

~BEARD (273)

[Hebrew, *za-qan'* beard, *sa-pham'* beard or mustache,]

- The hair growing on a man's chin and cheeks, sometimes including that growing on the upper lip. In the Hebrew Scriptures, *za-qan'* is the word for beard, while *sa-pham'*, pertaining to the lip, is variously rendered by translators as beard, mustache, and upper lip. In a few instances the word *za-qan'* refers not to the beard, but to the chin.
- As for a man or a woman, in case a plague develops in such one on the head or on the chin. (Leviticus 13:29)
- The priest must then see the plague, and if its appearance is deeper than the skin, and the hair is yellow and scarce in it, the priest must then declare such one unclean. It is an abnormal falling off of hair. It is leprosy of the head or of the chin. (Leviticus 13:30)
- And it must occur on the seventh day that he should shave off all his hair on his head and his chin and his eyebrows. Yes, he should shave off all his hair, and he must wash his garments and bathe his flesh in water, and he must be clean. (Leviticus 14:9)
- Among many ancient peoples of the East, including the Israelites, a beard was cherished as an evidence of manly dignity. God's Law to Israel prohibited the cutting off of the sidelocks, the hair between the ear and the eye, and the extremity of the beard.
- you must not cut your side locks short around, and you must not destroy the extremity of your beard. (Leviticus 19:27)
- They should not produce baldness upon their heads, and the extremity of their beard they should not shave, and on their flesh they should not make an incision. (Leviticus 21:5)
- During extreme grief, shame, or humiliation, a man might pluck hairs from his beard, or he might leave the beard or the mustache untended.
- Now as soon as I heard of this thing I ripped apart my garment and my sleeveless coat, and I began to pull out some of the hair

of my head and of my **beard**, and I kept sitting stunned. (**Ezra 9:3**)

- It may have been the untended **beard** of Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan, that indicated to David that Mephibosheth was perhaps telling the truth when he said that his servant Ziba had slandered him, and that Mephibosheth was actually mourning while David was a refugee from Absalom, contrary to what Ziba had reported.
- The king now said; And where is the son of your master? At this Ziba said to the king; There he is dwelling in Jerusalem, for he said; Today the house of Israel will give back to me the royal rule of my father. (**2 Samuel 16:3**)
- As for Mephibosheth the grandson of Saul, he came down to meet the king, and he had not attended to his feet nor had he attended to his mustache nor had he washed his garments from the day that the king went away until the day that he came in peace. (**2 Samuel 19:24**)
- And it came about that, when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, then the king said to him; Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth? (**2 Samuel 19:25**)
- To this he said; My lord the king, it was my servant that tricked me. For your servant had said; Let me saddle the female ass for me that I may ride upon it and go with the king, for your servant is lame. (**2 Samuel 19:26**)
- So he slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is as an angel of the true God, and so do what is good in your eyes. (**2 Samuel 19:27**)
- For all the household of my father would have become nothing but doomed to death to my lord the king, and yet you placed your servant among those eating at your table. So what do I still have as a just claim even for crying out further to the king? (**2 Samuel 19:28**)
- However, the king said to him; Why do you yet keep speaking your words? I do say; You and Ziba should share in the field. (**2 Samuel 19:29**)
- At this Mephibosheth said to the king; Let him even take the

whole, now that my lord the king has come in peace to his house.
(2 Samuel 19:30)

- The **removing** of the **beard** **illustrated calamity or great mourning** because of calamity.
- In that day, by means of a **hired razor** in the region of the River, even by means of the king of Assyria, Yehowah **will shave the head and the hair of the feet**, and it will sweep away **even the beard** itself. (Isaiah 7:20)
- He has gone up to The House and to Dibon, to the high places, to a weeping. Over Nebo and over Medeba Moab itself howls. On all heads in it there is baldness, **every beard is clipped**. (Isaiah 15:2)
- For upon every head there is baldness, and every **beard** is **clipped**. Upon all hands there are cuts, and upon the hips there is sackcloth! (Jeremiah 48:37)
- And as for you, O son of man, take for yourself a sharp sword. As a barbers razor you will take it for yourself, and you must make it pass along upon your head and upon your **beard**, and you must take for yourself weighing scales and divide the hair in portions. (Ezekiel 5:1)
- After the destruction of Jerusalem in **607 B.C.E**, men from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria expressed their distress by shaving their **beards**, ripping their garments apart, and cutting themselves. Even though they were bringing offerings to the house of Yehowah, they were bloodless offerings, apparently to be offered at the place where the temple had been.
- Then there came men from Shechem, from Shiloh and from Samaria, eighty men with their **beards** shaved off and with their garments ripped apart and with cuts made upon themselves, and there were grain offering and frankincense in their hand to bring to the house of Yehowah. (Jeremiah 41:5)
- That the practices of these men were not fully in harmony with the Law of God is shown by the fact that they made cuts upon themselves, a practice sternly prohibited by the Law.
- And you must not make cuts in your flesh for a deceased soul,

and you must not put tattoo marking upon yourselves. I am Yehowah. ([Leviticus 19:28](#))

