

TATTOOS AND THE BIBLE

Leviticus 19:28 states: “*You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead, nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves...*” (NASB). Is this a forbiddance of getting a tattoo? Or was this written for a *specific* people, in a *specific* time, with a *specific* example in mind (God’s mind). Lets see what some commentators have to say on what this example would be that caused God to forbid marking or engraving on one’s body.

- **Matthew Henry’s Commentary:** v. 28 “They shall make cuts or prints in their flesh for the dead; for the heathen did so to pacify the infernal deities...”
- **New Bible Commentary:** vv. 29-31 “The main focus of this section is to exclude rites and practices associated with pagan, Canaanite religion, particularly those which were physically or morally disfiguring. Abuse of the body in the name of religion is a wide spread human aberration...”
- **The International Bible Commentary:** v. 28 “Cutting the flesh was a feature of the worship of Melqart (Baal in Old Testament).... There are various explanations of this self-disfigurement which have been advanced: to provide blood for a departed spirit, to render mourners unrecognizable to departed spirits, to drive away the spirits by the life-force resident in the blood, and so on...”

The point here is that if one were to interpret this in a wooden literal sense that applies to today’s tattooing of the body for non-religious purposes, then one would apply verse 27 to getting “*bowl-cuts*.” For we read: “*You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads, nor harm the edges of your beard*” (NASB).

Matthew Henry Commentary: “Those that worshipped the hosts of heaven, in honor of them, cut their hair so that their heads might resemble the celestial globe; but, as the custom was foolish in itself, so being done with respect to their false gods, it was idolatrous.”



Yes, Matthew Henry just called the *bowl-cut* “*foolish*,” but when done for religious purposes, it is wrong. As with the tattoo, if done for spiritual purposes, it is forbidden. If done for personal reasons, I see no harm. If I am wrong, I suspect that when one receives their glorified body, it will be washed clean with the blood of Christ. Because only then will we be perfect, the creation God originally intended.

I see no **clear** precedence in the Bible for not getting a tattoo if done for non-religious purposes. If one were to interpret this as following the law, a maelstrom would soon follow; not to mention the book of Romans being thrown out the window.

You’re welcome. Lol.