

# Proverbs 24:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

## Analysis

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This verse (with verse 34) provides the lesson extracted from observation. 'Yet a little sleep, a little slumber' (שְׁנוֹת מְעַט מְעַט/me'at shenot me'at tenumot, a little sleep, a little slumber) quotes the sluggard's self-talk. 'A little folding of the hands to sleep' (לִשְׁכַּב מְעַט חֲבִיט/me'at chibbuq yadayim lishkav, a little folding of hands to lie down) completes the excuse. This exactly repeats Proverbs 6:10-11, showing this is proverbial wisdom reinforced through repetition. The danger lies in the word 'little'—the sluggard doesn't see himself as lazy, just taking brief, deserved rest. But 'a little' accumulates. Procrastination compounds. Death by a thousand small delays. The deception is gradualism—thinking small compromises don't matter. Scripture repeatedly warns: 'Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts' (Hebrews 3:7-8, quoting Psalm 95:7-8). Delayed obedience is disobedience.

## Historical Context

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The agricultural calendar allowed no procrastination. Delayed planting meant reduced harvest; neglected weeding meant choked crops; late harvesting meant lost grain. Ancient farmers couldn't afford laziness—entire communities depended on their diligence. This proverb's repetition (from 6:10-11) indicates its proverbial status in ancient Israel—passed from generation to generation. The warning resonated because audiences knew people who rationalized laziness through 'just a little' more rest. In the early church, Paul confronted believers who quit working (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12). The monastic tradition battled acedia (sloth)—listed

among the seven deadly sins. The Reformation emphasized vocation, viewing work as divine calling. Yet every generation faces the temptation to incrementally reduce effort, rationalizing laziness through small delays. Modern culture particularly enables this—entertainment, comfort, and minimal survival needs reduce consequences of laziness, making the warning even more relevant.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. What 'little' compromises—hitting snooze, postponing tasks, avoiding responsibilities—are accumulating into significant problems?
2. How do you rationalize laziness to yourself, and what truth counters those rationalizations?
3. What would change if you viewed every 'little' delay as potentially consequential?

## Interlinear Text

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יָד יְדָיִם	חֹךְ קָ	יָד יְדָיִם	תְּנוּמָה זֹאת	יָד יְדָיִם	שֵׁן נוֹת	יָד יְדָיִם
of the hands	folding	Yet a little	slumber	Yet a little	sleep	Yet a little
H3027	H2264	H4592	H8572	H4592	H8142	H4592

לִשְׁכֹּב:

to sleep

H7901

## Additional Cross-References

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**Romans 13:11** (Parallel theme): And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

**Ephesians 5:14** (Parallel theme): Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

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