

Beards

Shayla: May Adonaic men wear beards?

Meforshim:

In the United States it has been a standard teaching in Christian churches (particularly of the Baptist variety) that good Christian men will keep their beards shaved. Let's examine the Scriptures and determine if that is actually a biblical precept or merely a North American cultural practice?

A man's beard was only to be shaved off during the cleansing process so that his skin could be more easily checked.

- **Leviticus 14:8-9 HCSB** The one who is to be cleansed must wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe with water; he is clean. Afterwards he may enter the camp, but he must remain outside his tent for seven days. **9** He is to shave off all his hair *again* on the seventh day: his head, his beard, his eyebrows, and the rest of his hair. He is to wash his clothes and bathe himself with water; he is clean.



In fact, losing one's hair was so closely associated with disease that the Lord had to make a special law to make sure balding men would not be discriminated against.

- **Leviticus 13:40-41 HCSB** **40** "If a man loses the hair of his head, he is bald, but he is clean. **41** Or if he loses the hair at his hairline, he is bald on his forehead, but he is clean.

Shaving off the hair was also associated with occult practices.

- **Leviticus 19:26-28 HCSB** **26** "You are not to eat *anything* with blood *in it*. You are not to practice divination or sorcery. **27** You are not to cut off the hair at the sides of your head or mar the edge of your beard. **28** You are not to make gashes on your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves; I am the LORD.
- Compare to **Jeremiah 9:26 HCSB** Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, Moab, all those who clip the hair on their temples and reside in the wilderness. All these nations are uncircumcised, and the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart."



Notice the Egyptian style. So apparently goatees or "Vandykes" were out!

The shaving of one's beard was associated with punishment or judgment.

- **Isaiah 7:20 HCSB** On that day the Lord will use a razor hired from beyond the Euphrates River--the king of Assyria--to shave the head, the hair on the legs, and to remove the beard as well.
- **Isaiah 15:2 HCSB** Dibon went up to its temple to weep at its high places. Moab wails on Nebo and at Medeba. Every head is shaved; every beard is cut off.

- [Ezekiel 5:1-2 HCSB](#) "Now you, son of man, take a sharp sword, use it as you would a barber's razor, and shave your head and beard. Then take a pair of scales and divide the hair. **2** You are to burn up one third *of it* in the city when the days of the siege have ended; you are to take one third and slash *it* with the sword all around the city; and you are to scatter one third to the wind, for I will draw a sword *to chase* after them.

Tearing out or shaving off one's beard was a sign of mourning and it brought considerable attention.

- [Ezra 9:3-4 HCSB](#) When I heard this report, I tore my tunic and robe, pulled out some of the hair from my head and beard, and sat down devastated. **4** Everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me, because of the unfaithfulness of the exiles, while I sat devastated until the evening offering.
- [Isaiah 15:2 HCSB](#) Dibon went up to its temple to weep at its high places. Moab wails on Nebo and at Medeba. Every head is shaved; every beard is cut off.
- [Jeremiah 48:37 HCSB](#) Indeed, every head is bald and every beard clipped; on every hand is a gash and sackcloth around the waist.
- [Jeremiah 41:5 HCSB](#) 80 men came from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria who had shaved their beards, torn their garments, and gashed themselves, and who were carrying grain and incense offerings to bring to the temple of the LORD.
- [Micah 1:16 HCSB](#) Shave yourselves bald and cut off your hair in sorrow for your precious children; make yourselves as bald as an eagle, for they have been taken from you into exile.

Shaving off or marring one's beard was considered a tremendous shame, bringing terrible embarrassment.

