

**Hair -** שֵׂעָר

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)



[I. Hair in the Tanach 12](#_Toc29454624)

[II. Maturity is determined by hair 21](#_Toc29454625)

[III. Head vs. Hair Covering 26](#_Toc29454626)

[Headcovering in Jewish Law 27](#_Toc29454627)

[Men 28](#_Toc29454628)

[The Source 30](#_Toc29454629)

[Women 30](#_Toc29454630)

[The Sotah 30](#_Toc29454631)

[IV. Tzitzith 30](#_Toc29454632)

[V. Cutting hair 31](#_Toc29454633)



In this [study](study.html) I would like to try to understand what the Torah and our Sages reveal about hair. I would like to understand the purpose of hair and why we cover our hair sometimes.

The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for hair, “se’ar - שֵׂעָר”, has the same [letters](letters.html) as the word “shi’ur” meaning a *measured portion*.

Narrowness is associated with the [spiritual](physical.html) energies of harshness, of din (judgment). Therefore, the narrowness of any [physical](physical.html) thing, such as hair, indicates that it contains the [spiritual](physical.html) energies of harshness. Every [physical](physical.html) item is a reflection of the deep mystical mechanisms of its underlying [spiritual](physical.html) essence. Rabbi Nachman [taught](teacher.html) that because [HaShem](hashem.html)’s life-sustaining light is so powerful, it must be constricted, filtered, and diluted. Human hair accomplishes this through its [spiritual](physical.html) mechanism of constriction, thus [HaShem](hashem.html)’s light is absorbed into the [body](body.html) through the hair. We will also see later, that hair moves energy both in and out of the [body](body.html).

According to the Kabbalah, in a [spiritual](physical.html) sense hair is the waste product of the [brain](brain.html). Long strands of hair in men may act as ropes to which negative influences may take hold. This is considered particularly true regarding the hair at the back of the [neck](body.html) near the [brain](brain.html) stem, which is the point of [connection](connection.html) between the [brain](brain.html) and the rest of the [body](body.html). Harmful influences seek to attach there in order to “sever” a healthy [connection](connection.html) between the [spiritual](physical.html) and [physical](physical.html), effecting a sort of [spiritual](physical.html) decapitation.

According to Kabbalah, the hair that grows upward on the top part of the [head](body.html) belongs to the attribute of justice (contrary to the hair of the beard, which grows downward, belonging to the attribute of kindness).

The Bahir asks: “What is the Teli?[[1]](#footnote-1) It is the likeness before the Holy [One](one.html) Blessed Be He” and references Song of Songs: “His locks (peyot and beard) are hanging (taltalim).” In both Talmudic and Kabbalistic traditions, the link between these [two](two.html) statements are significant, in that it relates to a vision of G-d in battle, and He is seen as a Young Man with locks (peyot and a beard). It is explained that this is referring to Zeir Anpin, which is a Partzuf (personification of the Light of G-d). The link between these [two](two.html) statements also relates to the Torah which is closely associated with Zeir Anpin, referring to fact that the Torah contains “Teli Tela’im Chochmah” (Piles of Piles of Wisdom). The hairs of the peyot and beard are symbolized as the lines upon which the [letters](letters.html) of the Torah are written.

Here this is [speaking](mashal.html) about the Primordial Torah which preceded [Creation](bara.html), not the Written Torah which was “written with black [fire](fire.html) upon white [fire](fire.html).” The Sages explain each [letter](letters.html) of the Torah is a hair on the peyot and beard of Zeir Anpin, these are not literally hairs but channels through which G-d’s wisdom Emanates from His anthropomorphic “[head](body.html).” The [head](body.html) is the concealed wisdom which is then revealed through His “hair.” The entire the verse in the Song of Songs says: “His [head](body.html) is a fine treasure of gold, his locks are hanging, black like a raven.” The [letters](letters.html) of the Torah, which are written in black ink, is the revelation of the concealed wisdom. Therefore, Zeir Anpin is from where in each “hair” hangs a universe, each of which is represented by the [letters](letters.html) of the Torah. The Teli then is Zeir Anpin, which is the axis through which the universe revolves and Torah, which the blue print through which all of [Creation](bara.html) is sustained.

Interestingly, the [Zohar](orallaw.html)[[2]](#footnote-2) differentiates between the rest of the hair and that at the sides of the [head](body.html) and the beard. This hair is said to originate from holy sources and projects positive [spiritual](physical.html) energy: “The hair locks are shaped and hang in wavy curls from [one](one.html) side to the other side of the skull. This is what is written, ‘His locks are wavy’....They are situated hanging in curls, because they flow forth from great springs of the [three](three.html) divisions of the [brain](brain.html). From the spring of the [first](one.html) space in the skull, [Chachmah - wisdom]....From the second space, [Binah - understanding]....From the [third](three.html) space, [Da’at - [knowledge](knowledge.html)] go forth thousands of thousands of rooms and chambers, and the hairs flow forth continuously from all. Therefore, these locks (of the beard) are curls upon curls.”

Halakha requires Sefardi women to cover their hair. Halakha also requires all [Jewish](gen-jew.html) men to cover their heads. There is a BIG difference between covering a woman’s **hair** and covering a man’s [**head**](body.html).

The hair of a woman which derives from *nukva[[3]](#footnote-3)* of Atzilut,[[4]](#footnote-4) must be covered, since it can allow for the sustenance of negative forces.

The Torah’s attitude towards hair seems to have different ways of treating hair:

1. The Nazir’s hair is holy and is cut only at the end of his vow.
2. The Levites in the desert had to shave their hair.

When the [Jews](gen-jew.html) sinned with the Golden Calf, they used the [spiritual](physical.html) energies of constriction, derived from the [celestial](celestal.html) mechanism called the “upper hairs”, to place their trust and belief exclusively in an [idol](idolatry.html). This tainted the “upper hairs”, for their energies of constriction and limitation were to be the channel only for exclusive belief in [HaShem](hashem.html). Since the Levites were strongly connected to the constricting energies of the “upper hairs”, they were able to maintain their focus solely on [HaShem](hashem.html) and remain loyal to Him. Therefore, the Levites were the only ones who did not [sin](sin.html) with the Golden Calf and, in fact, they helped Moshe to destroy it. However, the [sin](sin.html) of the Golden Calf severely damaged and polluted the holy constricting energies of the “upper hairs”. As a rectification, since the Levites’ [spiritual](physical.html) essence is integrally related to the “upper hairs”, when they were sanctified to serve in the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html) and assist the [kohanim](priests.html) ([priests](priests.html)), they were commanded by [HaShem](hashem.html) to shave off all of the hairs of their [bodies](body.html).

1. The beard and *payot* should not be touched.
2. A woman’s hair must be covered.
3. The hair of the leper must be shaved.
4. The hair of Samson was the source of his strength.

Again, the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word “se’ar - שֵׂעָר” is translated as “hair.” The [first](one.html) use, in the Torah, of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for hair relates to [Esav](edom.html) who was born hairy as the Torah relates:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 25:25*** *And the* [*first*](one.html) *came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his* [*name*](name.html)[*Esau*](edom.html)*.*

The [letters](letters.html) of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for “hair” (se’ar - שֵׂעָר) are the same as that for the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for “gate” (sha’ar): שער (shin-ayin-reish). This suggests that hair acts like a gate. Just as a gate act as a [connection](connection.html) between those inside and those outside, so too does hair act as a [connection](connection.html) between [two](two.html) domains.

Kabbalistically, hair (se’ar) represents ‘din’, just as barley (se’ora) does, which is why it was the [Omer](omer.html)-[Offering](korbanot) between [Pesach](passover.html) and [Shavuot](shavuot.html), during which [time](time.html) 24,000 of Rabbi Akiva’s students died for less than perfect ‘social’ behavior.

Literally, the word ‘din’ means ‘judgment,’ but it refers to the light within [creation](bara.html) that tends to constrict the light of [HaShem](hashem.html) rather than reveal it, as does the light of *Chesed*. Hair, for specific reasons, represents this light and therefore by cutting it, the light of *Gevurot* is being tempered somewhat and rectified. By growing his hair, the nazir is increasing his power of tzimtzum, that is, his power of constraint.

The plain meaning of Bambidbar ([Numbers](nchart.html)) 6:2 is that a Nazirite is warned not to consume wine seeing that anyone who allows his [desire](needs.html) for wine and alcoholic drink to determine his actions will give in to other temptations involving matters which are forbidden even in moderate quantities, to lead him astray. The reason the *Nazir* has been commanded to grow his hair long is that long hair causes people to worry, and the Torah [wants](needs.html) the *Nazir* to worry about not breaking the constraints of his vow. When he looks dishevelled due to his unruly hair he will also abstain from other activities which reflect dishonour upon man. Hair is perceived as the remnant and excess of "smouldering" [physical](physical.html) forces that the [body](body.html) emits. [I believe that the fact that both nails and hair have to be trimmed, (and are phenomena which continue to grow even after death for some [time](time.html)) are viewed as reflecting the preponderance of [physical](physical.html) forces within us. It is interesting that we find in the [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[5]](#footnote-5) that [Jewish](gen-jew.html) women were generally devoid of pubic hair and under-arm hair which was taken as a [sign](signs.html) of their moral superiority in matters of chastity. See my article on hair in "The Just lives by his faith." Ed.][[6]](#footnote-6)

The reason the Nazir must not drink wine or become ritually impure is to keep his distance from forces which are beholden to the "left side" of the emanations, the part which is perceived of as representing [spiritually](physical.html) negative influences. On the other [hand](fourteen.html), he is warned not to shave as hair represents strength as we [know](daat.html) from Samson. The moment Samson agreed to have his hair cut his "[spiritual](physical.html)" strength disappeared and he was no better than any other ordinary mortal. He regained his prowess only after his hair had grown back.[[7]](#footnote-7) As I have mentioned previously, hair grows incessantly and continues to grow even after death if the corpse is in a moist environment. Each single hair is a symbol of the far-flung activities of the Lord, activities which deal with minute details, just as every single hair seems by itself insignificant. Hairs represent continuous development in all directions of the globe. As a reminder of this concept of G-d the "All-Present", the Nazir is commanded to give the hair full and unrestrained opportunity to keep growing This is the mystical dimension of the words ראשו שער פרע גדל. The Nazir is cautioned not to destroy any part of his hair by means of a razor seeing that "it is the crown of G-d on his [head](body.html)" (verse 7). Were he to cut this hair this would be equivalent to heresy practiced by an ordinary Israelite, something which the sages called הנטיעות קצץ "destroying saplings planted by G-d through cutting them ([spiritually](physical.html))". It is similar to separating the holy [name](name.html) of the Lord from His "branches". When Samson allowed his hair to be cut his [physical](physical.html) strength departed from him immediately and the prophet Samuel (himself a Nazir and author of the Book of Judges) describes what happened to him in these words: ותאלצהו. "she nagged him constantly." The word has a connotation of the attribute of Justice, i.e. the sages suggest that when reading these words we should reverse the [letters](letters.html) צ-ל to read the word as ותאצלהו, as if it meant that Delilah had succeeded in denying Samson the [spiritual](physical.html) input which had been the source of his [physical](physical.html) prowess.[[8]](#footnote-8)



The central [physical](physical.html) function of the hair on the [head](body.html) is to protect the [head](body.html) from moisture. In fact, a gland is attached to the follicle which moisturizes the hair. Furthermore, the hair on the [head](body.html) serves to protect the [head](body.html) from the [sun](hachama.html)’s rays.

Hair signifies a very diminished form of life force: it is constantly growing, but can be cut without causing pain. It therefore signifies the transference of a highly limited and diluted level of life force from the area of the [body](body.html) from which it issues.

The beard thus signifies [HaShem](hashem.html)’s attribute of mercy. Elsewhere, the Arizal describes the [thirteen](thirteen.html) “rectifications” or “tufts” of the beard, and how each [one](one.html) corresponds to [one](one.html) of the [thirteen](thirteen.html) attributes of mercy.

The analogy is that, just as a man’s and woman’s [head](body.html) grows hair, so, too, is there a concept of “hair” in the [world](worlds.html) of the Sefirot. And, just as hair sits on top of a man, like a crown on the holiest part of his [body](body.html), his [head](body.html), so, too, does hair sit on top of the uppermost sefirah, *Keter*, also called “Crown”. In fact, its level in [creation](bara.html) is so high, that, for the most part, we are forbidden even to make reference to it.

However, whereas human hair may serve little function other than for appearance-sake, or to keep us warm, in the Sefirot, the “hair” functions like little [spiritual](physical.html) pipes, through which the light of [HaShem](hashem.html) can begins its descent to the lower Sefirot, and, eventually, us. In other words, Sefirical hair represents the [spiritual](physical.html) interface between a sefirah, and the [one](one.html) after it, a kind of [spiritual](physical.html) interface. This is true whether we are looking at the entire, overall, general scheme of Sefirot, or, the smaller sub-systems of Sefirot that exist within each [one](one.html), like between Chachmah (Wisdom) and Binah (Understanding).

The [Gemara](orallaw.html), in Sotah 10a, relates that Shimshon received all his power because he never cut his hair. The hair is an extension of the [eyes](body.html); that is why we don’t cut our hair during *Sefirah*.

The Arizal says in his Sefer HaLikutim, (Sefer Shoftim,) that even when a person falls to wherever he falls to, he must never say, “it is right in my [eyes](body.html)”, this is my path. He must, instead, say and [know](daat.html) that he doesn’t [know](daat.html) why [HaShem](hashem.html) did this to him, he doesn’t [know](daat.html) why he fell. If he says, “it is right in my [eyes](body.html)”, then he falls completely. That was why they cut off Shimshon’s hair, because the hair is an extension of the [eyes](body.html)’ vision. When he blemished his [eyes](body.html), his strength was compromised and they were able to cut his hair.

✡✡✡

***Bamidbar 5:11-15***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *told Moshe, “*[*Speak*](mashal.html) *to the Children of Israel, and tell them about when a man’s wife deceives him, and another man lies with her carnally and defiles her, out of sight of her husband and closed off somewhere, and no witnesses against her can be found He must bring his wife to the* [*priest*](priests.html) *“*

This is the [law](law.html) of the Sotah, the suspected adulteress, and the parsha then goes on to detail the procedure for determining her innocence, or guilt.

These are the ones who go out (are divorced) without a ketuba Those who break [laws](law.html) which are Da’at Moshe or Yehudit What is an example of Da’at Yehudit? A woman who goes outside with uncovered hair Wait! [The prohibition against] uncovered hair is from the Torah, as it says, “[The [kohen](priests.html) shall have the woman stand before [HaShem](hashem.html)] and uncover the [head](body.html) of the woman.[[9]](#footnote-9)

***Kethuboth 72b*** *[IS DEEMED TO BE A WIFE’S TRANSGRESSION AGAINST]* [*JEWISH*](gen-jew.html) *PRACTICE? GOING OUT WITH UNCOVERED* [*HEAD*](body.html)*. [Is not the prohibition against going out with] an uncovered* [*head*](body.html) *Pentateuchal; for it is written, And he shall uncover the woman’s* [*head*](body.html)*, and this, it was* [*taught*](teacher.html) *at the school of R. Ishmael, was a warning to the daughters of Israel that they should not go out with uncovered* [*head*](body.html)*? — Pentateuchally it is quite satisfactory [if her* [*head*](body.html) *is covered by] her work-basket;1 according to traditional* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *practice, however, she is forbidden [to go out uncovered] even with her basket [on her* [*head*](body.html)*].*

Part of the procedure of humiliation of the Sotah was the uncovering of her hair, which, we are assuming, was covered to begin with. But, perhaps all women covered their hair in Moshe’s [time](time.html), including single women? As a matter of halachah? Hardly; it is extremely unlikely that only part of the halachah would still survive, that part which only pertains to married women.



The obligation to cover [one](one.html)’s hair after [marriage](mashal.html) is based in the Oral [Law](law.html). We have a tradition that all details of the Oral [Law](law.html) are, at least, hinted to in the Written [Law](law.html), on the level of either [remez](remez.html), drash, or [sod](sod.html). What part of the Written Torah can be considered the basis for the Oral [Law](law.html) halachah of a married woman covering her hair?

Can there be a more direct, more obvious source in the Written Torah than the verse commanding the uncovering of the Sotah’s hair (5:18), as if to say: You have acted as a single women through your act of infidelity, and now your hair covering, the symbol of your relationship with your husband, shall also be removed.

**THE NAZIR**

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 6:5*** *All the days of his vow to be a nazir, no razor shall go across his* [*head*](body.html) *until the fulfillment of the days of being a nazir. He shall be holy; the hair of his* [*head*](body.html) *shall grow wild (perah).*

The nazir may not cut the hair “on his [head](body.html)”. The [head](body.html) is the seat of the [brain](brain.html) and intellect. The hair, which covers the cranium and thus surrounds the [brain](brain.html), is, at least symbolically, an outgrowth and development of the perspicacity which lies within. The hair, when cut, represents a boundary, a limit. By abstaining from cutting his hair, the nazir manifests a presence that permits his intellect to burst forth beyond its usual parameters.

Following on the heals of the [mitzva](cmds613.html) of the Sotah is the halachah regarding the Nazir, the man or woman who vows to abstain from wine and wine-related products, and several other restrictions due to the person’s changed [spiritual](physical.html) status.

