
TATTOOS & THE BIBLE

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Dial-the-Truth Ministries

WHAT ABOUT LEVITICUS 19:28?

Leviticus 19:28 is the Christian (or so-called Christian?) tattooist and tattoo-bearer's worst nightmare. The Lord plainly, clearly, strongly, and ***without a doubt*** ²⁹₃₁ **condemns the tattoo.**

Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 19:28

Could that be any more clear?

"Ye shall not. . .print any marks upon you. . ."

Simple. . . Straightforward. . . Settled. . .

God Said It. . . I Believe It. . . That Settles It. . .

Right. . .?

Not hardly. . .

The clear statement from the word of God does not settle anything for this generation of disobedient, carnal, worldly, tolerant, non-judgmental, Christians. Rather than obey God, they run miles and miles and miles to "justify" their open disobedience to the Word of God.

How do they get around Leviticus 19:28?

Clearly, there it is. "Ye shall not. . .print any marks upon you. . ."

A lot of Christians when confronted with Leviticus 19:28, scream, "*Hey dude, that* ²⁹₃₁ *s not for today. Man, that* ²⁹₃₁ *s the Old Testament. I* ²⁹₃₁ *m under the New Testament*".

Did you know that "bestiality" (sicko, perverted, sex with an animal) was ONLY forbidden in the Old Testament Levitical Law? Only in Leviticus 18:23 and Leviticus 20:15-16. Dude, only in the Old Testament Law. Does that mean a Holy God NOW ²⁰/₁₁ under the New Testament, approves of bestiality?

By the way, have you ever read Leviticus 19:29? The verse immediately AFTER the "it ²⁰/₁₁ s not for me" Leviticus 19:28?

Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.
Leviticus 19:29

This is the only place in the Bible that God directly forbids someone to prostitute their daughter. And since, it ²⁰/₁₁ s ONLY in the Old Testament Levitical Law (and "hey, dude, we ²⁰/₁₁ re NOT under the law") ²⁰/₁₁ it MUST be ok by the Lord for a parent to cause their daughter to prostitute.

Same sick, perverted, wicked, line of reasoning as the "it ²⁰/₁₁ s ONLY in the Old Testament-tattoo-bearer-wearer". Same reasoning. . . Same disobedience. . . Same perversion of the Word of God.

There are many other "moral laws ²⁰/₁₁ that are ONLY forbidden in the Old Testament, such as the human sacrifice of children. No where in the New Testament is this forbidden. Does that mean that NOW under the New Testament, God Almighty endorses throwing babies into the fire as a human sacrifice?

And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.
Leviticus 18:21

Matthew Henry ²⁰/₁₁ s Commentary at the beginning of Leviticus 19 explains that most of Leviticus 19 (such as verse 19:28) are moral commandments that applies not only for Israel but for the New Testament Christian today.

"Some ceremonial precepts there are in this chapter, **but most of them are moral. . . Most of these precepts are binding on us**, for they are expositions of most of the ten commandments."
(*Matthew Henry ²⁰/₁₁ s Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Leviticus 19:28)

IT ²⁰/₁₁ S ONLY "FOR THE DEAD"

But by far the Christian tattooers favorite excuse for disobeying Leviticus 19:28 is the "that means nor print any marks upon you ²⁰/₁₁ for the DEAD". It ²⁰/₁₁ s ok, as long as it ²⁰/₁₁ s **not for the dead**". See the "for the dead!!! . .for the dead!!!!!!".

Is it ok to practice satanic bloodletting, self mutilation or cutting of the flesh as long as it ²⁰/₁₁ s **not for the dead**? It ²⁰/₁₁ s in the

same verse. . . Hmm. . . ?

Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.
Leviticus 19:28

Notice also, the phrase "for the dead" is ONLY referencing the "cuttings in your flesh". The condemnation of "nor print ANY marks upon you" is not qualified by the phrase "for the dead". Also, if you ²⁹ notice the verse clearly says "ANY marks" period.

