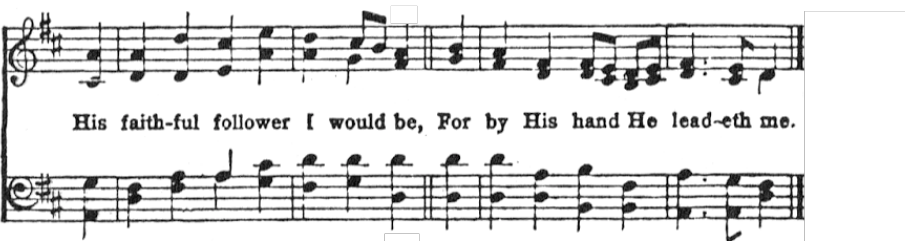
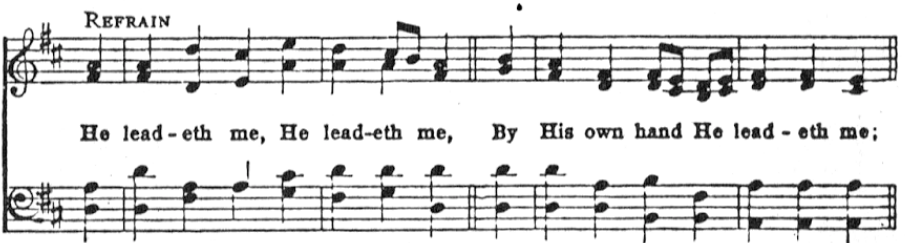
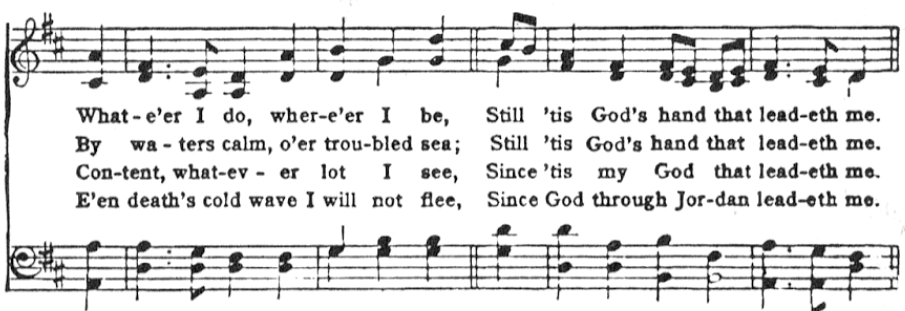
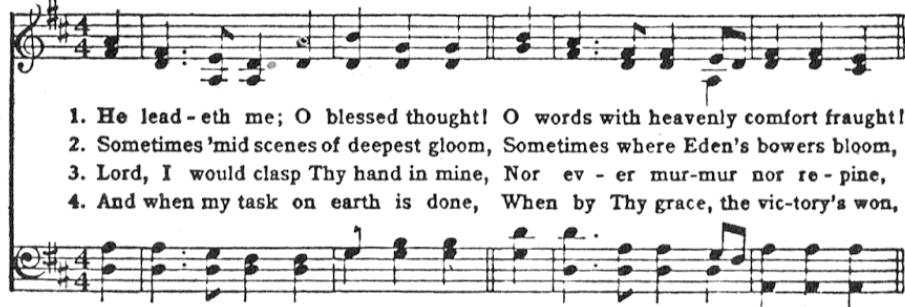


## He Leadeth Me

JOSEPH H. GILMORE, 1861

WILLIAM B. BRADBURY, 1864



**H**e Leadeth Me was written by Baptist pastor Joseph H. Gilmore in Philadelphia during the upheaval of the Civil War. Having been assigned to fill in for an out-of-town pastor, Gilmore writes...

"At the mid-week service, on the 26th of March, 1862, I set out to give the people an exposition of the Twenty-third Psalm, which I had given before on three or four occasions, but this time I did not get further than the words 'He Leadeth Me.' ...[afterwards, several of us] kept on talking about the thought I had experienced; and then and there, on a blank page of the brief from which I had intended to speak, I penciled the hymn."

Gilmore would go on to explain how the hymn is not a paraphrase of Psalm 23 but an elaboration on the theme found in verse two. Especially in light of the war, he understood that following God's leading did not ensure "still waters" in their personal lives or the world around them. Yet since Christ himself took "paths of righteousness" through the valley of the shadow of death on their behalf, God's providence would deliver all those in Christ into eternal life even through suffering and death.

