

IV. Memory Gives Consistency to Behavior

I am going to now read a passage which illustrates this—no exegesis or commentary—just a recitation from the New American Standard of Romans 7:14–Romans 7:25.

This passage will take on deeper and more profound implications as we proceed with our study. Therefore, once we're done I'll come back and quote it again but from a corrected translation.

IV. Memory Gives Consistency to Behavior

Proverbs 23:7 - As a man thinks in his soul, so is he.

Learning is a process whereby information is perceived then stored for application at a later time by means of memory. Learning results in changing a person's behavior. When circumstances occur, which remind him of the stored information, his response is affected to some degree by that recall.

Once something is learned then it may be recalled. If, when it is recalled, it is then applied, then a change in behavior has resulted. Memory then is the link which connects learning to recall.

Stephen Rose comments on these points: Rose, Stephen. The Making of Memory. New York: Anchor Books, 1992, page 136:

If . . . behavior is changed as a result of learning, and this change is expressed in recall, then it is necessary to assume that something has changed in the biology of the (person) to produce the changed behavior. There must be some record inside the organism by which the information acquired during learning is stored in such a form that it can be made available to modify subsequent behavior.

This record has been classified by neuroscientists as follows:

a. Memory Store:

Implies an area where information is stored and preserved, and available for withdrawal when needed.

b. Memory Trace:

Indicates the path established in the brain as a means of storing memory and results in a change in conduct. (Oxford English Dictionary) A track made by the passage of a thing. A mark or impression left on the mind. An indication of the presence of a quantity so minute as to be inferred but not actually measured; esp. in Chemistry.

Revelation 2:23 - Furthermore, I will execute her followers by means of the sin unto death so that the churches will know that I am He who constantly inventories the emotions [**limbic system**] and the stream of consciousness [**memory traces in the cortex**] and I will impose punishment to each one of you according to your production from the cosmic system.

c. Engram:

(Oxford English Dictionary)

A permanent change in the nucleus of a cell due to a stimulus. (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language) A persistent alteration occurring on stimulation of living neural tissue accounting for memory.

d. Cognitive Map:

(American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language)

Cognition is the mental process by which knowledge is acquired. So, mapping cognition implies that the brain has a process by which it arranges this knowledge in an orderly manner.

The Bible has terms as well for this phenomenon which we have noted:

- a. *Ma'gal* - "a track, a rut in which wheels go; a way, a path. A wheel-track."
- b. *Derek* - "A path worn by constant walking. Metaphorical use: Refers to the actions and behavior of men who either follow the way of righteousness or the way of the wicked."
- c. *trochia* - "Wheel-track"

Vine, W. E. Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, s.v. "wheel-track":

The track of a wheel.

Arndt, William F. and F. Wilber Gingrich. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, s.v. "wheel-track":

Wheel-track, course, way. 'Make straight paths' means that upon which one can advance quickly and in the right direction; symbolically of the moral life.

Liddell, Henry G. and Robert Scott. Greek-English Lexicon, s.v. "wheel-track":

Wheel-track, rut, the round of a wheel, path.

R. O. Yeager, s.v. "wheel-track":

A path or rut, made by a wheel. Metaphorically, a way of life; course of action.

Once wheel-tracks are established in a person's soul, then his character, beliefs, and lifestyle can be observed, especially when he is under some form of pressure. If his character is flawed, that pressure, in the form of divine discipline, is designed to change the way he thinks.

Hebrews 12:11 - All discipline, while being applied, seems not to be an occasion for happiness but an occasion for sorrow. On the other hand, afterward, it pays back with interest prosperous gain from the source of righteous integrity for those who are trained by it.

If he has biblical integrity, that pressure is designed to solidify the way he thinks.

1 Peter 1:6 - In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

1 Peter 1:7 - that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:13 - Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:14 - As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,

1 Peter 1:15 - but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.

This brings us to the principle of flexibility and inflexibility in order to acquire order within the soul. In neurology, this is called "*plasticity*" and "*specificity*."