[One](one.html) such restriction of being a Nazir is the halachah to not take care of [one](one.html)’s hair; it is to grow wild, just like the Sotah’s hair becomes when unwrapped by the [priest](priests.html):

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 5:18*** *The* [*kohen*](priests.html) *shall have the woman stand before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and uncover (pharah) the* [*head*](body.html) *of the woman.*

There is a clear [connection](connection.html) between the [two](two.html) parshiyot, for, in each case, the words are spelled, *peh-reish-ayin*. This is aside from the other important [connection](connection.html) the [Talmud](orallaw.html) makes between the Sotah and Nazir:

Why is [Tractate] Nazir [in the Book of Women]? The Tanna is basing himself upon the posuk: If she does not find favor in his [eyes](body.html), because she has acted unfaithfully[[10]](#footnote-10). What caused her to [sin](sin.html)? Wine! As it says: All who see the Sotah in her predicament takes an oath to abstain from wine.[[11]](#footnote-11)

In fact, the [letters](letters.html) *peh-reish-ayin*, are the basis of the word used to describe the licentiousness (or, in this context, the constraint of licentiousness; see Rashi) of those who worshipped the golden calf while Moshe was away from the [camp](stages.html), on top of Mt. [Sinai](stages.html):

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:25*** *Moshe saw that the people had been restrained (parah), because Aaron had restrained (paroah) them by doing only a small part of what some demanded to be done.*

Not coincidentally, these [letters](letters.html) are also the root [letters](letters.html) of the word “Pharaoh”, the very symbol of immorality and sensual living from which the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people were supposed to have fled! Certainly, given the emphasis Western Society places on hair care (a multi-billion dollar industry while people starve from want of basic [foods](food.html) in other parts of the [world](worlds.html)), and the role the appearance of hair plays in the attraction of men for women and vice versa, [one](one.html) can see how hair can symbolize sensuous living, and narcissist behavior, as the [Talmud](orallaw.html) portrays:

Lets look at those who took Nazirite vows:

***Shoftim (Judges) 16:15-21*** *Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you won’t confide in me? This is the* [*third*](three.html)[*time*](time.html) *you have made a fool of me and haven’t told me the* [*secret*](sod.html) *of your great strength.” With such nagging she prodded him day after day until he was tired to death. So he told her everything. “No razor has ever been used on my* [*head*](body.html)*,” he said, “because I have been a Nazirite set apart to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *since* [*birth*](birth.html)*. If my* [*head*](body.html) *were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other man.” When Delilah saw that he had told her everything, she sent word to the rulers of the Philistines, “Come back once more; he has told me everything.” So the rulers of the Philistines returned with the silver in their* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*. Having put him to* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *on her lap, she called a man to shave off the* [*seven*](seven.html) *braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him. Then she called, “Samson, the Philistines are upon you!” He awoke from his* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *and thought, “I’ll go out as before and shake myself free.” But he did not* [*know*](daat.html) *that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *had left him. Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his* [*eyes*](body.html) *and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding in the prison.*

So, Samson the judge lost his strength (God is our strength) when he lost his hair. We also see that there were others who derived strength with [HaShem](hashem.html) by taking a nazirite vow and letting their hair grow. John the Baptist was probably the most famous nzir.

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 1:8-17*** *Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as* [*priest*](priests.html) *before God, He was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the* [*temple*](temple.html) *of the Lord and burn* [*incense*](ketoret.html)*. And when the* [*time*](time.html) *for the burning of* [*incense*](ketoret.html) *came, all the assembled worshipers were* [*praying*](prayer.html) *outside. Then an* [*angel*](angels.html) *of the Lord appeared to him,* [*standing*](mashal.html) *at the right side of the altar of* [*incense*](ketoret.html)*. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with* [*fear*](fear.html)*. But the* [*angel*](angels.html) *said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the* [*name*](name.html) *Yochanan (John). He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his* [*birth*](birth.html)*, For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from* [*birth*](birth.html)*. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*

***Shabbath 50b*** *A nazirite may cleanse [his hair] and part it, but he must not comb it. Rather both are according to R. Judah, yet* [*two*](two.html) *Tannaim differ as to R. Judah’s view:* [*one*](one.html) *Tanna holds that in R. Judah’s view they [natron and sand] smooth, while the other Tanna holds that in R. Judah’s view they do not smooth. How have you explained them? As agreeing with R. Judah! Then consider the second clause: ‘But the* [*face*](body.html)*,* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*, and* [*feet*](heel.html) *are permitted’; but surely it removes the hair?-If you wish, I can answer that it refers to a child; alternatively, to a woman, another alternative, to a eunuch [by nature].*

The Nazir, who seeks to [purify](purity.html) himself and come close to [HaShem](hashem.html), separates himself from [three](three.html) things: Cutting the hair, drinking wine, and becoming tameh (ritually impure through contact with the dead).

These [three](three.html) separations correct blemishes in the [three](three.html) [worlds](worlds.html) of Thought, Action, and Speech.

**Thought**: Hair grows from the [head](body.html), the seat of thought. Thus, cutting the hair represents correcting imperfections in the sphere of thought.

**Action**: Tumah corresponds to the sphere of action. The principal source of Tumah results from contact with a dead [body](body.html), for before its passing, the [body](body.html) was the epitome of life and action.

**Speech**: Wine represents the function of speech. Hence the saying: “Enter the wine - exit the [secret](sod.html)”. Secrets are communicated by words. By speech. Correction in the sphere of speech is effected by abstinence from wine.

Corresponding to these [three](three.html) [worlds](worlds.html) are the [three](three.html) korbanot (offerings): Olah (burnt), Chatat ([sin](sin.html)), and Shlamim (peace). The Olah corrects faults in the thought; Chatat, in action and Shlamim, in speech.

Yochanan (John) was a prophet who came in the spirit and power of Elijah. We find that he was the greatest man born of woman:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 11:7-15*** *As Yochanan (John)’s disciples were leaving,* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *began to* [*speak*](mashal.html) *to the crowd about Yochanan (John): “What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the* [*one*](one.html) *about whom it is written: ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than Yochanan (John) the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *is greater than he. From the days of Yochanan (John) the Baptist until now, the kingdom of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. For all the Prophets and the* [*Law*](law.html) *prophesied until Yochanan (John). And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has* [*ears*](body.html)*, let him hear.*

It appears that this vow of separation may be related to his greatness.

✡✡✡

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 6:1-3***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *told Moshe, “When either a man or a woman vows to become a nazir, abstaining in honor of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, he must abstain from wine, wine-brandy...”*

In a sense, Birchat [Kohanim](priests.html) (Priestly blessing) represents the summary of all that came before it in the parsha, especially with respect to the [laws](law.html) of the nazir.

There are [two](two.html) main identifying factors about the nazir: he does not cut his hair and he abstains from consuming wine and related products (such as grapes). What does [one](one.html) have to do with the other? The [connection](connection.html) will become clear from what follows:

Literally, the word ‘din’ means ‘judgment’, but it refers to the light within [creation](bara.html) that tends to constrict the light of [HaShem](hashem.html) rather than reveal it, as does the light of Chesed. Hair, for specific reasons, represents this light and therefore by cutting it, the light of Gevurot is beening tempered somewhat and rectified. By growing his hair, the nazir is increasing his power of tzimtzum, that is, his power of constraint.

As the [Talmud](orallaw.html) points out and Rashi mentions, the nazir abstains from wine because he witnessed an episode of the sotah who sinned through wine. The nazir is forced to let his hair grow to provide a counter-balance to what he is retracting from, to maintain his free-will capability.

(We do not become nazirim today without a [Temple](temple.html).)

The following Talmudic source spells out just how much this is so by revealing the role of a married woman’s hair covering:

***Eiruvin 100b***[*Ten*](ten.html) *curses came to Chava [for* [*eating*](eating.html) *from the Tree of* [*Knowledge*](thetree.html) *of Good and Evil] She must cover like* [*one*](one.html) *in* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *(Rashi: It will be embarrassing to go out with her hair uncovered).*

Why would the [sin](sin.html) of [eating](eating.html) from the Tree of [Knowledge](thetree.html) of Good and Evil necessitate such a response from [HaShem](hashem.html)? Because, as the following Talmudic passage reveals, the calm and orderliness of Chava’s hair was part and parcel of woman’s [creation](bara.html), and [HaShem](hashem.html)’s gift to the [first](one.html) wife of history:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:20-22***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *caused a deep* [*sleep*](mashal.html) *to fall upon the man, and he slept. He then took* [*one*](one.html) *of his sides, and after, closed the flesh in its place.* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *built (vayivein) the side into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*

***Berachot 61a*** *Rebbi Shimon ben Menasi elucidated: Why does it say, “vayivein” (“and He built,” as opposed to the normal “vayitzar,” “and He formed”)? We learn from this that The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, Blessed is He, braided Chava’s [hair], and then brought her to* [*Adam*](adam.html)*.*

Hence, we learn, that the status of a woman’s hair changes at the [time](time.html) she is married to her soul-mate. The “reigning in” of her hair symbolizes the discipline she brings to herself and to her family upon making the commitment to a single [male](male%2Bfemale.html). And through this, we shall see, she brings blessing to herself, her husband, and her entire family, even affecting the uprightness of her descendants!

For, the word “yivein” is also in common with the word “binah,” or “understanding,” referring here to the woman’s “*Binah Yesayrah*”, the “Extra (Intuitive) Understanding” with which a woman, particularly at [marriage](mashal.html), is endowed. She gains this extra [insight](insights.html) to help her husband steer the family correctly across the waters of confusion of everyday life, and it is, according to this, intricately dependent upon her covering of her hair.

The only question is, why the hair, of all parts of the [body](body.html)? It is the least attached (you can pull out plenty without major consequence to your health)! To answer this question, and pull the whole matter together under [one](one.html) covering, we will have to consult the more esoteric side of Torah.

***Bereshit 1:26-27***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said, “Let us make Man in Our image, in Our likeness”* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *created mankind in His image; He created him in the image of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*,* [*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *and* [*female*](male%2Bfemale.html)*.*

Up until this point, we have only seen sources that the covering of a married woman’s hair is a Torah [mitzva](cmds613.html), and, that it is elucidated in the [Mishna](orallaw.html) and [Talmud](orallaw.html). And, even though there are many who wish to dispute this halachah today, they must understand that they are also taking on the entire line of Torah transmitters, the greatest Hakhamim (Rabbis) the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people have ever produced.

Furthermore, there is a concept that, although the same [mitzvot](cmds613.html) apply in all [generations](toldot.html) (except for those related to the [Temple](temple.html) service), some prove to be more of a test for [one](one.html) [generation](toldot.html) than for other [generations](toldot.html). [Eretz Israel](city.html), and hair covering are proving to be tests of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) spirituality specifically in this post-war [generation](toldot.html).

But why should a woman’s hair represent so much? Like for all of Torah, the clearer, more esoteric explanation lies in the realm of Kabbalah, the **ULTIMATE** source of **ALL** Torah concepts.

As the [Zohar](orallaw.html) explains, when the Torah says that man was created in the “image of [HaShem](hashem.html),” it means, more precisely, in the image of the Sefirot. Sefirot are [spiritual](physical.html) emanations, and they act like [spiritual](physical.html) transformers to “filter” the light of [HaShem](hashem.html), so that we, the [world](worlds.html), and our free-will can exist. Otherwise, the Torah intimates and Kabbalah explains, [HaShem](hashem.html)’s light would remain too pure and lofty for anything [physical](physical.html) to exist. The [ten](ten.html) Sefirot are in descending order:

(*Ain Sof*, or, [HaShem](hashem.html)’s light)

*Keter* (Crown)

*Chachmah* (Wisdom)

*Binah* (Understanding)

*Chesed* (Kindness)

*Gevurah* (Strength)

*Tifferet* (Beauty)

*Netzach* (Dominance; Eternity)

*Hod* (Glory)

*Yesod* (Foundation)

*Malchut* (Kingship)

According to Kabbalah, the Sefirot are arranged in the [spiritual](physical.html) realm in a similar fashion to how man has been formed in the [physical](physical.html) realm, and that it is to this established reality that the term “in the image of [HaShem](hashem.html)” refers. This puppet-like correspondence allows [creation](bara.html) to be [spiritually](physical.html), and ultimately, [physically](physical.html) responsive to the deeds of man (e.g., when a person [sins](sin.html) with his [hands](fourteen.html), then, it damages the part of the Sefirot that correspond to the [hands](fourteen.html), etc.). The correspondence is as follows:

[**HEAD**](body.html)

Keter (Crown)

Chachmah (Wisdom)

Binah (Understanding)

**UPPER** [**BODY**](body.html)

Chesed (Kindness)

Gevurah (Strength)

Tifferet (Beauty)

**LOWER LIMBS**

Netzach (Dominance; Eternity)

Hod (Glory)

Yesod (Foundation)

**EARTH**

Malchut (Kingship)

I have said in [one](one.html) paragraph what is the subject of many central and deep books, and would require just as many to fully explain this idea. However, it suffices to set up the analogy that, just as a man’s and woman’s [head](body.html) grows hair, so, too, is there a concept of “hair” in the [world](worlds.html) of the Sefirot. And, just as hair sits on top of a man, like a crown on the holiest part of his [body](body.html), his [head](body.html), so, too, does hair sit on top of the uppermost sefirahm, Keter, also called “Crown.” In fact, its level in [creation](bara.html) is so high, that, for the most part, we are forbidden even to make reference to it.

However, whereas human hair may serve little function other than for appearance-sake, or to keep us warm, in the Sefirot, the “hair” functions like little [spiritual](physical.html) conduits, through which the light of [HaShem](hashem.html) can begins its descent to the lower Sefirot, and, eventually, us. In other words, Sefirical hair represents the [spiritual](physical.html) interface between a sefirah, and the [one](one.html) after it, a kind of [spiritual](physical.html) interface. This is true whether we are looking at the entire, overall, general scheme of Sefirot, or, the smaller sub-systems of Sefirot that exist within each [one](one.html), like between Chachmah (Wisdom) and Binah (Understanding).

I did not choose Chachmah and Binah randomly; I did so because, when dealing with the Sefirot as [worlds](worlds.html) of their own, Chachmah plays the role of the “father” (“Abba”) within the system, and, “Binah” plays the role of the “mother” (“Imma”) within the entire system. The [six](six.html) Sefirot from Chesed through Yesod are viewed as their “offspring.”

Hence, in the Sefirot, Chachmah receives less distilled, more abstract light from Keter, its prime source of light, and passes it on to Binah, which receive it somewhat “filtered” by Chachmah. However, it is Binah’s role to filter the light additionally, this [time](time.html) enough to pass it on to the children Sefirot below, which represent the [world](worlds.html) in which **WE** live ([six](six.html) Sefirot, [six](six.html) days of [creation](bara.html), [six](six.html) [millennia](millenium.html) of human history).

It works no differently, or should work no differently, in the ideal human family.

It has been the role of the husband to learn and [gather](gather.html) information necessary for the survival of society in general, and his family in particular. However, the intelligence of children usually does not permit them to relate to the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of an adult in its pure form. Such [knowledge](knowledge.html), which **MUST** be learned by children for the sake of their futures, must be “filtered” and adapted, something usually done best by the [female](male%2Bfemale.html) [world](worlds.html).

In other words, within the family structure, the wife/mother acts as an interface between the husband and children, more than intelligent enough to understand her husband, and, perfectly capable of relating to her children on all levels. It is this way in the [physical](physical.html) family because it is this way in the Sefirical family.

Therefore, if the analogy is carried to its logical end, then, just like the “hair” of Binah acts as the interface and medium through which to bring over the light of Chachmah (Wisdom) to the level of Binah (Understanding), so, too, does the hair of a married woman represent her [connection](connection.html) to and willingness to receive the “light” of her husband, and **ONLY** her husband.

In fact, the [letters](letters.html) of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for “hair” (se’ar) are the same as that for the word “gate”(sha’ar): shin-ayin-reish. As is well [known](daat.html) in Kaballah, on the level of Binah, there is something referred to as the Nun Sha’arei Binah, The Fifty Gates of Understanding. On an exegetical level, it could be read, “The Fifty Hairs of Understanding,” suggesting that, just like a gate acts as a threshold between [two](two.html) domains, so, too, does hair (at least when it comes to Sefirot).

In other words, every man represents a “Chachmah” that belongs to a system, or family, of its own. Likewise, every woman represents a “Binah” that also belongs to a particular sub-system of Sefirot, and the concept of a zivug (“soul-mate”) is the concept of pairing up the right Chachmah with the right Binah. The covering of the woman’s hair **AT** [**MARRIAGE**](mashal.html) signifies [**SPIRITUALLY**](physical.html)and [**PHYSICALLY**](physical.html)the special and unique [connection](connection.html) between a specific Chachmah and Binah, husband and wife.

However, before a woman is married, she is in a position to receive wisdom from many sources, her father, her mother, teachers, some of which may be [female](male%2Bfemale.html) **OR** [**MALE**](male%2Bfemale.html), and her exposed hair signifies this. However, once she is married (something, the [Talmud](orallaw.html) reveals, with which [HaShem](hashem.html) is directly involved; Sotah 2a), she is, theoretically at least, supposed to look to her husband as her prime source of abstract [knowledge](knowledge.html) for her own personal growth and to filter to her children to build them up.

This is also why the process of [marriage](mashal.html) is called “kiddushin”, which means “sanctification”, as in the woman is “sanctified” to a single man.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Thus, according to Kabbalah, the covering of a married woman’s hair, leaving the viewing of her hair permissible only to her husband (and, technically, her father as well), [physically](physical.html) symbolizes her devotion to her own personal source of Chachmah. However, perhaps, more importantly, [**SPIRITUALLY**](physical.html), it solidifies the [connection](connection.html) between herself and her husband in the Sefirot, which, understandably, can have long term and eternal ramifications; it can affect the “shalom bayit” (peace in the house) in this [world](worlds.html), but worst, it can eternally weaken the [connection](connection.html) to her husband in the [World](worlds.html)-to-Come!

To the extent that a married [Jewish](gen-jew.html) woman covers her hair, that is the extent to which it affects the [spiritual](physical.html) bond between herself and her husband, and, as we will learn from Kimchit, her children as well.

This is why the hair of the Sotah was uncovered. Whether she actually [lay with](marriageact.html) another man or not, she had allowed herself to end up in a predicament that could very well have led to such a violation of her [marriage](mashal.html) and society. She may have enjoyed short term pleasure, but, she learns the hard way, she has damaged the long term [connection](connection.html) to her husband in the [world](worlds.html) within which no yetzer hara (evil inclination) operates, and, true and honest relationships are desired and enjoyed forever, if they are cultivated and preserved in this [world](worlds.html).

It will be a [time](time.html) when external beauty will be a thing of the past, because inner beauty, the kind that emerges from [one](one.html)’s commitment to values higher than [one](one.html)’s self, will brilliantly shine. How we deal with ourselves, our appearances, and our relationships in this [world](worlds.html) is the deciding factor regarding what we will be dealt in the [future](future.html) [world](worlds.html), what we will be able to enjoy **FOREVER** in the [World](worlds.html)-to-Come.

And, given the emphasis on [physical](physical.html) appearance today (boy, does the yetzer hara have a strangle hold on us), clearly [one](one.html)’s willingness to go against the tide and reign in her hair counts for a tremendous amount in [Heaven](heaven.html), just like those who give up some material comfort to pursue the spirituality of [Eretz Israel](city.html) (the [land of Israel](city.html)). At a [time](time.html) when the source of human dignity, man’s gift of godliness, is all but destroyed, to rebuild human dignity means the [world](worlds.html) to [HaShem](hashem.html) and the [world](worlds.html) He created.

[One](one.html) of the most famous “hair-stories” in the [Talmud](orallaw.html) is that of Kimchit, the mother who [merited](merit.html) to have [seven](seven.html) sons become [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol ([High Priest](priests.html)) during [Temple](temple.html) times. They asked Kimchit, “What did you do to [merit](merit.html) such reward?” She answered them that the beams of her house -- something a woman is supposed to build with her Binah Yesayrah, never saw the braids of her hair.[[13]](#footnote-13) Even in her most private moments, she strove to keep her hair covered.

