

STEPHEN E. WITMER

Divine Instruction  
in Early Christianity

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe  
246*

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Mohr Siebeck

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246





Stephen E. Witmer

# Divine Instruction in Early Christianity

Mohr Siebeck

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For Emma



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*Soli Deo Gloria*

June 2008  
South Hamilton, Massachusetts

Stephen E. Witmer

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	vii
Abbreviations .....	xiii

Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
<i>The basis and structure of this thesis.....</i>	2
<i>Methodology.....</i>	4

### Part One: Divine instruction in the OT and Jewish literature

Chapter 2: Divine instruction in the OT .....	7
1. Previous research on God as teacher in the OT .....	9
2. Divine instruction at Sinai .....	10
3. Divine instruction in the rest of the OT.....	13
4. The prophetic development of eschatological divine instruction.....	16
<i>Isaiah 2.2-4/Micah 4.1-3.....</i>	17
<i>Isaiah 30.20-21.....</i>	18
<i>Isaiah 54.13.....</i>	19
<i>Jeremiah 31.31-34.....</i>	22
5. Conclusion.....	26
Chapter 3: Divine instruction in early Jewish literature .....	28
1. Divine instruction in the Dead Sea Scrolls.....	29
<i>Study and education at Qumran .....</i>	29
<i>Didactic terminology combined with a reference to God.....</i>	31
<i>Divine instruction at Sinai .....</i>	32
<i>Who is taught by God? .....</i>	33
<i>When does divine instruction occur? .....</i>	38
<i>What is the content of divine instruction? .....</i>	40
<i>How is divine instruction given? .....</i>	41
<i>Conclusion.....</i>	42
2. Divine instruction in Philo of Alexandria .....	42
<i>Non-eschatological divine instruction.....</i>	44
<i>Philo's adaptation of the Greek educational trinity .....</i>	44
<i>Divine instruction, 'self-taught,' and natural gifting.....</i>	47
<i>Other means of divine instruction.....</i>	49

<i>Divine and human instruction</i> .....	50
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	52
3. Divine instruction in Josephus .....	52
4. Divine instruction in the Apocrypha .....	54
5. Divine instruction in the OT Greek pseudepigrapha.....	55
6. The Jewish expectation of a God-taught messianic teacher .....	56
<i>A God-taught Messiah</i> .....	57
<i>A teaching Messiah</i> .....	59
7. Conclusion.....	63

Part Two:  
Divine instruction in the Johannine corpus

Chapter 4: Teaching and revelation in the Fourth Gospel .....	64
1. The Fourth Gospel and the Johannine letters .....	65
2. Comparing the Fourth Gospel and the synoptic gospels: what is distinctive about teaching in the Fourth Gospel? .....	66
<i>Previous research: Pancaro, Hahn, and Untergassmair</i> .....	66
<i>Using the narrator/narrative distinction</i> .....	68
<i>Jesus as διδάσκαλος and ἥσθι, and his followers as μαθηταί</i> .....	69
<i>Those who teach (διδάσκω) in the Fourth Gospel</i> .....	75
<i>The other didactic terminology</i> .....	78
<i>The significance of divine instruction</i> .....	79
3. From where does the evangelist derive the language and concept of divine instruction?.....	81
<i>The OT citation in John 6.45a</i> .....	81
<i>Other sources of the concept of divine instruction</i> .....	85
4. Conclusion.....	86
Chapter 5: The teaching of Jesus and the teaching of God .....	87
1. Possible models for Jesus as teacher: Messiah, Servant, Prophet .....	88
<i>Jesus as the God-taught, teaching Messiah?</i> .....	89
<i>Jesus as the God-taught, teaching Servant?</i> .....	89
<i>Jesus as the God-taught, teaching prophet like Moses?</i> .....	90
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	91
2. Direct divine instruction in Isaiah 54.13 .....	91
3. The teaching of Jesus as the fulfillment of Isaiah 54.13.....	94
<i>The tension in John 6.45-46</i> .....	95
4. Jesus as the one taught by God <i>par excellence</i> .....	95
<i>Jesus learns from and imitates his Father (John 5.17-30)</i> .....	96
<i>Hearing, learning, and seeing the Father (John 6.45-46)</i> .....	99
<i>Jesus' διδαχή comes from God, who sent him (John 7.14-19)</i> .....	100
<i>Jesus was taught by the Father (John 8.28b)</i> .....	101
<i>The didactic framework for other passages in the Fourth Gospel</i> .....	102