Merrill F. Unger's, very popular and authoritative, Unger's Bible Dictionary under the definition for "Mark" includes the following reference for Leviticus 19:28:

"In Lev. 19:28 we find two prohibitions of an unnatural disfigurement of the body: 'Ye shall not make any cutting in your flesh for the dead, nor any print any *marks* upon you.' The latter (Heb. *qa aqa, incision*) refers to tattooing, **and has no reference to idolatrous usages**, but was intended to inculcate upon the Israelites a proper reverence for God's creation."
(Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 1974 ed., p. 696)

Notice that Unger teaches that tattoos were **forbidden without any reference to pagan, heathen, or idolatrous usages**. In other words, the tattoo itself, regardless the reason, was forbidden. Amen. Brother Unger.

Wycliffe²⁹'s *Bible Encyclopedia* under the definition for **TATTOOING** distinctly says:

"While ²⁹cuttings in the flesh²⁹ have reference here to mourning customs [for the dead], **the tattooing does not appear to pertain to such practice.**"
(*Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, 1975 ed., p. 1664)

The New American Commentary on Leviticus 19:28 writes the condemnation was for, "cutting the body either for the dead **or with tattoo marks.**" (Mark F. Rooker, *The New American Commentary* on Leviticus, 2000 ed., p. 262) Explicitly recognizing the tattoo was not "for the dead."

Do you see how dishonest and disobedient this "it doesn't²⁹ apply to my New-Testament-Christian-marked-for-Jesus-tattoo" is? Find what you don't²⁹ like in the Word of God, cut it out (doesn't²⁹ apply to New Testament Christians) or misapply (it²⁹'s just for the DEAD, when it²⁹'s clearly NOT). Same tactics used by the satanic cults and heretics for years. You can prove anything and everything with such deceitful methods.

THE "FORBIDDEN" HAIRCUT

One of the silliest and childish arguments to justify the Christian tattoo is the: "*Hey man, do you get a haircut or trim your*

beard? God condemned getting a haircut or trimming your beard in the verse before forbidding the tattoo. Dude, the tattoo is the same as getting a haircut."

Believe it or not . . . this is a widely used argument.

Leviticus 19:26-28 is a clear condemnation of pagan, witchcraft and heathen practices. Look at the context. Verse 26 is plainly referring to "enchantment [spells or witchcraft] nor observe times [astrology]. . . Verse 28 is the pagan, demonic practice of bloodletting [cuttings in your flesh] and tattooing. Why would the Lord stick in the middle a verse that "condemns simply getting a haircut"? Of course, He wouldn't. . . And He didn't. . .

Leviticus 19:26-28 reads:

26 Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.

27 **Ye shall not round the corners of your heads**, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.

28 Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

The condemnation found in verse 27 of "rounding the corners of your head" or "mar the corners of thy beard" was the forbidding of a common pagan practice that cut the hair as worship and honor of the hosts of heaven.

Here's how *Matthew Henry's* and *Coffman's Commentaries* reflect on the "forbidden haircut" of Leviticus 19:27:

"Those that worshipped the hosts of heaven, in honour of them, **cut their hair so as that their heads might resemble the celestial globe**; but, as the custom was foolish itself, so, being done with respect to their false gods, it was idolatrous." (Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Leviticus 19:27)

"Herodotus tells of the use of this type of haircut, forming what is called a tonsure, as the practice of pagan religious cults of ancient times who did so honoring one of their gods."
(*Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament*, Leviticus 19:27)

The fact is. . . Up until a few years ago, virtually everyone, including the most liberal Christian, KNEW the tattoo was clearly forbidden by the Word of God. And throughout history, the tattoo has ALWAYS been condemned by Bible Believing Christians. Always. Every historical resource ever written on tattoos clearly confirms this fact.

"Just as occurred in other cultures with tattoo traditions, when these pagan tribes were **converted to the Christian religion**, their spiritual and cultural rites (which included tattooing, piercing and scarification) **were outlawed.** . ."

(Jean-Chris Miller, *The Body Art Book : A Complete, Illustrated Guide to Tattoos, Piercings, and Other Body Modifications*, p.9)

"Whenever missionaries encountered tattooing they eradicated it."


