

# Transcending the Natural Heart

02 - Fatherhood & Family  
Church on the Park | Sunday, 18 May 2014

**Text:** Genesis 6:6 - 7:1

**Theme:** Most parents have a heart for their children, but the heavenly Father's heart transcends our hearts. He wants our hearts to be in sync with his.

**Intro:** Last week we saw the Father's heart for family and what a saved family looks like. This week we will begin to study models of biblical fathers. To be honest, I was planning to go a whole different direction with this week's message. But the Lord, kept on bringing me to Genesis, and he specifically put it on my heart to teach about Noah. At the time, I was uninspired by Noah, but the Holy Spirit breathed fresh life into his story. In Noah we find a godly father who helped bring salvation to his family. He is a great example for us to follow after.

This series was inspired by what God spoke to my heart. The Lord said to me, "You must rebuild the fallen wall of fatherhood and family in this country, not just through example but through teaching and conviction. Fatherlessness has devastated this nation and the church will never regain ground unless fatherhood and family are restored to the biblical model."

## 1) The restoration of our country begins with the hearts of the fathers turning to their children (Mal. 4:5-6)

- Last week, in the Gospel of John, we saw a **father** who was **desperate** to see his **son** healed. Most decent fathers have a **heart** to see their children **well**.
- But this verse in Malachi, **transcends** the mere **natural heart** of a father (or mother) for their child.
  - For our **hearts** to be **turned** to our children means that we have God's heart for them, something **transcending** the natural good heart toward our children.
- It means for us to be concerned for their **spiritual welfare** and the **state** of their **soul**.
- It means wanting to give them, not merely a **physical** inheritance, but a **spiritual inheritance**.
- This all begins with our **hearts** being **changed** toward our children. We may begin with a natural heart of their well-being, but we need to move on to a spiritual heart, **God's heart** for their **eternal welfare**.
- This will also mean a **deep spiritual connection** between fathers and their children—no longer this **aloof distance** and **hardness**, but rather God's **tenderness** and **compassion** for them.
- Everything **begins** with the **father**—not the children first, but the **father's heart**.
  - It's interesting too that the word father in Hebrew, **av**, is made up of the first two letters of the Hebrew aleph-bet. Ancient Hebrew Theory: ox + house (strength of the house)
- Hear is where Noah steps in. **Noah** has a **heart** for **God** and **his family**.

## 2) Noah is an example of a godly father and each one of us can walk in his footsteps (Gen. 6:8-10)

- **1 - Noah was different from the culture around him. If we are going to be godly fathers we need to be separate from the ways of the world. (Gen. 6:9; Rom. 12:1-2)**
  - Noah was surrounded by **extreme wickedness** and he had no other examples around him. The only way he could learn **righteousness** is through his **relationship** with God.
  - Good fathers, first and foremost, **walk** with God like Noah.
    - It all begins with **relationship**, not **religion**.
  - **Blameless** does not mean he never sinned. It means he **dealt** with his sin quickly and repented. He lived a **pure** life before God.

