

# 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

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**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

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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

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**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

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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

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לֹא	יִקְרְחוּ	קְרָחָה	בְּרֹאשָׁם	וּפָאָת	זָקְנָם
H3808	<b>They shall not make</b>	<b>baldness</b>	<b>upon their head</b>	<b>the corner</b>	<b>of their beard</b>
	H7139	H7144	H7218	H6285	H2206
לֹא	יִגְלְחוּ	וּבְבָשָׁרָם	לֹא	יִשְׁרְטוּ	שְׂרָטָתָם
H3808	<b>neither shall they shave off</b>	<b>in their flesh</b>	H3808	<b>nor make</b>	<b>any cuttings</b>
	H1548	H1320		H8295	H8296

## Additional Cross-References

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**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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