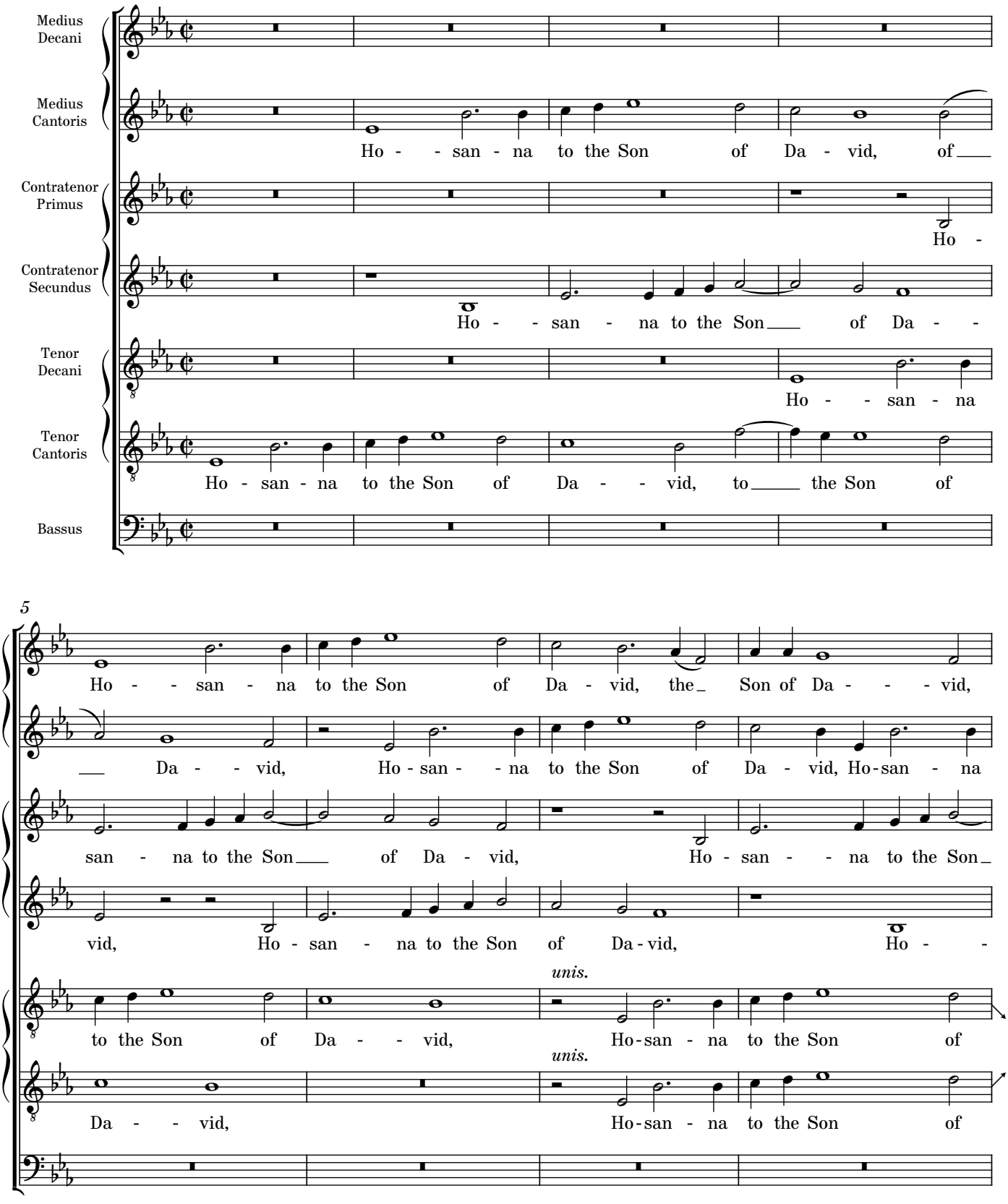
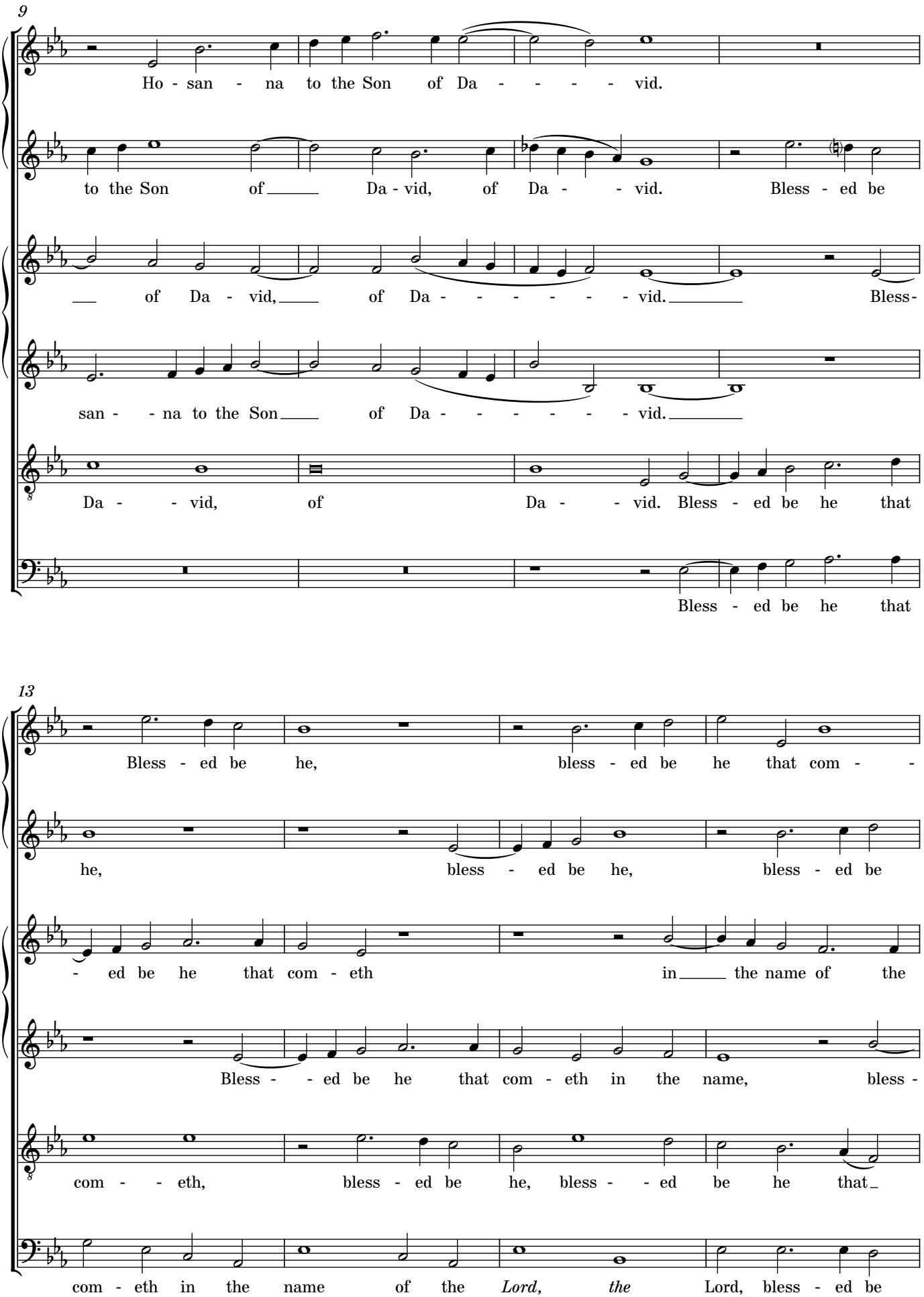
ANCIENT GROOVE MUSIC