- The Hebrew word means to be **complete and whole**. To have **integrity**.
- Our minds need to be **renewed** by the Holy Spirit to have **God's vision** of what a father is, not the **world's vision**.
- Noah was **not** an **ordained** pastor, priest or prophet, and yet he **preached** righteousness (2 Peter 2:5)
  - As fathers we need to **preach righteousness** from Scripture to our children. We need to be able to teach them the Word. "**Impress** them on your children." (Deu. 6:7)
  - It really doesn't matter how good your kids are at **sports**, how high their **grades** are or how **popular** they are. What matters is: do your children know the **word of God**...are your children walking rightly with God? That's our **chief objective**, not the **world's standards** but God's.
- "You **teach** what you **know** but you **reproduce** who you **are**"
- **2 - Noah heard God. Good fathers hear from God. (Gen. 6:13)**
  - **Religion is doing good stuff** without actually **hearing** from God.
  - Fathers need to **hear** God. **How** are we going to lead our families if we don't **hear**.
  - God gave Noah specific instructions; Our heavenly Father also wants to give us **clear** and **specific instructions**.
  - Remember, the primary way God speaks to us is through **Scripture**. The Father will make the Scriptures come **alive** to you and will **guide** you by his **Spirit** on how you should **apply** it in your situation.
- **3 - Noah built. Fathers build sanctuaries for their families. (Gen. 6:14-16)**
  - Fathers **build** homes, places of **safety** and **protection** from the **flood** of this **world's evils**.
    - Not just **naturally**, but **spiritually!!!**
  - Fathers build stuff that will last through the **storms** of life.
    - *Are you building something for your family that will last through the storms?*
    - *Are we building not just for our own personal selves, but our families?*
    - *Are we building something different from the world? Something the world has never seen before?*
    - Our families should **look different**. Our homes should be **filled** with the **fragrance** of heaven.
  - Noah **built** something for the **future**. *Are we living for the future? Are you preparing your family?*
  - Noah went **against** the **grain**. *Are we going against the grain?*
- **4 - Lastly, Noah did everything God had commanded him. Godly fathers are obedient to God. (Gen. 6:22)**
  - **Obedience** to God is what makes one man different from another
  - The biggest way you can **bless** your family is by **obeying** your heavenly Father
  - Look at the kind of obedience Noah had: **total obedience**. "he did everything."
  - Think about the affect obedience had on Noah's family. Obedience will **bless** your family, **protect** your family, **help** your family and **save** your family
  - Think about what would have happened **if** Noah **wasn't obedient**...they would have all died in the flood

**In Conclusion:** We saw what Noah did, but what did God do? God provided the plan; God provided the provision. God brought the animals supernaturally. Everything Noah needed to do God's work and save his family God brought to him. God also made a promise to him. Today, we have all of God's precious promises already made and sealed. We need to stand under God's plan, with his provision and in his promises.

## END NOTES

“He will *turn*...”

2340 שׁוּב (šûb) (re)turn.

### Derivatives

2340a שׁוּבָה (šûbâ) retirement, withdrawal (Isa 30:15).

2340b שׁוּבָה (šîbâ) restoration (Ps 126:1).

2340c שׁוּבָב (šôbâb) backsliding.

2340d שׁוּבָב (šôbêb) backsliding.

2340e מְשׁוּבָה (mêšûbâ) backsliding.

2340f תְּשׁוּבָה (têšûbâ) answer.

We have cited simply the basic meaning of šûb but as we shall see the verb branches into not a few different nuances. It is the twelfth most frequently used verb in the OT, appearing just over 1050 times. With very few exceptions šûb is restricted to the Qal and Hiphil stems. It appears most often in Jeremiah (111 times) followed by Psalms (seventy-one times), Genesis (sixty-eight times), Ezekiel (sixty-two times), I Kings (sixty-two times), II Chronicles (sixtyone times), II Kings (fifty-five times), Isaiah (fifty-one times).

The Bible is rich in idioms describing man’s responsibility in the process of repentance. Such phrases would include the following: “incline your heart unto the Lord your God” (Josh 24:23); “circumcise yourselves to the Lord” (Jer 4:4); “wash your heart from wickedness” (Jer 4:14); “break up your fallow ground” (Hos 10:12) and so forth. All these expressions of man’s penitential activity, however, are subsumed and summarized by this one verb šûb. For better than any other verb it combines in itself the two requisites of repentance: to turn from evil and to turn to the good.

In the Qal stem it has been suggested that there are ten different meanings for šûb with subdivisions within each, plus a few uses difficult to pinpoint (Holladay, p. 59ff.). Of these two or three merit special observance. To begin with, the basic meaning of šûb “to (re)turn” implying physical motion or movement appears over 270 times. A few times God is the subject, “At the appointed time I will return to you (Sarah),” (Gen 18:14). Most often the subject is a person: “I (Abraham) and the lad (Isaac) will go yonder and worship, and return to you” (Gen 22:5). In the Hiphil there are eighty-seven occurrences of šûb in the sense of “bring back, carry back.” Second, often (over 120 times) šûb acts as a sort of an auxiliary verb whose function is to repeat the action of the second verb: “and ‘again’ Isaac dug the wells (wayyāšōb yiṣḥāq wayyaḥpōr,” Gen 26:18).

