



Clanking Chains: Review: “Musar”: Instruction & **“Derek”:** Way; **“Magal”:** Path; Solomon’s Use in Prov 4:1 ff; 5:12 ff, et al.

מַעְגָּל *magal* - “entrenchment, track, path.”

Botterweck, G. Johannes and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 3:279:

מַעְגָּל *magal* - The lexicons usually render this word by “wheel- or wagon-track, track, path,” and connect it with “cart” or “wagon.”

The background sense of *magal* is a developed habit, good or bad, which will ultimately determine the fate of the person practicing it.

Derek and *magal* are found throughout the Proverbs in association with two prepositional phrases: “of righteousness,” found in verse 11, and “of wickedness” found in verse 19. We have established from these two vocabulary terms: (1) “wheel-tracks of righteousness” and (2) “wheel-tracks of wickedness.”

These wheel-tracks find their sources in either (1) instruction from a human father or from our heavenly Father or (2) from false teachers, lust patterns, doctrines of demons, or human viewpoint.

The Proverbs we are citing emphasize the “instruction” phase of the process. On occasion these passages will also include the “inculcation” and “facilitation” phase by means of the phrase “paths of righteousness.”

Proverbs 4:11 - I have directed you in the way [**דֶּרֶךְ** *derek*: **divine guidance for righteous behavior through the instruction**] of wisdom; I have led you in wheel-tracks [**מַעְגָּל** *magal*: **facilitated behavior patterns and character traits from the source**] of righteousness.

v.12 - When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run, you will not stumble.

v.13 - Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.

v. 14 - Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not proceed in the way of evil men.

v. 25 - Let your eyes look directly ahead, and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.

v. 26 - Watch [**פָּלַס** *palas*: **to make smooth**] the path of your feet [**מַעְגָּל** *magal*: **the wheel-tracks of personality**], and all your ways [**דֶּרֶךְ** *derek*: **behavior patterns**] will be established [**כִּינ** *kun*: **facilitated**].

v. 27 - Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil.

Proverbs 5:12 - You say, “How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof!

v. 13 - “And I have not listened to the voice of my teachers. Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!

v. 14 - “I was almost in utter ruin in the midst of the assembly and congregation.”



v. 23 - He will die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.

Proverbs 6:20 - My son, observe the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother.

v.23 - For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life.

Proverbs 10:17 - He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, but he who forsakes reproof goes astray.