(Gilbert, Steve, *Tattoo History: A Source Book*, p. 101)

"While these and other body modifications continued to be practiced underground as a way for **non-Christian people** to identify each other, God forbid you got caught and your mark was revealed."

(Jean-Chris Miller, *The Body Art Book : A Complete, Illustrated Guide to Tattoos, Piercings, and Other Body Modifications*, p.11)

Up until a few years, virtually every commentary written understood Leviticus 19:28 as an open condemnation of the tattoo. The Christian acceptance of a tattoo was not even considered for serious discussion.

Jameison-Faussett-Brown Commentary and Explanatory on the Whole Bible writes under Leviticus 19:28

"nor print any marks upon you  **by tattooing**, imprinting figures of flowers, leaves, stars, and other fanciful devices on various parts of their person. The impression was made sometimes by means of a hot iron, sometimes by ink or paint, as is done by the Arab females of the present day and the different castes of the Hindus. It is probable that a strong propensity to adopt such marks in honor of some idol gave occasion to the prohibition in this verse; **and they were wisely forbidden, for they were signs of apostasy; and, when once made, they were insuperable obstacles to a return.**"

(*Jameison-Faussett-Brown Commentary and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, Leviticus 19:28)

James M. Freeman in his excellent book, *The New Manners & Customs of the Bible*, says of Leviticus 19:28:

"Tattooing Forbidden

Both cutting and tattooing were done by the heathens, and so God forbade His people from doing so in imitation of them."

(James M. Freeman, *The New Manners & Customs of the Bible*, 1998 edition, p. 157)

Coffman's Commentary on the Old and New Testament under Leviticus 19:18 says:

"The cutting of one's flesh also characterized pagan worship as attested by the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel in the contest with Elijah. **Tattooing was also a device of paganism.** . . . Christians generally disapprove of tattooing, despite the fact of the widespread use of it by many even today. **In the light of what God says here, and in view of the history of it, it seems strange that anyone would pay someone else to tattoo him.**"

(*Coffman's Commentaries on the Old and New Testament*, Leviticus 19:28)

Charles R. Erdman in his commentary on Leviticus 19:28 writes:

"The custom of tattooing was forbidden, while among all the nations of antiquity it was common." (Charles

But Naves famous Topical Bible puts it best. Under the topic "Tattooing", Nave ^{נא}s simply and bluntly writes: "**TATTOOING, forbidden, Lev. 19;28**" (*Nave's Topical Bible*, p. 1312)

BUT WHAT ABOUT ISAIAH 44:5 & EZEKIEL 9:4?

I've seen several references by Christian tattooers who claim Isaiah 44 and Ezekiel 9 are examples of God-ordained tattoos in the Bible.

And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and **set a mark upon the foreheads** of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

Ezekiel 9:4

One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another **shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD**, and surname himself by the name of Israel.

Isaiah 44:5

The following excellent explanation of Isaiah 44:5 and Ezekiel 9:4 came from a Jewish web site:

1) In Leviticus 19:28 the term used is "k'thoveth qa'aqa." "K'thoveth" means "writing or inscription." "Qa'aqa" comes from a root whose meaning is "to insert or to stick in." Together, "writing that is stuck in"(see Rashi's commentary on the verse). Jewish oral tradition explains that the verse is talking about what we refer to today as tattoos, i.e. scratching or piercing the skin and filling it in with pigment.(see the tractate "Makoth" 21a).

2) Isaiah 44:5 uses the word "yichtov" which means "will write" without the word "qa'aqa" "to insert or to stick in." Isaiah is not talking about tattoos. What he is saying is "...and he will write with his hand to the L-rd..." like someone who signs a contract to express his utmost commitment and obligation(see Metzudath David's commentary on the verse).

3) Ezekiel 9:4 uses the word "tav" which means "a mark or a sign." The man clothed with linen is going to mark the foreheads of the righteous with ink, not tattoo them!

Someone who read the verses (Isaiah 44:5 and Ezekiel 9:4) in the Hebrew original would never dream that they are referring to tattoos.

(www.geocities.com/mnlerner2000/let007.html, *used with permission*)

THE "TATTOOED" LORD JESUS CHRIST. . .

