-Dickson (1992b:67) remarks that “liturgical reforms did not entirely extinguish their medieval traditions, with the result that the style of worship in English cathedrals today has links with a much earlier past.” The dissolution of churches was continued by Edward VI (1547-1552). Royal visitations with far reaching consequences were made to all cathedrals “reducing its (the liturgy’s: CJC) great complexity, simplifying the visual spectacle and forbidding the use of the organ, the singing of Latin antiphons, responsories and sequences and sometimes reducing the numbers in the choir” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:68).

Miles Coverdale published the *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall songes* in 1539. The latter was greatly influenced by the Lutheran song (Fourie 2000:211). Fourie (2000:213, cf. Strydom 1991:117) mentions that because of the unfamiliarity of the Psalms as well as the shortage of song books, the practice of *lining out* where the schoolmaster read the verse where after the congregation sang the verse, became common. Fourie (2000:213) concludes that this (the lining out) “was die doodsteek vir die sang in Engeland sowel as in Skotland”.

Archbishop Cranmer of Canterbury (1489-1556) “was responsible for establishing the first doctrinal and liturgical structures of the Church of England” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cranmer>, 20 July 2009). He compiled the first part of the Book of Common Prayer (1549) that was made compulsory in all churches in England. The Book of Common Prayer made great changes to the worship service. Wilson-Dickson mentions that “the structure of the Mass, renamed Holy Communion, was maintained in a simplified form, though omitting the Gradual. In a further revision of 1552, however, the other items of the Proper were also cut. Musicians were therefore left with none of the texts that had received the most lavish musical attention. The Daily Office was ingeniously compressed into two services - Matins and Evensong.” The Matins contained the following (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:70):

- Canticles like the *Venite* (Psalm 95) and *Te Deum*
- The canticle sung at Lauds (the *Benedictus*)
- The *Quicumque vult* (*Athanasian Creed*)
- The Evensong contained the following:
 - Psalms
 - *Magnificat* (Song of Mary)
 - *Nunc Dimittis* (Song of Simeon)

In 1550 John Merbecke published his *book of Common praier noted*, containing multiple songs with “traditional music as their basis, but he chose to keep to the free rhythm of the words and to use a method of notation reminiscent of Gregorian chant” (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:70). Six years later, the *One and fiftie Psalmes of David* (1556) was published by Sternhold and Hopkins in Geneva; the last contained strong tunes without any harmonization.

While the worship service throughout England was stripped of much of its splendour of the

Middle Ages, Queen Elizabeth (1533-1603) and her succession enjoyed the richest liturgies with the finest musicians in the Chapel Royal. This contrast existed for many centuries.

6. POST-REFORMATION

To give a brief overview of the liturgical singing in the years after the Reformation, is in itself an impossible task. The chief focus of an overview in the Post-Reformation time is only to indicate and follow the major shifts and nuances in the development of liturgical singing or church song insofar as it will contribute to the discussion on the free song.

The Reformation, with its *Sola Scriptura*, as point of departure, brought about the idea that Christians could form their own views based on the Bible. This, in the course of time, led to a multitude of churches, denominations and even sects. In theological context, this led to three major streams (cf. Strydom 1994:96).

- *Rationalism*, where the thoughts and understanding of the thinking individual stand in the center.
- *Orthodoxy* (from Greek *orthodoxos* meaning 'having the right opinion'), where the emphasis was placed on the rational systematizing of the Christian dogma.
- *Pietism*, where the religious experience of the individual became the criterion for religious practice. Closely related to the Pietism, was the Puritan movement in England and Scotland, the *Nadere Reformasie* in the Netherlands and the Revivalism in America.

Strydom (1994:69) concludes that Rationalism and Pietism had much in common: the fact that man stands in the center (as in humanism); subjectivism that tends to absolutise; individualistic thoughts or feelings that tend to deny the greater Body and the relativisation of objective truths (Scripture). All of these together, had a remarkable influence of the place and development of church music. Wilson-Dickson (1992a:138) notes: "The beginning of the seventeenth century heralded an acknowledgment that the rhetorical power was of prime importance. The new music it created forms the foundation of present-day Western musical practice. The churches of the time accommodated those changes, but as usual not without difficulty."

Music was flowering in the great centers and Basilica's in Europe. Cases are noted where the worship service and even the Mass were interrupted to give visiting musicians the opportunity to perform with an organ or other instruments (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:141).

