

## The Ant

### Proverbs 6:6-11; 30:25

#### Introduction

1. The ant is not usually a welcome creature. We regard it as a pest. If they come into our sugar bowl we spray and set traps. If they make hills in the yard we poison. We don't care to have them around. They are pests!
2. Regardless of where you find the ant or what variety it may be you note each one has the same habit.
3. It is the characteristic of the ant to be industrious and have foresight in preparing for the future.
4. So we are directed to the ant and its character that we might be wise.

#### I. Note to whom the advice is directed.

1. By name he is called a sluggard. By need he is a person who needs to be alerted, awakened and made wise to some things. He needs to be informed.
2. The sluggard can be one of two persons. 1) The out and out lazybones who never turns a hand at any kind of work or 2) The person who is neglecting certain areas of his life while very busy in others.
3. Most of us comfort ourselves with the thought we are not lazy. Our busy schedule points to this. But are there areas of neglect, areas in which we are not easily aroused to activity? If so we are the person he is addressing.
4. I would like to be more specific and ask if there are spiritual areas we neglect spiritual areas where we are not working at the job and have no foresight of the results of planning or lack of planning? Proverbs 19:25; 20:4; 21:25; 26:16
5. To neglect these areas means no food in the season of need. It means poverty comes "as one that travels and want as an armed man" (Proverbs 6:10-11).
6. So often we are reminded you don't have to tear down to destroy. Just let it alone, neglect it and it will destroy itself, whether done intentionally or not.
7. It speaks of failure. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3)
  - > It speaks of refusal. Refusal to harvest. Jesus said, "My father works even now and I work." (John 5:17)
  - > In some instances it speaks of the very richness of gifts becoming a handicap.
  - > It speaks of temptation to quit.

#### II. What can the ant teach us?

1. The ant has a built-in quality to voluntarily work. It has no guide or ruler that passes down the order, "Now it's time to go to work . Now it's time to harvest."
  - > We perhaps have much of this toward our family, our job, our own activities. But can we learn toward spiritual things. The work of the Lord is purely voluntary.
  - > We are disposed to leave spiritual activities undone, unnoticed, feeling it will not be hurtful or harmful.
2. Ants are small and vulnerable and have to do this in spite of the odds against them. There are few ideal situations but this is another factor that makes us negligent (Proverbs 30:25).
3. The ant takes full advantage of opportunities. Its interest is food. To have food, it must gather in the harvest. Our harvest is great! The fields are white to harvest (John 4:35) and the plea is to pray that God gets a hold of our hearts to bring laborers into the harvest (Luke 10:2).
4. The ant is persistent. It makes its opportunity. It searches for its food and does so because it knows survival is dependent upon it. It has a sense of foresight to know what will happen if it does not prepare.
5. The ant displays a care and concern, an interest in the welfare of the colony.
6. The ant is defensive and courageous.

#### III. Now asks the question: How long will you sleep, you sluggard? (Proverbs 6:9-10)

Do we need to awaken to areas in our home life?

In our social life?

In our personal life?

In our church life?

In regard to our rewards before the Lord?

Our future is much what we make it! It requires industry and foresight on our part. We must prepare. If we sow little, we reap little. Are we interested in food, fruit, blessings, growth?