BatSheva, says the [Midrash](orallaw.html), was no different. For, even when she washed her hair, she had her attendant hold a towel over her hair so that it not become overly exposed, even **IN HER HOUSE**. It was King David, whom, while shooting at a bird and missed, instead hit the towel and caused BatSheva’s hair to become temporarily revealed.

David HaMelech (the King) took this bizarre act of Divine Providence to be a [sign](signs.html) from [Heaven](heaven.html) that she was ready to be taken to him as a wife, even while she remained married to her former husband, Uri the Hittite. [Heaven](heaven.html), however, looks at this [event](feasts.html) as punishment for David’s haughtiness, and it led to all kinds of problems for him afterward.

Hence, we see that, just as Western Society makes a big deal about women’s hair, so, too, does the Torah. However, unlike Western Society, which promotes the “right” of a woman to allow her hair to be “paruah”, the Torah emphasizes the need to use hair as a symbol of commitment and self-discipline.

In a very real sense (more than is proper to discuss in this forum), Chava, the [first](one.html) woman, was also the [first](one.html) Sotah. She had acted more loyal to the snake than to her own husband, from whom she had been built and brought to by [HaShem](hashem.html) Himself! No matter what [Adam](adam.html) had failed to [teach](teacher.html) her, still, she ought to have consulted with him before [eating](eating.html) from the forbidden Tree of [Knowledge](thetree.html) of Good and Evil. Therefore, is it any wonder that when a married woman properly covers her hair, it is also an important part of the rectification for what went wrong in the Garden.

# I. Hair in the Tanach

Lets examine some of the places where hair is found in the scriptures.

[**Mourning**](mourning.html)

The Torah forbids the cutting of hair as a [sign](signs.html) of [mourning](mourning.html):

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 14:1*** *Ye [are] the children of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your* [*eyes*](body.html) *for the dead.*

In the [Talmud](orallaw.html), cutting the hair as a [sign](signs.html) of [mourning](mourning.html) was forbidden:

***Mo’ed Katan 14a*** *R. Phineas raised all objection: ‘Every* [*one*](one.html) *of those mentioned [by the Sages] as being permitted to crop his hair during the* [*festival*](festival.html) *[week] may [likewise] crop his hair during the [*[*thirty*](thirty.html)*] days of his* [*mourning*](mourning.html)*’; [which means conversely] that every* [*one*](one.html) *of those who is forbidden to crop his hair during the* [*festival*](festival.html) *[week] is [likewise] forbidden to crop his hair during the [*[*thirty*](thirty.html)*] days of his* [*mourning*](mourning.html)*.*

***Mo’ed Katan 14b*** *A mourner is forbidden to cut his hair, because since the Divine* [*Law*](law.html) *ordained the sons of Aaron: Let not the hair of your heads go loose, we infer that for everybody else [cutting the hair] is forbidden.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 10:1-7*** *Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put* [*fire*](fire.html) *in them and added* [*incense*](ketoret.html)*; and they offered unauthorized* [*fire*](fire.html) *before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, contrary to his* [*command*](cmds613.html)*. So* [*fire*](fire.html) *came out from the presence of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and consumed them, and they died before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. Moses then said to Aaron, “This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)[*spoke*](mashal.html) *of when he said: “‘Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.’“ Aaron remained silent. Moses summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of Aaron’s uncle Uzziel, and said to them, “Come here; carry your cousins outside the* [*camp*](stages.html)*, away from the front of the* [*sanctuary*](mikdash.html)*.” So they came and carried them, still in their tunics, outside the* [*camp*](stages.html)*, as Moses ordered. Then Moses said to Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, “Do not let your hair become unkempt, and do not tear your clothes, or you will die and* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will be angry with the whole* [*community*](community.html)*. But your relatives, all the house of Israel, may* [*mourn*](mourning.html) *for those* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *has destroyed by* [*fire*](fire.html)*. Do not leave the entrance to the Tent of Meeting or you will die, because* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s anointing oil is on you.” So they did as Moses said.*

Why does [HaShem](hashem.html) make mention of the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol’s ([High Priest](priests.html)’s) hair? Why not tell Aaron not to [mourn](mourning.html) in sackcloth and ashes?

**Tamei** (unclean) **vs. Tahor** ([clean](purity.html))

Notice the [connection](connection.html), in the next passage, between being unclean and doing the things that were forbidden to Aaron:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 13:40-46*** *“When a man has lost his hair and is bald, he is* [*clean*](purity.html)*. If he has lost his hair from the front of his scalp and has a bald* [*forehead*](body.html)*, he is* [*clean*](purity.html)*. But if he has a reddish-white sore on his bald* [*head*](body.html) *or* [*forehead*](body.html)*, it is an infectious disease breaking out on his* [*head*](body.html) *or* [*forehead*](body.html)*. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to examine him, and if the swollen sore on his* [*head*](body.html) *or* [*forehead*](body.html) *is reddish-white like an infectious skin disease, The man is diseased and is unclean. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall pronounce him unclean because of the sore on his* [*head*](body.html)*. “The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his* [*face*](body.html) *and* [*cry*](mashal.html) *out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the* [*camp*](stages.html)*.*

Notice that the cleansing of the above infectious person also involves removing the hair which had been left unkempt.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 14:1-20***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Moses, “These are the regulations for the diseased person at the* [*time*](time.html) *of his ceremonial cleansing, when he is brought to the* [*priest*](priests.html)*: The* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to go outside the* [*camp*](stages.html) *and examine him. If the person has been healed of his infectious skin disease, The* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall order that* [*two*](two.html) *live* [*clean*](purity.html) *birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop be brought for the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed. Then the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall order that* [*one*](one.html) *of the birds be killed over fresh water in a clay pot. He is then to take the live bird and dip it, together with the cedar wood, the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, into the* [*blood*](body.html) *of the bird that was killed over the fresh water.* [*Seven*](seven.html) *times he shall sprinkle the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed of the infectious disease and pronounce him* [*clean*](purity.html)*. Then he is to release the live bird in the open fields. “The person to be cleansed must wash his clothes, shave off all his hair and bathe with water; then he will be ceremonially* [*clean*](purity.html)*. After this he may come into the* [*camp*](stages.html)*, but he must stay outside his tent for* [*seven*](seven.html) *days. On the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day he must shave off all his hair; he must shave his* [*head*](body.html)*, his beard, his eyebrows and the rest of his hair. He must wash his clothes and bathe himself with water, and he will be* [*clean*](purity.html)*. “On the* [*eighth*](eight.html) *day he must bring* [*two*](two.html)[*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *lambs and* [*one*](one.html) *ewe lamb a year old, each without defect, along with* [*three*](three.html)*-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain* [*offering*](korbanot)*, and* [*one*](one.html) *log of oil. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *who pronounces him* [*clean*](purity.html) *shall present both the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed and his offerings before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. “Then the* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to take* [*one*](one.html) *of the* [*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *lambs and offer it as a guilt* [*offering*](korbanot)*, along with the log of oil; he shall wave them before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *as a wave* [*offering*](korbanot)*. He is to slaughter the lamb in the holy place where the* [*sin*](sin.html)[*offering*](korbanot) *and the* [*burnt offering*](korbanot) *are slaughtered. Like the* [*sin*](sin.html)[*offering*](korbanot)*, the guilt* [*offering*](korbanot) *belongs to the* [*priest*](priests.html)*; it is most holy. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to take some of the* [*blood*](body.html) *of the guilt* [*offering*](korbanot) *and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *and on the big toe of his right* [*foot*](heel.html)*. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall then take some of the log of oil, pour it in the palm of his own left* [*hand*](mashal.html)*, Dip his right forefinger into the oil in his palm, and with his finger sprinkle some of it before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)[*seven*](seven.html) *times. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to put some of the oil remaining in his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *and on the big toe of his right* [*foot*](heel.html)*, on top of the* [*blood*](body.html) *of the guilt* [*offering*](korbanot)*. The rest of the oil in his palm the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall put on the* [*head*](body.html) *of the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed and make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for him before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “Then the* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html) *the* [*sin*](sin.html)[*offering*](korbanot) *and make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for the* [*one*](one.html) *to be cleansed from his uncleanness. After that, the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall slaughter the* [*burnt offering*](korbanot) *And offer it on the altar, together with the grain* [*offering*](korbanot)*, and make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for him, and he will be* [*clean*](purity.html)*.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 14:9*** *On the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day, he shall shave off all his hair, his* [*head*](body.html)*, his beard, his eyebrows, and all his hair shall he shave off.*

If the metzora has to shave his entire [body](body.html) - “all his hair”, as part of his purification, why does the Torah specify “his [head](body.html), his beard, his eyebrows”?

The [head](body.html) represents haughtiness. He held his [head](body.html) high over others, thinking himself better. Through his [mouth](body.html), framed by his beard, he [spoke](mashal.html) gossip and slander. Under his eyebrows, his [eyes](body.html) narrowed in jealousy. It was that jealousy that engendered the wish to destroy another’s reputation, which can be done with just the raising of an eyebrow.

Did you notice the similarity between the use of the [blood](body.html) for an unclean person and the use of the [blood](body.html) at Aaron’s consecration? Let’s look at Aaron’s consecration:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 8:22-24*** *He then presented the other ram, the ram for the ordination, and Aaron and his sons laid their* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *on its* [*head*](body.html)*. Moses slaughtered the ram and took some of its* [*blood*](body.html) *and put it on the lobe of Aaron’s right ear, on the thumb of his right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *and on the big toe of his right* [*foot*](heel.html)*. Moses also brought Aaron’s sons forward and put some of the* [*blood*](body.html) *on the lobes of their right* [*ears*](body.html)*, on the thumbs of their right* [*hands*](mashal.html) *and on the big toes of their right* [*feet*](heel.html)*. Then he sprinkled* [*blood*](body.html) *against the altar on all sides.*

It is almost as though the unclean person is unfit for service. His fitness for service seems to be dependent upon being [clean](purity.html) and upon having the [blood](body.html) placed in the appropriate places. The kempt hair seems to be important to [HaShem](hashem.html) in the case of Aaron, because he is consecrated. The unkempt hair seems important to [HaShem](hashem.html), because he is unfit for service. The hair seems in some way to connected with service to [HaShem](hashem.html). It also seems to be something that can not be cleansed, and therefore must be cut off when we are made fit for service to [HaShem](hashem.html).

[HaShem](hashem.html) begins Vayikra (Leviticus) 19 with these words:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:1-3***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Moses, “*[*Speak*](mashal.html) *to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: ‘Be holy because I,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God, am holy. “‘Each of you must respect his mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God.*

Later, in that same chapter, he says:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:27*** *“‘Do not cut the hair at the sides of your* [*head*](body.html) *or clip off the edges of your beard.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 21:5*** *“‘*[*Priests*](priests.html) *must not shave their heads or shave off the edges of their beards or cut their* [*bodies*](body.html)*.*

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 14:1*** *You are the children of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God. Do not cut yourselves or shave the front of your heads for the dead, For you are a people holy to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God. Out of all the peoples on the* [*face*](body.html) *of the earth,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *has chosen you to be his treasured possession.*

The inference is that if we obey [HaShem](hashem.html) we will be holy. Can you see how the observation of this [command](cmds613.html) will “set you apart to [HaShem](hashem.html)”?

**The Nazir**

The Nazirite vow seemed to place an emphasis on the hair and on the grape plant.

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 6:1-21***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Moses, “*[*Speak*](mashal.html) *to the Israelites and say to them: ‘If a man or woman* [*wants*](needs.html) *to make a special vow, a vow of separation to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *as a Nazirite, He must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or from other fermented drink. He must not drink grape juice or* [*eat*](eating.html) *grapes or raisins. As long as he is a Nazirite, he must not* [*eat*](eating.html) *anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the* [*seeds*](flower.html) *or skins. “‘During the entire period of his vow of separation no razor may be used on his* [*head*](body.html)*. He must be holy until the period of his separation to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *is over; he must let the hair of his* [*head*](body.html) *grow long. Throughout the period of his separation to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *he must not go near a dead* [*body*](body.html)*. Even if his own father or mother or brother or sister dies, he must not make himself ceremonially unclean on account of them, because the symbol of his separation to God is on his* [*head*](body.html)*. Throughout the period of his separation he is consecrated to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “‘If someone dies suddenly in his presence, thus defiling the hair he has dedicated, he must shave his* [*head*](body.html) *on the day of his cleansing--the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day. Then on the* [*eighth*](eight.html) *day he must bring* [*two*](two.html) *doves or* [*two*](two.html) *young pigeons to the* [*priest*](priests.html) *at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to offer* [*one*](one.html) *as a* [*sin*](sin.html)[*offering*](korbanot) *and the other as a* [*burnt offering*](korbanot) *to make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for him because he sinned by being in the presence of the dead* [*body*](body.html)*. That same day he is to consecrate his* [*head*](body.html)*. He must dedicate himself to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *for the period of his separation and must bring a year-old* [*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *lamb as a guilt* [*offering*](korbanot)*. The previous days do not count, because he became defiled during his separation. “‘Now this is the* [*law*](law.html) *for the Nazirite when the period of his separation is over. He is to be brought to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. There he is to present his offerings to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*: a year-old* [*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *lamb without defect for a* [*burnt offering*](korbanot)*, a year-old ewe lamb without defect for a* [*sin*](sin.html)[*offering*](korbanot)*, a ram without defect for a fellowship* [*offering*](korbanot)*, Together with their grain offerings and drink offerings, and a basket of bread made without* [*yeast*](chametz.html)*--cakes made of fine flour mixed with oil, and wafers spread with oil. “‘The* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to present them before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and make the* [*sin*](sin.html)[*offering*](korbanot) *and the* [*burnt offering*](korbanot)*. He is to present the basket of* [*unleavened*](chametz.html) *bread and is to* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html) *the ram as a fellowship* [*offering*](korbanot) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, together with its grain* [*offering*](korbanot) *and drink* [*offering*](korbanot)*. “‘Then at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the Nazirite must shave off the hair that he dedicated. He is to take the hair and put it in the* [*fire*](fire.html) *that is under the* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html) *of the fellowship* [*offering*](korbanot)*. “‘After the Nazirite has shaved off the hair of his dedication, the* [*priest*](priests.html) *is to place in his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *a boiled shoulder of the ram, and a cake and a wafer from the basket, both made without* [*yeast*](chametz.html)*. The* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall then wave them before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *as a wave* [*offering*](korbanot)*; they are holy and belong to the* [*priest*](priests.html)*, together with the breast that was waved and the thigh that was presented. After that, the Nazirite may drink wine. “‘This is the* [*law*](law.html) *of the Nazirite who vows his* [*offering*](korbanot) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in accordance with his separation, in addition to whatever else he can afford. He must fulfill the vow he has made, according to the* [*law*](law.html) *of the Nazirite.’“*

If a person makes a vow to become a Nazir without stipulating a [time](time.html) period, his Nezirus lasts for a period of [thirty](thirty.html) days. During this period, the Nazir is not allowed to:

1. Cut his hair;

2. Become unclean by touching or being in the same room as a corpse; or

3. Consume any products of the grapevine.

When a Nazir completes his period of Nezirus, he must offer [three](three.html) sacrifices: a [male](male%2Bfemale.html) sheep as an Olah, a [female](male%2Bfemale.html) sheep as a Chatat, and a ram as a Shelamim (peace [offering](korbanot)). Together with the Shelamim he brings 6 and 2/3 Esronot of fine flour which are made into [twenty](twenty.html) loaves of [Matza](chametz.html), [ten](ten.html) Challot ([unleavened](chametz.html) loaves) and [ten](ten.html) Rekikin (flat [Matzot](chametz.html)). He then shaves his hair and burns it under the pot in which the Shelamim is cooked (Bamidbar 6:18).

The hair seems to be like a sacrificial animal. The hair is “consecrated”.

Lets look at hair from a “proverbial” sense:

***I Shmuel (Samuel) 14:41-45*** *Then Saul* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the God of Israel, “Give me the right answer.” And Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, and the men were cleared. Saul said, “Cast the lot between me and Jonathan my son.” And Jonathan was taken. Then Saul said to Jonathan, “Tell me what you have done.” So Jonathan told him, “I merely tasted a little honey with the end of my* [*staff*](staff.html)*. And now must I die?” Saul said, “May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if you do not die, Jonathan.” But the men said to Saul, “Should Jonathan die--he who has brought about this great deliverance in Israel? Never! As surely as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *lives, not a hair of his* [*head*](body.html) *will fall to the ground, for he did this today with God’s help.” So the men rescued Jonathan, and he was not put to death.*

***I Melakim (Kings) 1:51-52*** *Then Solomon was told, “Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon and is clinging to the horns of the altar. He says, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.’“ Solomon replied, “If he shows himself to be a worthy man, not a hair of his* [*head*](body.html) *will fall to the ground; but if evil is found in him, he will die.”*

***II Luqas (Acts) 27:30-36*** *In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved.” So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away. Just before dawn Paul urged them all to* [*eat*](eating.html)*. “For the last* [*fourteen*](fourteen.html) *days,” he said, “you have been in constant suspense and have gone without* [*food*](food.html)*--you haven’t* [*eaten*](eating.html) *anything. Now I urge you to take some* [*food*](food.html)*. You need it to survive. Not* [*one*](one.html) *of you will lose a single hair from his* [*head*](body.html)*.” After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to* [*eat*](eating.html)*. They were all encouraged and* [*ate*](eating.html) *some* [*food*](food.html) *themselves.*

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 21:12-19*** *“But before all this, they will lay* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to* [*synagogues*](synagog.html) *and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my* [*name*](name.html)*. This will result in your being witnesses to them. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your* [*head*](body.html) *will perish. By* [*standing*](mashal.html) *firm you will gain life.*

***Daniel 3:24-27*** *Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his* [*feet*](heel.html) *in amazement and asked his advisers, “Weren’t there* [*three*](three.html) *men that we tied up and threw into the* [*fire*](fire.html)*?” They replied, “Certainly, O king.” He said, “Look! I see* [*four*](four.html) *men* [*walking*](walking.html) *around in the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, unbound and unharmed, and the* [*fourth*](four.html) *looks like a son of the gods.” Nebuchadnezzar then approached the opening of the blazing* [*furnace*](furnace.html) *and shouted, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!” So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the* [*fire*](fire.html)*, And the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the* [*fire*](fire.html) *had not harmed their* [*bodies*](body.html)*, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of* [*fire*](fire.html) *on them.*

This is weird: not a hair of our [head](body.html) will perish, even if they put us to death!