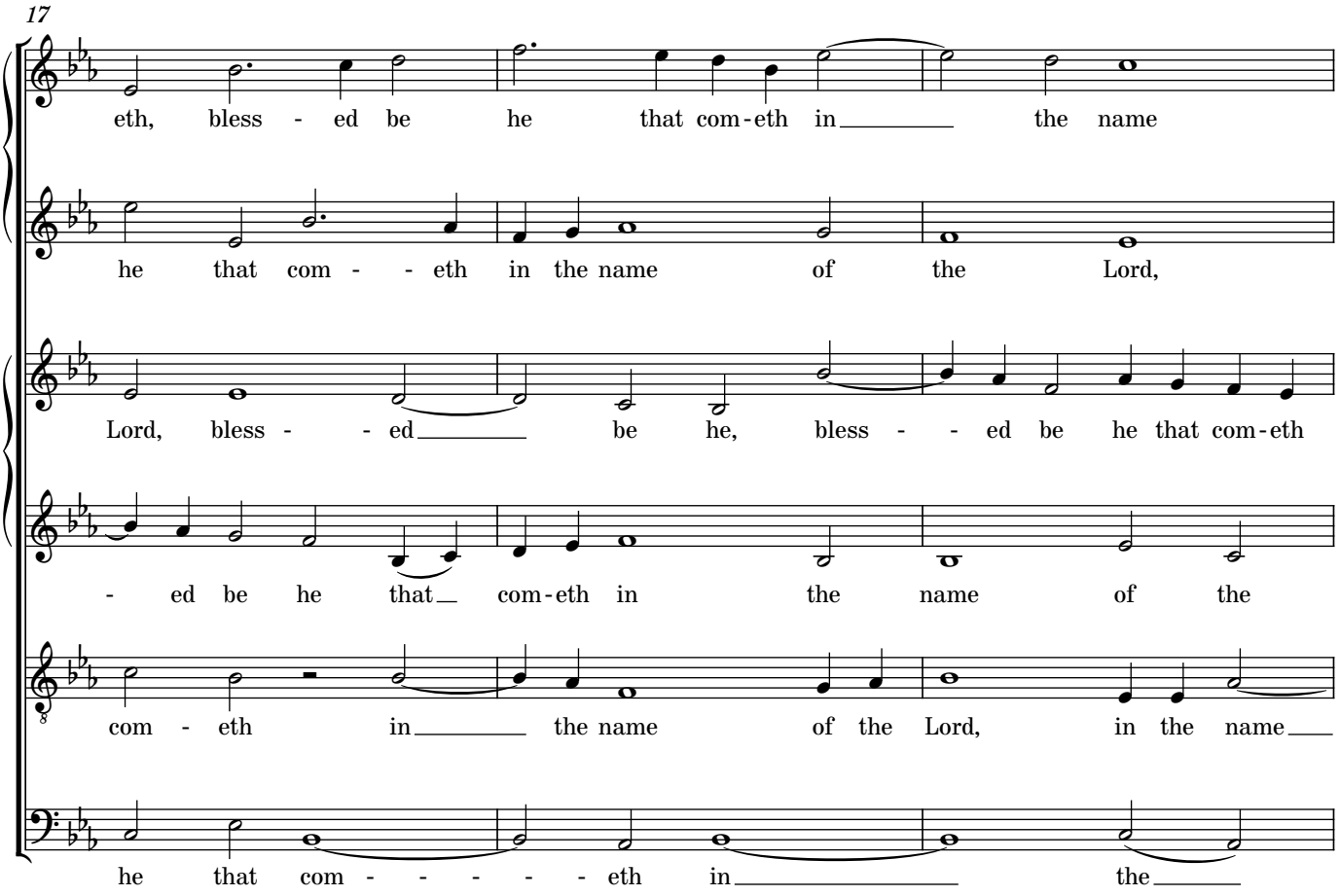
Hosanna to the Son of David

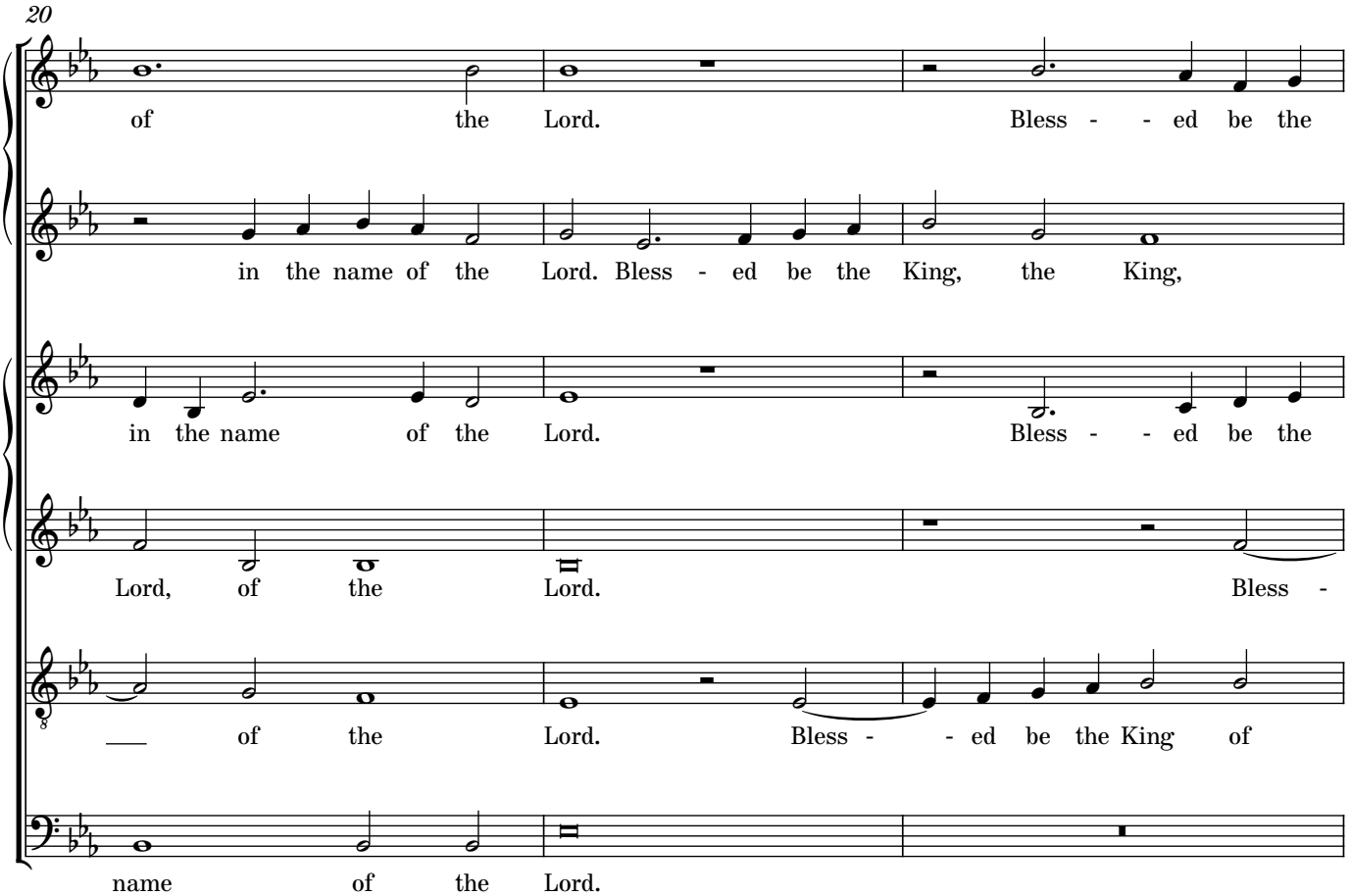