<i>Jesus as distinct from other learners</i> .....	104
5. Jesus as taught by God, and his teaching as <i>direct</i> divine instruction.....	105
6. The teaching of the Holy Spirit/Paraclete .....	106
7. Conclusion.....	107
 Chapter 6: The function of divine instruction .....	108
1. Jesus and his disciples as ‘taught by God’ .....	109
<i>Jesus as the heavenly teacher (John 3.1-15)</i> .....	110
<i>Jesus’ education and knowledge of the Scriptures (John 7.14-19)</i> .....	111
<i>Jesus’ disciples are taught by God (John 6.45)</i> .....	116
2. ‘Taught by God’ and charismatic exegesis .....	123
3. The Johannine community as taught by God .....	125
4. The teaching of the Spirit and the writing of the Fourth Gospel.....	128
5. Conclusion.....	129
 Chapter 7: The anointing that teaches all things .....	131
1. Didactic terminology in the Johannine letters.....	131
2. An allusion to Jeremiah 31.34 in 1 John 2.20, 27 .....	132
3. The <i>χρῖσμα</i> in 1 John 2.20, 27 .....	133
<i>Establishing the text of 1 John 2.20</i> .....	134
<i>Establishing the text and structure of 1 John 2.27</i> .....	134
<i>Identifying the ‘anointing’</i> .....	136
4. The teaching of God, the teaching of Jesus, and the teaching of the Spirit .....	141
5. Does the teaching of the <i>χρῖσμα</i> affect teaching structures in the Johannine community? .....	142
<i>Johannine ecclesiology</i> .....	143
<i>Interpretations of 1 John 2.27b</i> .....	145
<i>The χρῖσμα and teaching: critical assessment, and a way forward</i> .....	150
6. The function of divine instruction in the Johannine letters .....	152
7. Conclusion.....	152
 Part Three: Divine instruction in Paul and in Matthew	
 Chapter 8: God-taught to love .....	153
1. Paul’s understanding of eschatological divine instruction .....	154
<i>Divine instruction and the Spirit</i> .....	157
<i>Divine instruction and Jesus</i> .....	158
2. The content and function of divine instruction .....	159
3. How does divine instruction affect human teaching? .....	162
4. Conclusion.....	164

Chapter 9: One is your teacher .....	165
1. Matthew's understanding of eschatological divine instruction .....	166
2. The content and function of divine instruction .....	172
3. How does divine instruction affect human teaching? .....	173
<i>Interpretations of Matthew 23.8-10.....</i>	173
<i>Critical assessment, and a way forward.....</i>	175
4. Conclusion.....	178
Chapter 10: Conclusion .....	179
<i>Eschatology.....</i>	179
<i>Christology.....</i>	180
<i>Pneumatology.....</i>	181
<i>Ecclesiology.....</i>	181
<i>Hermeneutics.....</i>	182
<i>Conclusion.....</i>	183
Bibliography .....	185
Index of sources.....	209
Index of modern authors .....	229
Index of key-words and subjects.....	235

## Abbreviations

Abbreviations and stylistic conventions follow, where possible, *SBL* (1999) and IATG<sup>2</sup> (1992). In addition, the following abbreviations are used, with bibliographical details in the Bibliography:

AOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BST	The Bible Speaks Today
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
BBC	Blackwell Bible Commentaries
CB	Calwer Bibelkommentare
CPNIVC	College Press NIV Commentary
CRD	Jacob Neusner (ed.), <i>The Components of the Rabbinic Documents: From the Whole to the Parts</i>
CCC	Crossway Classic Commentaries
EDSS	Lawrence H. Schiffman and James VanderKam (eds.), <i>Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls</i>
FN	<i>Filologia neotestamentaria</i>
HBS	Herders Biblische Studien
IVPNTCS	IVP New Testament Commentary Series
JGRChJ	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>
LW	Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (eds.), <i>Luther's Works</i>
MCNT	Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTFF	New Testament Foundations and Facets
NTT	New Testament Theology
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
OBS	Oxford Bible Series
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
POTTS	Pittsburgh Original Texts and Translation Series
SBL	P. H. Alexander et al. (eds.), <i>The SBL Handbook of Style: for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies</i>
SBLAS	Society of Biblical Literature Aramaic Studies
SVTQ	<i>St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly</i>
SBLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
SDSSRL	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SJSJ	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
TRENT	Traditions of the Rabbis from the Era of the New Testament
UJT	Understanding Jesus Today
WT	Wesleyan Theological Journal



## Chapter 1

# Introduction

*'And may God, who rules over the whole world,  
give you wisdom, insight, understanding,  
knowledge of his commandments, and patience.  
Be instructed by God, seeking out what the Lord seeks from you,  
and then do it, in order that you may be found in the day of judgment.'*

*Epistle of Barnabas* 21.5-6, c. 100<sup>1</sup>

This study is an investigation of one aspect of early Christian self-understanding: the conviction current among some early followers of Jesus that they had been, and were being, taught by God, in fulfillment of OT prophetic promises. I will argue that this aspect of early Christian self-understanding was an important one, and has relevance for an appreciation of the eschatology, Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology and hermeneutics of the earliest Christian communities. By ‘early Christianity,’ I refer to the Christianity of the first century. The limits of the present study do not permit any comprehensive examination of the idea of divine instruction in Christian documents later than the NT writings. However, the idea of divine instruction is not infrequent in Christian authors of the second century and later (see the epigraph above), and further study would likely yield interesting results.