- [2 Samuel 10:4-6 HCSB](#) So Hanun took David's emissaries, shaved off half their beards, cut their clothes in half at the hips, and sent them away. **5** When this was reported to David, he sent *someone* to meet them, since they were deeply humiliated. The king said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow back; then return." **6** When the Ammonites realized they had become repulsive to David, they hired 20,000 foot soldiers from the Arameans of Beth-rehob and Zobah, 1,000 men from the king of Maacah, and 12,000 men from Tob.
- [1 Chronicles 19:4-6 HCSB](#) **4** So Hanun took David's emissaries, shaved them, cut their clothes in half at the hips, and sent them away. **5** Someone came and reported to David about his men, so he sent *someone* to meet them, since the men were deeply humiliated. The king said, "Stay in Jericho until your beards grow back; then return." **6** When the Ammonites realized they had made themselves repulsive to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent 38 tons of silver to hire chariots and horsemen from Aram-naharaim, Aram-maacah, and Zobah.

These previous points are why priests were especially forbidden to shave their beards.

- [Leviticus 21:5 HCSB](#) "Priests may not make bald spots on their heads, shave the edge of their beards, or make gashes on their bodies.

They were not to let their hair grow wild or become unkempt either; not even when mourning.

- [Ezekiel 44:20 HCSB](#) "They may not shave their heads or let their hair grow long, but must carefully trim their hair.
- [Leviticus 10:6 HCSB](#) Then Moses said to Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Do not let your hair hang loose and do not tear your garments, or else you will die, and the LORD will become angry with the whole community. However, your brothers, the whole house of Israel, may mourn over that tragedy when the LORD sent the fire.
- [Leviticus 21:9-11 HCSB](#) If a priest's daughter defiles herself by promiscuity, she defiles her father; she must be burned up. **10** "The priest who is highest among his brothers, who has

had the anointing oil poured on his head and has been ordained to wear the garments, must not dishevel his hair or tear his garments. **11** He must not go near any dead person or make himself unclean *even* for his father or mother.



Some argue that there were laws against certain hairstyles. In other words, they were not to have Mohawks or bowl cuts. Some believe that this was to make sure the people didn't follow the pagan practice of shaping the beard into a round or square shape and thus either be wrongly identified as following those false religions or actually begin leaning in that direction.

- Leviticus 19:27 HCSB You are not to cut off the hair at the sides of your head or mar the edge of your beard.

However, given the context, I believe that this is simply a statement on occult practices.

- Leviticus 19:26-28 HCSB "You are not to eat anything with blood in it. You are not to practice divination or sorcery. 27 You are not to cut off the hair at the sides of your head or mar the edge of your beard. 28 You are not to make gashes on your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves; I am the LORD.

And clearly Leviticus was not forbidding all cutting of the beard because they were told to keep their hair neatly trimmed.

- Ezekiel 44:20 HCSB "They may not shave their heads or let their hair grow long, but must carefully trim their hair.

Paul thought that the natural hair line should govern the length of one's hair. If we follow this line of thinking to its natural end it would lead us to think that since God created men to have beards it would be (obviously) unnatural to shave them off.

- [1 Corinthians 11:13-15 HCSB](#) **13** Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? **14** Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair it is a disgrace to him, **15** but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her as a covering.

King David wore a beard.

- [1 Samuel 21:13 HCSB](#) so he pretended to be insane in their presence. He acted like a madman around them, scribbling on the doors of the gate and letting saliva run down his beard.

Beards figure in a beautiful blessing.

- **Psalms 133:1-3 HCSB** A Davidic song of ascents. How good and pleasant it is when brothers can live together! **2** It is like fine oil on the head, running down on the beard, running down Aaron's beard, on his robes. **3** It is like the dew of Hermon falling on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD has appointed the blessing--life forevermore.

A passage that is generally considered to be a Messianic prophecy describes the Messiah Himself as having had a beard.

- **Isaiah 50:6 HCSB** I gave My back to those who beat Me, and My cheeks to those who tore out My beard. I did not hide My face from scorn and spitting.

Conclusion

Therefore, I believe that the statement that Adonaic men must be clean shaven has no support in the Scriptures. While I do not believe that they **MUST** wear beards, I believe that if there is any Scriptural weight on the issue, it definitely falls on the side of wearing them. This is particularly true for pastors who come closest to the New Covenant role of the Old Covenant priest.