The third important use of šûb in the Qal, and theologically the most crucial, is in passages dealing with the covenant community’s return to God (in the sense of repentance), or turning away from evil (in the sense of renouncing and disowning sin), or turning away from God (in the sense of becoming apostate). In such contexts šûb in the Qal is used 129 times. By contrast, in the Hiphil šûb is used only eleven times when discussing the divine-human relationship. “turn back (Qal imperative) and ‘let yourself be turned from your idols’ (Hiphil) from your idols” (Ezk 14:6).

Taking all stems into consideration, Holladay (p. 117) concludes that there are a total of 164 uses of šûb in a covenantal context. The majority of them, as one might expect, are to be found in the classical/literary prophets 113 times, with Jeremiah leading the way (forty-eight times). By way of contrast with Jeremiah, the covenantal usage of šûb is found only six times in the first thirty-nine

chapters of Isaiah (maybe only five if we read 30:15 not, “in returning (to God) and rest shall you be saved,” but “in sitting still *yāšab*, i.e. abstention from foreign alliances, resting shall you be saved”). In the remaining twenty-seven chapters it is found only four times: 44:22; 55:7; 57:17; 59:20. Thus, we encounter the interesting phenomenon of two prophets back to back in the canon, the first virtually silent on the subject and the second quite vocal. Perhaps the paucity of references in Isaiah is the prophet’s way of saying the die has already been cast. Quite poignantly God says to Isaiah, “Make the heart of this people fat ... lest they be converted (*šûb*) and healed.” A point of no return has been reached. God has foreseen the stubbornness of his people and has incorporated it into his plan. The prophet, therefore, is not to be frustrated (Mt 13:13ff.).

It should be noted that in a number of places *šûb* means “to return from exile.” In the Qal: naturally in *Ezr* and *Neh* (*Ezr* 2:1; *Neh* 7:6); also *Isa* 10:22; *Jer* 22:10; *Zech* 10:9, inter alia; in the Hiphil: *I Kgs* 8:34; *Jer* 12:15, inter alia. The association between the ideas of a return from exile and a return to the covenant should be obvious. A return from exile was reclamation as much as a return from any form of sin. That God should permit either return is corroborative of his covenantal faithfulness.

To be sure, there is no systematic spelling out of the doctrine of repentance in the OT. It is illustrated (*Pss* 51) more than anything else. Yet the fact that people are called “to turn” either “to” or “away from” implies that sin is not an ineradicable stain, but by turning, a God-given power, a sinner can redirect his destiny. There are two sides in understanding conversion, the free sovereign act of God’s mercy and man’s going beyond contrition and sorrow to a conscious decision of turning to God. The latter includes repudiation of all sin and affirmation of God’s total will for one’s life. *שִׁבָּה* (*šîbâ*). Restoration, returning. Used only in *Pss* 126:1, “When the Lord returns ‘the returning’ of Zion.”

An older view is that *šîbat* of *Pss* 126:1 should be read *šěbît* (BDB p. 986) and the phrase should be translated “turned again the captivity” (so *av*). This has therefore been called a post-exilic *Ps*! Dahood (*Psalms* III, AB, p. 218) agrees with the view adopted here that *šîbâ* is in fact from *šûb*. He offers the translation “restore the fortunes of” citing the Sefire inscription in support. He treats the word *šěbût* of vs. 4 also as from *šûb*, offering a similar translation. This view, now widely adopted, makes it unnecessary to see in this phrase a mark of exilic literature (see *šābâ*).