The early Christian concept of divine instruction has received insufficient attention in the secondary literature. To my knowledge, no monograph has ever comprehensively investigated the concept. Numerous commentaries and articles treat one or another of the NT passages that refer to divine instruction, sometimes referencing the other ‘key’ passages in a footnote. However, no study has ever gathered together the important NT passages and sought to locate those passages within the context of a close study of divine instruction in the OT and early Jewish literature. This is surprising in light of the many studies on Jesus as a teacher.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the lack of studies devoted to God as a teacher is reflective of the general neglect of God in New

---

<sup>1</sup> Holmes, *Apostolic Fathers*, 325.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. e.g. Byrskog, *Teacher*; Normann, *Christos Didaskalos*; Riesner, *Lehrer*; Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher*; Yieh, *One Teacher*. Many more works are noted below in chapters 4-5.

Testament theology, a problem identified by Nils A. Dahl thirty years ago, and lamented by other scholars since.<sup>3</sup>

The lack of secondary literature on divine instruction in the NT is similar to the situation in OT and Jewish studies. Only a few monographs investigate the idea of divine instruction in the OT,<sup>4</sup> and no study comprehensively investigates divine instruction in the DSS, Philo, and other early Jewish literature. Therefore, one justification for this study is the almost complete lack of previous studies. This also accounts for the lack of a *Forschungsbericht*. The few works that exist will be noted in the course of the study.

### *The basis and structure of this thesis*

This thesis is built upon two observations. First, the idea that God teaches people is pervasive in the OT, and receives an eschatological thrust in the prophetic literature, particularly in Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah. A wide range of early Jewish literature develops the idea of God as a teacher, and some of this literature draws upon the OT prophetic promises of eschatological divine instruction. Secondly, multiple corpora in the NT draw upon and develop the OT prophetic promises of eschatological divine instruction. Two OT passages in particular are cited or alluded to: Isa 54.13 and Jer 31.34. The presence of these OT passages can be shown with a reasonable degree of certainty in the Fourth Gospel and 1 Thessalonians, and to a lesser degree in 1 John, Matthew, and 1 Corinthians. One of the contributions of my project is to demonstrate the presence of these OT allusions. In two published studies, I have argued that John 6.45 cites a written or accurately memorized text of Isa 54.13, and that the neologism θεοδίδακτος in 1 Thess 4.9 is coined on the basis of the LXX or MT of Isa 54.13.<sup>5</sup> The OT allusions in 1 John, Matthew, and 1 Corinthians will be examined in chapters 7-9.

In order to understand how some of the earliest followers of Jesus were interpreting the OT prophetic promises of divine instruction as fulfilled in their experience, it is important first to understand the OT concept of divine instruction. Accordingly, chapter 2 surveys the theme of divine instruction in the OT, focusing particularly upon the prophetic literature. Chapter 3 moves toward the NT writings by examining the theme of divine instruction in the DSS, Philo, Josephus, the Apocrypha, and OT Greek pseudepigrapha, as well

<sup>3</sup> Dahl, ‘Neglected Factor,’ 153-163, esp. 153-55. Cf. Keck, ‘Renewal,’ 363. On this neglect in Johannine studies, see Thompson, *God*, 6-15; Culpepper, *Anatomy*, 112-15.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Finsterbusch, *Weisung*; Schawe, *Lehrer*. For articles and essays, see below in chapter 2.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Witmer, ‘Citation,’ 134-38; Witmer, ‘Neologism,’ 239-50. This thesis builds on the results of those studies rather than repeating their arguments.

as the idea of a messianic teacher in these writings. The various developments of the idea in the Jewish writings provide an important backdrop for contrast and comparison with the NT development of divine instruction.

Chapters 4-7 constitute the main section of the thesis. Here, I investigate the idea of divine instruction in the Johannine corpus, focusing upon the Fourth Gospel and 1 John. Chapters 8-9 offer brief explorations of the same theme in the Pauline letters and in Matthew. The wider-than-normal breadth of this thesis arises from the conviction that such an approach can highlight areas of unity and diversity in the NT writings that would go unnoticed in narrower studies. I make no attempt to force the evidence into a pre-conceived pattern or a contrived unity. Rather, what is most interesting is to see both similarities and differences. The Johannine writings, the Pauline letters, and Matthew each draw upon the idea of eschatological divine instruction, but develop it in different ways and for varying purposes. In the end, the flexibility and potency of the concept are among its distinguishing features.

