

Child Training II

Part 4: Parental Authority

God has established the institution of the parent as one of His ruling authorities on Earth. To this position has been delegated both the right to rule children and all the power necessary to succeed in training children according to God's will and plan and purpose. This position is the direct agency through which children are to receive the rule of God during their childhood. That is, it is through this position that each child is to receive protection, direction, and instruction.

Because of God-granted parental authority, parents have the right to set their will above that of their children and to command them to follow their rulership. They also have the power to administer justice and to punish for disobedience or to reward for conformance to their commands. To what extent may parents enforce their will on their children? Col 3:20 — “Children, obey your parents in all things.” Children *must* obey their father and their mother.

The Greek word translated as *obey* means both to hear and to obey what is heard. Children are to do what they are told. This means that the parents' word is *law* for their children. *Your word is law*. If your child disobeys your word, he has broken the law you have set for him. Your children are to do what you tell them to do. Even though Col 3:20 is addressed to children, parents are the ones who are in charge to make them obey them. God always holds the ones in authority responsible for the actions of those under their rulership. The parents are accountable to God for the obedience of their children. Just as the nations are told to execute murderers, in the same way parents are responsible to execute judgment upon their children who disobey them.

God has given government of the nations the responsibility and the power to administer the judgment of Gen 9:6, and they are answerable to God and will be judged by God if they disobey.

The boundary of parental authority is more extensive than that of any other institution. This is true because the parents' right to rule includes the power to force obedience to their will in all things (Col 3:20). No other institution is given this much power. The subjects of other

institutions are to submit to their authority, but the child is commanded to obey his parents.

Obedience is compliance to authority whether the subject wills to or not. Parents have the highest authority over their institution. Parents have the right to rule *all things*, and they have the power to enforce their child's compliance regardless of his unwillingness to obey their commands.

The Boundaries of Governmental Authority

Parental authority delegates to parents the right to rule the children under their control. No other institution or person has rulership rights over children. Neither society, school personnel, nosey individuals, nor even other institutions have any authority over children. The parents' power over their children is accountable to government only through God's laws concerning incest, injury, and murder. Parents are directly responsible to God for any misuse of their authority. There is no such thing as "children's rights" sanctioned by the word of God. The child has only the God-given right to be raised by his parents, without the intervention of any other institution (such as the State or Social Services).

When government begins to misuse its authority and goes beyond its boundaries and begins to undermine parental authority, the tendency then is to make the child responsible to the state rather than to the parents. Historically, this has occurred many times with tragic results. The governments of such nations as Sparta, Hitler's Germany, and communist Russia have usurped the parents' role, but today parental authority is being undermined in the USA through compulsory public education, child advocacy agencies, and child-abuse laws. Parents must not allow government to usurp their authority in those areas in which God holds the parents alone accountable.

For example, parents in the Edah have the explicit instruction in the word of God to teach their children information consistent with the word of God. The state has no such instructions and therefore has no authority above the parents to teach children contrary information. In fact, no instructions can be found in the Bible that give authority to government over children in any area except upholding the parents' position of authority (1 Pet 2:12-15).

Good governments uphold the parental authority and are not allowed to revolt against the parents. Good governments do not invade parents' rights over the child, nor do good governments take over the parents' responsibility over their child or prevent parents from doing their job (Mt 15:4; Ex 21:15,17; Dt 27:16; Pr 30:17; Dt 21:18-21).

Both father and mother are co-equal in their job as parents, but the father is the *head*.

Judgment of the Rebellious Child (Cursing)

God will not tolerate flagrant disrespect of parental authority by children. The death penalty was to be administered to any child who made a practice of overt disrespect, dishonoring his parents. Parents did not have the right to take their own child's life, but they were to report him to the government themselves to put to death — or in these times to be put out of the Edah. The parents were required to testify against their own child (Dt 21:18-21). As you can see, God is very serious about children being obedient. The death penalty is for the protection and benefit of the nation itself. If a child is raised to adulthood who disrespects and disobeys his parents, he is not likely to honor and respect the word of God in the Edah. Even in the world he would not respect others or the laws of the land.

The mere existence of such a law as Dt 21:18-21, as all laws which are enforced, acts as a deterrent, and few if any parents would fail to train their children to be obedient knowing that if they failed they would have to testify against them for the death penalty. Likewise, few children, knowing what the penalty was, would be openly rebellious to their parents, unless the parents were themselves rebellious. But even if a child escaped the death penalty because either the parental or governmental institution failed in their responsibility, God's word would not fail. God's word promises direct judgment to the child, the parents, and the nation (1 Sam 3:13-14, compared to 1 Sam 4:10-18 and Pr 30:11-17; 1 Sam 4:21; 1 Cor 10:11).

