

THE HARVEST, Pick

SATB (div.)
a capella, body percussion

The Harvest



words and music by

James Elias Pick

Note from the Composer

The Harvest ties together biblical themes of reaping and gathering. Some of these are literal, referring to the agricultural context of the day. Other scriptural references point to the harvest as a literary and theological metaphor for the coming Kingdom of God.

The opening of *The Harvest* is written as a working song, one that laborers might use to motivate and unify their efforts. The tenors and basses should sound strong and steady as they sing these opening measures. “Tares” are weeds that resemble wheat. (*Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43*)

Throughout, “Sing to the Lord of the Harvest” is a recurring expression of gratitude to God by harvesters for the bounty, acknowledging that though human hands may plant, water, tend, and reap, it is God who makes things grow.

In m. 23-29 and m. 52-64, the rapid-fire text, punctuated with stomps and claps, conveys the urgency of the request for more workers, as well as a desire to be sent. Accurate diction is paramount for the text to come through. The sustaining voices must support but not overpower those delivering the text. (*Matthew 9:37-38*)

Starting at m. 32, the sopranos and altos have their own working song: grinding the grain that was gathered. A hand mill consisting of an upper and lower stone was used to grind the grain into flour, which was then made into bread (“rounds”). “Daily bread from harvest” refers both to the Lord’s Prayer (“give us this day our daily bread”) and to the time-consuming grinding, likely done every day. At m. 40-47, the TB verse is sung in a quasi round with the SA verse, mirroring the partnering roles in converting a field of wheat into consumable bread.

M. 65 is a turning point in the piece, driving to the conclusion, which is the final harvest. The vocalization and body percussion in m. 65 is meant to present “one is taken” as otherworldly, even alarming. It is followed by a vacuous subito piano dynamic, emphasizing “one is left.”

The ostinatos and melodies in the section that follows intersect and build the sense of yearning for the final harvest, as well as the desire to play a role in its fulfillment. The text from the alto and tenor lines comes from Matthew 24:40-41. The soprano line comes from the calling of Isaiah, when the prophet says, “Here I am, send me” (*Isaiah 6:8*), which seems a fitting response to Jesus’ exhortation to “ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (*Matthew 9:38*)

The concluding section, starting at m. 86, describes end times: the final reaping as depicted in Revelation 14:14-16. The steps represent the advancing of the angel armies as the Kingdom of God comes. This section should be sung with great intensity, conveying the final harvest as an awesome and terrifying sight for anyone who witnesses it. Despite all this, the ending is ultimately exultant as the dissonance melts away, revealing the final resolution: the righting of all wrongs.

Soli Deo Gloria.

~ James Elias Pick

Visit www.jamespick.com to contact the composer or share recordings.

The Harvest

(SATB divisi, a cappella)

James Elias Pick

Moderato (♩ = 84)

SA
BP

Soprano

Alto

TB
BP

Tenor

Bass

3

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

sim.

mf

mf

Swing your sick - les low to high, high to low. Take a step and swing a - gain. —

Swing your sick - les low to high, high to low. Take a step and swing a - gain. —

Stomp *Pat Chest* *St* *P C* *St* *P C* *St* *P C* *Clap*

2

6

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

f Ga - ther wheat but leave the tares, bind them there, leave them there.

f Ga - ther wheat but leave the tares, bind them there, leave them there.

9

11

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

mp

Hmm

mp

Hmm

mf

Ga - ther in the har - vest. Huh! Swing your sick - les low to high,

mf

Ga - ther in the har - vest. Huh! Swing your sick - les low to high,

12

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

high to low. Take a step and swing a - gain.

high to low. Take a step and swing a - gain.

8

15

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

f Ga - ther wheat but leave the tares, bind them there, leave them there. Ga - ther in the har - vest.

f Ga - ther wheat but leave the tares, bind them there, leave them there. Ga - ther in the har - vest.

8

SA
BP

S

mf esp. **

Sing to the Lord of the har - vest.

A

mf esp. **

Sing to the Lord of the har - vest.

TB
BP

T

mf marc.

Huh! Sing to the Lord. Oh,

B

mf marc.

Huh! Sing to the Lord. Oh,

SA
BP

S

Ripe are the fields for the har - vest.

A

Ripe are the fields for the har - vest.

