

in the way of Ruth, to be for her own use if she would pick them up. They were *left* purposely for her to *glean*, and when gleaned to be beaten out before eaten, and so able to become nourishing to the body, or to be given to feed Naomi. If we would grow in grace, strength and communion with God, we must seek, gather, and stoop with humble hearts to pick up ears of corn out of God's Word; to beat them out as it were by seeking the aid of the Holy Spirit, and thus getting blessed truth and teaching, nourish not our own souls only, but also those of others who have not so gleaned (*Heb. xi. 6*).

In *verse 23* we see the steadfastness of Ruth, proving her trueness of heart towards Boaz; and she gleaned not only to the end of the *Barley* harvest, —a type of temporal blessings—but also to the end of *Wheat* harvest, the type of spiritual blessings that endure for ever.

It is very important to distinguish this special distinction. Some persons, who humble themselves before God, and ask for *temporal* blessings, will frequently obtain them; and because they do so they consider that they are in favour with God, and in the sure road of salvation. But this is a great error; let them remember the case of Ahab, the most evil of the kings of Israel, obtaining a temporal mercy because he humbled himself before God (*1 Kings xxi. 25–29*). But what was his end?

*Chapter iii.* Ruth had already gleaned handfuls of temporal blessings, by her constancy to glean only in the fields of Boaz, and among his reapers, keeping fast by them; but she wanted something