

Father In Heaven

June 2013 - Hymn of the Month



[Father In Heaven Orchestration by Larry Beebe](#)

The Hymn



Father in Heaven is a classic Christian hymn of praise and gratitude. The main subject of gratitude in this

hymn is peace.

The word 'peace' has a number of definitions. The context used by the author, Angus S. Hibbard, implies the type of peace described by the Lord Jesus Christ as he spoke to his disciples, as recorded in the Bible New Testament, and said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

From this scripture it is evident that the peace that comes from the Savior and our Father in Heaven is not the absence of war, oppression, or hostility in the world, but rather a state of tranquility and security within us.

The hymn text shows that this peaceful state is a result of feeling the love of the Lord and trusting in Him. The author's repeated use of the words "abiding" (enduring, continuing), and "enduring" (lasting, durable), express his faith in the ability of our Father in Heaven to provide us with eternal peace.

The text also points out that the world belongs to our Father in Heaven, it is His creation, and we are His children, as were our earthly fathers, wherever we live. He is the provider of our salvation, and knows the future.

The hymn's plea for all nations to have more of the Lord's peace, and to come to Him for salvation is just as applicable today as when the text was written. The topic of peace was undoubtedly important for those, like the author, who lived through World War I, which ended in 1919.

The exact date of the writing of the text is unknown but the hymn is said to have been published in 1938 in a hymn

The Author



The text author, *Angus S. Hibbard*, is believed to be the same man who is noted as an American telephone pioneer. Angus Smith Hibbard was born in February of 1860 in Milwaukee,

Wisconsin, to William and Adaline Smith Hibbard, the youngest of six children. His parents were said to be natives of Massachusetts. His mother died when he was four years old, and his father remarried a year later.

Young Angus received his early education at the St. James Parish School, then went to the Milwaukee Academy and in 1873 attended the Racine Grammar School and College established by the Episcopal Church. He participated in the scholarly work there and in the choir. An injury in 1878 requiring convalescence at home ended his schooling.

He found employment for a year in the general offices of a railroad company and then in 1878 became chief clerk to the superintendent of the Northwestern Telegraph Company at Milwaukee. The Superintendent, Mr. Haskins, was an agent of the Bell Telephone Company and began introducing telephone service to Wisconsin.

In December of 1884 Angus married Lucile Ray and they had one daughter in 1888.

Angus was said to have great ability and aptitude and completed construction of fifty telephone exchanges in the rugged Wisconsin lumbering country in five years. These accomplishments were noted and in 1886, at the age of twenty-six, he went to New York to become the General Superintendent of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. He is also credited with designing the first Bell Telephone logo.

The Composer



Friedrich Ferdinand Fleming was born in February of 1778 at Neuhausen, Saxony, Germany, about forty miles southwest of Dresden.

From 1796 to 1800, beginning at the age of about eighteen, Friedrich

is said to have studied medicine at Wittenburg, about 115 miles northwest of Neuhausen. It is said he also studied thereafter in Vienna, Austria, and in Italy or France.

Friedrich set up a practice in Berlin, and from 1803 to 1813 he worked as an ophthalmologist, and was also said to be a lecturer at the Berlin University and was associated with a medical society.

In addition to his medical work, Friedrich had a passion for music. He was said to be a founding member of Carl Friedrich Zelter's Choral Society. It is believed he composed many works for this society which were published under the Liedertafel label. His setting for Horace's *Integer Vita* was said to be one of these and is his best known work. It is interesting to note that the Latin "Integer Vitae" means whole or sound life.

Friedrich contracted an infectious disease in the course of his medical practice, and passed away at Berlin in May of 1813 at the age of 35.

The Compiler

Edwin Pond Parker was born in January of 1836 in the Bangor, Maine area. Edwin was educated at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, the Bangor Theological Seminary, and is also believed to have attended Yale University.

Edwin entered the ministry of the Congregational Church and became Pastor

collection titled *Favorite Hymns: A collection of the Best-Loved Hymns of the American People*.

The tune was written much earlier and is believed to be adapted from a male chorus musical setting composed by Friedrich Flemming about 1811 for the ode *Integer Vitae* by the Roman lyric poet Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus). It is known by the tune names INTEGER VITAE and FLEMMING.

The hymn tune is believed to have been first published in the 1875 edition of the *Congregational Psalmist*, and has subsequently been used for at least sixteen different known hymn texts in various denomination hymnals.

Father in Heaven appeared in the 1948 (1950) edition of Hymns, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Hymnal). In the 1985 edition of the LDS Hymnal the music in 4/4 time was transposed to a lower key with some slight modifications to make it easier for congregational singing. The tune was noted to have been arranged by Edwin P. Parker.

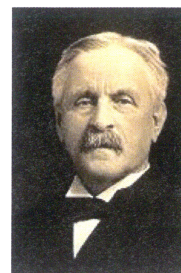
Angus was innovative and through his career had a number of patents to his name for telephone transmission devices, machines and systems.

In 1893 Angus moved to Chicago to take the position of General Manager of the Chicago Telephone Company, becoming Vice President in 1903. He transferred back to New York in 1911.

Angus retired in 1915, returned to Chicago, and was said to have maintained his active interest in civic and social affairs as well as his hobbies of music, and outdoor sports.

In 1941 he published a book entitled, "Hello-Goodbye, My Story of Telephone Pioneering."

He passed away a few years later, in October of 1945, at the age of 85, at Chicago, Illinois. He was buried in his hometown of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



of the South Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut in 1860. He ministered there for over fifty years, retiring in 1912.

Reverend Parker was also known as a hymn writer, composer, adapter, compiler and editor. He

was the editor of several hymn collection books and Sunday School song books. It is believed that his adaptation of the INTEGER VITAE hymn tune for *Father in Heaven* was done for one of these publications and was subsequently included in the LDS Hymnal.

Edwin Parker passed away in May of 1920 at Hartford, Connecticut, at the age of 84.

Father in Heaven - Text

Father in Heaven, in thy love abounding,
Hear these thy children through the world
resounding,
Loud in thy praises.
Thanks for peace abiding,
Ever abiding.

Filled be our hearts with peace beyond
comparing,
Peace in thy world, and joy to hearts
despairing.
Firm is our trust in thee for peace enduring,
Ever enduring.

God of our fathers, strengthen every nation
In thy great peace where only is salvation.
So may the world its future spread before
thee,
Thus to adore thee.

Information in this article came from:

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