

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Reaping and Sowing

Bill Brinkworth

When a gardener plants corn kernels, he expects them to germinate and produce corn. Likewise, when he drops lettuce seeds into the soil, he assumes he will one day harvest lettuce. All farmers and gardeners rely on the law of sowing and reaping.

Just as the agricultural law is always true, so is a similar truth of reaping and sowing the things in life. When one sows godliness, he will reap blessings and have God's hand on what "grows." When sin is "planted, it also will produce a crop, but a very unpleasant one that most regret.

Here are some biblical verses that teach principles about sowing and reaping in our lives:

Sinful seeds:

“Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity [sin], and sow wickedness, reap the same.” Job 4:8

“He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.” Prov. 22:8

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” Gal. 6:7-9

Godly seeds:

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hosea 10:12

“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” Psalm 126:5

“Sin wouldn’t be so attractive if its wages were paid immediately!”

Sins’ Crops

Bill Brinkworth

“Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.” II Sam. 21:1

The idea that “when I sin, it only affects me” is not biblical. There are many scriptural examples that when a person

sins, it affects others around them and even many in their future generations. One such instance occurred to the people of Israel because of King Saul's sin.

The Gibeonites had tricked Joshua into sparing their lives (Joshua 9:3-27, around 1,451 B. C.). The tribes' falsehood was soon detected, but only after Joshua's princes gave the Gibeonites their word that their lives would be spared. The dishonest Gibeonites and their future generations were sentenced to be servants to the Israelites because of their sin, but they were not killed.

Many years later, King Saul broke that promise and killed many Gibeonites (II Sam. 21:1, around 1021 B. C.). Although the pledge was made generations previously, God judged Israel by allowing famine in their land. They suffered from a leader's breaking a promise of bygone days.

Others also encountered God's judgment because of the sin of:

- Idolatry and hating God:

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;" Ex. 20:5 Also: Deut. 5:9, Lev. 20:4-5 (Also for the killing of babies.), Isa. 65:6-8.

- Parent's sins:

"Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the

children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Ex. 34:7

"Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. 15 Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth."

Psalms 109:14-15

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Deut. 30:19 Also: Num. 14:18, Num. 14:33, Lev.26:39-40, Isa. 14:20-21, Jer. 32:18.

- Wickedness:

"How oft is the candle [their future] of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger." Job 21:17

Although there are many more examples in the Bible, it should be evident from the instances above that people often reap the consequences of another's sins. Sin hurts many people.

We also can see it in our own lives. Laws are made that restrict the freedoms of many because of the actions of a few.

Teachers sometimes have to be stricter in their classrooms because of the actions of some disobedient students. Security is often increased in a country because of the sin of others, and often those doing right have to pay for their lack of freedom with their taxes. A country's leader can

make decisions that hurt his own citizens and sometimes even kill them. Sin always hurts the trespasser and, many times, those around him.

However, sometimes others can receive God's blessings from the actions of a godly person or persons. People and countries were changed and saved by King David, Jonah, Paul, John, Peter, and other righteous people. If our own Saviour, Jesus, had not stood up and done right, we would never have had the possibility of going to Heaven. Many nations, including the United States, have been blessed because of the godly stand its early forefathers had made. Future generations can reap good things from those that lived earlier by God's principles.

The wrath of God does not have to fall on all of those nations with ungodly leaders or those with wickedness in their ancestry. The one thing that can override God's judgment on individuals and even countries is that people of the current generation can make the right decisions.

God's grace and mercy are often poured out on those who choose to live according to God's will and way. Yes, we will often reap some of God's judgment on the sins of others and for leaders' ungodly decisions. Still, it can be limited if God's people turn and obey Him — individually and nationally.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” II Chron. 7:14

“Never forget or be fooled; one always reaps what one sows! If one plants a crop of sin, he will reap the harvest of some rotten fruit.”

He Regretted That Crop

Daniels

Two farmers in Kentucky were mad at each other. One had carefully kept the evasive Johnson grass out of his fields.

Meanwhile, a mischievous son of one of the farmers took a bushel of Johnson grass seed and scattered it over a 40-acre field one night to bring havoc to the other's property. The feud was settled in due time, and the neighbors became friends. The boy who planted the seed fell in love with his neighbor's daughter and married her.

When her parents died and the administrator came to divide the estate, that boy was given the 40-acre field he had planted years previously. The last I heard from him, he was still digging Johnson grass and regretted the day he sowed the weed!

So it is with sin; in the end, we reap what we sow — and usually regret it!

“You can't shack up with the devil and expect God to pay the rent!” — *Author Unknown*

What We Sow

Author Unknown

If we sow a thought, we reap an act;
If we sow an act, we reap a habit;
If we sow a habit, we reap character;
If we sow character, we reap our future.

Ouch!

Michael P. Green

Lord Byron, a poet, spent his life searching for pleasure. Modern people would say, “He tried to live it up.” One day in desperation, he wrote:

*The thorns I have reaped are of the tree I planted.
They have torn me, and I bleed.
I should have known what fruit would spring
from such a tree.*

“He who sows thorns should not go barefoot!”

— Author Unknown