

## **Enlarge Your Baldness**

In the book of Micah, the prophet delivers a striking command to God's people, "Make yourself bald and cut off your hair, because of your precious children; enlarge your baldness like an eagle, for they shall go from you into captivity." Micah 1:18. At first glance, this sounds strange to modern readers. Why would God instruct His people to shave their heads? And what could such an ancient image mean for Christians today, especially when baldness now is often natural or even a style choice?

**Mourning the Ancient World** – In the culture of the ancient Near East, shaving the head or beard was a public sign of deep grief, mourning, or shame. When disaster struck or when someone died, people would often shave their heads as a visible symbol of sorrow. The Scriptures record many such examples:

- Deuteronomy 14:1 – God told Israel, "You are the children of the LORD your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head for the dead." The Lord wanted His people to avoid the pagan mourning rituals practiced by surrounding nations.
- Isaiah 15:2 – Isaiah describes Moabites grieving, "Moab will wail over Nebo and over Medeba; on all their heads will be baldness, and every beard cut off."
- Jeremiah 7:29 – "Cut off your hair and cast it away and take up a lamentation on the desolate heights; for the LORD has rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath."
- Amos 8:10 – God warns, "I will bring sackcloth on every waist, and baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only son."

For Micah's audience, "make yourself bald" was not about hairstyle or fashion. It was a command to show visible grief and to acknowledge the pain of coming judgement. Judah faced the tragedy of their children being led into captivity. Their appearance was to reflect the weight of their sin and the sorrow of impending exile.

**The Message for Today** – Modern culture sees baldness in a different light. Many men lose hair naturally or shave their heads by choice, and some wear baldness with pride. For us, the lesson is not about outward appearance but about the state of our hearts. God still calls His people to mourn over sin and not necessarily through physical actions like shaving our heads, but through genuine repentance.

The apostle Paul captured this message, “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted: but the sorrow of the world produced death.” 2 Corinthians 7:10. Christians today are called to let their hearts be broken over sin and to let that sorrow lead to real change.

**Hope in Christ** – Unlike Judah, we live under the new covenant of Jesus Christ. Through Him we find forgiveness, restoration, and hope. Revelation 21:4 promises, “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Our grief over sin should drive us to the cross, where Christ’s sacrifice provides eternal life and the assurance that sin and sorrow will not have the final word.

Micah’s call to “enlarge your baldness” was a vivid message for an ancient people who understood the outward signs of grief. For Christians today, the challenge is spiritual rather than physical. Christians must not minimize sin or treat it lightly. Instead, we are called to mourn over sin, turn away from it, and rejoice in the forgiveness and eternal hope found in Christ.

So, whether you are bald, have a full head of hair, or choose to shave your head, the question remains: Does your heart reflect genuine sorrow for sin and joyful gratitude for the salvation Jesus offers?

~Ron Josselet (Assisted by ChatGPT)