*שׁוֹבֵב* (*šôbāb*). Backsliding, apostate. Appears three times, *Jer* 3:14, 22 and *Isa* 57:17, where KJV translates “frowardly,” and *jb* “like a thief.”

*שׁוֹבֵב* (*šôbēb*). Backsliding, *Jer* 31:22; 49:4 and a somewhat problematic usage in *Mic* 2:4 where the versions differ considerably from each other, and several emend (*jb*).

*מְשׁוּבָה* (*měšûbâ*). Backsliding, disloyalty, faithlessness. This noun appears twelve times, nine of which are in *Jeremiah* (3:6, 8, 11, etc.). Twice it appears in *Hosea*: 11:7 (where “backsliding” has become a way of life) and 14:4 [H 5] which indicates that Israel may still be cured from such a lamentable condition. Only in *Prov* 1:3 is *měšûbâ* applied to an individual, “The ‘turning away/error’ of the simple shall slay them.”

*תְּשׁוּבָה* (*těšûbâ*). Answer, (re-)turn. Appears eight times, five times in reference to the spring as the “turn” of the year (*II Sam* 11:1; *I Kgs* 20:22, 26; *I Chr* 20:1; *II Chr* 36:10); once “return” to a place (*I Sam* 7:17), and twice in the sense of “answer, retort” (*Job* 21:34; 34:36).

Bibliography: Dahood, M., “Some Ambiguous Texts in *Isaias*,” *CBQ* 20:41–43. Gordis, R., “Some Hitherto Unrecognized Meanings of the Verb *Shub*,” *JBL* 52: 153–62. Holladay, W., *The Root *Shub* in the Old Testament*, Leiden: Brill, 1958. Levine, B., “Notes on a Hebrew Ostrakon from Arad,” *IEQ* 19:49–51. Milgrom, J., “Did *Isaiah* Prophesy During the Reign of *Uzziah*?” *VT* 14:164–82, esp. pp. 169–72. *TDNT*, IV, pp. 984–99; VII, pp. 723–26. *THAT*, II, pp. 884–90. V.P.H.

“...*hearts*...”

1071 לָבַב (lābab) ravish (Piel), become intelligent (Niphal). Denominative verb.

Parent Noun

1071a לֵב (lēb), לֵבָב (lēbāb) heart, understanding.

1071b לִבָּהּ (libbâ) heart.

1071c לִבְבֵּהּ (lēbibâ) bread.

1071d לִבֵּב (libbēb) cook bread. Denominative verb, occurring only in the Piel.

lābab occurs as a denominative verb from lēb (Song 4:9). Translated “ravished my heart” (KJV, RSV) and “made my heart to beat faster” (NASB). BDB suggests “encouraged.”

“Become intelligent” suits the single Niphal usage (Job 11:12).

לֵב (lēb), לֵבָב (lēbāb). Heart, understanding, mind (also used in idioms such as “to set the heart upon” meaning “to think about” or “to want”).

Concrete meanings of lēb referred to the internal organ and to analogous physical locations. However, in its abstract meanings, “heart” became the richest biblical term for the totality of man’s inner or immaterial nature. In biblical literature it is the most frequently used term for man’s immaterial personality functions as well as the most inclusive term for them since, in the Bible, virtually every immaterial function of man is attributed to the “heart.”

Very few usages of lēb refer to concrete, physical meanings. The death accounts of Nabal (I Sam 25:37) and Joram (II Kgs 9:24) likely refer to the physical organ. The physical organ defined the location of Aaron’s breastplate (Ex 28:29). Psalm 38:9 probably refers to the beating of the physical organ. Physical “innerness” is expressed by “heart.” The deeps congealed “in the heart of” the sea (Ex 15:8) and the fires of Sinai rose “to the heart of” Heaven (Deut 4:11). The usage of “heart” for a divinely given vital principle may best fit Job 34:14–15 (“if he take back to himself the heart he gave,” writer’s paraphrase).

By far the majority of the usages of lēb refer either to the inner or immaterial nature in general or to one of the three traditional personality functions of man; emotion, thought, or will.