Three questions formulated through study of the NT texts themselves are asked of the Johannine, Pauline, and Matthean writings:

1. How do the authors understand the fulfillment of the promises of eschatological divine instruction? How is the teaching of Jesus related to the teaching of God? What is the role of the Spirit?
2. What is the content and function of divine instruction?
3. Does divine instruction obviate the need for human teaching?

These questions are answered in the course of the thesis, and chapter 10 gathers together the most important results in a conclusion.

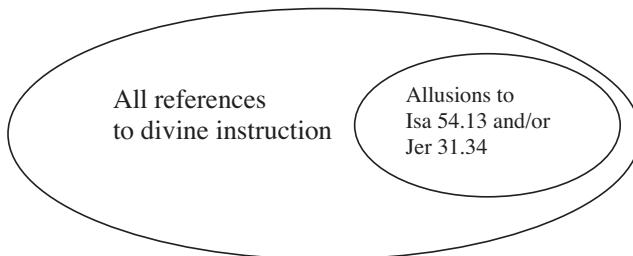
There are, of course, references to the gods teaching in Greco-Roman sources (and indeed, in many world religions).<sup>6</sup> In this thesis, I do not examine these references. This omission is due to limits of time and space, rather than to the conclusion that study of these sources would contribute nothing to the thesis. On the contrary, such a study would quite possibly shed further light on some of the NT passages. However, in my judgment the clear dependence of the NT upon the OT prophetic literature for its concept of eschatological divine instruction warrants the precedence given to the OT and Jewish sources in this study.

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<sup>6</sup> See e.g. Homer, *Il.* 5.51; Aeschylus, *Eum.* 279; Plato, *Menex.* 238b; *Socrat. Ep.* 1.10. Cf. Karrer, ‘Lehrende,’ 9; Zimmerman, *Urchristlichen*, 77-78; Theobald, ‘Gezogen,’ 334; Colless, ‘Divine Education,’ 118-42.

### Methodology

While this study is built upon the observation that the Johannine writings, the Pauline letters, and Matthew cite or allude to prophetic promises of divine instruction, it is important to study more than simply the passages that draw upon the OT if the idea of divine instruction in the NT documents is to be examined comprehensively. Therefore, while allusions to Isa 54.13 and Jer 31.34 are of most interest, all references to divine instruction must be examined. The former are a subset of the latter:



Accordingly, it is necessary to develop a method for identifying the concept of divine instruction in the OT, early Jewish literature, and the NT writings. Because no study similar to mine exists for early Jewish literature and the NT writings, my methodological discussion necessarily interacts with OT treatments of the concept.

In my judgment, the nature of the investigation demands that a study of the concept of divine instruction be based on didactic *terminology*. It is demanded by two factors. First, the concept of ‘teaching’ is difficult to define. Perhaps the most helpful way of distinguishing teaching from communication in general is to emphasize the continuous, sustained nature of teaching.<sup>7</sup> However, even this distinction is one of degree and is therefore inexact. In some texts, it can be difficult to determine if teaching is occurring, or simply communication in general. These difficulties are reduced in the case of formal instruction. Instruction in a formal setting is fairly easy to identify because we may look for a teacher and pupils and a designated place of instruction.<sup>8</sup> However, instruction can also be informal, and it is far more difficult to identify this type of instruction, since it occurs in the context of everyday life and does not require a teacher or pupils.<sup>9</sup>

Secondly, the problem of identifying the presence of instruction is compounded when we seek to identify the concept of *divine* instruction in the

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1.413; Rengstorf, ‘διδάσκαλος,’ *TDNT* 2.148; Rengstorf, ‘διδάσκω,’ *TDNT* 2.135.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. Acts 11.26; 20.20; Rom 2.17-21; 12.7; 16.17.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. 1 Cor 14.35; Gal 3.2; Phil 4.11.

relevant sources. This is because God does not teach in a classroom or fulfill the recognizable human occupation of ‘teacher.’ This makes it more difficult to distinguish divine instruction from divine communication (i.e. revelation) in general.

Erich Zenger’s recent essay on Yahweh as a teacher in the Psalms is an example of the methodological weakness of approaches that do not rely on didactic terminology.<sup>10</sup> Zenger discusses five Psalms he considers important for the concept of Yahweh as a teacher (Pss 50, 111, 112, 119, 147). Of these, only Ps 119 uses the main didactic terminology, and Zenger does not discuss the verses that use this terminology. Because his methodology is not lexically grounded, it has no control; the Psalms he interprets may refer to the concept of Yahweh as teacher, but they may equally refer only to the general idea of communication from Yahweh. Without lexical grounding, we cannot be certain.