Not losing a single hair from your [head](body.html) seems to indicate that you will not be hurt. It is almost as though a hair is the least part of a person. In this next passage we see that the destruction of a person is equated with the destruction of his hair:

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 68:20-21*** *Our God is a God who saves; from the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *comes escape from death. Surely God will crush the heads of his enemies, the hairy crowns of those who go on in their* [*sins*](sin.html)*.*

Lets look at some miscellaneous verses on hair:

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 16:31*** *Gray hair is a crown of splendor; it is attained by a righteous life.*

***Mishlei (Proverbs) 20:29*** *The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old.*

Hair is related to a woman’s glory:

***Yeshayah (Isaiah) 3:16-26***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says, “The women of Zion are haughty,* [*walking*](walking.html) *along with outstretched necks, flirting with their* [*eyes*](body.html)*, tripping along with mincing steps, with ornaments jingling on their ankles. Therefore the Lord will bring sores on the heads of the women of Zion;* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will make their scalps bald.” In that day the Lord will snatch away their finery: the bangles and headbands and crescent necklaces, The earrings and bracelets and veils, The headdresses and ankle chains and sashes, the perfume bottles and charms, The signet rings and* [*nose*](body.html) *rings, The fine robes and the capes and cloaks, the purses And mirrors, and the linen garments and tiaras and shawls. Instead of fragrance there will be a stench; instead of a sash, a rope; instead of well-dressed hair, baldness; instead of fine clothing, sackcloth; instead of beauty, branding. Your men will fall by the sword, your warriors in battle. The gates of Zion will lament and* [*mourn*](mourning.html)*; destitute, she will sit on the ground.*

***I Corinthians 11:1-16*** *Follow my example, as I follow the example of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you. Now I want you to realize that the* [*head*](body.html) *of every man is* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*, and the* [*head*](body.html) *of the woman is man, and the* [*head*](body.html) *of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his* [*head*](body.html) *covered dishonors his* [*head*](body.html)*. And every woman who prays or prophesies with her* [*head*](body.html) *uncovered dishonors her* [*head*](body.html)*--it is just as though her* [*head*](body.html) *were shaved. If a woman does not cover her* [*head*](body.html)*, she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her* [*head*](body.html)*. A man ought not to cover his* [*head*](body.html)*, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. For this reason, and because of the* [*angels*](angels.html)*, the woman ought to have a* [*sign*](signs.html) *of* [*authority*](authority.html) *on her* [*head*](body.html)*. In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God. Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to God with her* [*head*](body.html) *uncovered? Does not the very nature of things* [*teach*](teacher.html) *you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, But that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given to her as a covering. If anyone* [*wants*](needs.html) *to be contentious about this, we have no other practice--nor do the churches of God.*

In 1 Corinthians 11:7 the word “cover” means:

2619 katakalupto, kat-ak-al-oop’-to; from 2596 and 2572; to cover wholly, i.e. veil:-cover, hide.

This obviously does not mean that a man may not wear a hat as can be see from:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 28:4*** *These are the garments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash. They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as* [*priests*](priests.html)*.*

and:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 28:36-40*** *“Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: HOLY TO* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. Fasten a blue cord to it to attach it to the turban; it is to be on the front of the turban. It will be on Aaron’s* [*forehead*](body.html)*, and he will bear the guilt involved in the sacred gifts the Israelites consecrate, whatever their gifts may be. It will be on Aaron’s* [*forehead*](body.html) *continually so that they will be acceptable to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “Weave the tunic of fine linen and make the turban of fine linen. The sash is to be the work of an embroiderer. Make tunics, sashes and headbands for Aaron’s sons, to give them dignity and honor.*

This word “headbands” means:

4021 migba`ah, mig-baw-aw’; from the same as 1389; a cap (as hemispherical):- bonnet.

and:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 29:8-9*** *Bring his sons and dress them in tunics And put headbands on them. Then tie sashes on Aaron and his sons. The priesthood is theirs by a lasting ordinance. In this way you shall ordain Aaron and his sons.*

✡✡✡

The [head](body.html) seems to be important in:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 5:36*** *And do not swear by your* [*head*](body.html)*, for you cannot make even* [*one*](one.html) *hair white or black.*

Hair is also the target for grief and anger:

***Ezra-Nechemiah (Nehemiah) 9:1-4*** *After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the* [*priests*](priests.html) *and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.” When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my* [*head*](body.html) *and beard and sat down appalled. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel* [*gathered*](gather.html) *around me because of this unfaithfulness of the* [*exiles*](galuyot.html)*. And I sat there appalled until the evening* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html)*.*

***Ezra-Nechemiah (Nehemiah) 13:23-26*** *Moreover, in those days I saw men of Judah who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and* [*Moab*](stages.html)*. Half of their children* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *the language of Ashdod or the language of* [*one*](one.html) *of the other peoples, and did not* [*know*](daat.html) *how to* [*speak*](mashal.html) *the language of Judah. I rebuked them and called curses down on them. I beat some of the men and pulled out their hair. I made them take an oath in God’s* [*name*](name.html) *and said: “You are not to give your daughters in* [*marriage*](mashal.html) *to their sons, nor are you to take their daughters in* [*marriage*](mashal.html) *for your sons or for yourselves. Was it not because of marriages like these that Solomon king of Israel sinned? Among the many* [*nations*](nations.html) *there was no king like him. He was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel, but even he was led into* [*sin*](sin.html) *by foreign women.*

***Yeshayah (Isaiah) 15:1-3*** *An oracle concerning* [*Moab*](stages.html)*: Ar in* [*Moab*](stages.html) *is ruined, destroyed in a night! Kir in* [*Moab*](stages.html) *is ruined, destroyed in a night! Dibon goes up to its* [*temple*](temple.html)*, to its high places to* [*weep*](mashal.html)*;* [*Moab*](stages.html) *wails over Nebo and Medeba. Every* [*head*](body.html) *is shaved and every beard cut off. In the streets they wear sackcloth; on the roofs and in the public squares they all wail, prostrate with* [*weeping*](mashal.html)*.*

***Yeshayah (Isaiah) 22:12-14*** *Lord,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *Almighty, called you on that day to* [*weep*](mashal.html) *and to wail, to tear out your hair and put on sackcloth. But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep,* [*eating*](eating.html) *of meat and drinking of wine! “Let us* [*eat*](eating.html) *and drink,” you say, “for tomorrow we die!”* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *Almighty has revealed this in my* [*hearing*](mashal.html)*: “Till your dying day this* [*sin*](sin.html) *will not be atoned for,” says the Lord,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *Almighty.*

***Yirimiyah (Jeremiah) 48:35-38*** *In* [*Moab*](stages.html) *I will put an end to those who make offerings on the high places and burn* [*incense*](ketoret.html) *to their gods,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. “So my* [*heart*](body.html) *laments for* [*Moab*](stages.html) *like a flute; it laments like a flute for the men of Kir Hareseth. The wealth they acquired is gone. Every* [*head*](body.html) *is shaved and every beard cut off; every* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *is slashed and every waist is covered with sackcloth. On all the roofs in* [*Moab*](stages.html) *and in the public squares there is nothing but* [*mourning*](mourning.html)*, for I have broken* [*Moab*](stages.html) *like a jar that no* [*one*](one.html)[*wants*](needs.html)*,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 7:12-19*** *The* [*time*](time.html) *has come, the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice nor the seller grieve, for wrath is upon the whole crowd. The seller will not recover the land he has sold as long as both of them live, for the vision concerning the whole crowd will not be reversed. Because of their* [*sins*](sin.html)*, not* [*one*](one.html) *of them will preserve his life. Though they blow the trumpet and get everything ready, no* [*one*](one.html) *will go into battle, for my wrath is upon the whole crowd. “Outside is the sword, inside are* [*plague*](plagues.html) *and* [*famine*](famine.html)*; those in the country will die by the sword, and those in the* [*city*](city.html) *will be devoured by* [*famine*](famine.html) *and* [*plague*](plagues.html)*. All who survive and escape will be in the mountains, moaning like doves of the valleys, each because of his* [*sins*](sin.html)*. Every* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *will go limp, and every knee will become as weak as water. They will put on sackcloth and be clothed with terror. Their faces will be covered with shame and their heads will be shaved. They will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be an unclean thing. Their silver and gold will not be able to* [*save*](salvation.html) *them in the* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s wrath. They will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs with it, for it has made them stumble into* [*sin*](sin.html)*.*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 27:25-32*** *“‘The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares. You are filled with heavy cargo in the* [*heart*](body.html) *of the sea. Your oarsmen take you out to the high seas. But the* [*east*](east.html) *wind will break you to pieces in the* [*heart*](body.html) *of the sea. Your wealth, merchandise and wares, your mariners, seamen and shipwrights, your merchants and all your soldiers, and everyone else on board will sink into the* [*heart*](body.html) *of the sea on the day of your shipwreck. The shorelands will quake when your seamen* [*cry*](mashal.html) *out. All who handle the oars will abandon their ships; the mariners and all the seamen will stand on the shore. They will raise their voice and* [*cry*](mashal.html) *bitterly over you; they will sprinkle* [*dust*](rock.html) *on their heads and roll in ashes. They will shave their heads because of you and will put on sackcloth. They will* [*weep*](mashal.html) *over you with anguish of soul and with bitter* [*mourning*](mourning.html)*. As they wail and* [*mourn*](mourning.html) *over you, they will take up a lament concerning you: “Who was ever silenced like Tyre, surrounded by the sea?”*

***Amos 8:9-10*** *“In that day,” declares the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, “I will make the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn your religious feasts into* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *and all your singing into* [*weeping*](mashal.html)*. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that* [*time*](time.html) *like* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day.*

The lack of hair was also used as a taunt. (see also our [study](study.html) on [forty](forty.html)-[two](two.html):

***II Melakim (Kings) 2:23-24*** *From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was* [*walking*](walking.html) *along the road, some youths came out of the town and jeered at him. “Go on up, you baldhead!” they said. “Go on up, you baldhead!” He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the* [*name*](name.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. Then* [*two*](two.html) *bears came out of the woods and mauled* [*forty*](forty.html)*-*[*two*](two.html) *of the youths.*

The Levi’im were shaved. They were to be the recipients of the blessing brought to the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) by the service of the [Kohanim](priests.html). Therefore, in their inauguration rite, they were shorn of their hair. It was this that [Korach](qorach.html) objected to. He did not want to “receive” from Moshe. He wanted to be the “[giver](giver.html)”, the mashpia. [Korach](qorach.html)’s very [name](name.html) had the same [letters](letters.html) as “Kerayach” – hairless, bald. In his very essence lay the potential of being a great recipient of the life force received from Moshe Rabeinu. He failed his test.

In this next prophecy hair is used to represent [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people:

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 5:1-17*** *Now, son of man, take a sharp sword and use it as a barber’s razor to shave your* [*head*](body.html) *and your beard. Then take a set of scales and divide up the hair. When the days of your siege come to an end, burn a* [*third*](three.html) *of the hair with* [*fire*](fire.html) *inside the* [*city*](city.html)*. Take a* [*third*](three.html) *and strike it with the sword all around the* [*city*](city.html)*. And scatter a* [*third*](three.html) *to the wind. For I will pursue them with drawn sword. But take a few strands of hair and tuck them away in the folds of your garment. Again, take a few of these and throw them into the* [*fire*](fire.html) *and burn them up. A* [*fire*](fire.html) *will spread from there to the whole house of Israel. “This is what the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: This is* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, which I have set in the center of the* [*nations*](nations.html)*, with countries all around her. Yet in her* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *she has rebelled against my* [*laws*](law.html) *and decrees more than the* [*nations*](nations.html) *and countries around her. She has rejected my* [*laws*](law.html) *and has not followed my decrees. “Therefore this is what the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: You have been more unruly than the* [*nations*](nations.html) *around you and have not followed my decrees or kept my* [*laws*](law.html)*. You have not even conformed to the standards of the* [*nations*](nations.html) *around you. “Therefore this is what the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: I myself am against you,* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, and I will inflict punishment on you in the sight of the* [*nations*](nations.html)*. Because of all your detestable idols, I will do to you what I have never done before and will never do again. Therefore in your midst* [*fathers*](fathers.html) *will* [*eat*](eating.html) *their children, and children will* [*eat*](eating.html) *their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*. I will inflict punishment on you and will scatter all your survivors to the winds. Therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, because you have defiled my* [*sanctuary*](mikdash.html) *with all your vile images and detestable practices, I myself will withdraw my favor; I will not look on you with pity or spare you. A* [*third*](three.html) *of your people will die of the* [*plague*](plagues.html) *or perish by* [*famine*](famine.html) *inside you; a* [*third*](three.html) *will fall by the sword outside your walls; and a* [*third*](three.html) *I will scatter to the winds and pursue with drawn sword. “Then my anger will cease and my wrath against them will subside, and I will be avenged. And when I have spent my wrath upon them, they will* [*know*](daat.html) *that I* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *have spoken in my zeal. “I will make you a ruin and a reproach among the* [*nations*](nations.html) *around you, in the sight of all who pass by. You will be a reproach and a taunt, a warning and an object of horror to the* [*nations*](nations.html) *around you when I inflict punishment on you in anger and in wrath and with stinging rebuke. I* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *have spoken. When I shoot at you with my deadly and destructive arrows of* [*famine*](famine.html)*, I will shoot to destroy you. I will bring more and more* [*famine*](famine.html) *upon you and cut off your supply of* [*food*](food.html)*. I will send* [*famine*](famine.html) *and wild beasts against you, and they will leave you childless.* [*Plague*](plagues.html) *and bloodshed will sweep through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *have spoken.”*

Why do we learn about hair, and not about skin, [eyes](body.html), or other parts?

***Daniel 7:9*** *“As I looked, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his* [*head*](body.html) *was white like wool. His throne was flaming with* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and its wheels were all ablaze.*

In the following passage, why did she use her hair and not her cloak or a towel - This was HER HOUSE. Why did she use her hair????

***Yochanan (John) 12:1-8***[*Six*](six.html) *days before the* [*Passover*](passover.html)*,* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*’s honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*’s* [*feet*](heel.html) *and wiped his* [*feet*](heel.html) *with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But* [*one*](one.html) *of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, “Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. “Leave her alone,”* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *replied.” [It was intended] that she should* [*save*](salvation.html) *this perfume for the day of my* [*burial*](burial.html)*. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.”*

Why does hair show up [six](six.html) days before [Passover](passover.html)?

The Apostles seem to equate hair with the other things that a woman covers herself with.

***I Timothy 2:9-10*** *I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, But with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.*

***I Tzefet (Peter) 3:1-5*** *Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, When they see the* [*purity*](purity.html) *and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands,*

\* \* \*

The following section was an adaptation of shiur by the Alter Rebbe by Yitzchok D. Wagshul.

*Even though the Torah and* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html) *as we* [*known*](daat.html) *them are enclothed in worldly form, such as* [*laws*](law.html) *of what is forbidden and what is permitted, and expressed through* [*physical*](physical.html) *objects like coins for charity, and so on, this does not alter their essential character as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s very “intellect”. Chassidic philosophy frequently uses an analogy to hair in making this point. The hair on* [*one*](one.html)*’s* [*head*](body.html) *grows outward through miniscule openings, and has so little of the* [*body*](body.html)*’s life-force in it that* [*one*](one.html) *can cut hair without feeling pain. This is in sharp contrast to what is on the other side of those tiny holes: the* [*brain*](brain.html)*, which is the very center of the* [*body*](body.html)*’s vitality. Viewing the hair of* [*one*](one.html)*’s* [*head*](body.html) *as though it had pushed through the barrier of* [*one*](one.html)*’s skull and were a visible, tangible extension of the* [*brain*](brain.html) *into the outside, hair serves as a metaphor for the way* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *lets unimaginably refined and lofty degrees of holiness find expression even in the “lowest” places. No* [*one*](one.html) *suggests that hair contains anything of the* [*brain*](brain.html) *itself, or is comparable to the* [*brain*](brain.html) *in any other way, but we can still say that if it derives from the* [*brain*](brain.html)*, it is “of the* [*brain*](brain.html)*,” so to* [*speak*](mashal.html)*. To apply this to the Torah and* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html)*, while it is true that they are thoroughly bound up with this* [*physical*](physical.html)[*world*](worlds.html)*, they “derive from the* [*brain*](brain.html)*”: the Torah and* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html) *as we* [*know*](daat.html) *them are nevertheless visible, tangible manifestations to this lowly, “outside”* [*world*](worlds.html) *we live in of the rarified holiness within that deepest and most concealed “*[*brain*](brain.html)*”: the* [*spiritual*](physical.html) *level associated with* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s chachmah, or “wisdom.”*

# II. Maturity is determined by hair

***Berachoth 24a*** *The Master said: ‘If his children and the members of his* [*household*](househld.html) *were minors, it is permitted’. Up to what age? — R. Hisda said: A girl up to* [*three*](three.html) *years and* [*one*](one.html) *day, a boy up to* [*nine*](nine.html) *years and* [*one*](one.html) *day. Some there are who say: A girl up to* [*eleven*](eleven.html) *years and a day, and a boy up to* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *years and a day; with both of them [it is] up to the* [*time*](time.html) *when Thy* [*breasts*](body.html) *were fashioned and thy hair was grown.[[14]](#footnote-14)*

✡✡✡

The [sacrifice](korbanot.html) of the [omer](omer.html) was brought from barley (a less affluent crop than wheat, more difficult to digest, and used more to feed animals than for human consumption). Therefore, during the days of counting it is not permitted to cut the hair or marry.

✡✡✡

**Payot** - Sidecurls worn by Ultra-Orthodox men and boys.

**Payot** - corners; therefore, earlocks of hair.

Q-5: What is the significance of the untrimmed beards and sidecurls?

