

Hebrews 12:5a; Etymology of Paideia

oligoreo - “To think lightly of something.”

The verb is accompanied by the negative particle *mh* which negates the idea and makes this a command of prohibition which is translated: “do not make light of.”

present - Iterative; prohibits what recurs at successive intervals. Repetition of this action is forbidden the believer. No believer in his right mind would make light of any doctrinal principle. However, the reversionist does and is commanded to stop.

active - The reversionistic believer is prohibited from making light of divine discipline.

imperative - Prohibition; the negative *mh* establishes a negative divine policy which prohibits any believer from producing the action of this verb—making light of the divine discipline of God.

“*My son, stop making light of ...*” the objective genitive singular of description from *paideia* - “*the corrective discipline of chastisement.*”

Recently, I told you that we would take a look at the biblical words translated “chastisement” in the King James Version. Since then, we have noted the Hebrew word *músar*. Now we see its Greek equivalent, *paideia*, which has the following etymology, taken from the:

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 5, s.v. “paideia”:

Denotes the upbringing and handling of the child which is growing up to maturity and which thus needs direction, teaching, instruction and a certain measure of compulsion in the form of discipline or even chastisement.

In every age *paideia* implies for the Greeks a process of growth, and there is always a relation between the words of education and nourishment. *Paideia* becomes ‘*the sum-total of all ideal perfections of mind and body which was taken to include a genuine intellectual and spiritual culture.*’

Paideia among the Greeks included the concepts of education and culture. It emphasized the passing down of customs and laws from one generation to another.

The word was also used for the influencing of belief and conduct.

As you may recall from previous studies, the word “culture” in Latin originally referred to tilling the soil. It later took on the idea of mental cultivation resulting in refinement, enlightenment, learning, and taste.

The work of the farmer is an illustration of *paideia*.

The natural intelligence of the child is like the earth waiting to receive the seed; the teacher is like the farmer; his words of admonition and instruction are like the seed. Thus, a father must have great concern for the proper cultivation of his children’s souls. If they are not taught properly then what results is instability and the application to life of the body’s more base desires.