- They should not produce baldness upon their heads, and **the extremity of their beard** they should not shave, and on their flesh they should not make an incision. ([Leviticus 21:5](#))
- The importance of the **beard** and its being well groomed played a part in the attitude of Achish the king of Gath toward David when the latter disguised his sanity by letting his saliva run down upon his beard. This served to help convince King Achish that David was insane.
- So he disguised his sanity under their eyes and began acting insane in their hand and kept making cross marks on the doors of the gate and let his **saliva run down upon his beard**. ([1 Samuel 21:13](#))
- Later, when Hanun the king of Ammon grossly insulted David's ambassadors by cutting off half their **beards**, David sympathetically told his men to stay in Jericho until their **beards** grew abundantly again. The Ammonites knew that it was a signal insult to David and that they had become foul-smelling in his eyes over the incident, and so they prepared for war.
- So Hanun took the servants of David and shaved off half their **beards** and cut their garments in half to their buttocks and sent them away. ([2 Samuel 10:4](#))
- Later people reported it to David, and he at once sent to meet them, because the men had come to feeling very humiliated, and the king went on to say; Dwell in Jericho until your **beards** grow abundantly. Then you must return. ([2 Samuel 10:5](#))
- In time the sons of Ammon saw that they had become foul-smelling to David, and the sons of Ammon proceeded to send and hire Syrians of Beth-rehob and Syrians of Zobah, twenty thousand men on foot, and the king of Maacah, a thousand men, and Ishtob, twelve thousand men. ([2 Samuel 10:6](#))
- And it came about afterward that Nahash the king of the sons of Ammon came to die, and his son began to reign in place of him. ([1 Chronicles 19:1](#))
- At that David said; I shall exercise loving-kindness toward

- Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father exercised loving-kindness toward me. Accordingly David sent messengers to comfort him over his father, and the servants of David proceeded to come into the land of the sons of Ammon to Hanun to comfort him. (1 Chronicles 19:2)
- However, the princes of the sons of Ammon said to Hanun; Is David honoring your father in your eyes in that he has sent comforters to you? Is it not for the sake of making a thorough search and causing an overthrow and for spying out the land that his servants have come in to you? (1 Chronicles 19:3)
 - So Hanun took the servants of David and shaved them and cut their garments in half to their buttocks and sent them away. (1 Chronicles 19:4)
 - Later people went and told David about the men, and he at once sent to meet them, because they had become men very much humiliated, and the king went on to say; Dwell in Jericho until your **beards** grow abundantly. Then you must return. (1 Chronicles 19:5)
 - In time the sons of Ammon saw that they had become foul-smelling to David, and Hanun and the sons of Ammon proceeded to send a thousand silver talents to hire for themselves chariots and horsemen from Mesopotamia and from Aram-maacah and from Zobah. (1 Chronicles 19:6)
 - It was customary for men to wear **beards**, even before the Law covenant was made. While the Hebrews did not make monuments with figures of themselves, many monuments and inscriptions have been found in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and other Middle Eastern lands, in which the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Canaanites are pictured with **beards**.
 - Even some representations dated as far back as the **Third Millennium B.C.E.**, show **beards** of varying styles. Among the above-named peoples, eunuchs were mainly the one's depicted **beardless**. The making of eunuchs was not a practice in Israel, however, because the Law excluded eunuchs from the congregation of Israel.
 - No man castrated by crushing the testicles or having his male member cut off may come into the congregation of Yehowah. (Deuteronomy 23:1)

- Since most Semites are pictured as wearing **beards**, even prior to the time of the Law, it would logically follow that the faithful men of the line of Shem, who continued to speak the language of Eden and who doubtless followed more closely the original customs from the time of their forefather Seth, possessed **beards**. Consequently, there is good reason to believe that **Noah, Enoch, Seth, and Adam likewise** were **bearded** men.

- **Herodotus II, 36**, says **the Egyptians shaved the hair both of the face and of the head**. For the men it was a sign of mourning or of slovenliness to let the hair and beard grow. For this reason Joseph, when taken out of prison, shaved before being brought into the presence of Pharaoh.

- And Pharaoh proceeded to send and to call Joseph, that they might bring him quickly from the prison hole. Hence he **shaved** and changed his mantles and went in to Pharaoh. (**Genesis 41:14**)

- However, false **beards** as well as wigs were worn by the Egyptians.

- Did Jesus, when on earth, wear a **beard**? Certainly it was a custom strictly held by the Jews. Jesus, born a Jew, came to be under Law and he fulfilled the Law.

- But when the full limit of the time arrived, God sent forth his Son, who came to be out of a woman and who came to be under law. (**Galatians 4:4**)

- Do not think I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I came, not to destroy, but to fulfill. (**Matthew 5:17**)

- Like all other Jews, Jesus was dedicated to Yehowah God from his birth, by reason of the Law covenant, and was under obligation to keep the whole Law, including the **prohibition on shaving the extremity of the beard**. Also, at the time that Jesus was on earth, **the Roman custom was beardlessness**. Therefore, if Jesus had been **beardless**, he would have been challenged as being either a eunuch or a Roman. Significantly, a prophecy concerning Jesus suffering states; **My back I gave to the strikers, and my cheeks to those plucking off the hair**.

- **My back I gave to the strikers, and my cheeks to those plucking**

off the hair. My face I did not conceal from humiliating things
and spit. (**Isaiah 50:6**)