A-10: The *payot* (sidecurls) and beard are worn in obedience to this [commandment](cmds613.html) in the Torah:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:27*** *You shall not round the corners of your heads, nor mar the edges of your beards.*

The [Mishna](orallaw.html) tells us that there are [five](five.html) corners to the [head](body.html):

***Makkoth 20a*** *MISHNAH. IF A MAN MAKES A BALDNESS ON HIS* [*HEAD*](body.html)*, OR ROUNDS THE CORNER OF HIS* [*HEAD*](body.html)*, OR MARS THE CORNER OF HIS BEARD, OR MAKES* [*ONE*](one.html) *CUTTING [IN HIS FLESH] FOR THE DEAD, HE IS LIABLE [TO A FLOGGING]. IF HE MAKES* [*ONE*](one.html) *CUTTING FOR* [*FIVE*](five.html) *DEAD, OR* [*FIVE*](five.html) *CUTTINGS FOR* [*ONE*](one.html)*, HE IS LIABLE [SEVERALLY] FOR EACH* [*ONE*](one.html)*.*

*ON [ROUNDING] THE* [*HEAD*](body.html) *[HE IS LIABLE] FOR* [*TWO*](two.html) *CORNERS,[[15]](#footnote-15)* [*ONE*](one.html) *FOR* [*ONE*](one.html) *SIDE AND* [*ONE*](one.html) *FOR THE OTHER; ON [MARRING] THE BEARD [HE IS LIABLE] FOR* [*TWO*](two.html) *[CORNERS] ON* [*ONE*](one.html) *SIDE, FOR* [*TWO*](two.html) *ON THE OTHER SIDE, AND FOR* [*ONE*](one.html) *LOWER DOWN;[[16]](#footnote-16) R. ELIEZER[[17]](#footnote-17) SAYS: IF THEY WERE ALL TAKEN OFF AS* [*ONE*](one.html)*[[18]](#footnote-18) HE IS LIABLE ONLY ON* [*ONE*](one.html) *COUNT. AND HE IS ONLY LIABLE ON TAKING OFF WITH A RAZOR; R. ELIEZER[[19]](#footnote-19) SAYS: EVEN IF HE PICKS OFF THE HAIRS WITH TWEEZERS,[[20]](#footnote-20) OR [REMOVES THEM] WITH PINCERS,[[21]](#footnote-21) HE IS LIABLE.*

Rashi, on Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:27 tells us about the corners:

***the edge of your beard*** *[meaning:] The end of the beard and its borders. And these are* [*five*](five.html)*:* [*two*](two.html) *on each cheek at the top [edge of the cheek] near the* [*head*](body.html)*, where [the cheek] is broad and has* [*two*](two.html) *“corners” [i.e., extremities,* [*one*](one.html) *near the* [*temple*](temple.html) *and the other at the end of the cheek bone towards the center of the* [*face*](body.html)*]—and* [*one*](one.html) *below, on the chin, at the point where the* [*two*](two.html) *cheeks join together.[[22]](#footnote-22)*

***Makkoth 20b*** *OR ROUNDS THE CORNER OF HIS* [*HEAD*](body.html)*. Our Rabbis* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: ‘The corner of his* [*head*](body.html)*’, is the extreme end on* [*one*](one.html)*’s* [*head*](body.html)*: and what is [rounding] the extreme end on his* [*head*](body.html)*? If he levels his* [*temple*](temple.html)*-growth from the back of his* [*ears*](body.html) *to the* [*forehead*](body.html)*.*

Rashbam states that the top pe’ot (corners) of the beard are at the place where the cheeks join the temples, the [two](two.html) lower pe’ot are at the borders of the mustache on either side of the [mouth](body.html), and the [fifth](five.html) is at the bottom. Rashbam describes the location as “at the bottom,” not explaining exactly where. The Rosh and the Tur both explain the location as being the point where the chin meets the throat.

The “corners of the [head](body.html)” are the area above the [ears](body.html). Together, both the curls and the untrimmed beard are a symbol of obedience to the [laws](law.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html). Many Hasidic men also cut the rest of the hair very short. This is not really required, but is more comfortable under a hat. Also, some Hasidim see the entire haircut, very short hair with beard and payot, as part of the “uniform” of their group.

The minimum length for *payot* (pronounced PAY-us) is long enough that you can grab a hair and bend it towards its own root -- which comes out to be just about below the earlobes. But there are other opinions also, and many Hasidim wear them longer. Some men curl them carefully and let them hang conspicuously in front of the [ears](body.html), while others tuck them behind the [ears](body.html) or up under their yarmulke (skullcap.) Again, this is a matter of style and, in some cases, personal preference.

Lubavitcher Hasidim, however, do not wear *payot,* except for the young boys until the beard grows in. And some non-Hasidic Orthodox wear them also, including many Sephardic and Yemenite [Jews](gen-jew.html). So you really cannot tell if somebody is a Hasid just because he has *payot.*

✡✡✡

The hair corresponds to the [spiritual](physical.html) connections that link a person to his [spiritual](physical.html) essence above. When the hair is in order, the [physical](physical.html) and [spiritual](physical.html) [worlds](worlds.html) mesh. Both the king and the [Kohanim](priests.html) are required to cut their hair regularly as a [sign](signs.html) of the orderly bond to the [spiritual](physical.html) [world](worlds.html) that is necessary to properly fill their exalted positions of [authority](authority.html).

A nazir must let his hair grow wild to signify the short-circuit that necessitates his temperance. At the conclusion of his lesson in self control, he shaves his hair to signify a [new](new.html) beginning, a total reorganization and rewiring of his [physical](physical.html)-[spiritual](physical.html) bonds. The hair is then burnt under the pot in which his shelamim [offering](korbanot) is cooked to signify this [new](new.html) found harmony.

✡✡✡

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 70b*** *In regard to the upper* [*Adam*](adam.html)*, the union of* [*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *and* [*female*](male%2Bfemale.html) *is at* [*first*](one.html) *only distantly alluded to in the words “this is the book”, but after they produced offspring they are called openly “*[*Adam*](adam.html)*”. Then it is said that God made man in the “likeness” of God. By the word “likeness” we are to understand a kind of mirror in which images appear momentarily and then pass away. According to another explanation, the word “likeness” refers to the union of* [*male*](male%2Bfemale.html) *and* [*female*](male%2Bfemale.html)[*organs*](body.html)*: and so the Master affirmed. Furthermore: “This is the book of the* [*generations*](toldot.html) *of Man”, viz. the book which reveals the inner meaning of the features of man, so as to* [*teach*](teacher.html) *the* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *of human nature. The character of man is revealed in the hair, the* [*forehead*](body.html)*, the* [*eyes*](body.html)*, the lips, the features of the* [*face*](body.html)*, the lines of the* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*, and even the* [*ears*](body.html)*. By these* [*seven*](seven.html) *can the different types of men be recognized. The Hair: A man with coarse, upstanding, wavy hair, is of a truculent disposition. His* [*heart*](body.html) *is as stiff as a die. His works are not upright. Have no fellowship with him. A man with very smooth, sleek and heavy-hanging hair, is a good companion, and* [*one*](one.html) *benefits from association with him. When left to himself he is not quite reliable. He cannot keep secrets unless they are of great importance. His actions are sometimes good and sometimes the reverse.*

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 71a*** *‘A man whose hair lies flat, yet is not sleek, is fearless and insolent. He has a strong* [*desire*](needs.html) *to do good, for he perceives the beauty of goodness, but alas! his good intentions are never realized. In his old age he becomes God-fearing and pious. Great secrets are not to be entrusted to him, but he is safe enough with small ones. He can make much out of little and his words are listened to with respect. He is under the esoteric* [*sign*](signs.html) *of the* [*letter*](letters.html) *Zain, according to the scheme which our Master has* [*taught*](teacher.html) *us.*

*‘A man whose hair is black and extremely glossy will succeed in all his doings, particularly in secular matters such as commerce, for instance. He is generous. But he prospers only as an individual; anyone associating himself with him will also have success, but not for long. He is also under the* [*letter*](letters.html) *Zain.*

 *‘*[*One*](one.html) *whose hair is black but not glossy is not always successful in mundane affairs. It is good to associate oneself with him for a while in business matters. Should he be a student of the Torah he will succeed in his studies, and others who will join him will likewise succeed. He is a man who can keep a* [*secret*](sod.html)*, but not for long. He is of a despondent nature, but will prevail against his enemies. He is under the* [*sign*](signs.html) *of the* [*letter*](letters.html) *Yod when it is not included in the* [*letter*](letters.html) *Zain, but is numbered independently among the small* [*letters*](letters.html)*.*

*‘A man who is bald is successful in business, but is not straightforward. There is always a scarcity of* [*food*](food.html) *in his house. He is hypocritical; that is, when his baldness begins in youth. If he becomes bald in his old age he changes and becomes the opposite of what he was before, for good or for ill. This, however, only refers to the baldness which occurs on the* [*forehead*](body.html)*, at the spot where the phylactery is put on. Otherwise, it is not so. He is not*

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 71b*** *deceitful, but is given to backbiting and insinuation. He is occasionally* [*sin*](sin.html)*-fearing. He is under the* [*sign*](signs.html) *of the* [*letter*](letters.html) *Zain when it includes the* [*letter*](letters.html) *Yod. So much for the mysteries revealed by the diflferent kinds of hair, mysteries revealed and entrusted only to those well versed in holy lore, those who comprehend the ways and mysteries of the Torah, by which they may find out the hidden propensities of men.*

✡✡✡

3: A minor - Since we derive the principle determining who is qualified to write [Tefillin](tefillin.html) from a verse in the Torah, we require that the scribe must be unquestionably a legal adult, that is, he must have produced [two](two.html) pubic hairs and also have reached the age of [thirteen](thirteen.html). If we doubt whether he has produced [two](two.html) pubic hairs, then he is not qualified to write [Tefillin](tefillin.html) [as opposed to other areas of [halacha](walking.html), where we assume a [thirteen](thirteen.html) year old has produced them] unless:

a) he has a substantial amount of facial hair, even if these hairs are very small[[23]](#footnote-23) [we can thus assume that pubic hairs have appeared], or

b) he has already lived over half of the average human lifespan [i.e he has reached the age of 35 yrs and 1 day - see explanations below], or

c) [Signs](signs.html) that he is a ‘Soris’ have appeared, as discussed later in Siman 55:5.

We should severely reprimand those scribes who allow [thirteen](thirteen.html) year old youths to write [Tefillin](tefillin.html) without properly verifying whether they have developed the requisite [signs](signs.html) of [physical](physical.html) maturity. See above in the [Mishna](orallaw.html) Brura, Siman 32:103 what I wrote in the [name](name.html) of the Levush concerning this matter, and see also the Biur [Halacha](walking.html) [in which the Chofetz Chayim rules that if an [eighteen](eighteen.html) year-old wrote [Tefillin](tefillin.html) passages and cannot be checked for [two](two.html) adult hairs, [one](one.html) need not be strict after the fact about the validity of the [Tefillin](tefillin.html)].

4: Education - In truth, even a [thirteen](thirteen.html) year old is not qualified to write [Tefillin](tefillin.html) if we don’t [know](daat.html) whether he has produced [two](two.html) pubic hairs; however, the difference is, that if we see a small beard on a young man who wrote the [Tefillin](tefillin.html) after he had turned [thirteen](thirteen.html), we assume that he already had hair when he wrote them [Choshen Mishpat, Siman 35]. This assumption would not help with a boy who wrote [Tefillin](tefillin.html) before he turned [thirteen](thirteen.html), because any hair that appears before the age of [thirteen](thirteen.html) has no effect on the boy’s status.

**Hair Tubes**

The Levites were commanded to constantly shave all the hair off their [bodies](body.html). Hair is like a narrow tube that constricts the life-force which passes through it. Evil attaches itself to the extremities of the hair where it can nurture off the diminished light. To eliminate that possibility, the Levites shaved.

The [Kohanim](priests.html), though, assisted the Levites in the [Temple](temple.html) service. When Levites lifted certain offerings, the Cohens [first](one.html) placed their [hands](fourteen.html) under the Levites’ [hands](fourteen.html). Together they would raise the [sacrifice](korbanot.html).

The principle here is that in order to elevate the [physical](physical.html) to [spiritual](physical.html), the act must be preceded by an influx of G-dly Kindness from above. That’s why the [Kohanim](priests.html), representing Kindness, helped the Levites.

✡✡✡

In a positive sense, the concept of hair refers to “the [thirteen](thirteen.html) hairs of the beard” which are representative of the [thirteen](thirteen.html) attributes of mercy, a Divine influence that is unlimited in nature.

In regard to pulling out the hairs of the beard, the Arizal writes that, it is strictly prohibited to pull or uproot even [one](one.html) of the hairs anywhere on the beard, because they are “pipes for a divine flow.” (They are a path by which the Divine blessings and revelations are channeled to a person.)

[One](one.html) aspect of the flow of Divine energy between the *partzufim* is reflected in the hair. Hair is seen as a hollow channel filled with Divine “light.” However, since it is possible to cut the hair without experiencing any pain (which is of course not the case with any other part of the [body](body.html)), the life-force present within hair is seen to be extremely attenuated. The force flowing through hair is thus highly contracted, a manifestation of the power of *gevurah* and judgment. (Judgment in the sense of being strictly rationed and apportioned).

The mystics say that wherever we have hair it is a place where energy flows out. Hair is a channel that conveys the glow, the power, the energy outward to the whole [body](body.html). All [organs](body.html) that reach out and produce in the [world](worlds.html), have hair at their base. This is why males have more hair than females. The [male](male%2Bfemale.html) is the [one](one.html) who goes out into the [world](worlds.html). The [female](male%2Bfemale.html) is the [one](one.html) who is hidden (in the home) and receives inwardly. This explains why, in Ashkenaz minhag, unmarried women do not cover their hair and why married men cover their hair with a [tallit](tzitzith.html) in [prayer](prayer.html). This is also the reason why married women cover their hair; because in [marriage](mashal.html) they arise to such deep power that their hair [needs](needs.html) to be covered so that this power is not revealed. The hair is a revelation of the outflow of energy. Men are weaker [spiritually](physical.html) and only rise to power in [marriage](mashal.html).

Hair, in men, is concentrated in [three](three.html) areas, the [head](body.html), at the root of the [arms](body.html), where they attach to the [body](body.html), and the reproductive [organs](body.html). Hair represents internalism spreading outwards, away from its source. Basically the principle of being mashpia. It is to be found mainly in men, who are considered the *mashpia*[[24]](#footnote-24) in the relationship between *zachar*[[25]](#footnote-25) and *nekeiva*,[[26]](#footnote-26) and in the areas of the [body](body.html) that represent flowing outward. In the place of the mind and speech, at the root of human acts, and the source of reproduction.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Men have more hair than women because they transmit energy, at [first](one.html), to the [world](worlds.html). The woman is the [one](one.html) who receives the energy. The [head](body.html) which is the source of energy outflow for the [body](body.html) has more hair than anywhere else, in men. Men do not have the [spiritual](physical.html) sensitivity to transmit this energy to the [world](worlds.html) except after [marriage](mashal.html), at the highest point of meditational concentration during the Shemone Esre. This is why they cover their [head](body.html) with the [Tallit](tzitzith.html) during this [prayer](prayer.html). Women are so much more [spiritual](physical.html) that they manifest this energy when they become married.

The aura, or glow, of the [body](body.html) is damped down when the hair is covered.

Our hair works like an antenna, drawing in energy. (Married women’s hair draws more energy than single women’s, thus they should cover their heads.)

The beard is seen in Kabbala as the seat of mercy (*rachamim*). Kabbalistic works identify [thirteen](thirteen.html) components of the beard (either tufts or parts of the [face](body.html) that are devoid of hair and thus outline the beard), corresponding to [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [thirteen](thirteen.html) attributes of mercy ([*Exodus*](exodus.html) 34:6-7). Indeed, *Arich Anpin* connotes “patience” a concept closely allied to that of mercy. The [thirteen](thirteen.html) components of the beard of *Arich Anpin* are called *mazalot* (sing. *mazal*), which means a “source of flow” or influence.

The following was translated from *Likutei Torah* by Rabbi Moshe Wisnefsky:

“Kabbalists ascribed mystical power to the beard and hair. They sometimes called God `Atika Kadisha’, the Holy Ancient [One](one.html), symbolizing [HaShem](hashem.html)’s most transcendent manifestation as a beard with [thirteen](thirteen.html) curls, representing the attributes of divine mercy, [Exodus](exodus.html) 34:6-7).[[28]](#footnote-28)

Now, the light that issues from the beard, via the hairs, is called *mazal*, because it “flows” drop by drop.

The word *mazal* in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) is derived from the root *nun-zayin-lamed*, which means “to flow.” A *mazal* is a [spiritual](physical.html) conduit of Divine life force, which flows from it to some other level.

To explain: The light of the Infinite [One](one.html) [[first](one.html)] becomes manifest in the [head](body.html) of *Arich Anpin*, in which are situated the brains. When it then seeks to be manifest [further, down] through the throat, which is narrow, the light bursts forth [through the skin] as hair. This is the origin of the beard.

The [thirteen](thirteen.html) tufts of the beard of *Arich Anpin* are synonymous with the [thirteen](thirteen.html) attributes, or aspects, of Divine mercy:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|   | [**Exodus**](exodus.html) **34** | **beard** |
| 1 | mighty | sideburns  |
| 2 | merciful | mustache  |
| 3 | and gracious | the lack of hair in the middle of the mustache |
| 4 | long- | the hair under the lower lip |
| 5 | suffering | the lack of hair in the middle of the hair under the lower lip  |
| 6 | abundant in kindness | the hair of the jaw bone |
| 7 | and truth | the lack of hair on the cheeks |
| 8 | storing kindness | the upper layer of the beard |
| 9 | to thousands | the short hairs between the upper and lower layers of the beard |
| 10 | bearing iniquity | the small hairs near the throat |
| 11 | and transgression | the fact that these small hairs are all of equal size |
| 12 | and [sin](sin.html) | the lack of hair in the [mouth](body.html) |
| 13 | and acquits | the lower layer of the beard |

# III. [Head](body.html) vs. Hair Covering

As you [know](daat.html), a wig or hat, is for women. A Kippa or Yarmulke is for men. It is a very important [mitzva](cmds613.html). It goes all the way back to the beginning of [time](time.html), as is explained in the Book of Bereshit (Genesis), the [First](one.html) Book of the Bible.

When [Adam](adam.html) and Eve sinned in the [Garden of Eden](eden.html), by [eating](eating.html) from the Tree of the [Knowledge](knowledge.html) of Good and Evil, they brought death, destruction and darkness into the [world](worlds.html). In their shame, they covered their heads, as [atonement](atonemen.html) for the lack of respect they showed to [HaShem](hashem.html). When they experienced their [first](one.html) night, they thought they were dying for their actions, and started to dig graves for themselves. This is when [HaShem](hashem.html) told them that they will not die, daytime and nighttime are a natural order of things.

Women – Hair Covering

In Talmudic times, women always covered their hair.[[29]](#footnote-29) Some aggadic sources interpret this custom as a [sign](signs.html) of a woman’s shame and feeling of guilt for Eve’s [sin](sin.html). Should a woman [walk](walking.html) bareheaded in the street, her husband could divorce her without repayment of her ketubah.[[30]](#footnote-30) By the sixteenth century, [praying](prayer.html) with the [head](body.html) uncovered was considered to be a heathen custom.

Girls did not have to cover their hair until the [wedding](wedding.html) ceremony.[[31]](#footnote-31) In some contemporary Sephardic [communities](community.html), however, it is the custom for unmarried girls to cover their heads.

