

Lions in the Street!

5-17-15AM

Proverb 22:13 *The Sluggard Says: "There is a lion outside; I shall be slain in the streets!"*

Proverb 26:13 *The Sluggard Says: "There is a lion in the road! A lion is in the open square!"*

There are no lions roaming free in the Middle East today. But 3000 years ago it was a different story. Samson slew a lion; a lion killed the man of God in I Kings 13; the Samaritans were plagued with lions when they took the land from the Israelites. So it may not be unreasonable for a man to open his door and find a lion on the doorstep, in the street, or in the open square. So why is he a sluggard?

A sluggard is one who is indolent, slothful or lazy. The NKJV renders it "the lazy man", the BBE – "the hater of work". Maybe the problem is not his excuses (which might be legitimate). Perhaps the issue is his heart, and his will towards making excuses.

The bible shows us many times where men made excuses. Adam did in the garden (My wife made me do it); Moses did on Mt. Sinai (I am not eloquent); both Aaron and Saul made the same excuses for their sins (The people made me do it); in Matthew 25 we meet an unnamed man who tells his master "I was afraid of you". How does Jesus feel about excuses? In the parable in Luke 14:16-24 three types of excuses were offered. The master in the story was angry over all three. What we ought to conclude is that it does not matter how good the excuse is if it is just an excuse.

Time for some self – application. First, let us ask this: is there something you need to be doing? Let us consider these expectations from God:

Doing works prepared by God – Ephesians 2:10

Doing works in your home – Colossians 3:19-21

Spiritual growth – II Peter 1:5-7

Loving others – Romans 13:8

Secondly, is there an excuse that you offer not to do it? Perhaps like Saul or Aaron you have said that others prevent your service. Maybe you blame your family, your friends, or other Christians for preventing you from serving. Maybe you claim you are not equipped (consider II Timothy 3:16-17) to service God, claiming (as Moses) you are too old or claiming (as Jeremiah in 1:6-7) that you are too young. Is it simply the case that you are the sluggard, or even worse, that you are the coward (Revelation 21:8)?

Conclusions

Jesus gave us a parable in Matthew 21:28-31 of two sons. One said he would not obey his father, but then he did. The other said he would obey, but he did not. In this lesson, consider which son you are. Do you promise to serve God, but then allow things to interrupt? Do you offer excuses to God to your missed labor? God is not looking to your intent to work, He is looking at your actually trying.