In the era of the Post-Reformation the **rhetoric power of music** was discovered and employed as never before. Wilson-Dickson (1992a:142) remarked that “through their music they aimed to exercise that emotional power over their audiences against which Calvin had so solemnly warned.”

The new kind of music where a single human voice was used in combination with certain instruments, was called **opera**. The last was called *stile rappresentativo* (a style representing human emotions) by the Roman Church and utilized in the worship service in spite of its secular origin and associations. Monteverdi’s 1610 setting of music for the Vespers is a good example hereof (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:142-143). “Montiverdi’s 1610 setting of music for Vespers is a spectacular example of the possibilities that can be explored by combining the older polychoral and contrapuntal musical styles with the ecstatic element of dance and the rhetoric of *stile rappresentativo*” (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:142). This came close to the ecstatic music of the Old Testament.

This new style of opera had an immense effect in the church. In contradiction to other forms of music, opera had the purpose to put across words with its emotional content and convey meaning like no other form of music. This form of music was ideal for communicating the stories and message of the Bible. It was often used to dramatize biblical narratives in the liturgy and even more outside the liturgy. From the end of the 17th century it became more and more secularized and performed outside the walls of the church. It became known as *oratorios* because of their first appearance at the Oratorio (prayer-hall)(cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:144). Sometimes oratorios were done in combination with a choir and a narrator. “Opera tends to deal with history and mythology, including age-old devices of romance, deception, and murder, whereas the plot of an oratorio often deals with sacred topics, making it appropriate for performance in the church” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oratorios>, 21 July 2009).

The Lutheran Church shared in the splendor of the polychoral music as well as the new musical form of the oratorio. Wilson-Dickson refers in this regard to the work of Michael Praetorius (1571-1621): “He wrote more than 1,200 liturgical pieces, many of them hymns and motets. In some of this music he shows a keen awareness of the Venetian polychoral style, but he made it relevant to the German congregations by using familiar Lutheran melodies as a basis, in much the same way as earlier composers had used Gregorian chant” (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:146). Many of the great composers (like Schütz, Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and others) worked and lived in patronage, meaning that they were sustained by the church or the state. At certain stages some cities (like Hamburg) had a cantor who

organized music or the church and other occasions. **The new style of music was not free from criticism and opposition.**

Bach made no distinction between secular and sacred; all music had to glorify God.

Bach made great effort with the symbolic as well as the rhetoric dimension of music. He used two settings for the Greater and Lesser Catechisms: one on a grand scale and the other one in simple form without pedals. He also created three settings for the *Kyrie*: one addressed to the Father, one to the Son and one to the Holy Spirit (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:159). At the same time his music was rhetoric with powerful expression of feelings. His use of non-biblical texts led to conflict with some members of his congregation. The divisions within the Lutheran Church between the Orthodoxy and Pietism (Spener, Nicolaus of Zinzendorf, Hus and the Moravian Brothers) played a huge role in the conflict. Bach composed more than 300 cantatas (a combination of the most significant thoughts of the sermon with music) for use between the reading and the sermon. These cantatas had much in common with the new style of opera. The texts of these cantatas were a free paraphrase of the Bible. **This was a major shift away from the Biblical texts of Schütz and others. Bach's Baroque music had much in common with dance-music and contained an element of dancing** (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:167).

Meanwhile in England, the Puritan movement, striving for purity in worship and dogma, "dissolved the traditional hierarchy of the Church of England and within three years cathedrals became redundant..." (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:102), organs were destroyed and worshipping traditions demolished. The Book of Common Prayer was made illegal in 1645. The liturgy were stripped of all ornaments and included only the introductory prayer, readings, psalm, prayers, sermon, prayers, (optional) psalm and blessing (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992b:102):

It is obvious from the above liturgy that only Psalms were sung in the liturgy, and well in a metrical way. The Puritans (much like Calvinism) was sceptic about music in the worship service. The *Psalter of Sternhold and Hopkins* was used. In order to regulate liturgical singing, the Puritans used the method of **lining out** where each line of the Psalm was recited or sung by the leading voice where after the congregation responded with the singing of the same line. As already indicated, Fourie (2000:213) concluded that the practice of lining out "was die doodsteek vir die sang in Engeland sowel as in Skotland". The Church of England was reinstated in 1660 and the *Revised Book of Common Prayer* was again introduced in the *Church of England*. At this stage, **the musical standard was at its lowest point in centuries.**

In the Chapel Royal readings and prayers were still sung in traditional plainsong, mostly in English. Often harmonizations in three or four parts were added to the chant (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:106). In course of time the plainsong melodies were forgotten and new melodies were composed, leading to a new way of singing namely *Anglican Chant*. In time, Anthems became the most important form of worship at the Chapel Royal. Anthems were included in the 'First Service', the Eucharist and the Evensong. "Anthems permitted the greatest artistry and invention of which the musicians of the Chapel were capable; they were usually of a complexity that made them impossible to perform elsewhere" (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:107).