Some Hakhamim compared the exposure of a married woman’s hair to the exposure of her private parts since they felt that a woman’s hair could be used for erotic excitement.[[32]](#footnote-32) They forbid the recital of any blessing in the presence of a bare headed woman. Pious women even took care to not uncover their hair in their house. This was particularly true of Kimhit, the mother of several [high priest](priests.html)s (Yoma 47A, Lev. R 20:11).

The general custom was to appear in public and in the presence of strange men with covered hair. it gradually became accepted to be the general traditional custom for all [Jewish](gen-jew.html) women to cover their hair.[[33]](#footnote-33)

Rabbinic literature [teaches](teacher.html) that it is sinful for a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) woman to be seen by any man other than her husband, or to listen to the recital of [prayers](prayer.html) without her [head](body.html) covered. The [Talmud](orallaw.html) also forbade a man to recite [prayers](prayer.html) in front of any woman who was not fully dressed and this included his wife’s [head](body.html) covering. The [Zohar](orallaw.html) called the covered hair of the [head](body.html) of the wife, “The chastity of the house.”

The hair of *Nukva* and of *Zeir Anpin* have the quality of judgment (*din*). Yet, *Nukva*, associated with the woman, is of a less severe quality and is only in need of being covered. This covering of the [female](male%2Bfemale.html)’s hair in normative [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [law](law.html), applies to married, divorced, or widowed women. In Kabbalistic practice these women’s hair are meant, within the bounds of practicality, to be covered entirely, and to be covered, ideally, nearly always with the exception of bathing.

Keeping this in mind throughout every [generation](toldot.html), we also cover our heads, to always remember Who hears us, Who sees us, and Who takes notes of all our thoughts and actions.

Men - [Head](body.html) Covering

The normal [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [head](body.html) covering is called: Yarmulke in Yiddish, Kipa in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), and Skullcap or Hat in English.

A man’s hair is of a different variety from a woman’s. His judgments (*din*) expressed on the hair of most of his [head](body.html), with exception of the sideburns (*peyot*), are considered in need of nearly complete elimination. This especially is the case if his soul is rooted in the distinctly aggressive dimension of the super-soul-root of Cain, the killer of his brother Abel. In the context of what has been said in regards to woman, the message is clear. A man, who is an embodiment of *Zeir* *Anpin,* [needs](needs.html) to remove his judgments, i.e. hairs of most of his [head](body.html), in order to rectify his nature. Men, it should also be noted also cover their hair.[[34]](#footnote-34)

***“***[***One***](one.html) ***should not*** [***walk***](walking.html) ***bare-headed (the distance of)*** [***four***](four.html) ***cubits.”***.[[35]](#footnote-35)

***“Nowadays there is a definite prohibition...(not only to*** [***walk***](walking.html) ***a short distance, but) even to sit (in the house) bare-headed”***.[[36]](#footnote-36)

***“Small children should (also) be brought up to cover their heads”***.[[37]](#footnote-37)

The basic [halacha](walking.html) of covering the [head](body.html) for men is that it is forbidden to [walk](walking.html) [four](four.html) cubits (about 8 [feet](heel.html) or 2.5 meters) with an uncovered [head](body.html). According to some authorities it is forbidden to go any distance at all without a [head](body.html) covering. It is even considered improper to sit in [one](one.html)’s home with an uncovered [head](body.html).

It is also forbidden to say a [prayer](prayer.html) with the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) or to [study](study.html) Torah without a [head](body.html) covering.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says, that the mother of Rabbi Nachman bar [Yitzchak](isaac.html) would not allow him to go with his [head](body.html) uncovered for she said, ***“Cover your*** [***head***](body.html) ***in order that you should have the*** [***fear***](fear.html) ***of*** [***heaven***](heaven.html) ***upon you.”*** Another basis given for this practice is to avoid the customs of the non-[Jews](gen-jew.html).

## Headcovering in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [Law](law.html)[[38]](#footnote-38)

There are [two](two.html) separate issues of covering the [head](body.html) in Judaism, [one](one.html) for men and [one](one.html) for women.

## Men

The basic [halacha](walking.html) of covering the [head](body.html) for men is that it is forbidden to [walk](walking.html) [four](four.html) cubits (about 8 [feet](heel.html)) with an uncovered [head](body.html). (According to some authorities it is forbidden to go any distance at all without a [head](body.html) covering. It is even considered improper to sit in [one](one.html)’s home with an uncovered [head](body.html).)

It is also forbidden to say a [prayer](prayer.html) with the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) or to [study](study.html) Torah without a [head](body.html) covering.

This practice is understood from the requirement that the [Priests](priests.html) wear a hat (mitre or bonnet) when they serve in the [Temple](temple.html):

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 28:3-4*** *And thou shalt* [*speak*](mashal.html) *unto all [that are] wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the* [*priest*](priests.html)*’s office. And these [are] the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the* [*priest*](priests.html)*’s office.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 29:4-10*** *And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the* [*tabernacle*](mikdash.html) *of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water. And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: And thou shalt put the mitre upon his* [*head*](body.html)*, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour [it] upon his* [*head*](body.html)*, and anoint him. And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them: and the* [*priest*](priests.html)*’s office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 39:27-30*** *And they made coats [of] fine linen [of] woven work for Aaron, and for his sons, And a mitre [of] fine linen, and goodly bonnets [of] fine linen, and linen breeches [of] fine twined linen, And a girdle [of] fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, [of] needlework; as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *commanded Moses. And they made the plate of the holy crown [of] pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, [like to] the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO* [*HASHEM*](hashem.html)*.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 8:13*** *And Moses brought Aaron’s sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *commanded Moses.*

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 15:30-32*** *And David went up by the ascent of [mount] Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his* [*head*](body.html) *covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that [was] with him covered every man his* [*head*](body.html)*, and they went up,* [*weeping*](mashal.html) *as they went up. And [*[*one*](one.html)*] told David, saying, Ahithophel [is] among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, I* [*pray*](prayer.html) *thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. And it came to pass, that [when] David was come to the top [of the mount], where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his* [*head*](body.html)*:*

***Zecharyia (Zechariah) 3:1-8*** *And he shewed me Joshua the* [*high priest*](priests.html)[*standing*](mashal.html) *before the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and Satan* [*standing*](mashal.html) *at his right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *to resist him. And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto Satan,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *rebuke thee, O Satan; even* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *that hath chosen* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *rebuke thee: [is] not this a brand plucked out of the* [*fire*](fire.html)*? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the* [*angel*](angels.html)*. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his* [*head*](body.html)*. So they set a fair mitre upon his* [*head*](body.html)*, and clothed him with garments. And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *stood by. And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *of hosts; If thou wilt* [*walk*](walking.html) *in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to* [*walk*](walking.html) *among these that stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the* [*high priest*](priests.html)*, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they [are] men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.*

Now, we have seen that the [priests](priests.html) ALWAYS wore a hat when they served and [prayed](prayer.html). With this in mind, consider that all of the Bne Israel are a kingdom of [priests](priests.html):

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:6*** *And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of* [*priests*](priests.html)*, and an holy* [*nation*](nations.html)*. These [are] the words which thou shalt* [*speak*](mashal.html) *unto the children of Israel.*

What is a “[prayer](prayer.html) closet”?



***Matityahu (Matthew) 6:6*** *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou ast shut thy door,* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to thy Father which is in* [*secret*](sod.html)*; and thy ather which seeth in* [*secret*](sod.html) *shall reward thee openly.*

The [prayer](prayer.html) shawl is called a talit. The word *talit* contains [two](two.html) [Hebrew](hebrew.html) words; *tal* meaning tent and *it* meaning little; thus, little tent. Each man had his own little tent. (Hakham Shaul was a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) Pharisee, but also a tentmaker. Many believe that he made talitot, not tents to live in.)

When a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) man puts on his talit ([prayer](prayer.html) shawl) for shacarit, the morning [prayers](prayer.html), he closes himself in and shuts out the [world](worlds.html). This effectively becomes his “[prayer](prayer.html) closet”

So, what exactly is Hakham Shaul talking about in this next passage? Is he changing the Torah? Is he telling us to do something that is not commanded in the Torah?

***I Corithinian 11:1-10*** *Be ye followers of me, even as I also [am] of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered [them] to you. But I would have you* [*know*](daat.html)*, that the* [*head*](body.html) *of every man is* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html)*; and the* [*head*](body.html) *of the woman [is] the man; and the* [*head*](body.html) *of* [*Mashiach*](mashiach.html) *[is] God. Every man* [*praying*](prayer.html) *or prophesying, having [his]* [*head*](body.html) *covered, dishonoureth his* [*head*](body.html)*. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with [her]* [*head*](body.html) *uncovered dishonoureth her* [*head*](body.html)*: for that is even all* [*one*](one.html) *as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover [his]* [*head*](body.html)*, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on [her]* [*head*](body.html) *because of the* [*angels*](angels.html)*.*

***1 Corinthians 11:4*** *Every man* [*praying*](prayer.html) *or prophesying, having [his]* [*head*](body.html)***covered****, dishonoureth his* [*head*](body.html)*.*

2596 kata, kat-ah’; a prim. particle; (prep.) down (in place or [time](time.html)), in varied relations (according to the case [gen., dat. or acc.] with which it is joined):-about, according as (to), after, against, (when they were) X alone, among, and, X apart, (even, like) as (concerning, pertaining to, touching), X aside, at, before, beyond, by, to the charge of, [charita-] bly, concerning, + covered, [dai-] ly, down, every, (+ far more) exceeding, X more excellent, for, from ...to, godly, in (- asmuch, divers, every, -to, respect of),...by, after the manner of, + by any means, beyond (out of) measure, X mightily, more, X natural, of (up- ) on (X part), out (of every), over against, (+ your) X own, + particularly, so, through (-oughout, -oughout every), thus, (un-) to (- gether, -ward), X uttermost, where (-by), with. In composition it retains many of these applications, and frequently denotes opposition, distribution or intensity.

## The Source

The source for not [walking](walking.html) [four](four.html) cubits with the [head](body.html) uncovered is the statement in the [Talmud](orallaw.html) that the mother of Rabbi Nachman bar [Yitzchak](isaac.html) would not allow him to go with his [head](body.html) uncovered for she said, “Cover your [head](body.html) in order that you should have the [fear](fear.html) of [heaven](heaven.html) upon you.” There is another statement that Rav Huna brei d’Rabbi Yehoshua would not go [four](four.html) cubits with his [head](body.html) uncovered.

## Women

Women who are or have been married (widows and divorcees) are required to cover their hair. A woman who has never been married does not have to.

## The Sotah

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) in Ketuvot 72a states that the source for this prohibition is from BaMidbar 5:18, which deals with the [laws](law.html) of a sotah, a suspected adulteress, and states, “The [priest](priests.html) shall stand the woman before God and uncover her hair...”. Rashi[[39]](#footnote-39) provides [two](two.html) explanations for the [Talmud](orallaw.html)’s conclusion, [one](one.html), that from the fact that she is punished midah kneged midah (measure for measure) for exposing her hair to her paramour we see that this is prohibited and, [two](two.html), from the fact that we expose her hair we see that under normal conditions a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) woman’s hair should be covered.

The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for hair is se’ar, שער [Sin](sin.html)-Ayin-Raish, which has the same [letters](letters.html) as gate, sha’ar, spelled Shin-Ayin-Raish, because hair is like a gateway to the siechel, the part of the human mind through which [*daat*](daat.html) works. It is also the root of se’ir, שעיר [Sin](sin.html)-Ayin-Yud-Raish, the goat through which [atonement](atonemen.html) on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) was also achieved. The word barley, se’orah, which was the [offering](korbanot) the Sotah brought for [atonement](atonemen.html), is a similar word.

According to Kabbalah, these [letters](letters.html) are associated with din, judgment. Maybe the issue is a message to the entire [nation](nations.html) in a more general sense, for we [know](daat.html) that at the [End of Days](lastdays.html), it will be a [time](time.html) of judgment and therefore a [time](time.html) to use judgment. Life is a process of birrur, separation, and all the crisis [Jews](gen-jew.html) undergo are to force us to decide where we stand with the issues of Torah.

# IV. [Tzitzith](tzitzith.html)

Hair and [Tzitzith](tzitzith.html) seem to be related:

6734 tsiytsith, tsee-tseeth’; fem. of 6731; a floral or wing-like projection, i.e. a fore-lock of hair, a tassel:-fringe, lock. ^ Tsiyqelag. See 6860.

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 15:38-40***[*Speak*](mashal.html) *unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them* [*fringes*](tzitzith.html) *in the borders of their garments throughout their* [*generations*](toldot.html)*, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the* [*commandments*](cmds613.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own* [*heart*](body.html) *and your own* [*eyes*](body.html)*, after which ye use to go a whoring: That ye may remember, and do all my* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*, and be holy unto your God.*

***Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 8:3*** *And he put forth the form of an* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and took me by a lock of mine* [*head*](body.html)*; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*,* and *brought me in the visions of God to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where [was] the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.*

# V. Cutting hair

***Ta’anith 17a*** *BOTH THE MEN OF THE MISHMAR AND THE MEN OF THE MA’AMAD MAY NOT CUT THEIR HAIR NOR WASH THEIR CLOTHES, BUT ON A THURSDAY THEY MAY OUT OF RESPECT FOR THE* [*SABBATH*](sabbath.html)*. What is the reason? — Rabbah b. Bar Hana said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Johanan: In order that they should not enter on their week of duty in an unkempt state.*

*Our Rabbis have* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: A king cuts his hair every day, a* [*high priest*](priests.html) *on the eve of every* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*, all ordinary* [*priest*](priests.html) *once in* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *days. Why has a king to cut his hair every day? — R. Abba b. Zabda said: Scripture says, Thine* [*eyes*](body.html) *shall see the king in his beauty.[[40]](#footnote-40) Why has a* [*high priest*](priests.html) *[to cut his hair] on the eve of every* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*? — R. Samuel b.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: Because the Mishmar changes every week. Whence can it be adduced that an ordinary* [*priest*](priests.html) *[must cut his hair] once in* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *days? — It is to be adduced from the analogous use of the word pera’ in* [*connection*](connection.html) *with the Nazirite [and the* [*priests*](priests.html)*]. Of the* [*priests*](priests.html) *[it is written], Neither shall they shave their heads, ‘nor suffer their locks [pera’] to grow long;[[41]](#footnote-41) and of the Nazirite it is written, He shall be holy. he shall let the locks of the hair of his* [*head*](body.html) *grow long [pera’];[[42]](#footnote-42) as in the case of the Nazirite the period of growing his hair is* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *days so too must it be in the case of the ordinary* [*priest*](priests.html)*.*

***Ta’anith 17b*** *An objection was raised against this: The following [*[*priests*](priests.html)*] incur the penalty of death,those who are intoxicated with wine and those whose hair has grown long. With regard to those who are intoxicated with wine, it is expressly stated, Drink no wine nor strong drink,[[43]](#footnote-43) but whence do we adduce that this also applies to those who grow their hair long? For it is written, Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long,[[44]](#footnote-44) and the next verse states, Neither shall any* [*priest*](priests.html) *drink wine when they enter into the inner court; thus, those who grow their hair long are likened to those who are drunk with wine, just as those who are drunk with wine incur the penalty of death so too those who grow their locks long. Now can we not carry the comparison even further [and say] that just as those who are drunk with wine profane the service, so too should those who grow their hair long profane the service? — (No; [the* [*two*](two.html)*] are likened only with regard to the penalty of death but not with regard to the rendering of the service profane).*

***Ta’anith 26b*** *WITH THE BEGINNING OF AB REJOICINGS ARE CURTAILED. DURING THE WEEK IN WHICH THE* [*NINTH*](nine.html) *OF AB FALLS IT IS FORBIDDEN TO CUT THE HAIR AND TO WASH CLOTHES BUT ON THE THURSDAY IT IS PERMISSIBLE IN HONOUR OF THE* [*SABBATH*](sabbath.html)*.*

***Mo’ed Katan 8b*** *AND A RON WITH THE DEAD [*[*BODY*](body.html)*] CLOSE BY IN THE COURT [YARD]. We learn here what our Rabbis* [*taught*](teacher.html) *[elsewhere]: ‘They [may] do all that the dead requires, they cut his hair and wash a garment for him and make him a box of boards that had been sawn on the day before the* [*Festival*](festival.html)*. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says, they [may] even bring trees and he saws them [into] boards in his house, behind closed doors’.*

The Shuchan Aruch says:

[*One*](one.html) *who takes a haircut must also wash his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *once, even if only part of his hair was cut. This applies even when someone else cut his hair. The* [*one*](one.html) *who gave the haircut must also wash his* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*, for he touched the other person’s hair.*

✡✡✡

The Levites are “taken” (8:6), i.e. persuaded that they’re fortunate to specially serve [HaShem](hashem.html), despite the difficulty and loss of worldly grandeur entailed (Rashi)-- this implies that they had and may have natural grave doubts about their role; per *Ohr Hachayim*, they’re “taken” away from ordinary society-- per Abarbanel, to form a separate [camp](stages.html). ALL Levites are sprinkled with water of purification, in case ANY are unclean by intimate contact with the dead (Rashi; why this matters is unclear; per Abarbanel, it’s symbolic of their [new](new.html) higher state (cf. the [priests](priests.html)’ consecration [sin](sin.html) offerings, Lev. 9:2, and requiring conversion of all Ethiopians); [first](one.html) their [bodies](body.html) (except concealed parts-- e.g. armpits and genitals) are shaved, as in purifying a *m’tzora*, even if he is a *nazir*-- they forego casual pleasures, superfluous as hair, in their [new](new.html) role (Abarbanel). Hair’s the symbolic barrier between them and Israel, to be removed (Hirsch)!

✡✡✡

[Daat](daat.html) means [marriage](mashal.html). [Daat](daat.html) means procreation. [Daat](daat.html) comes to a boy when he reaches the age of [thirteen](thirteen.html) because that is the age when we get pubic hair. [Daat](daat.html) REQUIRES pubic hair.

Hair grows at the root of [organs](body.html) that affect the [world](worlds.html).

✡✡✡

Cutting the hair of a [three](three.html) year old [male](male%2Bfemale.html), for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html), on [Lag B’Omer](omer.html): The source of the custom is the [Zohar](orallaw.html), which bases it on the combination ofa couple of verses. In prohibiting the chopping down of fruit trees forwood (which actually refers to unwarranted waste in general) the Torahwrites “For man is a tree of the [field](field.html).” Step [two](two.html): the Torah prohibits[eating](eating.html) of the fruit of a tree for the [first](one.html) [three](three.html) years. Based upon the[connection](connection.html) implied by the [first](one.html) verse, there exist mystical reasons not tocut a child’s hair for [three](three.html) years. I don’t [know](daat.html) why it would apply to boysand not girls, but that is the practice.

