

Harvest

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The valleys stand so thick with corn, that even they are singing

The time of harvest has arrived and the fruits of the earth are being gathered in. This is a time of great importance to the farming community.

All year they have ploughed, planted and cared for their crops. Now the results of their labours lie before them. *We plough the fields and scatter, but it is fed and watered by His almighty hand.* By the grace of God indeed, all has come to fruition.

As a child (and farmer's daughter) I will remember this happy time. All the family made for the fields, taking with us cans of tea – it was thirsty work!

The corn had been cleared and rabbits skipped from the empty stooks. We sat in the sun and exchanged jokes. My father was especially good at this! It was a case of *God's in His heaven and all's right with the world.*

A machine had thrown out the potatoes. We gathered them up with our hands, and threw them into bags. The hay and corn were stacked into bales. From the trees we picked apples. The windfalls were made into puree for the freezer and some were thrown to the ever eager pigs.

We now had the huge task of getting all the produce into the barn, which stood in the farmyard. Eventually all was inside and, with a sense of relief, we pushed the heavy doors shut, and went in to supper.

The children were late getting to bed, and a thunderstorm was threatened. No matter – we had done our job, and all that we had grown over the year was safely in shelter,

On Sunday we went to the village church to join in the service giving thanks for the many blessings. We lifted up our voices

and sang *We plough the fields* knowing that we could only do part of the job, the rest had to be left to Him.

We have come a long way since those halcyon days. New and amazing technologies have arrived. At the touch of a button, via the internet, we are able to find all we want to know – wonders indeed!

Harvest was, and is, a time for joy. It is also a time for reflection. We echo the words of Boaz to Ruth *What have you gleaned today? Or yesterday, or indeed throughout our lives?*

John Bunyan wrote *Foul fiends and goblins I will fight, but always I will make good the right to be a pilgrim.* We too are pilgrims, and may we have courage such as his. Courage to withstand the buffetings of life.

On the lake of Genessaret, our Lord calmed the waters and the fearful disciples survived. We pray that he will defend us in all our fears.

We may know all about these new technologies, but we have no control over the elements. It may rain or snow or blow a hurricane. We can do nothing but endure. This is a humbling fact. It reminds us that the Lord is omnipotent.

We seem to have wandered from thoughts of harvest, but not really. All this is relevant – it is all part of God's Universe. He will sow and in time reap His harvest. We pray that through His mercy we shall be included.

*All the world is God's own field.
Fruit unto His praise to yield.
Wheat and tares together sown.
Unto joy or sorrow grown.
First the blade, then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear.
Grant, O Harvest Lord, that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.*