The difficulties of identifying the concept of divine instruction suggest that the best approach is to focus on the terminology of instruction. Accordingly, my method of studying the concept of divine instruction is to examine texts that combine a reference to God with didactic terminology, and then to bring into discussion those texts that (arguably) convey a similar concept even if they do not use this terminology.<sup>11</sup> Ellen Birnbaum’s work on Philo is a good example of a careful and methodologically self-aware use of vocabulary in order to study a theme or concept in a complex corpus.<sup>12</sup> Most of the studies of instruction in the OT with which I interact in chapter 2 appropriately anchor their approaches in didactic terminology, and therefore maintain more methodological control than Zenger.<sup>13</sup> Of course, the choice of terminology is important for such an approach, but it is not difficult to isolate a representative list of Hebrew and Greek didactic terminology. In no chapter is my selection of vocabulary comprehensive, but the chosen vocabulary in each case is sufficient to yield an accurate view of the concept of God teaching people.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Zenger, ‘Lehrer,’ 47–67 considers grounding his study in the teaching terminology of the Psalms, but does not employ this method, since it would require too much space for a limited essay.

<sup>11</sup> This method is broad enough to include texts (e.g. Deut 4.10; Jer 31.31–34) that would not be included if the search was only for instances in which God was the grammatical subject of a verb meaning ‘to teach.’

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Birnbaum, ‘Philo,’ 535–52, esp. 536–40.

<sup>13</sup> See the statements of method in Schawe, *Lehrer*, 4–6; Finsterbusch, *Weisung*, 11–12. Cf. Ego, ‘Implikationen,’ 7–15; Diedrich, ‘Lehre,’ 59–73.

<sup>14</sup> For a fuller list of Hebrew and Greek verbs for ‘teach,’ cf. Zuck, ‘Hebrew Words,’ 228–35; Zuck, ‘Greek Words,’ 158–68. See also Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 1.325–29, 413–16 for the Greek terms under the subdomains ‘learn’ and ‘teach.’

The terminology-based methodology I employ requires two caveats, both concerning the now much-discussed distinction between a word and a concept.<sup>15</sup> First, it is possible for the concept of divine instruction to be present in a given passage without the use of didactic terminology.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, several factors suggest that my method has led me to the key passages. Rather than choosing only one word, I have selected a range of didactic terminology. This ‘semantic field’ leads to a greater number of passages, and so avoids the criticisms of some narrower word studies.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, while passages that do not use didactic terminology may express the concept of God teaching, I have highlighted above the uncertainty caused by the difficulty of defining the concept of ‘instruction.’ In my opinion, the safer option is to bring control to the study by staying close to the didactic terminology, even if this means omitting some passages that are on the periphery. Finally, I have noted above that I include passages that do not use didactic terminology, but correspond to passages that do. This is another way of addressing the word/concept distinction.

The second caveat is that not all of my selected didactic terminology will necessarily lead to the same concept of teaching, or (more specifically) divine instruction. This is due to the obvious fact that lexemes can be used in different senses.<sup>18</sup> To take two examples, διδάσκω in 1 Cor 11.14 does not denote instruction of a formal kind, and is so vague in meaning that a more general word could be substituted without a change in meaning (e.g. ‘Does not nature *show* you’). Similarly, διδάσκω in Matt 28.15 does not denote a didactic relationship, but has the sense ‘tell someone what to do.’<sup>19</sup> Hence, while I have allowed didactic terminology to guide me to the concept of divine instruction, I have not uncritically assumed that all those words will mean the same thing. I note differences in meaning when necessary.

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<sup>15</sup> See especially the famous work of Barr, *Semantics*, 206-62. Cf. Silva, *Biblical Words*, 17-32.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 119.

<sup>17</sup> Sawyer, ‘Review,’ 241 criticizes the discussion of education in *TDNT* 5 because it is restricted to passages where παιδεία, παιδεύω, etc. occur. My methodology has included a broader range of words, including both παιδεύω and διδάσκω, as well as other terminology (including words for ‘learn’). Sawyer himself notes that the increasing use of ‘semantic fields’ in *TDNT* 5 alleviates some of the criticisms of the previous volumes of *TDNT*.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 120.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. BDAG 241.