Tied to the notion of upsherin (from the same root as the English “toshear”) is the idea that this is the beginning of the child’s education. Heis taken to learn aleph-bet on that day. This again implies aboys-learn-Torah association, suggesting a reason why girls don’t have anupsherin, but the verses don’t imply anything about this second custom.

Also, with the [first](one.html) haircut comes the [first](one.html) opportunity to keep the[mitzva](cmds613.html) of not cutting peiyot (side-burns). [Tzitzith](tzitzith.html) are worn for the [first](one.html)[time](time.html) as well.Hirsch notes that the fruit of the [first](one.html) [three](three.html) years is called ‘Orlah’,just as the skin removed during [circumcision](circumcz.html), as well as theprophetic/poetic image of the orlat haleiv, the callus of insensitivitythat [one](one.html) must remove from [one](one.html)’s [heart](body.html). Here, we talk about “orlat harosh”,symbolically removing the impediment to understanding. Rav Hirsch tiesthis in to the notion of peiyot, which provide a visible line, remindingyou of the separation between the animal and human parts of our psyche.

This cutting of hair is the [third](three.html) in a series of “cuts” which symbolize the movement of the child away from his mother’s [womb](thebirth.html) and into the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [community](community.html), a “[coming](coming.html) out” of sorts. The [first](one.html) is the cutting of the umbilical cord at [birth](birth.html); the second is the [circumcision](circumcz.html), a marking in the private realm; and the [third](three.html) is the hair, which is in the public realm.

✡✡✡

“[Korach](qorach.html)” means to be bald.

✡✡✡

[Mitzva](cmds613.html) [number](nchart.html) 149 according to the Sefer HaChinuch prohibits the [Kohanim](priests.html) from entering the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) wearing long hair.

✡✡✡

**Division Of** [**Adam**](adam.html)**’s Soul**

(The soul of) [Adam](adam.html) *HaRishon* divides into 248 “limbs” just as a [body](body.html) does. There is another [type](types.html) (of source of soul) as well, and that is the countless “hairs” that hang on him.

That is, his soul. We are referring to the [spiritual](physical.html) counterpart of hair.

All the sparks of the individual souls in this [world](worlds.html) are from these levels from [Adam](adam.html) *HaRishon*. All of the specific souls and levels of souls that will later go into [bodies](body.html) born from [Adam](adam.html) *HaRishon* are called “Soul-Roots,” and are drawn from these levels of [Adam](adam.html) *HaRishon*.

To [know](daat.html) the root of a soul of a particular person you will need to recognize into whom the specific sparks of the limbs and hairs of [Adam](adam.html) *HaRishon* divided. These are the Soul-Roots that came from him, and it is the same with each limb, as *Chazal* understood the verse, “*Where were you when I founded the earth?*” (*Iyov* 38:4).

✡✡✡

The [Jews](gen-jew.html) are called Israel because the [letters](letters.html) can be switched around to form the words, Li Rosh (“to me as a [head](body.html)”). The [head](body.html) has [three](three.html) parts: the [brain](brain.html), the skull and the hair. The [brain](brain.html) is the source of reason, and the skull represents will. Hair represents the Chochma which is revealed to us (the Torah) – just as hair receives a minute amount of Chayot from the [brain](brain.html). Thus, the revelation of the “hair” is in [Gan Eden](eden.html) (since Torah is [studied](study.html) there) and the revelation of the [brain](brain.html) (hidden Chochma) and of the skull (will, [Mitzvot](cmds613.html)), will be revealed when [Mashiach](mashiach.html) comes.

✡✡✡

The Sefer [book] “Taamei Ha-Minhagim” mentions that it was a “[known](daat.html) custom” to [travel](mashal.html) to Meron on the anniversary of the death of Rashbi [Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, a beloved leader who died on [Lag b’Omer](omer.html)almost 2300 years ago]. People would bring their little children for their haircuts and they would celebrate. The haircut was called a *chalaka*. The etymology of the word is as where [Yaakov](israelja.html) is called *ish chalak*, smooth [man]. The implication is that they would shave off more hair than we do today.

Several sources point out the juxtaposition in Sefer Vayikra [the book of Leviticus], Perek [chapter] 15 of the [mitzva](cmds613.html) [[commandment](cmds613.html)] of orlah[leaving the produce of trees for [three](three.html) years] and peyot[leaving the corners of fields unharvested for the poor]. Just as the tree is off limits for [three](three.html) years until it is considered mature, so too do we wait for a child to mature [three](three.html) years before making peyot[in this case, the “corners” of a child’s hair, earlocks, which are left slightly longer].

This idea is developed in conjunction with the pasuk[verse] in Devarim [Deuteronomy] (20:20, which compares man to the tree of the [field](field.html)).

The significance of the [number](nchart.html) [three](three.html) can be connected on several fronts. There is the [Midrash](orallaw.html) of how [Avraham](avraham.html) discovered [HaShem](hashem.html) at the age of [three](three.html). The [number](nchart.html) [three](three.html) establishes a *chazakah* [strengthening; doing the same thing [three](three.html) times is considered to give it almost the status of an oath]. In fact, [Lag b’Omer](omer.html)is [thirty](thirty.html)-[three](three.html).

Returning to a concept we mentioned earlier, man is compared - on many levels - to a tree. In fact, if we go back to the [six](six.html) days of [creation](bara.html), we see that trees were created on the 3rd day.

✡✡✡

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) adds a curious detail to God’s [creation](bara.html) of the [first](one.html) woman. The Sages explained that ‘God building the rib’ meant that He braided Eve’s hair before bringing her to [Adam](adam.html).

***Berachoth 61a*** *R.Simeon b. Menasia expounded: What is meant by the words, ‘And the Lord built the rib’? It* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, plaited Eve’s hair and brought her to* [*Adam*](adam.html)*; for in the seacoast towns ‘plaiting’ [keli’atha] is called, ‘building’ [binyatha].*

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) brought a linguistic proof, since the word for ‘braid’ in [one](one.html) language is ‘binita’, similar to the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word ‘binyan’ (‘building’).

This idea that braiding hair is a form of building is not just a quaint notion; it has legal ramifications. The [Talmud](orallaw.html) states that it is forbidden to braid hair on [Shabbat](sabbath.html), since braiding constitutes building.[[45]](#footnote-45)

✡✡✡

Hair represents inessential outgrowths of the personality which can lead to [sin](sin.html). Until such outgrowths have been removed by shaving, i.e. removed totally, the *metzora* had not yet been fully re-instated in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) society. After that, he has to occupy himself with Torah, symbolized by his immersion in water.

The subsequent return to “the [camp](stages.html)” is also a [remez](remez.html) (a hint) to the “higher” [world](worlds.html) to which the soul has now been restored. His return to this stage is still only tangential, peripheral; he does not yet occupy his rightful place within it. After a further, more lengthy period of [time](time.html) has elapsed (characterized in the Torah by the [number](nchart.html) [seven](seven.html)), he can rid himself of all his hair on all parts of his [body](body.html). This means that he divests himself of all that is extraneous, non-essential, and therefore apt to lead him astray. At that point no hint of his affliction remains, and the rehabilitation process has been successfully completed.

[Midrash](orallaw.html) of Rabbi Moshe Alshich on the Torah*, as translated and annotated by Eliyahu Munk.*

✡✡✡

Mystical Significance of Hair

by Rabbi [Yitzchak](isaac.html) Luria

From *Taamei Hamitzvot*, *parashat* Kedoshim, in the Writings of the Ari. Translation and commentary by Zachariah Goldman

Do not cut off the hair on the sides of your [head](body.html). Do not shave off the edges of your beard. (Lev. 19:27)

From the  Arizal:

When performing a [mitzva](cmds613.html), a person should do so to fulfill the will of his Creator, Who commanded him. For example, when a man’s hair is cut, he should bring to mind that he will not allow the hair of the sides of his [head](body.html) to be shaved, nor the hair of his beard.

The mystical explanation is the following: There are the [three](three.html) types of hair of the [head](body.html) - those associated with *Arich* *Anpin*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Nukva*. However, the hairs of *Arich* *Anpin* are of a quality of complete mercy and are all channels of [lights](lights.html) that allow the [lights](lights.html) to descend below; it is not appropriate to cut them. Therefore, the nazirite whose hair signifies *Atik* [associated with *Arich* *Anpin*] does not cut his hair at all, as has been explained regarding the [commandment](cmds613.html) of the nazirite. However, in *Zeir Anpin* it is fitting to cut of the hair of [one](one.html)’s [head](body.html), particularly someone whose soul is rooted in the root soul of Cain.

**“ The beard hairs are channels of divine** [**spiritual**](physical.html) **abundance... “**

It is proper for a man to intend, when getting his hair cut, that he is a reflection of *Zeir Anpin*, and that he is removing all the judgments from himself by means of the *razor* [in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), “*t’ar*”], which has the numerical value of the divine [name](name.html) *Ado-nai*. This numerical equivalency is achieved when each [letter](letters.html) of this divine [name](name.html) *Ado-nai* is spelled out in full, and the total numerical value of each [letter](letters.html) is added up. *Ado-nai* transforms the judgment; therefore, it has the numerical value of “razor” [“*t’ar*”] to remove the judgments...

“*T’ar*” is spelled: *tav* (400), *ayin* (70), *reish* (200), with a total numerical value of 670 plus 1 for the entirety of the word, equaling 671.

“*Ado-nai*” spelled-out is : ***alef*** (1), *lamed* (30), *pei* (80), ***dalet*** (4), *lamed* (30), *tav* (400), ***nun*** (50), *vav* (6), *nun* (50),***yud*** (10) *vav* (6), *dalet* (4), with a total numerical value of 671

However, you already [know](daat.html) that the [head](body.html) [of a person] incorporates allusions to the [ten](ten.html) sefirot*,* and that its allusion to malchut constitutes the [secret](sod.html) of the Sides of the [Head](body.html). Thus, “side” [in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), “*peah*”] has the numerical value of the divine [name](name.html) *Elohim*, and “*peah*” is always in *malchut*.

“*Peah*” is spelled *pei* (80), *alef* (1), *hei* (5), with a numerical value of 86.

“*Elo-him*”is spelled *alef* (1), *lamed* (30), *hei* (5), *yud* (10), *mem* (40), also with a numerical value of 86.

However, there is no sustained existence to the [world](worlds.html) except through the judgments, and it is not fitting to remove them completely. To that end, we need to retain only the dimension of *malchut* [i.e. *peah*], but this applies only to the [head](body.html) of *Zeir Anpin* [man]. However, *Nukva* [woman] does not shave her [head](body.html). The reason is that since she corresponds to *Nukva*, and since all the judgments are in *Asiya* [related to *Nukva*], were she to remove the judgments from the [head](body.html) of *Nukva*, there would not remain any judgments in the [world](worlds.html). Accordingly, a woman [needs](needs.html) to keep her hair and does not shave her [head](body.html).

My master was extremely careful not to get a haircut after midday, that is after the [time](time.html) arrives for [praying](prayer.html) the Large *Mincha*. Even on the eve of the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) [Friday afternoon], he was cautious.

It is fitting that a man not uproot any hair from his beard at all, for the beard hairs are channels of divine [spiritual](physical.html) abundance. He should intend that the top of the beard is the [*First*](one.html) *Tikun*.

The divine [name](name.html) “*E-l*”, in the [secret](sod.html) of the  [Thirteen](thirteen.html) Attributes of Mercy, and the hair of the beard on the left and right is twice the numeric value of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for “beard” [“*zakan*”], which is also the numerical value of the divine [name](name.html) “*Sha-dai*”.

“*Zakan*” is spelled *zayin* (7), *kuf* (100), *nun* (50), and when doubled has a numerical value of 314.

“*Sha-dai*” is spelled *shin* (300), *dalet* (4), *yud* (10), also with a total numerical value of 314.

Together the beard as a whole is “*E-l Sha-dai*”. For this reason a man should be mindful at all times not to grasp his beard so that he does not uproot any hair from it.

Section I: Practices

Before we explore the [spiritual](physical.html) [insights](insights.html) of the  Arizal’s [teaching](teacher.html), we need [first](one.html) to understand what, in practice, our options are. We will start [first](one.html) with an examination of normative  [Halacha](walking.html) ([Jewish](gen-jew.html) [Law](law.html)) and then discuss Kabbalistic and Chassidic practices rooted largely in the teachings of the Arizal.

According to [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [Law](law.html), women are permitted to shave their own facial hair,[[46]](#footnote-46) and to shave the sides of their [head](body.html).[[47]](#footnote-47) Women are not allowed to shave (with a razor) any [Jewish](gen-jew.html) man’s beard or *peyot*, i.e. side locks.[[48]](#footnote-48) According to some authorities, men are permitted to trim or completely shave their beard with either a scissors or an electric shaver that employs a scissor-like cutting mechanism.[[49]](#footnote-49) These lenient authorities maintain that the  Torah’s prohibition applies only to using a razor in the prohibited zones on the man’s beard and [head](body.html).[[50]](#footnote-50)

A man may allow his hair to grow in a moderate way, as long as: there is no impediment due to hair thickness to his putting on the [head](body.html) [Tefillin](tefillin.html), he does not wear long hair to emulate women, and his hairstyle does not follow uniquely [gentile](gen-jew.html) fashions. When a man or a woman gets a haircut, or a man trims or shaves his beard, each should have this done by a person of the same [sex](marriageact.html)..

Kabbalistic and Chasidic practice don’t avail themselves of these lenient halachic opinions,[[51]](#footnote-51) and so Kabbalistic principles differs in the following ways:

1. A man does not shave, nor permit others to shave, his beard at all, with the exception of the mustache that overlaps the top lip, and this is only to be trimmed to above the lip with a scissors.[[52]](#footnote-52)

2. According to some, a man does not allow his *peyot*, i.e. the hair of his temples and upper sideburns between [forehead](body.html) to back of [ears](body.html) (i.e. sides of the [head](body.html)) to be trimmed[[53]](#footnote-53) except when the *peyot* extend past the length of the beard and then are trimmed with a scissors.[[54]](#footnote-54)

3. A man should keep the hair of his [head](body.html) short (Ibid.), with the exception of course of the *peyot* and beard.

Section II: [Spiritual](physical.html) [Insights](insights.html)

The path of Kabbala is a profound, yet subtle [spiritual](physical.html) path, nestled within the [heart](body.html) of Torah. The [mitzvot](cmds613.html) explored here will distinguish clearly between a person, whose commitment to Torah is limited to the keeping of the [letter](letters.html) of the Divine [Law](law.html), and a person whose commitment soars to the level of passionate harmony with the spirit of the Divine [Law](law.html).

Any part of the natural order can be perceived in a variety if ways. Hair, the subject of our exploration here, is no exception. For a scientist, hair is seen and understood in terms of its function in the human [body](body.html); for a swimmer, in terms of its implications on the speed of the race; and for an advertising executive, as an instrument to attract customers. All these perspectives are understandable, yet far removed from how a Torah practitioner and Kabbalist relates to hair.

The Kabbalist, analogous to the scientist, is interested in understanding hair’s [spiritual](physical.html) dimension and function. Analogous to the swimmer, he is interested in how hair allows him to maneuver through the [spiritual](physical.html) realm. Given the nature of hair, in what way does it obstruct the [spiritual](physical.html) [journey](stages.html); in what way can it expedite it? The Kabbalist, like the advertising executive, is interested in attracting divine [spiritual](physical.html) abundance and seeks to promote practices that facilitate that aim. These parallels reflect the statement of King Solomon, “[One](one.html) opposite the other did [HaShem](hashem.html) make.” (Ecclesiastes 7:14) The wise will understand.

Many people today [experience](experience.html) and relate to their hair as an important expression of their self and something that is integral to their self-esteem. Thus for moderns, it should be reiterated that the Torah gracefully allows them to keep their hairstyles. This is the case provided the hairstyles conform with basic Torah norms of modesty and with the [laws](law.html) relating to shaving and haircuts that we have seen above and will explain later. There is an element of the Torah, the [Tree of Life](eternal.html), that makes space for a spectrum of people who are all in different places along the [spiritual](physical.html) path. The disciple of Kabbala, representing the epitome of [spiritual](physical.html) aspiration in Torah, seeks from the depths of Torah a way of relating to hair that brings greater [spiritual](physical.html) purpose, understanding and maturation.

What is [first](one.html) made clear in the Arizal’s [teaching](teacher.html) is that all hair, whether that of a man or a woman, has besides any [physical](physical.html) qualities and psychological significance a distinct [spiritual](physical.html) quality. This quality for a man and a woman are different in degree but not in kind. However, whether for men or for women, this quality can actually be different in kind, as we see with the attainment of the nazerite. The nazerite’s hair is transformed from the quality of *din* (judgment) to that of *rachamim* (mercy) by their ascetic and [spiritual](physical.html) practices. This transformation of the hair from *din* (judgment) to *rachamim* (kindness) explains the [commandment](cmds613.html) (Num. 6:5) upon the nazerite to grow his hair long and thus to manifest the supernal *rachamim* latent within the divine persona (*partzuf*) of *Atik* *Yomin* that he has come to, in miniature, be expressed through their hair.

Initially, students of Kabbala need to develop this sensitivity to hair’s [spiritual](physical.html) quality and then they can start developing their appreciation for the Arizal’s understanding and mappings of these various gradations of hair and the directives that follow from them.

[First](one.html), it should be said that Kabbala has a complex yet ultimately simple understanding of [HaShem](hashem.html). Accordingly, it calls upon us to emulate, and, so to [speak](mashal.html), embody, a greater range of divine personas, or in proper Kabbalistic terminology, *partzufim*. In other words, in normative Torah[[55]](#footnote-55) we are bidden to emulate [HaShem](hashem.html) in terms of specific character traits, all having their specific parallels in the *sefirot* (*Tomer* *Devorah*). So too here, we are called to touch a more subtle dimension of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s *manifestation* of Himself in [creation](bara.html) and our psyche.

The Arizal, in the [teaching](teacher.html) above, refers to [three](three.html) *partzufim*: *Nukva*, *Zeir Anpin* and *Arich* *Anpin*. Here, we will deal with the [first](one.html) [two](two.html), given that the nazerite’s vow is not desirable for most contemporary [Jews](gen-jew.html).[[56]](#footnote-56)

“*Nukva*” is Aramaic for “[female](male%2Bfemale.html)”, and is also [known](daat.html) as the *Shechina* (indwelling Divine Presence). It is a feminine/receptive dimension of the Creator’s *sefirotic* personality, so to [speak](mashal.html). *Nukva* corresponds to the *sefira* of *malchut*. How does the Kabbala reconcile the concepts of femininity and kingship equally associated with *Nukva*? Quite simply, Kabbala sees monarchy as depending on a kingdom, something that can only be given to the King, in a desired fashion, through the willing reception on the part of a people of the kingdom. Thus, it is said about *Nukva*/*malchut*, “There is no King without a [nation](nations.html)” (*Kad* *HaKemach*, [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h  Ayin, *alef*). *Nukva* is also as referred to as “*bat*” (“daughter”) or “*Knesset* *Yisrael*” (“the [Community](community.html) of Israel”) and represents the collective soul of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. Although *Nukva* is receptive / feminine to the Godly dimensions above, it is active / masculine in relation to those below it.