Edited by
Ben Byram-Wigfield

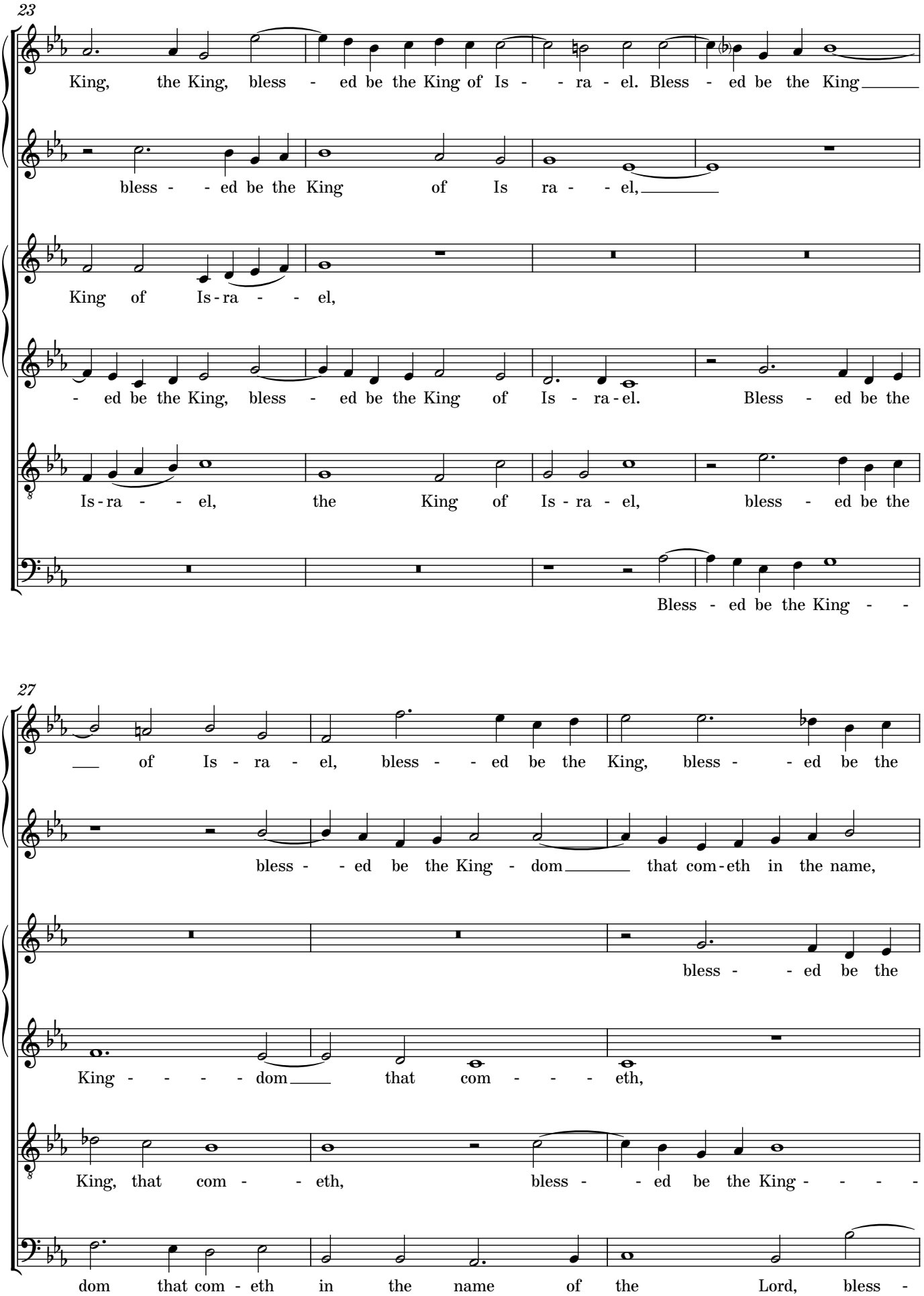
ORLANDO GIBBONS
(1583 - 1625)

