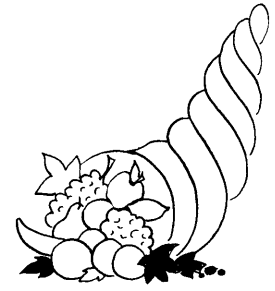


COME, YE THANKFUL PEOPLE, COME



Have you ever gone to a Homecoming or Family Reunion? Everyone's talking at once . . . about the work they've been doing, about the good and bad times they've had, and about their hopes for the future.

Harvest gatherings were much the same. After the work of harvest was completed, people talked about the food that had been safely stored for the winter; they expressed their thankfulness to God for the harvest; and they thought about the future. Henry Alford's "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" talks about just such a harvest time.

The Bible speaks of still another kind of harvest in Matthew 12:24-30 and 36-43. Read the parable of the "wheat and tares" to see how the words of the second stanza of "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come," fit into the thought of the Bible story and describe a Christian belief called "Judgment":

"Wheat and tares together sown,
Unto joy or sorrow grown"

How can you best explain the next line of the second stanza:

"First the blade, and then the ear,
"Then the full corn shall appear."

Several revisions were made in Dean Alford's text after it first appeared in his **Psalms and Hymns Collection** in 1844, but twenty years later he announced that only his original four stanzas constituted the authorized text.

One of the changes still appearing in many hymnals is at the beginning of the second stanza. Dean Alford's original text of that stanza began:

"We ourselves are God's own field."

Most hymnals have now changed it to the version on the other side of this page.

The tune, St. George's, Windsor, was named by George Elvey after the Chapel of St. George where he and other famous organists served for many years, including John Marbeck, William Child, Sir Walford Davis and William Henry Harris. The Chapel also has a legendary link to King Arthur's Round Table through one of the nine orders of the knighthood in Great Britain, "The Order of the Garter."

How many times can you find this rhythmic pattern:  ? _____

What do you notice about the intervals where this rhythmic pattern occurs? _____

Can you identify these parts of the hymn: Rhythm _____

Meter _____

Accidental _____

Key Signature _____

The first two phrases have identical melodies, but listen to the harmonic accompaniment. Is there a difference?
Where? _____

Whether we come together in a harvest celebration, a homecoming, or Thanksgiving services, "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" helps us remember (1) our own responsibilities to work, (2) that God is our constant Source of help, and (3) our Christian understanding of the future!