

The Living Words

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~~ Perfect ~~

I begin this study with a comparison of two people, Jacob and Job.

*And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a **plain** man, dwelling in tents.*

Genesis 25:27 (KJV)

*There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was **perfect** and upright, and one*

Job 1:1 (KJV)

From these two verses, we could conclude that Jacob was plain, just an ordinary person, nothing special, but Job, on the other hand, was rather extraordinary as he was “perfect.” What you might find interesting is the word “perfect” in Job 1:1 is a translation of the Hebrew word **טָמֵם** *tam* ^[H:8535] but so is the word “plain” in Genesis 25:27. So why isn’t Jacob considered “perfect” by the translations just as they did with Job? This is another case of translators relying on the Greek Septuagint for their translation rather than the Hebrew text itself. The Greek uses the word **ἀμemptos** *amemptos* ^[G:273], meaning “blameless,” for Job and the word **ἀπλους** *haplous* ^[G:573], meaning “simple,” for Jacob.

The word **תָּם** *tam* ^[H:8535] can be best defined as “mature in thought and action” and is the parent root of the verb **תָּמַם** *tamam* ^[H:8552] meaning to be whole, finished or completed. From this verb comes the word **תְּמִיִּם** *tamiym* ^[H:8549].

*Thou shalt be **perfect** (tamiym) with the LORD thy God.*

Deuteronomy 18:13 (KJV)

Can one be perfect? From a Greek perspective, no, because everyone has his faults, but in Hebraic thought there is no concept of “perfect.” A better translation of the verse above is;

*You will be **complete** (tamiym) with Yahweh your Elohiym*