

A Righteous Israelite

Scripture Reading — Ruth 2:1-16

Pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her.
— Ruth 2:16

Righteous Israelites were scarce in the time of the judges, for people generally did as they pleased. What would the -owner of the field where Ruth was gleaning be like? Would he be upright and honest, or would he take advantage of a poor foreign widow?

Boaz turns out to be righteous: he respects his workers and -acknowledges Ruth's kindness in staying with Naomi and gleaning grain for her. Further, Boaz tells his workers to go beyond the letter of the law as stated in God's Word; he gives willingly from his abundance without being asked to help Ruth and Naomi. Boaz also encourages Ruth to glean until the harvesting is finished. Boaz does what is right in God's eyes.

Boaz and Ruth's righteousness proceeds from letting God's Word shape their lives. Righteous living is the key to a life of blessing for God's people.

Jesus therefore tells his disciples to glean their "harvest" from among "the lost sheep of Israel" (Matthew 10:6), and Jesus himself brought his good news and healing to people outside Israel (Mark 7:24-37).

Today we, who are Gentiles like Ruth, are also temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) and instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:13). May each of us also let God's Word shape our lives.

Prayer

Wherever our eyes look and our feet take us, Lord, let us be righteous neighbors by the power of your Spirit. In Jesus, Amen.

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