In referring to the inner nature, lēb may contrast some relatively obscure or less visible aspect of man’s nature with the more public side of his being. It may be regarded as an inner reflection of the outer man (Prov 27:19; RSV “mind”). Dream consciousness may be meant when the heroine’s “heart” was awake though her body slept in the Song of Songs (5:2). Statements such as “Why does your heart carry you away?” (Job 15:12) contrast the heart with the remainder of the person. However, in other contexts, “heart” expresses the totality of a man’s nature and character, both inner and outer (I Kgs 8:23; Ps 9:1 [H 2]).

Closely related to the above is the usage of lēb as an emphatic personal term (cf. similar usage of nepeš, ‘ešem, etc.) The plagues are sent, not just upon Pharaoh, but upon Pharaoh’s heart (Ex 9:14). Thus, Jacob’s stealing of Laban’s heart might emphasize Laban as the object of Jacob’s actions rather than Jacob’s subtlety (Gen 31:20; cf. RSV, “Jacob outwitted Laban”). Similarly, the breastplate of judgment on Aaron’s heart may emphasize Aaron as the bearer of judgment as well as a bodily location (Ex 28:29). A variation of this usage is “heart” as reflexive: “Refresh your hearts” for “Refresh yourselves” (Gen 18:5) and “strengthen your heart” for “strengthen yourself (with food)” (Jud 19:5).

The whole spectrum of emotion is attributed to the heart. Examples of positive emotions are the following: Hannah’s heart rejoiced (I Sam 2:1) as should the hearts of those who seek the Lord (I Chr 16:10). Love may be centered in the heart, as when Delilah complained that Samson’s heart was not with her (Jud 16:15). Absalom gained for himself the loyalty of the Hebrew nation by stealing their hearts (II Sam 15:6). The joyful excitement from the news that Joseph was alive

made Jacob's heart faint (Gen 45:26). Reception of comfort is seated in the heart as in the idiom "to speak to the heart" (Gen 34:3; Isa 40:2) for "to comfort."

As for negative emotions, grief is "evil of heart" (Neh 2:2; RSV "sadness of heart"). David's regret or bad conscience at cutting Saul's garment is expressed as "his heart struck him" (I Sam 24:6; cf. II Sam 24:10). God's regret at creating man is centered in God's heart (Gen 6:6). The broken heart accompanies being oppressed (Ps 34:18 [H 19]). Contempt (II Sam 6:16), envy (Prov 23:17), and anger (Prov 19:3) are all functions of the heart.

Idioms relating the heart to fear and bravery are so numerous as to deserve separate treatment. Fear is expressed as follows: The heart may "go out" or "leave" (Gen 42:28; KJV, RSV, "fail"); it may "fall" (I Sam 17:32; RSV, "fail"). To remove courage is to hinder the heart (Num 32:7, 9). Fear occurs when the heart "deserts" its owner (Ps 40:12 [H 13]; KJV, "fails") or "melts" (Josh 14:7). Trembling of heart may represent emotions ranging from the complete demoralization of God's people under judgment (Deut 28:65; cf. I Sam 28:5) to Eli's anxiety over the welfare of the ark of God (I Sam 4:13). On the other hand the "heart of a lion" speaks of courage (II Sam 17:10). Thought functions may be attributed to the heart. In such cases it is likely to be translated as "mind" or "understanding." To "set the heart to" may mean to "pay attention to" (Ex 7:23) or to "consider important" (II Sam 18:32). Creative thought is a heart function. Wicked devices originate in the heart (Gen 6:5). The RSV translates "which came upon Solomon's heart" as "all that Solomon had planned" (II Chr 7:11).

Wisdom and understanding are seated in the heart. The "wise heart" (I Kgs 3:12; RSV, "wise mind") and "wise of heart" (Prov 16:23) are mentioned. This idiom can be so strongly felt that "heart" virtually becomes a synonym for such ideas as "mind" (II Chr 9:23; RSV) or "sense" (Prov 11:12; RSV). The heart functions in perception and awareness as when Elisha's heart (i.e. Elisha's perceptive nature; RSV "spirit") went with Gehazi (II Kgs 5:26). As the seat of thought and intellect, the heart can be deluded (Isa 44:20; RSV "mind").