TB
BP

T

8 sing to the Lord. Oh,

B

8 sing to the Lord. Oh,

**Throughout, courtesy accidentals have been included for clarity when major and minor tonalities overlap or alternate.

23

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

Pray!

Pray!

f

Pray to the Lord for the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few.

Pray to the Lord for the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few.

Clap

Stomp

26

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

f

Pray to the Lord that He would send you, that He would send me, He'd send me and you to the

Pray to the Lord that He would send you, that He would send me, He'd send me and you to the

mf

Pray to the Lord of the

Pray to the Lord of the

Stomp

29

SA BP *Clap* **30** *Pat Thighs* *Rub Hands*

Stomp

S *mp* har - vest. Hmm

A *mp* har - vest. Hmm

TB BP *Clap* *Stomp* *Steps* L L L L

T *mp* har - vest. Hmm

B *mp* har - vest. Hmm

32

SA BP *sim.*

S *mf* Add the wheat and turn by hand, stone on stone. Mill the grain to flour.*

A *mf* Add the wheat and turn by hand, stone on stone. Mill the grain to flour.*

TB BP *sim.*

T *mp* *precise, rhythmic* Sing to the Lord of the har - vest. Sing to the Lord

B *mp* *precise, rhythmic* Sing to the Lord of the har - vest. Sing to the Lord

*(may be sung as one or two syllables)

35

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

f

Turn the wheel, the sun goes 'round, bake the rounds, pass them 'round:

Turn the wheel, the sun goes 'round, bake the rounds, pass them 'round:

8 of the har - vest. Sing to the Lord of the har - vest.

of the har - vest. Sing to the Lord of the har - vest.

38

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

40

mf

dai - ly bread from har - vest. Add the wheat and

dai - ly bread from har - vest. Add the wheat and

Stomp Pat Chest St P C

mf

8 Sing to the Lord of the har - vest. Swing your sick - les low to high,

Sing to the Lord of the har - vest. Swing your sick - les low to high,

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

turn by hand, stone on stone. — Mill the grain to flour.

turn by hand, stone on stone. — Mill the grain to flour.

St *PC* *St* *PC* *Clap* *sim.*

high to low. Take a step and swing a - gain. Oh, —

high to low. Take a step and swing a - gain. — Oh, —

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

B

f Turn the wheel, the sun goes 'round, bake the rounds, pass them 'round: dai-ly bread from har - vest.

f Turn the wheel, the sun goes 'round, bake the rounds, pass them 'round: dai-ly bread from har - vest.

f Ga - ther wheat but leave the tares, bind them there, leave them there. Ga-ther in the

f Ga - ther wheat but leave the tares, bind them there, leave them there. Ga-ther in the

47

SA
BP

48

poco f

S Oh, Sing to the Lord. Oh,

A Oh, Sing to the Lord. Oh,

TB
BP

T har - vest. Sing to the Lord of the har - vest.

B har - vest. Sing to the Lord of the har - vest.

50

SA
BP

S Sing to the Lord. Oh,

A Sing to the Lord. Oh,

TB
BP

T Ripe are the fields for the har - vest.

B Ripe are the fields for the har - vest.

SA
BP

mf

S

Pray!

mf

A

Pray!

TB
BP

f

T

Pray to the Lord for the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few.

B

Pray to the Lord for the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few, the work-ers are few.

Clap

Stomp

SA
BP

f

S

Pray to the Lord that He would send you, that He would send me, He'd send me and you.

f

A

Pray to the Lord that He would send you, that He would send me, He'd send me and you.

TB
BP

mf

T

Pray to the Lord.

B

Pray to the Lord.

Clap

Stomp

58

SA
BP

mf

S

Praise!

A

mf

Praise!

TB
BP

f

T

Praise to the Lord for the King-dom is near, the King-dom is near, the King-dom is near.

B

f

Praise to the Lord for the King-dom is near, the King-dom is near, the King-dom is near.

Clap

Stomp

61

SA
BP

f

S

Praise to the Lord for the reap-ing is here, the reap-ing is here, the reap-ers draw near for the

A

f

Praise to the Lord for the reap-ing is here, the reap-ing is here, the reap-ers draw near for the

TB
BP

mf

T

Praise to the Lord of the

B

mf

Praise to the Lord of the

Stomp

12

Più mosso (♩ = 104)

64

SA
BP

4/4

Pat thighs

Clap

66

mp *ff*

har - vest! Oo Wah!

mp *ff*

har - vest! Oo Wah!

