



Clanking Chains: Disobedience to Parents a Capital Crime in Israel; Collective Disobedience to the Divine Contract Results in National Discipline

- 72- The Fifth Commandment is designed as a hinge mandate for children. The development of honor and respect for God in the souls of children opens the door for developing honor and respect for the rules of an ordered society.
- 73- If a child was found in consistent disobedience toward his parents, the penalty for Jewish children was as severe as it gets:

Deuteronomy 21:18 - “If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him [יָסַר *yasar*], he will not even listen to them,

v. 19 - then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the leaders of his city at the gateway of his home town.

v. 20 - “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’

v. 21 - “Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

- 74- The word “chastise” in verse 18 is יָסַר *yasar* which is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek παιδεύω, *paideuō*. Both emphasize the idea of instruction by means of severity when necessary tempered by benevolence.
- 75- We have already observed a derivative of יָסַר *yasar*, the Hebrew word מוֹסֵר *musar*. The definition and description of these words help amplify our study:

Harris, R. Laird (ed.). *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 1:386-87:



From the usage and parallels in the Old Testament, one must conclude that *yasar* and *musar* denote correction which results in education. The theological basis for discipline is grounded in the covenant relationship which Yahweh establishes with his people. In Leviticus 26:18 *yasar* is used in the formula “I will chastise you seven times for your sins,” with a clear parallel in verse 24, “I will punish you seven times” (נָכַח *nacha* “to beat, strike, hit”). God’s corrective discipline seeks the reformation of the people.

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” (Deuteronomy 8:12). Hence, by their hunger, as well as by the manna which he provided, they were to “understand that man does not live by bread alone, but ... by everything that proceeds from the mouth of Yahweh” (Deuteronomy 8:3). Thus, they were to know in their hearts that Yahweh was disciplining them,

Deuteronomy 8:5 - “Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.”

This discipline then might be considered education that is theocentric. That Deuteronomy 8:5 uses the comparative expression “as a man disciplines his son” is not without covenantal and theological significance. Hence, 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 interpersonal relationship of love.

Proverbs 3:11 - My son, do not reject the discipline [מוֹסֵר *musar*] of the Lord, or loathe His reproof [הוֹכַחַת *tokachath*],

v. 12 - for whom the Lord loves He reproves [יָכַח *yakach*], even as a father, the son in whom he delights.

In Proverbs 3:11-12 *musar* and *tokachath* [“discipline, reproof”] are said to come from Yahweh “for whom the Lord loves he reproves (*yakach*), 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, and only secondarily to ethical behavior.

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, hence the close association with the *torah* which means “instruction or teaching.”

God deals with his people from the standpoint of warning and correction. But all such discipline becomes futile through the resistance and stubbornness of those to whom it is given.



Jeremiah 5:3 - O Lord, do not Your eyes look for truth? You have smitten them [**נָכָה** *nacha*], but they do not weaken; You have consumed them, but they do not take correction [**מוֹסָר** *musar*]. They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to repent.

Jeremiah 7:28 - “You shall say to them, ‘This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God or accept correction [**מוֹסָר** *musar*]; truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth.’”

Jeremiah 17:23 - “Yet they did not listen or incline their ears, but stiffened their necks in order not to listen or take correction [**מוֹסָר** *musar*].”

Jeremiah 32:30 - “Indeed the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have been doing only evil in My sight from their youth [**the Exodus**]; for the sons of Israel have been only provoking Me to anger by the work of their hands [**from unethical conduct to overt idolatry**],” declares the Lord.

v. 31 - “Indeed this city has been to me a provocation of My anger and My wrath from the day that they built it [**reference to Urushalim, an ancient Canaanite city**], even to this day [**the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian army, 587 B.C.**], that it should be removed from before My face [**fulfilled in August 586 B.C.**],

v. 32 - because of all the evil of the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger—they, their kings, their leaders, their priests, their prophets, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

v. 33 - “And they have turned their back to Me, and not their face; though I taught them, teaching again and again, they would not listen and receive instruction [**מוֹסָר** *musar*].”

- 76- The definitions and description of the words for discipline, correction, reproof and punishment—*yasar*, *musar*, *tokachath*, *yakach*, *nacha*, and the Greek equivalent *παιδεύω*, *paideuō* stress divine instruction by means of severity tempered by benevolence.



77- The Ten Commandments establish the foundational principles for order in a society. Man left to his own devices will eventually opt for human-viewpoint solutions to the inevitable problems that plague the human race. When absolute power is vested in human leaders, who are no better qualified than the next person to resolve these issues, then totalitarianism begins its inexorable march through the institutions in a futile effort to either maintain or reestablish order.

The obligation and duty of a client nation is, by definition, to submit to the divine guidance supplied by biblical mandates and illustrations. The United States, although in spiritual decline, remains at the moment a client nation, defined as follows by:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *Freedom through Military Victory*. 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1996), 82:

Client nation. A national entity in which a certain number of spiritually mature believers form a pivot sufficient to sustain the nation and through which God furthers His plan for mankind. Under divine blessing God specifically protects this representative nation so believers can fulfill the divine mandates of evangelism, communication and custodianship of Bible doctrine, providing a haven for Jews, and sending missionaries abroad. (See Exodus 19:4-6; Deuteronomy 7:6-11; 26:18-19 compared with Romans 11:25; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6.)

Among these passages a couple speak directly to our study while at the same time present an indictment against the United States as a client nation:

Exodus 19:5 - “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;

v. 6 - and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

Two things are required for the Israelites to guarantee freedom, prosperity and provision in the land: (1) obey God’s mandates and (2) remain loyal to the contract, i.e., the Mosaic Law, to which they signed off in:

Exodus 19:7 - So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him.



v. 8 - And all the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord.