

What Do You Reap?
International Bible Lessons
Ruth 2:8-18
Sunday, August 21, 2011
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“But Boaz answered Ruth, ‘All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before’” (Ruth 2:11—NRSV).

“But Boaz answered her, ‘All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before’” (Ruth 2:11—ESV).

“And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore” (Ruth 2:11—KJV).

The Bible teaches, “Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow” (Galatians 6:7). Obviously, in the physical world, we will reap corn from corn and wheat from wheat. No one sows corn with the expectation of reaping wheat. The Bible teaches that this same law of the harvest operates in the moral and spiritual realms as well. Regarding disobedience, only by God’s grace do we avoid the exact moral punishments we deserve for the sins we have committed.

We can also reap good whenever we sow what is good. Naomi cared for Ruth, and Ruth cared for her mother-in-law after both of their husbands died. She met her needs, as only a loving daughter should do. Furthermore, her good deeds did not go unnoticed by others. Indeed, her goodness to Naomi surprised the townsfolk in Bethlehem, because Ruth was a Moabite and Naomi was an Israelite, and animosity between the two nations ran deep. Boaz knew that Ruth gleaned for both Naomi and herself, so Boaz arranged for Ruth to eat and drink as though she were one of his own workers. He also arranged for her to reap more than one person could glean. Jesus' teachings proved true in Ruth's life: "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Luke 6:38).

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Thinking Further

1. How does the Book of Ruth teach the law of the harvest — that we reap what we sow?
2. How might you expect to be treated if you were a very poor Moabite widow who had just moved to Bethlehem with your very poor Israelite mother-in-law?
3. In what ways did Boaz show his care and concern for Naomi and Ruth?
4. In what ways did Boaz do more than the Law of God required of him in allowing Ruth to glean in his field?

5. What does it tell us about someone when they try to find ways to avoid doing what the Law of God requires of them?

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