TB
BP

Pat Chest

Stomp

Clap

mp *ff*

har - vest! Oo Wah!

T

8

har - vest! Oo Wah!

Tenor & Baritone
sub. p

One is tak-en, one is left.

B

har - vest! Oo Wah!

Bass 2

68

SA
BP

S

A

TB
BP

T

8

One is tak-en, one is left. One is tak-en, one is left.

cresc. poco a poco

mp legato e esp. *cresc. poco a poco*

B

Sing to the Lord of the

72

SA
BP

S

A *mp esp.* *cresc. poco a poco*
One left in the field... _____

TB
BP

T *mp*
8 One is tak-en, one is left. One is tak-en, one is left.

B
har - vest. _____ Ripe _____ are the fields for the

76

SA
BP

S *mp molto esp.* *cresc. poco a poco*
Here I am, Lord. _____ Send

A
One left at the mill... _____ One left in the field... _____

TB
BP

T *mf*
8 One is tak-en, one is left. One is tak-en, one is left.

B *mf*
har - vest. _____ Sing _____ to the Lord of the

SA
BP

S

mf

me, Lord. _____ Here I am, Lord. _____ Send

A

mf

One left at the mill... _____ One left in the field... _____

TB
BP

T

8

One is tak - en, one is left. One is tak - en, one is left.

B

har - vest. _____ Ripe _____ are the fields for the

Thrilling, Terrifying (♩ = 98)

84

SA
BP

86 Stomp

f

S

me, Lord. _____

A

f

One left at the mill... _____

TB
BP

Stomp

f Tenor *ff* feroce

T

8

One is tak - en, one is left. _____ Time! _____

B

f Baritone & Bass 2 *ff* feroce

har - vest. _____ Time! _____

87 *poco rit.*

SA BP *Steps*
L R L R L R L R

mf cresc. On the clouds *mf cresc.* comes the Lord.

S On! Come!

A *mf cresc.* On the clouds *mf cresc.* comes the Lord.

TB BP *Steps*
L R L R L R L R

T *f* Come!

B *f* Come!

91 *a tempo* *poco rit.*

SA BP *Steps*
L R L R *sim.*

mf cresc. "Swing your sick - le, *mf cresc.* reap the earth!"

S Swing! Reap!

A *mf cresc.* "Swing your sick - le, *mf cresc.* reap the earth!"

TB BP *Steps*
L R L R *sim.*

T Swing! Reap!

B Swing! Reap!

16

95

Broadening

Molto rit.

SA
BP

L

ff

Gath - er... Weed out... Fi - nal

A

ff

Gath - er... Weed out... Fi - nal

TB
BP

L

ff

T

...wheat. ...tares. Fi - nal

B

ff

...wheat. ...tares. Fi - nal

98

Slowly

Stomp

SA
BP

har - vest!

S

har - vest!

A

har - vest!

TB
BP

Stomp

T

har - vest!

har - vest, har - vest!

B

har - vest!

Text:

Swing your sickles low to high, high to low.
Take a step and swing again.
Gather wheat but leave the tares,
Bind them there, leave them there.
Gather in the harvest.

Sing to the Lord of the harvest.
Ripe are the fields for the harvest.

Pray to the Lord for the workers are few,
The workers are few, the workers are few.
Pray to the Lord that He would send you,
That He would send me, He'd send me and you
To the harvest

Add the wheat and turn by hand, stone on stone
Mill the grain to flour.
Turn the wheel, the sun goes 'round,
Bake the rounds, pass them 'round:
Daily bread from harvest.

Sing to the Lord of the harvest.
Ripe are the fields for the harvest.

Pray to the Lord for the workers are few,
The workers are few, the workers are few.
Pray to the Lord that He would send you,
That He would send me, He'd send me and you.

Praise to the Lord for the Kingdom is near,
The Kingdom is near, the Kingdom is near.
Praise to the Lord for the reaping is here,
The reaping is here, the reapers draw near
For the harvest.

One is taken, one is left...

Sing to the Lord of the harvest
Ripe are the fields for the harvest...

One left in the field...
One left at the mill...

Here I am, Lord.
Send me, Lord...

Time!...
On the clouds...
Come...
Comes the Lord...
Swing...
"Swing your sickle..."
Reap!
"reap the earth!..."

Gather...
Weed out...
Final harvest!

~ James Elias Pick