



**Clanking Chains: Biblical Authoritarianism: Children Must Be Taught Morals, Truth, & Wisdom:
Development of Wheel-tracks**

Galatians 5:1 - It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery.

Romans 6:6 - Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;

v. 7 - for he who has died is freed from sin.

1 Peter 2:13 - Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority,

v. 14 - or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

v.15 - For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

v. 16 - Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.

Colossians 3:20 - Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

1 Samuel 15:23 - "Rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry."

Neill's corrupt philosophy continues with an explanation of how a child's freedom to be himself is to be accomplished:

In order to do this, we had to renounce all discipline, all direction, all suggestion, all moral training, all religious instruction. (p. 9)

The Scripture is not silent regarding the discipline, training, and instruction of children. The greatest collection of biblical guidance with regard to this subject is found in the book of Proverbs:

Proverbs 1:2 – To know wisdom and instruction, to discern the sayings of understanding,

v. 3 - to receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity;

v. 4 - to give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion,

v. 5 - a wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel.

Proverbs 1:7 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

v. 8 - Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

Proverbs 4:1 - Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding.



The word for instruction is:

מוֹסָר *musar* - discipline.

Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1:386-87:

From the usage and parallels in the Old Testament, one must conclude that *musar* denotes correction which results in education.

The discipline of Yahweh is not to be taken negatively, for the hardships in the wilderness were balanced by his miraculous provisions both designed to test “what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.” The theological basis for an earthly father’s discipline over his son is in the covenant. He bears the image of his covenant Lord, and as such stands in parallel relationship over his children—chastening, correcting, instructing, providing—which are expressions of an interpersonal relationship of love. So e.g., in Proverbs 3:11-12 “reproof” and “correction” are said to come from Yahweh “for whom the Lord loves he reproves, even as a father the son in whom he delights.” Hence, discipline gives assurance of sonship, for *musar* primarily points to a God-centered way of life. Proverbs and other wisdom literature speak of discipline with emphasis on instruction.

How was discipline administered? Proverbs 22:15 speaks of the “rod of correction.” But most often, *musar* is oral instruction. In Job 5:17 ff., when he urges Job not to “despise the discipline of the Almighty,” Eliphaz shows insight concerning the means which God may use to discipline his children: pain and wounds, famine and war.

But all such discipline becomes futile through the resistance and stubbornness of those to whom it is given.

Thus wisdom is gained by submitting to the oral instruction of a superior who communicates truth and enforces compliance by corporal discipline if necessary. Solomon continues:

Proverbs 4:2 - For I gave you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction.

v. 3 - When I was a son to my father, tender and the only son in the sight of my mother,

Proverbs 4:4 - then he taught me and said to me, “Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments and live;

v. 5 - Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

v. 6 - “Do not forsake her [**wisdom**], and she will guard you; love her, and she will watch over you.

v. 7 - “The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring, get understanding.

v. 8 - “Prize her, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her.

v. 9 - “She will place on your head a garland of grace; she will present you with a crown of beauty.”

v. 10 - Hear, my son, and accept my sayings, and the years of your life will be many.

v. 11 - I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths.



The objective of teaching children the doctrines, principles, and mandates of Scripture is so that they can lead righteous lives. This is brought out by two words we have studied in detail in the series, *The Way to Santa Fé*. The two words are “way” and “path.”

The word “way” is the noun:

דֶּרֶךְ derek - “way, road, journey, manner.”

Harris, R. Laird (ed.). *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 1:196-97:

דֶּרֶךְ derek refers to a path worn by constant walking. Sometimes *derek* can refer to a major highway, such as the king's highway running north and south in Transjordan. More numerous are the metaphorical uses of *derek*. It often refers to the actions and behavior of men, who either follow the way of righteousness or the way of the wicked.

Botterweck, G. Johannes and Helmer Ringgren (eds.). *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Translated by John T. Willis and Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978), 3:270-72:

דֶּרֶךְ derek. (1) road; (3) journey; (4) conduct; (6 *b*) the behavior required by God.

Literal and Figurative Usage. In some words connected with the concept of “way” the figurative use is so prominent that the literal meaning is not attested at all, e.g., in the case of *magal*. A “traveled and therefore well-established road.” The figurative use of *derek* in the sense of “conduct, behavior,” and to denote “certain fundamental facts in the life of man and nature,” derived from this.

Oneness of Life and Conduct. All exegetes affirm that the Hebrew *derek* embraces both the course of life and conduct. The figurative use means “conduct and destiny, the living of life and the course of life in the sense of prosperity or adversity.”

The much more frequent use of *derek* with man as the logical subject embraces in a single term that which breaks down into conduct and course of life.