The nations of the world, as well as Christianity, have been experiencing this type of curse over the last several generations — wars, drugs, and violent death have been a way of life for youth, especially in the USA. This is due to breaking the Everlasting Covenant (Isa 24:5-6).

Cursing is the consequence for the rebellious child, the one who is untrained or untrainable. On the other hand, for the child who learns obedience and who honors his parents, God has promised the blessing of peace and prosperity. God promises blessing for children (Eph 6:2-3; Ex 20:12) — long life in the land, the land of the living (Pr 3:1-2).

Parental authority is not without restraint. Each child will be dealt with in a manner that is consistent with God's character. Since God ordained the institution of parental authority, He will be fair and just to every child who is placed under each entity of this institution. There have been and there will be evil individuals who become parents, just as there are evil leaders in government. The parents who misuse the authority delegated to them fall under the direct judgment of God. When we see a child receive what we consider mistreatment from such parents, we must remember that God is in control and has chosen to place the soul life of that child under those parents, *specifically*. But we who are spiritual can go to the aid of the parent (Gal 6:1). We all make many mistakes (Jms 3:2). God knew we were not perfect when He gave the child to you, so depend on Him to give you the grace to make up for that lack, for you are still responsible.

Children Need an Authority Figure

Children need an authority figure. If parents do not provide the needed leadership, their children will seek it elsewhere. You as parents have heard child-training teachings for the last 22 years. But for the first time realize who you are, who you have the right to be — the ruler over your children. Since your Heavenly Father has placed you in this position, you should function as one who has the right to rule, and your children need to understand who is in charge, who their commander-in-chief is. This means that you make the decisions, not the children. You are to decide when it is time for bed, what they are to eat and not eat, and what activities are permitted. These decisions belong to the parent until the child has been trained to make the right responses and decisions himself. The parent even decides when and in what areas the child is allowed to make his own decisions. If this is how a child is raised, he will not know what

rebellion or disobedience or disrespect is. He has been trained to obey, not to be rebellious, but to be respectful and submissive and obedient.

Children need an authority figure. If parents do not provide the needed authority and leadership, their children will seek it out elsewhere. Without firm leadership in the home, children will find someone outside the family who will tell them what to do. Children desperately need someone whom they can obey, someone they know loves them, and someone they can give their allegiance to. God makes their soul respond to parental authority, and since this is so, they will find a replacement if the parents abdicate their position of responsibility.

It should be no surprise that leaderless children respond to the new kid on the block. If they can find no one in authority to respond to, then “gang life” seems better than *no life* in the family.

Contrary to the perverted, accepted teaching of psychology today, your child needs a leader, not a pal, buddy, big sister, or “big brother.” Parents are authority figures and therefore cannot *also* be pals or buddies with a child who must become obedient to their rule. If parents rule well when their child is growing up, there can be a lifetime of friendship between them and their grown-up child. However, this can happen only after a child has been trained to meet his parents’ standards. “Can two walk together unless they agree?” (Amos 3:3). Friendship is companionship, and companionship is compatibility.

Parental Responsibility

Parents in the nations who fail to train their children blame other things — schoolteachers, television, other children, and even religion. But God holds *them* and them alone accountable for training their children. So it is the parents’ responsibility to control negative influences — in or out of the Edah.

If we sent our children to public school, they would of course be taught things that oppose the teaching of their parents, but even in the world it is the parents’ responsibility to

determine where their children go to school and what they are taught. Children can be influenced by their peers, but it is the parents' responsibility to control with whom their children associate.

Parents are the symbols and representatives of God's authority to their children. The way parents handle their rulership is the way children will begin to think about God and all other authorities under God. Parents are the very crucial position in their child's life. If they see that their parents are fair, then they will see God as fair. If parents punish for disobedience and wrongdoing, then God must also. If his parents care for him, then God must care about him. If his parents respect God's word, then he will also. If his parents mean what they say, then God also means what He says.

As a parent, you have the opportunity to mold the child's opinions about God, proper government, his or her marriage relationship, etc. A child who is required to obey his parents will come to respect their authority and will thus be prepared to submit to authority wherever it is expressed, including God's word.

Child training is dependent on the child's respect for his parents' position of authority. Parents must come to understand that fulfilling parental responsibilities is the expression of their love for their children. In other words, if you love your children, *rule them well!*