After the conversation that night, Gilmore gave it no further thought, leaving his notes and hymn behind, but his wife kept them and sent the hymn out to be published. Gilmore had no idea of its publication and the subsequent tune that William Bradbury ("Jesus Loves Me," "Just As I Am") added to it until a few years later. He arrived at another church to fill the pulpit once again and was surprised to hear his hymn being sung. Learning the truth from his wife, Gilmore was humbled to think that his words had become a source of encouragement to the church during dark times. He reflected later that even in great darkness, "God's leadership is the one significant fact in human experience...it makes no difference how we are led, or whither we are led, so long as we are sure God is leading us."

## Scripture to consider:

Exodus 13-14

Psalm 23

Psalm 37

Psalm 73

Isaiah 8

Jeremiah 31

John 10

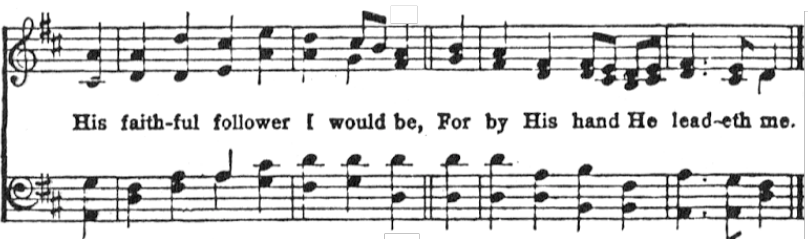
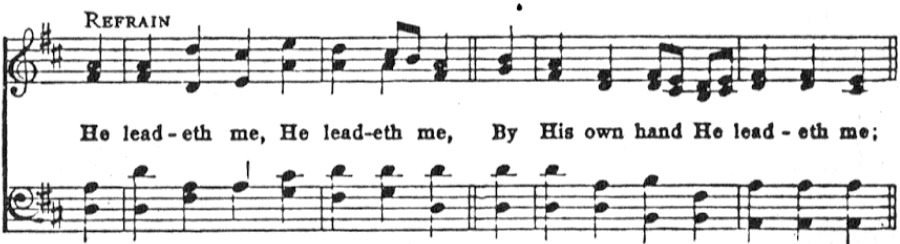
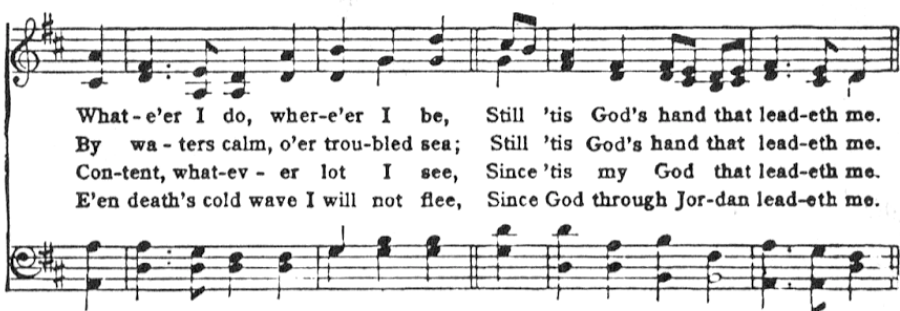
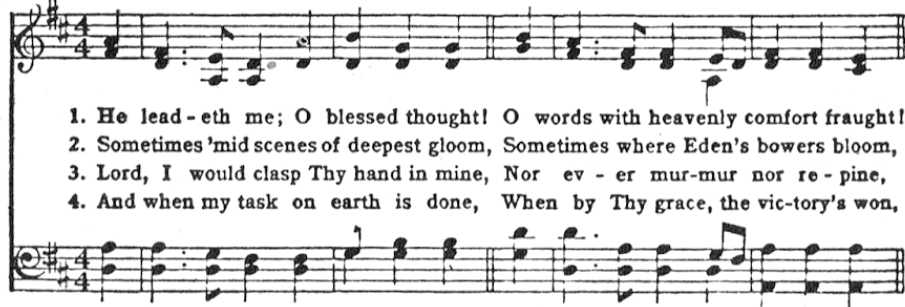
John 21

Philippians 4

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