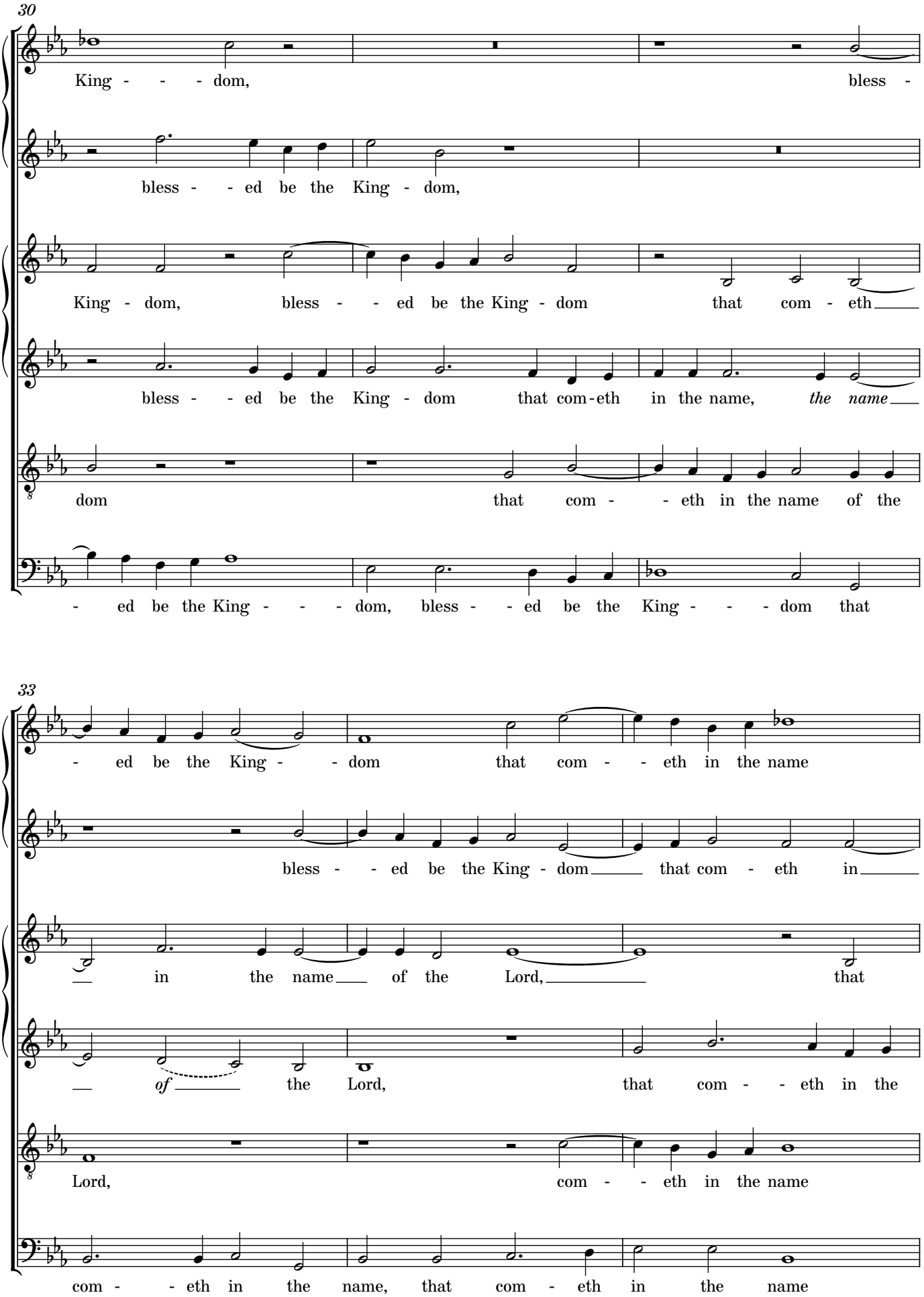


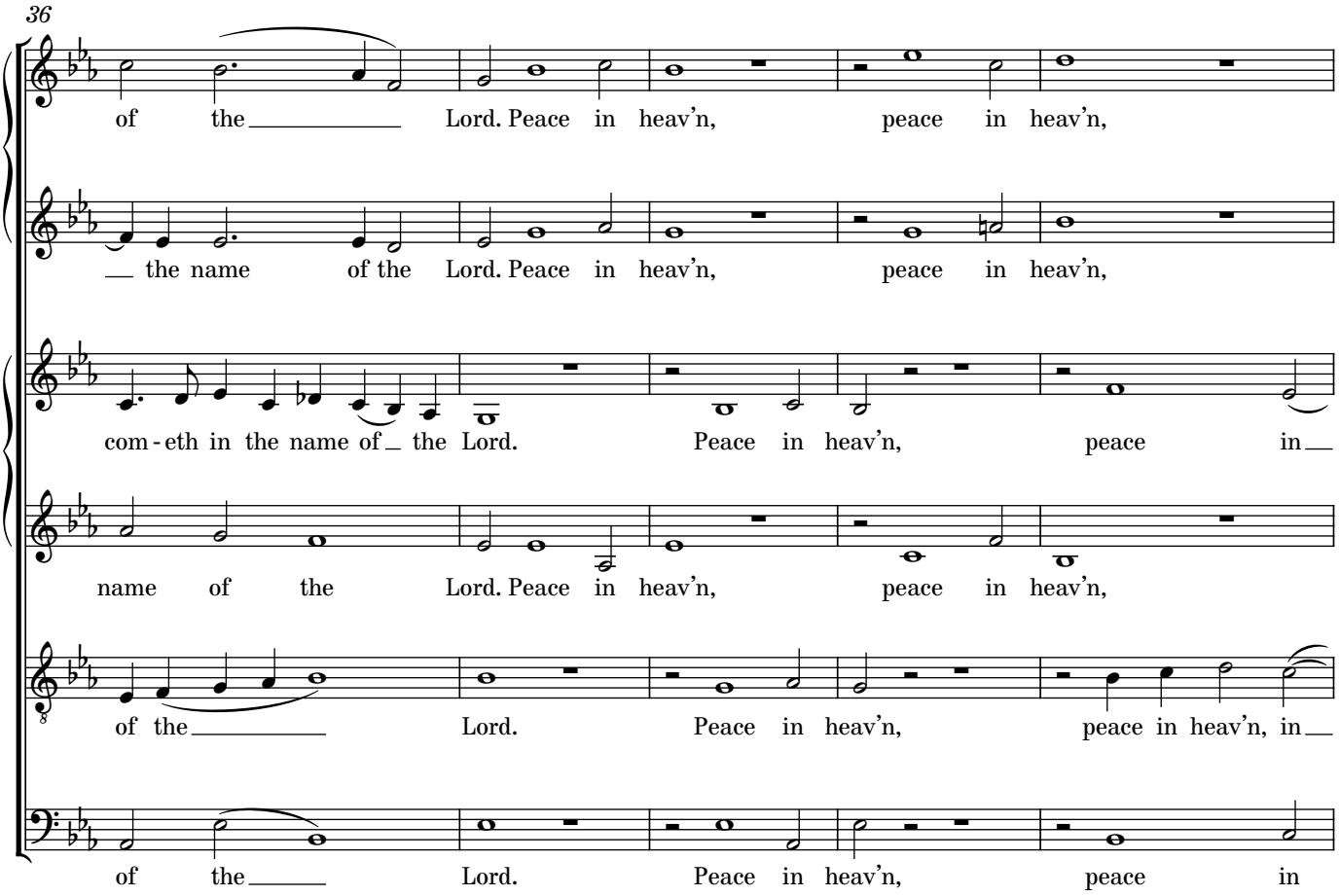


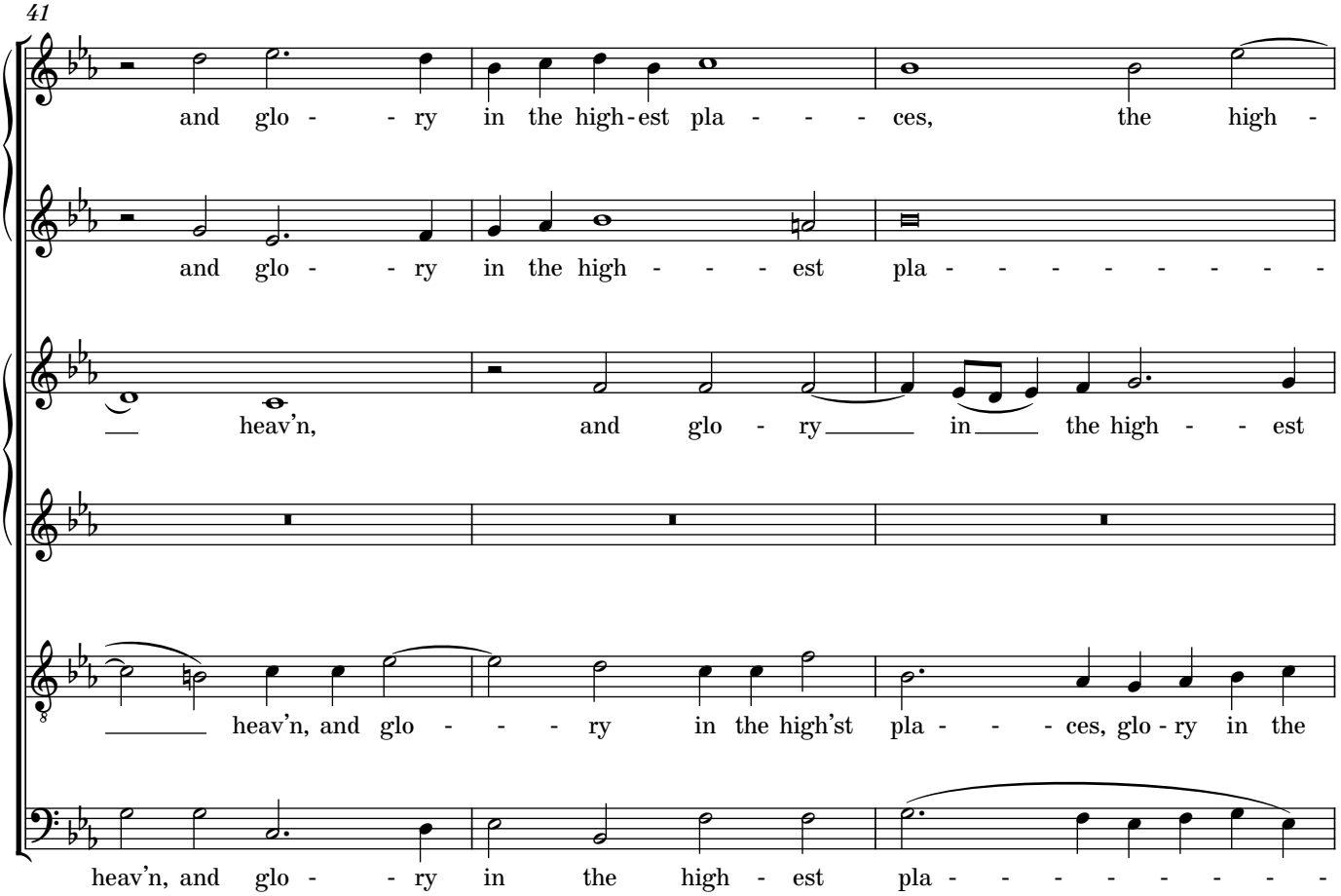


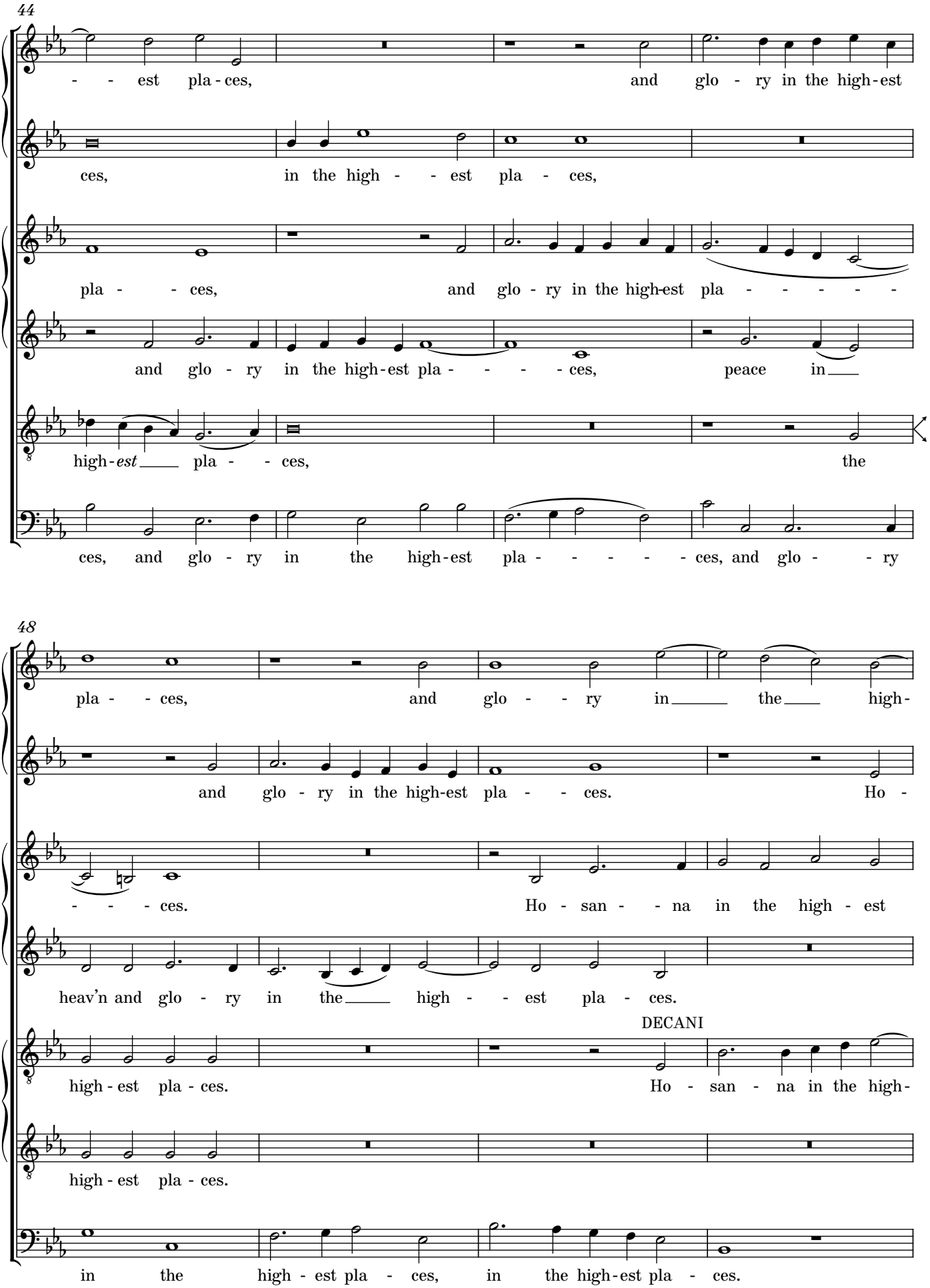


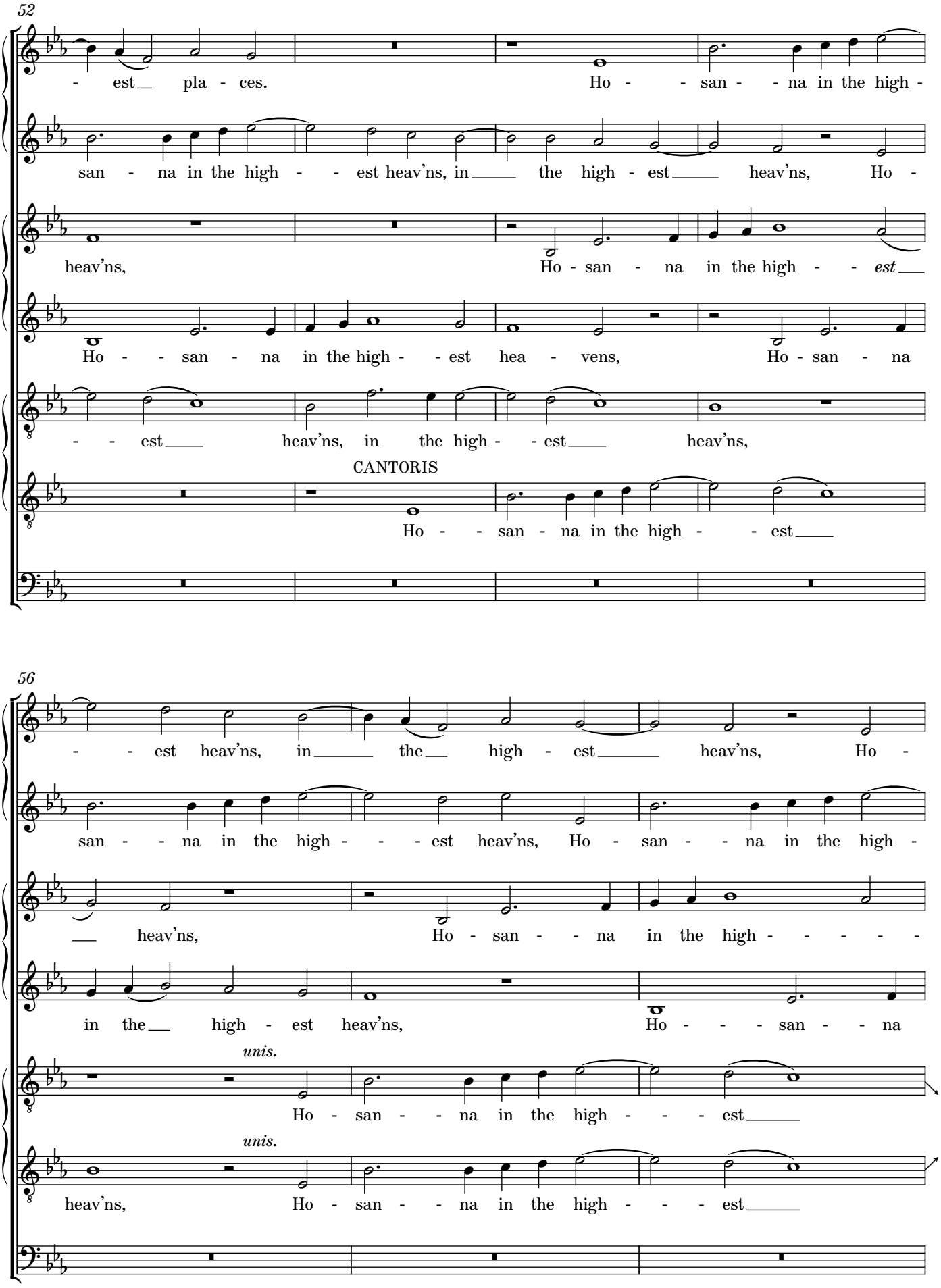


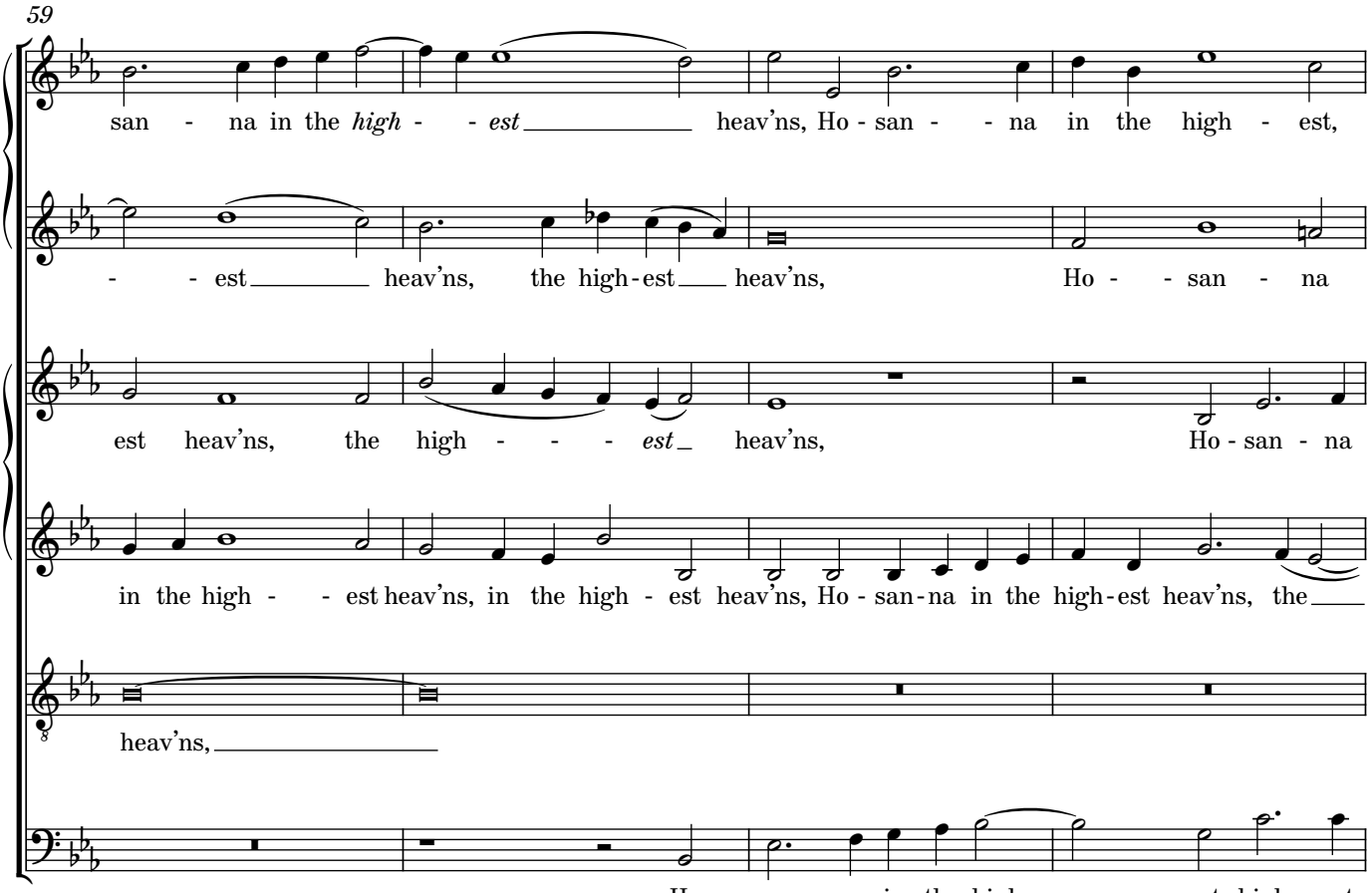


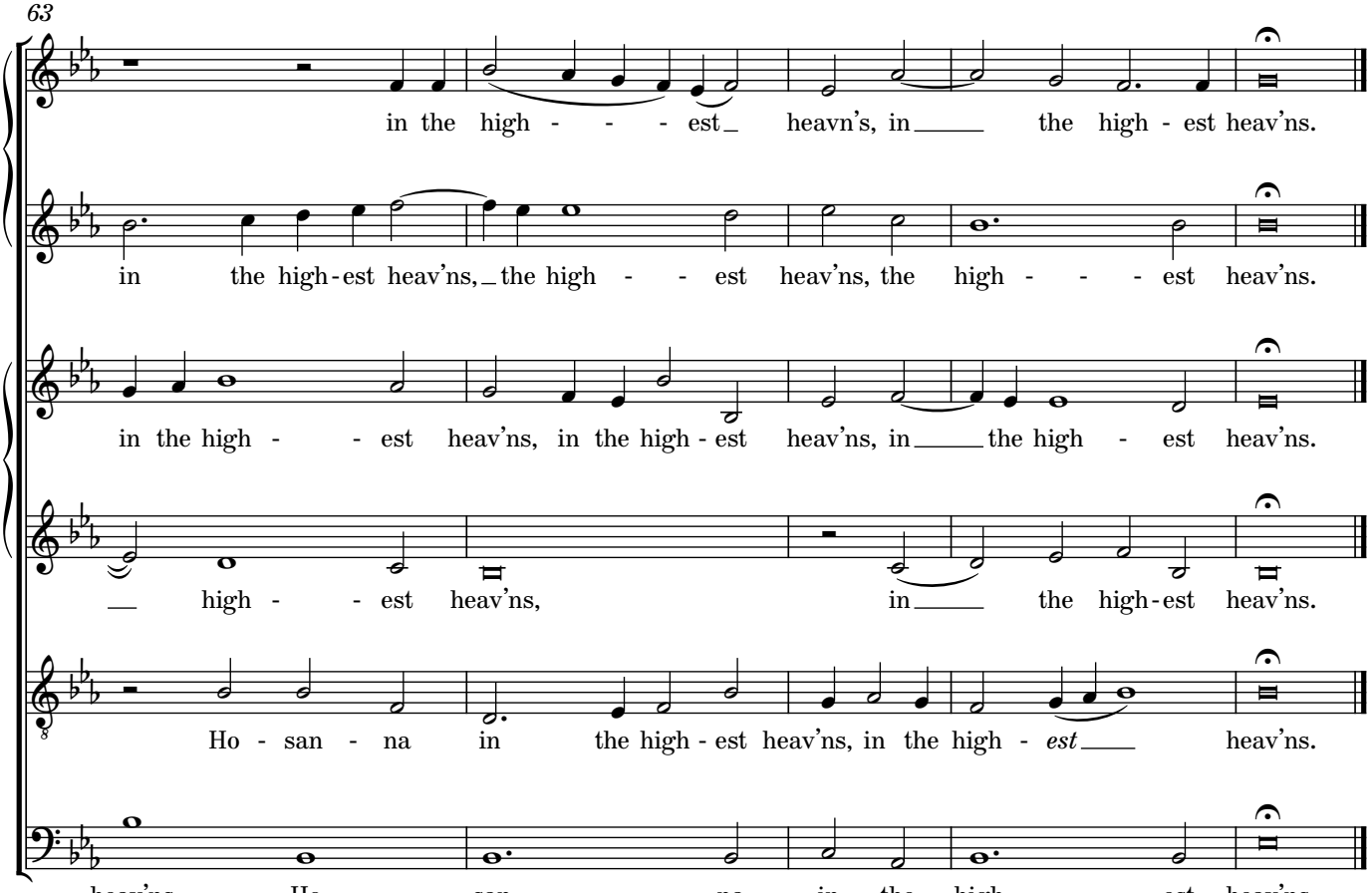












ANCIENT GROOVE MUSIC

Orlando Gibbons

Hosanna to the Son of David

Sources:
Durham: C2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19: partbooks for Contratenor, Tenor and Bassus, c. 1625.
