

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

(OT Survey Lesson 288—Wisdom about Work)

Introduction: The proverbs often address and contrast the diligent worker with the sluggard. Solomon shows the consequences of each lifestyle and offers valuable advice about work life.

Lesson aim: To show the value of diligence in work as opposed to laziness.

The sluggard

1. How does Solomon humorously describe the laziness of the sluggard? (19:24; 26:15; 26:14)
2. What kind of excuses does the sluggard make to keep from working? (22:13; 26:13)
3. What keeps a sluggard from changing his ways? (26:16)
4. What are the consequences of the sluggard's laziness? (19:15; 20:4)
What can be the ultimate end of his refusal to work? (21:25-26)
Consequently a sluggard is a brother to whom? (18:9)
5. What effect does the sluggard have on those who send him to work? (10:26)
6. What warning does Solomon issue to the sluggard? (6:6-11) What did he say would be the result of his neglect? (24:30-34)

The working man

1. Who does Solomon say "acts wisely"? (10:5) What is the "precious possession" of the wise? (12:27)
2. How can one see the difference in productiveness between the sluggard and the upright? (15:19)
3. What motivates the worker to work? (16:26)

4. What blessing comes to the man who is willing to work diligently? (10:4; 13:4; 28:19; 20:13; 12:11)
5. Increased wealth also brings what else to its possessor? (10:15).
6. When one is diligent in work, what else may he also be able to do? (12:24; 22:29)

Advice about working

1. What does Solomon encourage the worker to do in these two proverbs? (21:5; 14:23)
2. What principle is Solomon encouraging in 27:23-27? In 21:17?
3. Does Solomon recommend the use of animals in one's labor? (14:4)
4. What principles does the wise man suggest in the management of workers or slaves? (29:19, 21) What does Solomon say will happen to the slave that "cares for his master"? (27:18)
5. Which should come first, a new house or a planted field? (24:27)
6. What warning does Solomon give about the accumulation of earthly wealth? (23:4; 27:20; 23:5)
7. All of our pursuits need to be accompanied with what? (16:3)