The heart is the seat of the will. A decision may be described as "setting" the heart (II Chr 12:14). "Not of my heart" expresses "not of my will" (Num 16:28). The "hearts" of the Shechemites inclined to follow Abimelech (Jud 9:3). Removal of the decision-making capacity is described as hardening the heart (Ex 10:1; Josh 11:20). Closely connected to the preceding is the heart as the seat of moral responsibility. Righteousness is "integrity of heart" (Gen 20:5). Moral reformation is to "set one's heart aright" (Job 11:13). The heart is described as the seat of moral evil (Jer 17:9). Personality dispositions may be considered as more or less permanent personality patterns. Some typical dispositions located in the heart are generosity ("generous heart"; Ex 35:5), pride ("his heart became high"; II Chr 26:16), and faith ("the heart made firm"; Ps 78:8).

לִבָּהּ (libbâ). Heart (KJV, RSV), rage (KB). Unique form of unclear meaning (Ezk 16:30). Perhaps a variant of lēb.

לֶבְבָהּ (lēbibâ). A kind of bread. Perhaps pancakes (BDB) or heartshaped (KB) bread (II Sam 13:6, 8, 10).

לִבְבֵי (libbēb). Piel denominative verb for cooking the lēbibâ bread (II Sam 13:6, 8).

Bibliography: "Heart," JewEnc. Pedersen, Johs, Israel, its Life and Culture, vol. II, Oxford, 1959, pp. 102–8. TDOT, III, pp. 606–11; VII, pp. 908–13; IX, pp. 626–28. THAT, I, pp. 861–66.

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"Blameless"

תָּמַם (tāmam) be complete.

Derivatives

תָּמַם (tōm) integrity.

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2522bתָּמַם (tūmmâ) integrity.  
2522cתָּם (tām) perfect.  
2522dתָּמִים (tāmîm) complete.  
2522eמְתֹם (mētōm) entirety.

tāmam may assume an auxiliary function, e.g. in Josh 3:16 the literal rendering, “They were complete, they were cut off,” represents, “They were completely cut off.” With the verb’s fundamental idea of completeness, Samuel inquired of Jesse, “Are here all (Heb hātammû) thy children?” (I Sam 16:11). Cf. tāmîm (the root tāmam’s most common derivative), describing an entire day (Josh 10:13) or a whole, and therefore healthy, vine (Ezk 15:5). mētōm indicates soundness of flesh (Ps 38:3). tāmîm delimits Israel’s sacrifices, which were to be without blemish, perfect in that respect, so as to be accepted (Lev 22:21–22) as types of Christ, the spotless Lamb of God (I Pet 1:19). Speech which is tāmîm (Amos 5:10) corresponds to “what is complete, entirely in accord with truth and fact” (BDB, p. 1071). Elihu was enabled to assure Job, “My words are not false; one who is perfect (tāmîm) is with you” (Job 36:4), because of his inspiration by God, who is perfect (tāmîm) in knowledge (37:16, cf. 32:8, 18; 33:4). In the fullest sense it is Yahweh’s acts (Deut 32:4; II Sam 22:31 = Ps 18:30 [H 31] and law (Ps 19:7 [H 8]) that are perfect.

tāmam moves naturally toward that which is ethically sound, upright (Ps 19:13 [H 14]). The “perfect” (tāmîm) decision, as made by lots, is the correct one (I Sam 14:41). As made by men, it is the right one (Jud 9:16, 19). Asaph praised the completeness (tōm) or integrity of King David’s heart (Ps 78:72). tāmam is used with the commandments of God meaning to fulfill them (Josh 4:10). The av translates Job 22:3, “if you make your ways perfect.” Abraham was instructed to be tāmîm (Gen 17:1), as was all Israel (Deut 18:13; cf. II Sam 22:33; Ps 101:2a, 6). They were to be “wholly” God’s; for, even here, “the words which are rendered in English by ‘perfect’ and ‘perfection’ denoted originally something other and less than ideal perfection” (IDB, III, p. 730).

