

LOANS, LAZINESS, & VILLAINY

Friday, November 21

Reading: Proverbs 6:1-19

Proverbs 6:9 *How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep?* **10** *A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—***11** *and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.*

Having warned against the wayward woman (a topic he will return to in a moment), Solomon exposes three more dangers to avoid in order to live a life of wisdom.

BAD LOANS (6:1-5) – This warning has nothing to do with generosity or giving help to the needy. These are things we need to do. This involves putting up security for someone else's debt. The Law of Moses gave regulations for offering collateral on a loan (Deuteronomy 24:10-13). However, in this case, the language implies that this was a foolish agreement that could lead to personal financial ruin. The fact that a discussion about the lazy person follows implies that the "neighbor" or "friend" his son is trying to help has no intention of helping themselves. Solomon says to do whatever it takes to get out of this bad situation. While we are to be giving people, we are also to be good stewards of what God has given us.

THE LAZY PERSON (6:6-11) – The lazy person is contrasted with the little ant. Ants are self-motivated. They don't need someone to tell them what needs to be done. They also plan and store for the future. They work diligently in the times of plenty (summer/harvest) for the sparse times in winter. The sluggard, however, would prefer to stay in bed and push the snooze alarm! This lazy attitude will lead to poverty. The Hebrew word translated "thief" literally means to 'come and go' or wander. We might call them a hobo today. The "armed man" may refer to an armed crook. Laziness will steal a person's future as they wander aimlessly through life.

THE TROUBLEMAKER (6:12-19) – In Hebrew, this word means 'worthless, good for nothing.' The word "villain" means emptiness, mischief, and evil. This person "winks maliciously with his eye, signals with his feet and motions with his fingers." These may be signals to a partner to be prepared to take this victim for all he's got! His motive is to deceive and stir up conflict. However, his judgment will come suddenly when he least expects it.

Solomon summarizes this person's attitude with a numerical list of things that God hates. The six +1 pattern makes it memorable and draws attention to the last item on the list. "Haughty eyes" see themselves as better than everyone else and perhaps even God! "A lying tongue" plays fast and loose with the truth. "Hands that shed innocent blood" refers to violence done against those who don't deserve it. Central to his character is "a heart that devises wicked schemes" and "feet that are quick to rush into evil." His whole life is focused on carrying out his evil plans. The last two subvert justice by telling lies about others and stir up trouble to break apart the things that hold society together. These have been called "the Seven Deadly Sins." It is interesting that lying is seen as on par with murder. In fact, lying in one form or another is mentioned twice! The things we think of as 'little sins' are still an abomination in the eyes of God.

Are you a good steward of what God has given you? How is your work ethic? What 'deadly sins' would you add that plague you?