



**Clanking Chains: The Biblical View of Corporal Punishment, Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15;
Definition & Description of “Rod”: Heb. “Shebet,” Gk. “Rhabdos”**

- 15) The wheel-tracks consist of biblical truths in three categories: (1) order, (2) establishment, and (3) doctrine. These principles are to be communicated consistently and daily according to:

Deuteronomy 6:6 - These words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart [**circulating in your streams of consciousness**].

v. 7 - And you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

- 16) The words “shall teach them diligently” is the Hebrew verb:

שָׁנַן shanan - “to instruct with repetition”

This definition requires that the English translation be expanded to include a word such as “diligently.” Another translation might read, “Teach your children Bible doctrine repetitiously.”

- 17) Now it is clear from Scripture and it has been emphasized in our studies that God desires us to obey His commandments. Those who do are blessed and ultimately rewarded while those who do not are disciplined and suffer loss of reward.
- 18) Under the laws of divine establishment we find that God delegates His power and authority down to certain individuals or groups of individuals in three categories:
1. In marriage, authority is delegated to the husband. (Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:18)
 2. In the family, authority is delegated to the parents. (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20)
 3. In the national entity, authority is delegated to rulers of various categories in the several systems of human government. (Matthew 22:19-21; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17)
- 19) Therefore, in the divine institution of the family, children are mandated to honor, obey, and be submissive to their parents.
- 20) We have also learned that when an individual violates the laws of divine establishment punishment is inflicted by government. (1 Peter 2:14b)
- 21) In addition to human justice there is also divine justice in the form of divine discipline in several levels of intensity: (1) warning (Revelation 3:20); (2) intensive (Revelation 3:19), and (3) the sin unto death (1 John 5:16).
- 22) God delegates leadership authority down to parents with instructions to teach children prescribed wheel-tracks. Child training involves a system that utilizes benevolence as its primary function but depends on certain levels of severity when necessary to maintain or reestablish order.



- 23) Just as God deals with adult believers through various levels of discipline so also must parents with their children. And the most severe level of child discipline is the use of corporal punishment.
- 24) This is required when it is determined through evaluation of a sequence of events that the child is in rebellion. In order for the child to be successful in life he must learn to control his own conduct.
- 25) If allowed to continue in rebellion then he will facilitate wheel-tracks that will challenge all subsequent systems of authority. This threatens society and places the child's welfare, freedom, and even his life in jeopardy.
- 26) Several passages in Proverbs address the necessity of corporal punishment:

Proverbs 13:24 - He who spares his rod [שֶׁבֶט *shebet*] hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines [מוֹסֵר *musar*] him diligently.

Proverbs 22:15 - Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod [שֶׁבֶט *shebet*] of discipline [מוֹסֵר *musar*] will remove it far from him.

Proverbs 23:13 - Do not hold back discipline [מוֹסֵר *musar*] from the child, although you beat him with the rod [שֶׁבֶט *shebet*], he will not die.

Proverbs 29:15 - The rod [שֶׁבֶט *shebet*] and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.

- 27) The word for "rod" is the Hebrew noun:

שֶׁבֶט *shebet* - rod, stick, staff

We get an expanded definition from:

Harris, R. Laird (ed.). *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 2:897:

שֶׁבֶט *shebet*. The rod was used as an instrument for remedial punishment. [REMEDIAL: (Latin: *remedium*: cure; medicine.) Intended as a remedy. Concerned with the correction of faulty ... habits and the raising of a pupil's general competence. (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.)] As a corrective instrument it was used for a son in Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13; 29:15. In Proverbs it is the symbol of discipline, and failure to use the preventive discipline of verbal rebuke and the corrective discipline of physical punishment will end in the child's death.

In Proverbs 23:13, the death mentioned is a maximum ramification of rebellion and refers to several contingencies: (1) poor decisions from a position of weakness that produce fatal consequences; (2) the administration of the death penalty by government as punishment for capital crimes; or (3) the administration of the sin unto death as the maximum level of divine severity for a reversionistic lifestyle.

- 28) A description of the rod is found in the definition of the Greek equivalent, the noun ῥαβδος, *rhabdos*:

Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 1562:

ῥαβδος, *rhabdos*: A rod, lighter than a walking-stick. Rod of chastisement. The young shoot of some trees.



Arndt, William F. and F. Wilber Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 733:

ῥαβδος, *rhabdos*: Of a stick as a means of punishment.

Myers, Allen C. (ed.). *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 890:

Rod (Heb. שֵׁבֶט *shebet*; Gk. ῥαβδος, *rhabdos*). Any kind of substantial branch or stick used for corporal punishment.

Friedrich, Gerhard (ed.). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), 6:966-67:

ῥαβδος, *rhabdos*: Originally the flexible cane. A stick for beating in school. The Jewish schoolmaster used a strap rather than a stick (of) the Hellenistic school. Important in the pedagogic literature of Hellenism and late antiquity is the question (of) whether better results are achieved by kindness or blows.

- 29) Our research has shown that the Bible recommends the use of the flexible branch or stem, usually from a tree or shrub. The intensity of the lashes and their number must be judged by the wisdom of the parent with consideration for the age of the child.
- 30) Child training includes instruction, correction, and punishment. This is emphasized in three of the verses just noted in Proverbs by the word:

מוֹסֵר *musar* - “discipline”

Solomon uses this word in conjunction with שֵׁבֶט *shebet* to show the correlation between instruction and discipline.