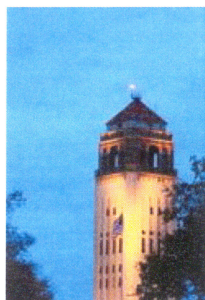


Guide Me to Thee

Hymn of the Month

Just as picturesque scenes can bring peace and calmness to the soul, so does beautiful music

The Hymn



When traveling to an unknown area we will usually refer to a map or

directions. Directions given by someone who has been there before often will include landmarks. Similarly, before the invention of radar and sonar, lighthouses and beacon lights marked seaports and navigation channels, and ships relied on them for safe arrival at their destination.

Our hymn, "Guide Me to Thee," was said to have been first published in 1892, years before the Wright brothers made their historic first airplane flight in 1903. It seems logical then that the author intended a maritime analogy of our Savior, Jesus Christ, as a 'beacon light' or 'safety tower' that will guide us to him over the 'stormy sea' of life.

The title phrase, "Guide Me to Thee" is repeated twelve times in the text and forms a focal point for each descriptive phrase. Part of the text describes the abilities and powers of the Savior that are desired to be exercised in our behalf. These include guidance/instruction, redemption, protection, glory, comfort, mercy, and love. The other part of the text describes the mortal storms that we have need to be rescued from such as: darkness, disobedience/sin, strife, tears/sorrow, despair, death and fear.

The Text



"Guide Me to Thee"

Text as found in the 1985 LDS Hymnal

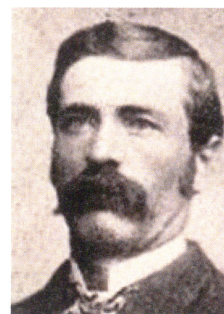
Jesus, my Savior true,
Guide me to thee.
Help me thy will to do.
Guide me to thee.
E'en in the darkest night,
As in the morning bright,
Be thou my beacon light.
Guide me to thee.

Through this dark world of strife,
Guide me to thee.
Teach me a better life.
Guide me to thee.
Let thy redeeming power
Be with me ev'ry hour.
Be thou my safety tow'r.
Guide me to thee.

When strife and sin arise,
Guide me to thee.
When tears bedim my eyes,
Guide me to thee.
When hopes are crushed and dead,
When earthly joys are fled,
Thy glory round me shed.
Guide me to thee.

When silent death draws near,
Guide me to thee.
Calm thou my trembling fear.
Guide me to thee.
Let me thy mercy prove.
Let thy enduring love
Guide me to heav'n above.
Guide me to thee.

The Author & Composer



Orson Pratt Huish was born to James and Helen Niblett Huish in September of 1851 at Blaenavon, Monmouthshire, Wales. Orson was the third son of the

family, which eventually included eight sons and two daughters.

James Huish was a blacksmith and he and Helen joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) in 1843. They moved to Monmouthshire the next year and he was employed at the ironworks in Blaenavon. Orson was born to them during this time and was apparently named after the early LDS apostle, Orson Pratt, who served as a missionary in England several times.

James emigrated to the United States in 1857 and worked to raise money for the rest of the family to come. They arrived in 1859, joining their father in St. Louis, all except the youngest child, born after the father left, who died at sea. They made their way to Florence, Nebraska, and in June of 1861 departed for Utah with the Job Pingree company. This group of 33 wagons included about 150 people. Most of the wagons were drawn by oxen, including that of the James Huish family and his brother Walter. There were no deaths or serious accidents and the company arrived in Salt Lake City in September.

The family went directly to Payson, approximately sixty miles south of Salt

The supplication in the first verse figuratively suggests that the beacon light of Christ can make our darkest night as though it were a bright morning.

The author, Orson P. Huish, was no stranger to hardship. As a child he traveled with his family by boat from England to the United States and then on to Utah, crossing the great plains by wagon. He experienced the tremendous difficulties of the pioneer settlers in establishing homes and communities in the semi-arid wilderness long before electric power or automobiles were available. It is believed he and his wife lost three children in their first few years of life. Personal anguish seems evident in the lines, "When tears bedim my eyes," "When hopes are crushed and dead, When earthly joys are fled..."

It is instructive to note that the mention of these heart-wrenching situations is followed by a plea to the Savior for guidance and comfort. There is no anger or blame expressed. Almost everyone has similar situations at times in their lives, and the first person expression of these thoughts allows the hymn timeless appeal.

The hymn is understood to have been first published as a Sunday School song by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) in the 1892 edition of the "Deseret Sunday School Song Book." An image of the hymn from an 1894 edition is shown at the top of the second column and is available online.

In the 1948 edition of the LDS Hymnal, the song was included with the first phrase as the title, "Jesus, My Savior True." The music of the ninth through the twelfth measure was modified to create tenor and bass parts. This modification continued in the subsequent 1985 edition, which used the original title, 'Guide Me to Thee' and transposed the music in 6/8

Lake City, which was first settled in 1850. They had some acquaintance there and James found work in a nail factory and did blacksmithing. He took his turn standing guard at the fort at night against the native American tribes. His sons assisted at the blacksmith shop that he later established.

Little is known about Orson's youth, it is said that he was engaged in farming and raising cattle. He met a young lady who was a native of England, Ann Marintha Pickering and they were married about 1872.

The large Huish family was known to be a musical one and in 1880 six of the brothers formed a band with the oldest brother, Edward as their leader. He was said to have had some musical training in England. Their only surviving sister, Florette, played the drums and sang. The Huish band is said to have traveled to towns throughout southern Utah, playing for dancing and providing special acts. Often tickets were purchased with produce or bartered labor.

Orson was known to be an entrepreneur as well as a musician. He is reported to have studied commercial photography and established a company, Huish & Hinshaw, which did work in Utah and Arizona. Photography with glass plates had become common in the late 1850's. He also established several general stores and a pharmacy.

In addition to his business ventures, Orson was a prolific song writer, believed to have created about three hundred songs. Few were published outside his local community, however. In addition to our hymn, "Guide Me to Thee," he also wrote "Come Unto Jesus," and the music for "Come, All Ye Sons of God," which are found in the current 1985 LDS hymnal.

Orson and Ann (Marintha) are believed to have had eight children, three of

time to a slightly lower key. The text has remained unchanged since the first publication except for some minor revisions to punctuation.

The expression of great faith in this hymn has continued to inspire disciples of Christ for over one hundred and twenty years.

whom appear to have died as toddlers. Ann preceded him in death. He was a widower for over twenty years before he passed away in December of 1932 at the age of 81.

His words, music and example of faith continue to inspire today.



Information in this article came from:

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