The elaborated music in the Chapel Royal stood in greatest contrast to the kind and level of music in the Christian community at large. This vacuum created the need and space for the birth and development of the hymn and congregational hymn-singing, where hymn refers to "a devotional poem 'of human composure', intended for corporate worship" (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:110). Benjamin Keach (1640-1704), known today for introducing hymn-singing to the Baptist Church, persuaded his congregation outside London to sing hymns; this led to great controversy. A few years later he published *The Breach Repaired in God's Worship; or, Singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, proved to be a Holy Ordinance of Jesus Christ* (Wilson-Dickson 1992b:110). In 1697 he published a collection of thirty seven hymns.

One of the greatest hymn-writers of all times, was Isaac Watts (1674-1748), who is known as the 'Father of English Hymnody' (cf. Fourie 2000:214). He wrote more than 400 hymns (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992b:111); some credit him for more than 750 hymns (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_watts, 21 July 2009). **Watts introduced a new era of hymn-singing with extra-Biblical poetry** and indicated that even the Psalms should be "imitated in the language of the New Testament" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_watts, 21 July 2009). His challenge was "to make David sing like a Christian" (Daniel 1964:443, cf. Fourie 2000:214), leading to the birth of collections like *The Psalms of David intimated in the Language of the New Testament, and apply'd to the Christian State of Worship* (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:119). Thus many of the new hymns were new paraphrases of the old Psalms. A variety of melodies were published to which these hymns were sung in different situations. Wilson-Dickson (1992b:111) states that more than 450 different metrical psalms and at least **250 different hymn-books were published in the 18th century**. Usually the hymn-singing of the congregation was unaccompanied and without harmonization; in the country church it was lined out (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:180).

Wilson-Dickson (1992a:182) concludes that the **worship in the country churches differed greatly from the worship in town** due to the lack of money as well as the lack of educated people “able or willing to raise musical standards”. Traveling singing-teachers, that was musically not always trained well themselves, visited the country churches and instructed congregations on psalmody; the latter leading to “a primitive kind of music” (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:183) with all kinds of experimenting on harmonization of the choir causing the congregation to be passive onlookers again.

Charles Wesley (1707-1785), leader of the Methodist Movement and deeply influenced by the hymn-singing of the Moravian Church and the Herrnhut community, **composed more than 6500 hymns** that was sung “by prisoners, colleagues, students, and saints alike” (Daniel 1964:443, cf. Fourie 2000:214). These hymns included hymns like “*And Can It Be That I Should Gain?*” and “*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*”; some of the song being a translation of German hymns. About 150 hymns of Charles Wesley are included in the Methodist hymn book “*Hymns and Psalms*” as well as in many other hymn books. His songs were “songs of individual experience, marking the successive stages of penitence, conversion, justification, pardon and sanctification in the life of the Christian pilgrim” (Curwen 1880:12). Charles Wesley avoided decorum in worship (cf. Wilson-Dickson 1992a:185) due to the dangers of distraction from the core issue, namely salvation and eternal life for all who believe in Jesus Christ. **The hymns and music of Charles Wesley, often to the tune of popular songs, found their way to the hearts of the Christian believers, overshadowing the use of metrical Psalms, bringing an end to the practice of lining out.** Singing became congregational singing and not choir-singing. Charles Wesley gave the following musical advice to the congregation in many of his hymn books (Wilson-Dickson 1992a:187):

- First learn the these tunes, afterwards learn other tunes
- Sing the hymns exactly as printed
- Sing lustily and with good courage
- Sing modestly
- Sing in time
- Sing spiritually

Singing was often done without accompaniment or only with organ and bass viol.

The simplicity of the above mentioned music in the Protestant churches stood in great contrast to the musical development in Roman Catholic circles. In the last, focus remained on music as a form of art with symbolic value.

