



May 16, 2025

Leave Some in the Field for the Needy

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

In two weeks from this Sunday we will observe the Feast of Pentecost. Mentally I've been studying and preparing for this upcoming Feast of the Lord.

Might we stop for a few moments, and look at one instruction in the information in Leviticus 23 relating to this festival. *"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleanings from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God."* (v.22)

Why is this included in the instructions about the celebration of this festival?

There is to be a "new grain offering" presented on this day (v.16) which included the "two wave loaves" made from fine flour baked with leaven. The harvest that was reaped and gathered at this time of year was the wheat harvest. The LORD wanted to remind them to trust Him to have a blessed harvest with enough to allow some of it to be left in the field for those in need.

The principles of being blessed for giving and that 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' and "God loves a cheerful giver" come clearly into play.

Of course this is not the only place in Scripture where instructions about "gleanings" is found. Notice also, *"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God."* (Leviticus 19:9-10)

I can reflect back on when I was a small boy growing up in Nebraska. At that time the farmers did not try to cut every single piece of growing crop and not only left a bit from the fencerows, but also left corners of the field open for not only wildlife but also some for those who they knew might need some of the produce to live.

Times have changed, now many farmers squeeze every bit they can including disking under everything before the onset of winter. Funny, they can't figure out why there is very little wildlife left due to not leaving any habitat for them to flourish. But that's a whole other topic.

Back to Leviticus 19.

Notice the following comment from the Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary: "This was the earliest law for the benefit of the poor that we read of in the code of any people; and it combined in admirable union the obligation of a public duty with the exercise of private and voluntary benevolence at a time when the hearts of the rich would be strongly inclined to liberality."

This instruction is also repeated in Deuteronomy 24:19-22. The command to leave some of the harvests of grain, olives and grapes for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow are specifically mentioned. This section concludes with, "*And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.*" (v.22)

I have to wonder if the Israelites, while living in Egypt, depended on collecting the gleanings from the harvests that took place there? We know the Israelites were forced to make bricks for Pharaoh's building projects. After Moses appeared before Pharaoh the first time, the Israelites were punished by being required to gather straw for making the bricks. The straw had been provided by the Egyptians previously. It is not clear if the Israelites were also forced to do agricultural work such as taking care of animals, planting, and reaping crops. Several grain crops that were grown in Egypt are mentioned in connection with the plague of hail that did a lot of destruction. The hail damaged the herb of the field, trees of the field, the flax, and the barley, but the wheat and the spelt were late crops and

were not damaged then. (Exodus 9:25, 31-32) Quite possibly some Israelites were servants who worked the fields and would have access to the gleanings of the various crops? We can't know for sure.

There is a description of celebrating the three pilgrimage festivals in Deuteronomy 16. In connection with the Feast of Weeks, there is mention of the whole family and also the Levites rejoicing before the LORD at the place determined by the LORD.

Also mentioned are "*the stranger and the fatherless and the widow*" to be included. (v.11) These are the same ones mentioned to have gleanings left for them. There is again a reminder that "*you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt.*" (v.12)

The Eternal provided for His people even while living in Egypt. In spite of the hardships and decrees of Pharaoh, they increased in numbers. It appears they stayed in good health judging by the stamina they exhibited when they marched out of Egypt and traveled the many miles on the way to the land of Canaan. The Israelites were also showered with valuable items of gold, silver, jewels, and other items when they departed.

As we come to Pentecost, you and I need be reminded to give thanks to our God and Deliverer who has called us to be first-fruit pilgrims, and provides for and takes care of us on our journey.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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