

# Deuteronomy 21:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;

## Analysis

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**Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails** (גלחה את־ראשה ועשתה את־צפרניה)—The rituals of shaving her head (gillechah) and trimming nails mark transition from one identity to another. Some interpret this as removing her beauty to test the man's commitment; others see it as mourning ritual (cf. Jeremiah 16:6). Either way, the month delay prevents immediate sexual gratification.

Bringing her **home to thine house** (אל־תוך ביתה) signals protection, not immediate exploitation. The woman enters the household sphere before entering the marriage bed—a radical departure from treating captives as sexual objects to be used at the moment of conquest.

## Historical Context

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Ancient warfare typically involved immediate rape of female captives—trophy and humiliation. By requiring the soldier to bring the woman home and wait a month, the law introduces cooling-off period and forces consideration of long-term commitment rather than momentary lust.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

### Study Questions

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1. How does requiring a waiting period before acting on desire apply to modern decisions about relationships, purchases, and commitments?
2. What does bringing someone "home" before intimacy teach about the biblical order of covenant before consummation?

### Interlinear Text

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וְהֵבֵאתָ הָ	אֶל	תּוֹךְ	בֵּיתִי	וְגִלְחָהּ	אֶת
Then thou shalt bring	H413	her home	to thine house	and she shall shave	H853
H935		H8432	H1004	H1548	
רֹאשָׁהּ	וְעָשְׂתָּהּ	אֶת	צַפְרָנֶיהָ:		
her head	and pare	H853	her nails		
H7218	H6213		H6856		

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