## Chapter 2

# Divine instruction in the Old Testament

*‘As it says in the prophets, “And they will all be taught by God”’*

John 6.45

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the idea of divine instruction in the OT in order to prepare the way for the chapters that follow.<sup>1</sup> The method outlined above in chapter 1 yields a large number of instances in which a reference to God is closely connected with didactic terminology.<sup>2</sup> The various Hebrew and Greek didactic terms have different nuances,<sup>3</sup> but in this chapter I will focus more on the similarities than the differences in meaning. In fact, the terms can sometimes be used synonymously or interchangeably: יְסַר and לִמְדָה are placed in synonymous parallelism in Ps 94.10,<sup>4</sup> as are יְרַדָּה and לִמְדָה in Ps 25.8–9.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, the Apocrypha will be considered in chapter 3, together with other early Jewish sources. This chapter is based on examination of all uses of the following words in the MT: סָרָה; רָדָה (Hiphil); לִמְדָה (Qal); לִמְדָה (Piel); לִמְדָה (Pual); קָרְבָּן; גָּוֹרָם. In addition, all uses of the following words in the LXX have been examined: διδακτός; διδασκαλία; διδασκαλος; διδάσκω; διδαχή; μανθάνω; παιδεία; παιδεύτης; παιδεύω; συνετίζω. The LXX consistently translates לִמְדָה (Qal) with μανθάνω (cf. Kapelrud, ‘לִמְדָה’, *TDOT* 8.10; Rengstorf, ‘μανθάνω’, *TDNT* 4.400), and – with the exception of Job and Proverbs – לִמְדָה (Piel) with διδασκω (cf. Rengstorf, ‘διδασκω’, *TDNT* 2.136). תְּרִדָּה is translated variously, only once with διδάσκω.

<sup>2</sup> There are over one hundred such passages both in the MT and the LXX.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the extensive work of Schawe, *Lehrer, passim*, and the relevant *TDNT* and *TDOT* articles.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 94.12. In LXX Ps 17.36, God’s παιδεία is said to teach (διδάσκω) the psalmist, and in Jer 32.33, God teaches (τάξις) instruction (μάθημα). In Isa 28.26, יְסַר and יְרַדָּה are used in close conjunction.

<sup>5</sup> I find unconvincing the attempt of Jenni, *Piel*, 119–22 to argue that יְרַדָּה (Hiphil) denotes teaching within an established student-teacher relationship, while לִמְדָה (Piel) suggests a more one-off, ‘accidental’ teaching. There are too many exceptions for Jenni’s theory to be convincing. E.g. Deut 11.19 uses לִמְדָה (Piel) to refer to ongoing instruction within a parent-child relationship. The many uses of לִמְדָה (Piel) in Deuteronomy for Moses’ teaching do not (as Jenni suggests) indicate an ‘accidental’ teaching, because Moses is seen as the teacher *par excellence*. Cf. לִמְדָה (Piel) in Isa 48.17: on Jenni’s reasoning, one would expect יְרַדָּה.

As noted in chapter 1, the use of Isa 54.13 and Jer 31.34 in the Johannine corpus, the Pauline letters, and Matthew makes these two texts, and others like them that speak of eschatological divine instruction, of greatest interest for this study. Accordingly, I will focus on these texts in the present chapter. However, it is important to locate the prophetic development of divine instruction within the wider context of divine instruction in the OT. Restrictions of space do not allow here for the kind of comprehensive examination of each of the texts that would be desirable, and I can only sketch the contours of the idea in broad strokes. After examining divine instruction at Sinai and noting some of the most important features of divine instruction in the OT, I will provide a more detailed treatment of the prophetic development of divine instruction, focusing on Isa 54.13 and Jer 31.31–34.

Although not denying the value of some diachronic approaches, I will employ a synchronic approach in my study of the OT writings. The studies of Braulik and Finsterbusch on instruction in Deuteronomy provide good examples of the two approaches. Braulik's aim is to isolate each use of **לִמְדָה** in Deuteronomy, and assign it to one of four literary strata, as well as a corresponding sociological context.<sup>6</sup> This approach yields some rather hypothetical results, as Braulik himself admits, due to the lack of scholarly consensus regarding his method and results.<sup>7</sup> Finsterbusch's study, on the other hand, employs a synchronic method, reading the book of Deuteronomy as a compositional unity.<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this study, a synchronic approach is preferable, since it allows us to deal with the texts as they stand, rather than relying upon hypothetical and disputed theories of authorship and redaction. Moreover, it surely brings us closer to the way in which the authors of the NT writings were reading the OT texts.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, while I am aware of the critical issues surrounding, for instance, the composition of the book of Isaiah,<sup>10</sup> I will not attempt to separate out redactional layers in this study.

<sup>6</sup> Braulik, 'Deuteronomium,' 121–22.

<sup>7</sup> Braulik, 'Deuteronomium,' 121.

<sup>8</sup> Finsterbusch, 'Mose,' 27–28. Finsterbusch recognizes the value of diachronic approaches (e.g. the study of Braulik), but asserts that a synchronic approach should come first. Cf. Finsterbusch, *Weisung*, 9–11, and the essays in De Moor, *Synchronic, passim*, particularly Williamson, 'Synchronic,' 211–26.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. John 12.37–41 attributes both Isa 6.10 and Isa 53.1 to what 'Isaiah the prophet' said. Here, the book of Isaiah is seen as a compositional unity. Similarly, there is no hint in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> of differing authorship for Isa 1–39 and Isa 40–66.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. Williamson, *Isaiah*, 1–29; Höffken, *Jesaja, passim*.