Fourie (2000:215) mentions other developments regarding the hymn:

- The Oxford Movement
- American Hymns
- Frontier Hymns
- Gospel Hymns
- Songs of the Social Gospel movement
- Songs and influence of the Ecumenical Movement

7. CHURCH MUSIC IN SOUTH-AFRICA

With the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape on 6th April 1652, and the founding of a church at the southern point of Africa, the Psalter of Datheen (1566) came to South Africa (Cf. Strydom 1991:143). For more than 120 years nothing else than the Psalter of Datheen was sung in religious exercises and worship services. The 1690 version contained nine 'lofzangen' (*De tien geboden des Heeren*), while the 1749 version contained thirteen 'lofzangen'. This was followed by the introduction of the revised Psalter (1773) which included some non-paraphrased hymns to the collection. This version was used until 1937 in the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK) and until 1944 in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (DRC). Fourie (2000:256) notes that the sick-comforters in the Cape, who managed the spiritual care for more than thirteen years, had to prove that they were able to read and to lead in singing. He continues that they had to know all the Psalter melodies. Singing was done without accompaniment, and often to the poor vocal leading of the sick-comforter.

The first German (Lutheran) congregation in the Cape started on 10 December 1780 with "vocaal- en instrumentaal musiek" (Schoeman 1997:255) and sang mainly "hoog-Duitse kerklidere" (Fourie 2000:262). Rev. Pierre Simond translated all the Psalms into French for use in the French congregation. The singing of Psalms was boosted by the 'sangkonst' or musical education at school. The first organ was bought in 1737 which was used mainly for accompaniment during Psalm-singing.

From the beginning there were **complaints about the 'onsingbaarheid' of many of the Psalms**. After two and a half centuries of only Psalm-singing, the *Evangelische Gezangen* was introduced in the Netherlands on 1 January 1807 and in South Africa on 9 January 1814 in addition to Psalm-singing. This introduced a new era in Reformed liturgical singing in the

Netherlands as well as South Africa. This led to the publication of the *Halleluja!*-hymnal. *Psalmen en Gesangen der Ned. Geref. Kerk van Zuid-Afrika* (1883) and another edition in 1895. The singing of *Evangelische Gezangen* was not without resistance and conflict: in towns like Colesberg and Craddock it led to major differences and disagreement; in some cases it was called "Afgodische Gezangen" (cf. Fourie 2000:283). The same conflict manifested later in Rustenburg, Waterberg and other regions. This conflict ultimately led to the schism in the Afrikaans church: the result being separate Afrikaans churches.

Fourie (2000:312) indicates how many new songs were sung during the different wars in South Africa. These songs were often new words set to old melodies (*kontrafaktes*), like the "kommando-lied" (FW Reitz), "Die Kinderlied" (WA Pelsler) and many more. It is important to note that a new era in congregational singing was introduced where:

- Not only Psalms were sung
- Many other songs were sung
- New words were combined with old melodies
- Ordinary Christians could write new words for songs
- People sang not only about the objective dogma's of faith but also and especially about God and faith in their unique situation.

Charles Murray published the *Kinderharp* (KHP) in 1863, containing songs of Moravian, Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican and American Revival origin. After a few alterations, the KHP was approved for use in Sunday school as well as worship services for children. It was followed with the publication of Andrew McGregor, *Zionsliederen*, in 1871. **These two publications did not give rise to a new need and a new way of singing in the Dutch Reformed Church; rather the spiritual need and vacuum that was already present in the DRC found expression in these publications and the singing thereof.**

The *Halleluja! Psalmen en Gesangen der Ned. Geref. Kerk van Zuid-Afrika* was published in 1883 and followed by another edition of the *Psalmen en Gesange* in 1895 (Strydom 1991:143). The *Halleluja* (1903) with its 411 songs, published by Charles Wesley, contained only one Psalm and seven Hymns (*Gesange*). This publication was followed by other publications in 1931 (*Die Nuwe Halleluja*) and 1951. The 1931 publication contained 75 Psalms and 100 hymns (*Gesange*). Many of the songs in the 1931 and 1951 publications were included in the *Nuwe Gesangeboek* (1978).

The *Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika* in South Africa introduced a new collection of

“*Skrifberymings*” in 1935, containing “*Eenige Gezangen*” with the “*Skrifberymings*”. The *Dutch Reformed Church* and the *Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk* introduced a new version of the *Evangelische Gezangen* in 1944, containing two hymn melodies as well as a few South African melodies (cf. Strydom 1994:148). The *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk* introduced the *Sionsgesange* in 1949. The last contained songs from the *Psalm- en Gesangbundel* van 1944, die *nuwe Halleluja* (1931), *Church Praise*, *Methodist Hymn Book*, die *Rynse Gesangeboek* en Ira D Sankey’s *Sacred Songs and Solo’s* (Strydom 1994:148).