From a concept of being “used up,” as of money (Gen 47:15, 18), tāmam takes on the meaning of “come to a close, cease,” as of a year (v. 18; cf. Ps 102:27 [H 28]). The verb denotes the finishing of various actions, such as building (I Kgs 6:22) or writing (Deut 31:24, 30). Finally, it refers to a people’s destruction (Num 14:33).

Two problems of ot theology concern the verb tāmam: self-righteousness and perfectionism. Illustrating the former, David expresses the resolve, “I will walk within my house with a perfect (tōm) heart” (Ps 101:2b KJV, ASV marg. and RSV, “in the integrity of my heart”); cf. his not infrequent professions of righteousness (Ps 7:8 [H 9]; 18:20). Yet the connection with the nt Pharisaism remains one of the “mere appearance” (KD, Psalms, I, p. 72). “Some of these utterances are no more than asseverations that the speaker is innocent of particular crimes laid to his charge; others are general professions of purity of purpose. ... Those who make them do not profess to be absolutely sinless, but they do disclaim all fellowship with the wicked, from whom they expect to be distinguished in the course of Providence” (A. F. Kirkpatrick, Cambridge Bible, Psalms, I, p. lxxxvii).

For the latter, other than in the above-listed passages referring to God himself, the ot resists claims to ultimate perfection. Noah was said to be tāmîm “perfect” (Gen 6:9; NASB, “blameless in his time”). But compare Genesis 9:21–23 and even the creature “in Eden” (Ezk 28:13, whether Adam or Satan, see sāṭan) who was tāmîm from his creation until unrighteousness was found in him (v. 15), was by no means incapable of sin. Scripture’s preeminent example of the tām “perfect” man is Job (Job 1:1). He claimed to be tām (9:21–22) and tāmîm (12:4) and held fast to his tmmâ “integrity” (27:5; 31:6), as recognized not only by his wife (2:9) but also by Yahweh in heaven (1:8; 2:3). In reference to the root meaning of tāmam, he was a “finished product,” well rounded and balanced (IB, III, p. 909). Job, however, prefaced his own assertions by granting, “Though I be perfect, it (marg., he) shall prove me perverse” (9:20 ASV). He admitted his sins (7:20–21; 9:2, 15; 10:6; 14:16–17), even from his youth (13:26), confessed that he could not be held innocent (9:28), and ended by retracting his rash charges against God and by repenting in dust and ashes (42:6).

As he explained, “If I have truly erred, my error lodges with me”; i.e., he was not guilty of the accusations made by his “friends” (22:6–9) and was tāmîm, wholehearted in his commitment to the person and requirements of God.

תָּם (tōm). Integrity. (In eleven of twenty-three usages); also strength, perfection (Isa 47:9; ASV RSV translate “full measure”), or uprightness. The phrase lē tōm, concerning a soldier’s bow, shot “at a venture” (I Kgs 22:34), literally (marg.) “in his simplicity,” means unsuspectingly. The plural, tmmîm “perfections,” describes the Thummin, the precious stones of Aaron’s breastpiece (see ’ûrîm).

תְּמָה (tmmâ). Integrity. Appears five times in OT wisdom literature (e.g. Job 2:3; Prov 11:3).

תָּם (tām). Perfect. So translated in nine of thirteen occurrences, many of which refer to the patriarch Job. Also means undefiled, upright. For young Jacob’s identification as a “plain” man (Gen 25:27 KJV), the revised versions render tām as harmless (marg.), quiet.

תְּמִים (tāmîm). Complete. Refers to animals which are without blemish; also translated as such related adjectives a full, whole, upright, perfect. It represents the divine standard for man’s attainment.

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