Procrastination Doesn’t Pay

*Alexander the Great, on being asked from what source he had acquired such great power, said, “By putting nothing off until tomorrow.”*

It is wise to praise Alexander the Great, who towers at the list of the “greats” as the most powerful of all. In a day when power changed hands quickly, only Alexander had the wit and power to keep going and conquer lands quickly. As the conqueror and ruler of one of the greatest empires in the world, Alexander knew that of which he spoke. I speak now on his wise saying.

When Alexander says to leave nothing until the ‘morrow, he means that the key to accomplishing any task, or rather the *starting point*, is to start. You cannot accomplish anything by continually putting it off. Procrastination will only build upon itself.

It would be wise to heed Alexander’s wisdom, as he, perhaps the greatest authority on the subject, has had success. By putting nothing off, one will develop diligence, will find his tasks growing easier, and will be more productive. When asked the source of his power, Alexander – in an attempt to teach – strikes at the root of the matter, by showing that nothing can be accomplished by laziness.

Alexander wisely chooses not to answer the question simply by bragging about his strength, but instead hits at the real issue. If one did not listen to Alexander, nothing would be accomplished. Putting off tasks does not only prevent them from being accomplished, but builds laziness and extends itself to all areas of life, resulting in a person who takes no responsibility, and learns nothing.

Just as leaving a cheese, or milk, or bread, out upon the table will destine it to rotting and collecting mold, so leaving one’s work for the morrow will only put it off indefinitely, and build evil, rotting laziness. And just as putting away that food immediately will cause them to stay intact and keep them from rot, so doing a thing right away will build diligence and simply be useful and wise.

Gideon, by obeying the Lord and taking the initiative, conquered the Midianites. Had he waited, they would have invaded Israel.

For this reason, Cato demonstrates the wisdom of this chreia with his maxim, “He who hesitates is lost.”

After looking at all this, we see that truly Alexander was a wise king, and spoke wise words.