## 2.1 Previous research on God as teacher in the OT

Relatively little has been written on divine instruction in the OT. Until recently, the only book-length study was Erwin Schawe's 1979 thesis *Gott als Lehrer im Alten Testament*, an examination of three Hebrew verbs for 'teach' with particular attention to the passages in which God is the grammatical subject.<sup>11</sup> Karin Finsterbusch's thoroughly researched 2005 book *Weisung für Israel* focuses on instruction in Deuteronomy, but also includes substantial chapters on teaching and learning in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Proverbs.<sup>12</sup> Several essays provide broad overviews of the subject. Brian Colless has written two relevant articles, one outlining the idea of God as a teacher in the OT and NT,<sup>13</sup> and another tracing the idea of divine education in several religions.<sup>14</sup> H.-J. Kraus' article outlines the OT concept of divine instruction, but only in a very partial way, and is more helpful for its theological reflection than for its exegetical contribution.<sup>15</sup>

More recently, several essays have appeared which examine (at least indirectly) the idea of divine instruction in particular OT corpora. As noted above, Georg Braulik has contributed a redaction-history study on the use of לֵמֹד in Deuteronomy, while Karin Finsterbusch has offered a synchronic study of Moses as teacher in Deuteronomy.<sup>16</sup> Friedrich Diedrich studies the requests for divine instruction in Pss 25, 119, and 143, and concludes that these prayers likely reflect the personal piety of the wisdom tradition and the world of the scribal school.<sup>17</sup> Other work on the Psalms includes that of Erich Zenger, who argues that Yahweh is presented as both a teacher of the nation and the individual in the Psalms.<sup>18</sup> Beate Ego's recent essay takes a broader approach, surveying the concept of instruction in Deuteronomy, the prophetic tradition, the Psalms, Qumran, and the rabbinic literature.<sup>19</sup> In the present

<sup>11</sup> Schawe, *Lehrer* studies יְרַדֵּה (Hiphil), לֵמֹד (Piel), and יְסַדֵּךְ and its derivatives. Much of Schawe's thesis is only indirectly related to divine instruction, since large portions of it analyze passages in which humans teach.

<sup>12</sup> Finsterbusch, *Weisung*, *passim*.

<sup>13</sup> Colless, 'Teacher,' 24–38, 112–23, 151–62 draws on Colless' unpublished M.A. thesis, *Yahweh Hammoreh. A Study of the Divine Educator Figure in the Religion of Israel*, 1965. The article leaves much to be desired. It is largely a listing of the OT texts, and includes little interaction with secondary literature.

<sup>14</sup> Colless, 'Divine Education,' 118–42.

<sup>15</sup> Kraus, 'Paedagogia,' 515–27 adopts Calvin's concept of *paedagogia Dei* in his attempt to find a concept that can account for both the unity and differences of the Old and New Testaments.

<sup>16</sup> Braulik, 'Deuteronomium,' 119–46; Finsterbusch, 'Mose,' 27–45.

<sup>17</sup> Diedrich, 'Lehre,' 59–73.

<sup>18</sup> Zenger, 'Lehrer,' 47–67.

<sup>19</sup> Ego, 'Implikationen,' 1–26.

chapter, I will seek to build on the secondary literature noted here, while addressing some issues that have been insufficiently discussed.

## 2.2 Divine instruction at Sinai

In order to understand the concept of divine instruction in the OT, we begin with the example *par excellence* of divine instruction: the giving of the Law at Sinai.<sup>20</sup> That this is divine instruction is evident in Deut 4.36: ‘From heaven he let you hear his voice to instruct [רִזְצָרָנָה/παιδεύω]<sup>21</sup> you; and on earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words from the midst of the fire.’<sup>22</sup> In Deut 4.10, the Lord tells Moses that he allowed the people to hear his words so that they would learn (לִמְדָה [Qal]/μανθάνω) to fear him, and would teach (לִמְדָה [Piel]/διδάσκω) their children.

An important feature of these Deuteronomic passages is the distinction between direct divine instruction and mediated divine instruction. The ‘ten words’,<sup>23</sup> are marked off from the rest of the Law as those that were spoken and written (4.13; 5.22; 9.10; 10.4) by God himself, without an intermediary.<sup>24</sup> The texts cited above (4.10, 36) therefore refer to the direct, unmediated divine instruction of the ten words. The Lord speaks the ten words recorded in 5.6–21 ‘face to face’ with the people (5.4),<sup>25</sup> and only then do the people request that Moses act as an intermediary (5.24–27; cf. 18.16). Moses then teaches (לִמְדָה) Israel the rest of the commandments in the plain of Moab (1.5; 4.1, 5; 5.31; 6.1). God’s instruction is demarcated from the teaching of Moses and others in part by the terminology used to describe it. Schawe rightly points out that, in Deuteronomy, God is never the grammatical subject

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Braulik, ‘Deuteronomium,’ 134; Ego, ‘Implikationen,’ 3 on the archetypal nature of Sinai.