A new Psalter followed in 1976 with Genevan melodies with many of the Psalms. Some melodies had to be adapted and new melodies were used for many songs. The *Gesangeboek* (AGB) followed in 1978, containing songs from the German repertoire, hymns from the Anglo-Saxon context, songs from Dutch and French origin as well as a few South-African melodies. The *Jeugsangbundel 1* (JSB1) appeared in 1984 as a collection of songs that was, according to the foreword, “nie bedoel vir gebruik in die erediens nie”. In 1989 a new hymn book *Sing onder mekaar* (SOM) was published. This publication contained only 47 songs from different contexts and was seen as a ‘proefsangbundel’ in addition to the *Psalms en Gesange* (APGB). The *Jeugsangbundel 2* (JSB2) was published in 1993 and contained 66 songs of different genres. According to its foreword, it was meant “vir gebruik in die erediens en by jeugbyeenkomste.” In October 1994 the *Nuwe Sionsgesange* (NSG) was introduced in the *NG Sendingkerk*. The NSG contains songs from many other books and contexts.

The *Liedboek van die kerk* (LBK) was published in 2001 as a hymnal for use within the Dutch Reformed Church as well as the *Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika* “...by die erediens en ander byeenkomste” (Liedboek 2001:3). The LBK contains 150 Psalms and 452 other songs, divided into two main groups namely the liturgy of the worship service and liturgy of life. The following forms of songs are included in the LBK (2001:21-24):

- *Strofiese liedere*
- *Deurekomponeerde liedere*
- *Keerversliedere*
- *Refreinliedere*
- *Kanons*
- *Miniatuurvorms*

The LBK was followed in recent years by the forming of two commissions or workgroups within the DRC, namely FLAM (*Funkie Liedere vir Aan die brand Musiekbediening*)(see <http://www.flam.co.za>) and VONKK (*Voortgesette Ontwikkeling van Nuwe Klassieke*

Komposisies)(see <http://www.vonkk.co.za>).

7.1 Conclusions:

The history and development of church singing in the Reformed churches in South Africa clearly includes two lines:

- On the one side one finds the official church song, approved by synods and encouraged as the official song. This line can be divided into two smaller lines: the Psalter (Psalm-singing) and the *Evangelische Gezangen*. Although there were great differences on the role and position of the *Evangelische Gezangen*, these two were considered to be the official song of the church.
- On the other side one find **a continuing urge or need for a different kind of song, expressing something that the Psalter and the *Evangelische Gezangen* fail to do**. This line of songs found expression in the *Kinderharp*, the *Zionsliedere*, the *Halleluja*, the *Jeugsangbundel 1 & 2*, and a flood of gospel and contemporary music in the current situation in South Africa. These two lines could have a positive influence on one another. In the following chapters, the reason for this continuous urge needs to be investigated. **It is argued here that spirituality and culture play a major role within a postmodern context**. These concepts and their influence will have to be investigated.
- The need for another kind of song was often recognized and illustrated by the use of other hymnals (like the *Kinderharp*) within children's worship services. **Various other hymnals are also used today within children's worship services**.
- The existence of a hymnal like the *Nuwe Sionsgesange* (NSG) within the *NG Sendingkerk* must be noted. Although the DRC and the NG Sendingkerk (currently part of the URC) are part of the same tradition (Reformed), speak the same language (Afrikaans) and are part of the same family of churches, **they developed separate hymnals based on the different cultures and spiritualities of these two churches**. The same provision ought to be made for other cultures, sub-cultures and spiritualities (chapter 4 & 5).

Within the South-African context, Strydom (1994:146) distinguishes between singing in the worship service on the one side and religious singing outside the worship service on the other. Although this is a legitimate perspective, it's not always an accurate perspective, especially within a society where normal life and religious life are not separated so clearly any more. Although some forms of singing were allowed and approved in the worship

service, and others not, one could hardly separate them from one another. The songs and music that were *not* allowed in the worship service, kept on appearing in the worship service at different times and places. They were not only non-officially used in the worship service; they also had a major impact on the worship service as well as the forming of believers. They also had a great influence on the direction that the formal or official song went. One can hardly separate them from one another. The history and development of church music and singing in South Africa must partly be seen as the result of the interaction between these two lines of church music and singing. Many free songs were sung at home and at other meeting for a long period before been considered as songs for the official hymnal. In this way they had a major impact on the official song and partly prepared the way for the official song.