



LESSON 3: "The Sluggard and the Ant" **Date:** _____

KEY VERSE: Proverbs 13:4 – "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat."

INTRODUCTION

Proverbs is filled with comparisons. The very word, "Proverb" (Hebrew, *mashal*) means, "To be like," or "To make a comparison." One of the most striking comparisons found in the book of Proverbs is that of the sluggard and the ant. Let's learn the lessons of the sluggard and the ant.

INTRODUCING "MR. DILIGENT"

The Proverbs mention "diligence" _____ times. Behind the word translated "diligence" is either the picture of "being sharp" or "quick." The diligent man is easily recognized. He is sharp in his thought patterns and prompt to meet his obligations.

1. The person called diligent

a. He is planned, not _____ (Prov. 21:5).

The diligent man thinks things through ahead of time. He plans his work and works his plan. Remember, it is impossible to stay on schedule when you do not have a schedule!

b. He is gratified, not _____ (Prov. 12:27).

Because God knows that a job well-done brings with it a sense of satisfaction, He set Adam in the Garden of Eden with a job to do (Gen. 2:15).

2. The promise to the diligent

a. He will have _____ (Prov. 10:4).

Anything worth having is worth working for. Many kinds of riches come with diligence—physical treasure (Prov. 13:4), spiritual treasure (Prov. 13:4), social treasure (Prov. 22:29).

b. He will have _____ (Prov. 12:24).

Before one can become "his own boss," he must first conquer "his own spirit."

INTRODUCING "MR. SLUG"

Proverbs mentions the sluggard or the slothful _____ times. In the Hebrew Scriptures there are three different words to describe this man. The first word simply means to be "lazy." The second word means to be a "deceiver." The third word means to be a "quitter."

1. Mr. Slug is described.

a. His attitude betrays him.

- He is bothered by _____ (Prov. 20:4).
- He is bothered by his _____ (Prov. 15:19).
- He is betrayed by his _____ (Prov. 22:13).

b. His appearance betrays him.

- For the slothful man, _____ movement is an effort (Prov. 26:13-16).
- For the slothful man, _____ accomplishment is absent (Prov. 24:30-31).

2. Mr. Slug is destroyed.

a. The reasons for his destruction

- He is _____ (Prov. 6:9-11; 18:9).
- He is _____ (Prov. 12:24, 27).

b. The results of his destruction

- He is not _____ (Prov. 10:26).
- He is not _____ (Prov. 24:32-34).

Proverbs 6:6-11 encourages the man who would avoid the path of the sluggard to study the ant. Ants prepare for the future and do so without prodding. Even so, the wise man will learn from the ant and the sluggard and be diligent.