<sup>21</sup> The context of Deut 4.36 suggests that רִזְצָרָנָה has the sense of ‘instruct’ rather than ‘discipline.’ Cf. Schawe, *Lehrer*, 198.

<sup>22</sup> All biblical translations are my own. The ‘instruction’ of the Lord can also refer to disciplinary action (רִצָּחָה in 8.5), and his great works on behalf of Israel (מִזְרָחָה in 11.2). On the didactic nature of these passages, cf. Schawe, *Lehrer*, 199–203.

<sup>23</sup> That is, the ‘ten commandments,’ referred to as ‘words’ by the MT (רְבָדָה) and the LXX (ρήματα).

<sup>24</sup> For recognition of this distinction in the secondary literature, see Nicholson, ‘Decalogue,’ 422–33; Clines, ‘Ten,’ 26–45; Baker, ‘Decalogue,’ 1–24; Finsterbusch, ‘Mose,’ 35, n. 21.

<sup>25</sup> 5.5 might seem to imply that the communication of the Lord is not direct, since it suggests that Moses stands between the Lord and the people. On this question, cf. Baker, ‘Decalogue,’ 2, n. 3.

of **לִמְדָה**.<sup>26</sup> Rather, in 4.36, **יִסְרָאֵל** is used for God's direct teaching from heaven.<sup>27</sup>

Deuteronomy emphasizes that Moses teaches (**לִמְדָה**) as the Lord commanded him to teach,<sup>28</sup> and this suggests that Moses' teaching mediates the divine instruction – it is not his own.<sup>29</sup> In turn, Moses' instruction is to be taught in public by Levitical priests and judges,<sup>30</sup> and in the family sphere by parents.<sup>31</sup> In sum, the Lord's instruction is mediated by Moses at the request of the people, and in turn mediated by elders, Levitical priests, and parents. However, the ten words were taught *directly* by the Lord to all the people (5.22). Although Israel did not see God's form at Sinai, they did hear his voice and learn from him (4.10, 12).

This distinction between the ten words and the rest of the Mosaic Torah is evident also in the Exodus account, which emphasizes God's direct communication of the ten words (Exod 20.1–17, 22) and his direct action in writing upon two tablets.<sup>32</sup> Like Deuteronomy, Exodus also recounts the people's request for an intermediary after the Lord speaks the ten words (20.19). The divine instruction of 20.22–23.33 (cf. 25.1–31.17) is therefore mediated through Moses, and no longer spoken directly by God. Also like Deuteronomy, Exodus specifies that the words written (and spoken) directly by God are for the instruction of the people: the Lord commands Moses to come up to the mountain so that he can give Moses the stone tablets ‘with the Law and the commandment which I have written in order to instruct [**הָרָא**] them’ (24.12).<sup>33</sup>

The distinction noted here between direct and mediated divine communication appears in some early Jewish sources that reflect upon the events at

<sup>26</sup> Schawe, *Lehrer*, 92.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Finsterbusch, *Weisung*, 312–13.

<sup>28</sup> On the importance of **לִמְדָה** in Deuteronomy, cf. Braulik, ‘Deuteronomium,’ 120. For the references to Moses' teaching at God's command, cf. 4.5, 14; 5.31; 6.1.

<sup>29</sup> **לִמְדָה** in 4.1, 5, 14; 5.31; 6.1; 31.19, 22; **לִקְרָב** in 32.2. This is not to say that Moses' teaching consists *only* of repetition of the commands he received from God at Sinai. See Finsterbusch, ‘Mose,’ 27–45, and the critique of Schawe on this point by Finsterbusch, *Weisung*, 2–3.

<sup>30</sup> **הָרָא** in 17.10, 11; 24.8; 33.10. Note especially 24.8 for the emphasis that the Levitical priests teach as Moses commanded them. See 31.9–13, and cf. Ego, ‘Implikationen,’ 2–3.

<sup>31</sup> **לִמְדָה** in 11.19. Note that in this text, parents are to teach ‘these words of mine’ (i.e. Moses' words). Cf. also 6.6–9, which uses the term **לִשְׁמָה** (6.7).

<sup>32</sup> 24.12; 31.18; 32.16. Contrast 24.4, where *Moses* writes commandments.

<sup>33</sup> There are few uses of didactic terminology in Exodus, and almost all these refer to *divine* instruction. Cf. **תְּרִירָה** in 4.12, 15. **תְּרִירָה** is also used in 15.25, but not with a didactic connotation. Cf. Schawe, *Lehrer*, 45. **Μανθάνω** in LXX 2.4 is not used in the sense of formal instruction.