

Leviticus 21:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

Analysis

They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

This verse falls within the section on **Priestly Holiness**. Higher standards for priests due to their sacred role, including restrictions on mourning practices and marriage.

Every sacrifice and ritual in Leviticus points forward to Jesus Christ, who fulfills the entire sacrificial system as both perfect sacrifice and eternal high priest.

Historical Context

Higher standards for priests due to their sacred role, including restrictions on mourning practices and marriage. Chapters 17-27, often called the 'Holiness Code,' expand covenant obligations beyond ritual to encompass all of life—sexuality, economics, justice, and relationships. The repeated refrain 'I am the LORD' grounds these laws in God's character and covenant relationship with Israel. Israel received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through

wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. Archaeological discoveries at sites like Ugarit reveal Canaanite religious practices Israel's laws explicitly rejected, confirming the Bible's historical reliability and the distinctiveness of Israelite worship.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does this verse teach about the seriousness of sin, the cost of redemption, or the beauty of holiness?
2. How does this verse help you understand both God's justice and His mercy in salvation?
3. In what ways does this verse challenge contemporary cultural values or your personal attitudes?

Interlinear Text

לֹא תִּקְרַב קָרְבָּן בְּרָאשׁ מִזְבֵּחַ וּפְאַתְּ מִזְבֵּחַ
H3808 They shall not make H7139 baldness H7144 upon their head H7218 the corner H6285 of their beard H2206

לֹא יִגְלֶל חֹרֶב בְּשֶׁלַח מִשְׁרָט וְנִשְׁרָט וְנִשְׁרָט וְנִשְׁרָט וְנִשְׁרָט
H3808 neither shall they shave off H1548 in their flesh H3808 nor make H8295 any cuttings H8296

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 14:1 (Parallel theme): Ye are the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

Ezekiel 44:20 (Parallel theme): Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads.

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