Oxford, St. John's MS 180: A Bass partbook, c. 1630.
John Barnard, *The First Book of Selected Church Musick*, (London, 1641)
Oxford, Christ Church Mus. 16: late 17th-century ms in score, copied by Henry Aldrich.

Previous editions have also been consulted.

The music is presented up a minor third, in original note values. All slurs are editorial.

Gibbons appears to have combined or confused the text from all three accounts in the synoptic Gospels: Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9-10; and Luke 19:38. His text seems to be closest to that of the Geneva Bible of 1560, particularly its use of 'highest places' and 'highest heavens'. (The Great Bible and King James Bible just have 'in the highest'.)

Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the King of Israel. Blessed be the Kingdom that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest places. Hosanna in the highest heavens.

The sources vary in underlay most significantly between bars 21 and 37. Some sources try to replace the word 'Kingdom' with 'King' entirely, often leading to unsatisfactory word stress, melismas on unimportant syllables, or repetition.

The sentence '*Blessed by the King (of Israel)*' is clearly a separate sentence from '*Blessed be the Kingdom that cometh*'. The former is used principally in bars 21 to 25, and the latter being used from 26 to 34, with a few occasional uses of 'King' as the point allows.

The allocation of notes to syllables usually reveals where 'Kingdom' was intended. In addition, the vertical and horizontal context, as well as the musical motif, has been used to inform which of the many variants to follow.

Some sources show Verse and Chorus indications, though they are neither conclusive nor satisfactory.

The Tenor part divides for the opening phrase, first sung by Cantoris Tenor in bar 1 and then repeated by Decani Tenor in bar 4; and similarly (but swapped) at 50 and 53. Many editions give the repeated phrase to the Basses, who are otherwise unoccupied, which may be an option, if they are sufficiently nimble.

Ben Byram-Wigfield
London, June 2025