“*Zeir* *Anpin*” is Aramaic for “Small [Face](body.html)” and represents the small [face](body.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html). *Zeir* *Anpin* is how [HaShem](hashem.html) appeared to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people in the image of a young warrior with black hair.(See *Shaar* *Hakavanot*, *Inyan Chag* *Hashavuot*, for quotation of famous  [Midrash](orallaw.html).) This prophetic glimpse of divine imagery was perceived at the crossing of the [Red Sea](stages.html) when the Egyptians were drowned. It is possible that this dimension of [HaShem](hashem.html) is seen as the small [face](body.html) because it does not reflect the wholeness of the divine intention in relation to [Creation](bara.html). Rather, it is but a small dimension of the Creator’s *sefirotic* projection. *Zeir* *Anpin* is also [known](daat.html) as *“*Holy [One](one.html), blessed be He” and is a masculine/active dimension of the Creator’s *sefirotic* persona. *Zeir* *Anpin* is [known](daat.html) as “*ben*” (“son”) and is associated with the [six](six.html) *sefirot* of *chesed*, *gevura*, *tiferet*, *netzach*, *hod* and *yesod*.

Before we explain the nature of the hair of *Zeir* *Anpin* and *Nukva,* it is necessary to [first](one.html) explain the concept of hair as it pertains to the *partzufim*. [First](one.html), though, it [needs](needs.html) to be said that each *partzuf* is composed of [ten](ten.html) sefirot, which have both *Mochin* (consciousness) and *middot* (attributes). In [name](name.html), the *Mochin* are: *keter*, *chochma*, *bina* and the *middot* are: *chesed*, *gevura*, *tiferet*, *netzach*, *hod* and *yesod*. *Malchut*, as we have said, is receptive. These *sefirot* are depicted by analogy to a human like form. Thus hair is also part of the human being and is viewed as reflective of the divine hair. [One](one.html) could look at our hair as being a poor analogy of the “real” divine hair. The hair of the *partzufim* is said to originate in the excess of the *Mochin*’s processing and receptivity of the divine light from the *Ein* *Sof*.[[57]](#footnote-57)

The hair of *Nukva* and of *Zeir Anpin* have the quality of judgment (*din*). Yet, *Nukva*, associated with the woman, is of a less severe quality and is only in need of being covered. This covering of the [female](male%2Bfemale.html)’s hair in normative [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [law](law.html), applies to married, divorced, or widowed women. In Kabbalistic practice these women’s hair are meant, within the bounds of practicality, to be covered entirely, and to be covered, ideally, nearly always with the exception of bathing.

[Note: See [*Zohar*](orallaw.html), *parashat* *Naso* 125b -126b, regarding [spiritual](physical.html) importance and ramifications of women not covering their hair both at home and outside. See *Magen* [*Avraham*](avraham.html), *Orach* *Chaim* 75:2 regarding extent that hair should be covered according to [*Zohar*](orallaw.html); also see *Chatam* *Sofer*, *Orach* *Chaim* 36; also *Igrot* *Moshe*, *Even* *HaEzer*, vol. I, 58 for strict and lenient Halachic views. See *Shulchan* *Aruch* *Even* *HaEzer* 21:2 and *Bayit* *Chadash* on *Tur* *ad* *loc*. for requirement of hair coverings for women who are: married, divorced, widowed or single if not virgins. For this last inclusion, see [*Mishna*](orallaw.html) *Berura*, *Orach* *Chaim* 75:11, *Helkat* *Mechokek*, [Letter](letters.html) 2 and *Shevut* [*Yaakov*](israelja.html) vol. I, 103. There is room for leniency here from for widows, divorcees, and presumably single women. See *Igrot* *Moshe* *Even* *HaEzer,* vol. I, 57 and more so *Igrot* *Moshe* *Even* *HaEzer,* sect*.* 32 par. 4. In practice, [one](one.html) is advised to ask [one](one.html)’s local Rav. There are stricter opinions see *Yabiah* [*Omer*](omer.html) 4:3.]

A man’s hair, though, is of a different variety. His judgments (*din*) expressed on the hair of most of his [head](body.html), with exception of the sideburns (*peyot*), are considered in need of nearly complete elimination. This especially is the case if his soul is rooted in the distinctly aggressive dimension of the super-soul-root of Cain, the killer of his brother Abel. In the context of what has been said in regards to woman, the message is clear. A man, who is an embodiment of *Zeir* *Anpin,* [needs](needs.html) to remove his judgments, i.e. hairs of most of his [head](body.html), in order to rectify his nature. Men, it should also be noted also cover their hair (*Shulchan* *Aruch* *Orach* *Chaim* 2:6 and see [*Shabbat*](sabbath.html) 156b) and contrary to much popular lay opinion, this [head](body.html) covering is ideally supposed to cover the majority of his skull (*Igrot* *Moshe* *Orach* *Chaim* 1:1). Nor should a man [walk](walking.html) [four](four.html) *ammot* (approximately [six](six.html) [feet](heel.html)) without a [head](body.html) covering, or make a blessing without a [head](body.html) covering (Ibid.). In particular, Kabbalists wear especially large [head](body.html) coverings, almost equaling those of women’s requirement.

Not so the hair of the man’s beard. Here we are instructed that a man’s beard represents channels for divine abundance and reflect supernal G-dly qualities of kindness and trust, which men are called to embody. With regards to the man’s beard, he is encouraged to let it grow unhindered. Here there is also the need for sensitization that beard hair is not something to pull, when debating a Talmudic argument, or to comb, for the cultivation of even a [spiritual](physical.html) neatly kept image. Rather, a man is called to a radical [experience](experience.html) of what Job stated, “From my flesh I will see [HaShem](hashem.html).” (Job 19:26) We can explain this verse as referring to the [experience](experience.html) of the [spiritual](physical.html) and G-dly potential in the human [body](body.html).

When the Arizal [teaches](teacher.html) that the hair of the [head](body.html) is of the quality of judgment, perhaps this is also tacit recognition, in [one](one.html) respect, of the intimate association of hair with ego. For anyone living in the Western [world](worlds.html) such a [connection](connection.html) between hair and ego is beyond need of demonstration. Likewise, is the understanding nothing more than ego limits a person. The hair of the [head](body.html), located as it is on the top of the human [body](body.html), can be perceived as the *keter* (literally “crown”) of negative human ego. Interestingly, a woman, who expresses the divine persona of *Nukva,* is required to cover her hair on the [head](body.html) but is not to eliminate it. In actuality, the opposite is true. She is discouraged from making herself hairless, given the need for her embodiment of a tamed force of judgment in this [world](worlds.html). Women are rooted in the left side of the [Tree of Life](eternal.html) and correspond to the *gevura*. Her *gevura* [needs](needs.html) to be contained but not eliminated. Men are rooted in the Right side of the [Tree of Life](eternal.html), and find their source in the *chasadim;* therefore, their *gevurot*/*dinim*, i.e. the hair of their heads, [needs](needs.html) to be eliminated largely but not completely.

How is it that our hair has come to embody the quality of judgment? And is this the way of responding to this reality? Kabbala explains that anything with a dominant quality of judgment*,* like hair, is inherently vulnerable to exposure and damage from the “Other Side” i.e. Evil. That there is evil in the [world](worlds.html) and that the [world](worlds.html) is in such a [spiritually](physical.html) collapsed state of existence is a result of the fall of [Adam](adam.html) and Eve. (*Derech* [*Hashem*](hashem.html) 1:3:8) Needless to say, before their fall [Adam](adam.html) and Eve did not cover their hair, as they were both naked (Gen. 2:25), free of sexual lust and ego.[[58]](#footnote-58)

We, as fallen human beings seeking [redemption](redemption.html), need to respect the situation that we, as part of archetypal [Adam](adam.html) and Eve, have collectively created. We need to work with this reality towards *Tikun*. Abrogating the covering of [one](one.html)’s hair, for a man or a woman, in the present [time](time.html), in the [name](name.html) of feminism or some preemptive neo-messianic spirit, when evil has yet to be eradicated, feeds the “Other Side” with exactly what it [desires](needs.html): the power of judgments. The [Zohar](orallaw.html) states quite clearly that when we *expose* the judgments below, we cause a descent of the judgments above, in *Nukva* and *Zeir Anpin,* into this [world](worlds.html) below. These then later wreak havoc on our lives.

In the words of the [Zohar](orallaw.html): “Disruption of [spiritual](physical.html) consciousness will befall a man who allows his wife to expose her hair; this [the proper covering of a woman’s hair] is [one](one.html) of the foundational principles of modesty. A woman who let’s her hair be seen in order to appear attractive causes poverty to her home, [spiritual](physical.html) inferiority to her children and causes a negative [spiritual](physical.html) influence to reside in the home... If all this in [one](one.html)’s own house certainly in public places and certainly other brazen acts of immodesty....” ([Zohar](orallaw.html), *parashat* *Naso* 125b-126b)

Section 3: Meditation Instructions

When a man is beginning to have his haircut, he should intend:

1. To fulfill the will of his Maker in not having the corners of his [head](body.html) shaved with a razor.

2. To fulfill the will of his Maker in not having his beard cut by a razor.

Besides these preparatory meditations, he can intend:

1. To remove the judgments from his [head](body.html) to the extent that he does.

2. To do the meditation while reflecting on the above *gematria* of the word “*toar*” (“razor”- see Part 1) and [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html).

Throughout the day, a man can attune to his beard, as an expression of the divine names *E-l Sha-Dai.* This should not be done in the bathroom or an unclean place. While contemplating, a person can focus on opening his [heart](body.html) in kindness, and developing his inner strength, thus becoming more truly trusted as a vessel for the Divine Will.

A woman, when putting on her hair-covering, can intend to conceal and sweeten her judgments. She can also contemplate ways in which she can appropriately manifest her inborn quality of *gevura*. Hair, as a clearly sexual dimension of her existence, can suggest a meditation focused on the partial concealment of her [physical](physical.html) self so that her [spiritual](physical.html) self can illuminate [creation](bara.html) with greater clarity.

The goal of the Kabbala is the transformation of a human being into a chariot for the Divine. Hair, an aspect of our existence that has been [exiled](galuyot.html) into banality and perversion, in Kabbala is recognized for its [spiritual](physical.html) power, properties and potential. Contemporary [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [spiritual](physical.html) seekers are encouraged to work with this Kabbalistic tradition and experiment with its fruits.

Although the [experience](experience.html) of Divine [Law](law.html) is at times experienced as an external imposition on the self, [experience](experience.html) shows that with the humbling of the [heart](body.html) and the opening of the mind Divine [Law](law.html), is in actuality a greater, albeit often more concealed, expression of the soul’s [knowledge](knowledge.html) and intuitive wisdom.

by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai

Tazria (Leviticus 12-13)

 Does Your Hair Hang Low...?

 [Zohar](orallaw.html), *parashat* Tazria, page 48b

Translation and commentary by Simcha Treister

**“ Hair is engendered by the excess of consciousness that surges from the intellectual *sefirot*...”**

Within this general section of the  Torah, are the [laws](law.html) that deal with purification, among which are the requirements that the hair be shaved. The holy  Arizal explains in *Mevo Shearim*, Gate 5, Part 1, that the higher *partzufim* of the *sefirot* in the [spiritual](physical.html) [worlds](worlds.html) also have hair. This hair is engendered by the excess of consciousness that surges from the intellectual *sefirot* of *chochma* and *bina*.

The hair is like a fiber optic that is a hollow tube with very fine light emerging from the end, or [mouth](body.html), of the hair. In the [spiritual](physical.html) realms, these hairs are a result of waves of *Mochin Dekatnut*,or constricted, self-centered consciousness. A person emitting this [type](types.html) of consciousness causes black hairs to grow on his [spiritual](physical.html) counterpart. These black hairs become a breeding ground for other external negative forces and a place for attachment of harsh judgement. These hairs are the roots of the judgments in *Zeir Anpin*. The external forces, or *kelipot*, don’t receive their life force from the Holy *partzuf* of *Zeir Anpin* itself, rather they receive a tiny amount of life-force from the light emerging at the ends of the hair.

**“ When the hair is cut off from *Zeir Anpin* all judgments are sweetened...”**

 Rebbe Shimon said that words “*Dina* *Kashia*”, or “harsh judgement”, refer to the judgements aroused from below - by *Mochin Dekatnut* - that causes hair to grow on the [head](body.html) of *Zeir Anpin*. Now when those below return to proper consciousness of the Divine, they cause this hair to be shorn off from the [head](body.html). Clipping the hair below denies the *kelipot*, or external forces of consciousness, from having a hold on the source of consciousness from above. It is interesting to note that [one](one.html) of the more common sights at a revivalist Baal Teshuva meeting is a young person with a pony tail having it publicly cut off and placing on a *kipa*!

When the hair is cut off from *Zeir Anpin* all judgments are sweetened and the negative forces below in the [physical](physical.html) [world](worlds.html) have no place to establish a foothold. This is why *Zeir Anpin* is then called “pure”, in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) “*tahor*”, because it has been [purified](purity.html) from the attachment of these negative forces.

It is not called “pure” until it has been removed from the aspect of [impurity](purity.html) generated by the *kelipot* attached to it. When it emerges from this attachment, it is called “pure”. This is the meaning of the words “Who can give pure from impure?” (Job 14:4) It was certainly in a state of [impurity](purity.html) because of the attachment of these external forces. An example is like lice which breed in hair and disappear when the hair is cut, as they live only in the hair not on the [head](body.html) itself. The [head](body.html) remained [clean](purity.html) but was made unclean by the life-forces breeding in the hair surrounding it. This is also hinted in the verse:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 13:40*** *And the man whose hair has fallen off his* [*head*](body.html) *is bald and is pure.*

✡✡✡

This [study](study.html) was written by

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

(Greg Killian).

Comments may be submitted to:

Greg Killian

12210 Luckey Summit

San Antonio, TX 78252

Internet address: gkilli@aol.com

Web page: https://www.betemunah.org/

(360) 918-2905

Return to [The WATCHMAN](https://www.betemunah.org/) home page

Send comments to Greg Killian at his email address: gkilli@aol.com

1. Pole Serpent from Parashat Chukat [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Zohar](orallaw.html), Ha’azinu states:

1. The hairs are places of harsh judgment, as in the verse, “for He crushes me with a tempest” (Job 9:17), where the Hebrew word for tempest is phonetically similar to the word for hair.

2. Hair at the back of the neck indicates harsh judgment as in the verse, “and they have turned their back to me and not their face” (Jeremiah 32:33).

3. There are no judgments in the hair of the beard. - Regarding the curls of the hair on the sides of the head and the beard, see Zohar, Naso. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Nukva = Lower light [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Atzilut* is the world of Divine emanation. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Sanhedrin21 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Torah Commentary, by Rabbi Bachya ben Asher, translated and annotated by Eliyahu Munk. Page 1919 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Judges 16:17 as well as Judges 16:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Torah Commentary, by Rabbi Bachya ben Asher, translated and annotated by Eliyahu Munk. Page 1919 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Bamidbar 5:18, Ketuvot 72a [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Devarim 24:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Nazir 2a [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Kiddushin 2b, see the second Tosfot there. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Yoma 47a [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ezekiel 16:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The side growth descending over the junction of jaw-bone to the skull. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. There are several explanations: (i) The corners mean the ‘regions’, directions of the beard: two side-whiskers; two running parallel with the jaw to the sides of the mouth; and one on and under the chin (R. Han.). (ii) Two upper junctions of the jaw to the skull, in the region of the eyes; two corners of lower-jaw below the lobes of the ear; and one on the chin. (iii) Two corners of the lower jaw-bone under the ear; two ends of the jaw-bone nearing the chin; and the chin. (Rashi — RIBN, on the text.) V. R. Shimshon (of Sens) and Raabad (of Posquieres, Beaucaire) on Sifra, Lev. XIX, 27; Asheri Mak. III, 2, and R. Jacob’s Summaries (there) No. 5 and Tur, Y.D. 181. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Var. lec.: ‘R. Eleazar’. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. In a single movement. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Var. lec.: ‘R. Eleazar’. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Tweezers, the Roman volsellae, hairpluckers. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Or possibly the Roman radula, a kind of shaving spoke. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Torath Kohanim 19:74; Mak. 20b [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Sema, on Choshen Mishpat 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. *Mashpia* is a [giver](giver.html) and *Mekabel* is a receiver. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. zachar = male [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Nekeiva = female [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Rav Moshe Shapiro [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. ***Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols***, p.18, entry: “Beard.” [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ned. 30b; Num. R-9:1 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. In Ket. 7:6, the term “[daat](daat.html) Yehudit” means that a woman should not spin or have her hair uncovered in the street. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ket. 2:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Ber 24a [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Sh. Ar. EH 21.2 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. *Shulchan* *Aruch* *Orach* *Chaim* 2:6 and see *Shabbat* 156b [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, Ch. 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, Ch. 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, Ch. 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Excerpt from LAZER’S TALMUD TORAH CENTER FOR BASIC JEWISH EDUCATION [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Rabbi Shlomo Yitchaki, 1040-1105, author of the primary commentary on the Talmud. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Isa. XXXIII, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ezek. XLIV, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Num. VI, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Lev. X, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Ezek. XLIV, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Shabbat 95a [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. *Shulchan* *Aruch*, Yoreh Deah 181:3 see *Veyesh* *Osrim* & 181:11 and the Arizal quoted above [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Ibid.181:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ibid. 181:3,10 and *Har* *Tzvi*, Y.D. 143 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. *Makot* 20A, *Rambam*, *Avodat* *Kochavim* 12:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *Shulchan* *Aruch*, Yoreh Deah 181:3 see *Veyesh* *Osrim* & 181:11 and the Arizal quoted above [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Writings of the Ari, *Taamei Hamitzvot*, *parashat* Kedoshim. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *Shulchan* *Aruch*, Yoreh Deah 181:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Writings of the Ari, *Ta’amei* *Hamitzvot,* *parashat* Kedoshim. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. *Rambam, Sefer* [*Mitzvot*](cmds613.html), Mitzvah 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. *Shulchan* *Aruch,* *Yoreh* *Deah* 203:7 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. *Otzrot* *Chaim*, *Derush* *Adam* *Kadmon,* pg. 6 [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. See *Guide for the Perplexed*, ch. 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)