Some Christian tattooers go so far as claim that the Lord Jesus Christ has a tattoo!

Many Christian tattooers claim that when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in Revelation chapter 19 on a horse  **He has a tattoo on his thigh!**

Revelation 19:11-16 says:

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; **and he had a name written**, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.


15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.


16 **And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**

I know you don't  believe Christians can be that deceived so here  is the proof:

"And what of Christ Himself? Twice in chapter 19, our Lord is depicted as having a name written on Him (verses 12 and 16). **As unthinkable as it may be for some to picture our Lord Jesus as having a tattoo, the author of the Apocalypse had no problem with it.**"
(www.larryoverton.com/berean/tatoos.htm)

Revelation 19:16 clearly is referring to the "vesture his thigh"  ". . . **he hath on his vesture and on his thigh. . .**"

Can anyone with any spiritual discernment (and a brain) really believe the Lord Jesus Christ has a tattoo? Isn't  it amazing how spiritually blind someone becomes when they began to justify their disobedience to the Word of God?

But what really is frightening about this gross, perverted, wicked interpretation of a "tattooed" Jesus Christ in Revelation 19:16  **it makes the Lord Jesus Christ a SINNER!**

It means the Lord Jesus CLEARLY disobeyed Leviticus 19:28! It means the Lord Jesus Christ was not Holy! He was not the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. He clearly was disobedient and broke the Levitical Law of Leviticus 19:28!

And if the Lord Jesus Christ committed sin  everyone is either in hell or on the way to hell. There is no

salvation without a sinless, spotless Lamb of God. It took a sinless, perfect, Saviour to pay for your sins.

And thank God despite what these spiritually sicko, perverted, Christian tattooers "preach" **The Lord Jesus Christ was without sin and without "tattoo"!**

18 Forasmuch as **ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things**, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, **as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:**

1 Peter 1:18-19

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, **yet without sin.**

Hebrews 4:15

For he hath made him to be sin for us, **who knew no sin**; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

2 Corinthians 5:21

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 **Who did no sin**, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1 Peter 2:21-22

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; **and in him is no sin.**

1 John 3:4-5

DEFILING THE TEMPLE OF THE LIVING GOD

Most Christians, even the most carnal and backslidden, would never desecrate or defile the local church building. Even among most lost people there is a reverence and sacredness to the church building.

But. . . Did you know?

If you are truly born again the Holy Spirit of God dwells within in (John 14:17, Romans 8:9, 11) and your body is the temple of God. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 makes this very clear.

19 What? **know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost** which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: **therefore glorify God in your body**, and in your spirit, which are God's.
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

And . . . Did you know?

The Lord warns several times of the seriousness of defiling the temple of God ²⁰ your body! In 1 Corinthians 3, the Lord clearly and sternly warns against defiling your body ²⁰ the temple of God. If any man defiles the temple of God ²⁰ HIM SHALL GOD DESTROY!

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 **If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy**; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

My Christian friend, you ²⁰ d better watch what you do with your body. It is the temple of a Holy God. You ²⁰ d better not defile it with pagan, devil-worshipping tattoos!

". . . If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. . ."

What God said ²⁰ He meant!

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: **hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?**

Numbers 23:19

7 **Be not deceived; God is not mocked**: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Galatians 6:7-8

Do you really believe the Lord Jesus Christ is pleased with a Christian wearing a pagan tattoo? Do you honestly believe God ²⁰ s perfect will is for a Christian, *any* Christian, to be "marked" with a demonic tattoo?

With the unbiased documentation and Bible we ²⁰ ve given (and we could supply much, much more) there is no question to the pagan and devil-worshipping source of the tattoo. Every tattoo historian I ²⁰ ve read, traces the root of the tattoo to religious paganism. Every one.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 is another warning against the tattoo. Notice the warning against the "fellowshipping" and concord with Christ and Belial (the devil). Verse 16 is very interesting. . . As it relates the "fellowshipping" with your body ²⁰ the temple of

the living God.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 reads:

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 **And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God;** as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

I realize in writing this, a lot of Christians (or so-called Christians?) could care less what God says. They're gonna do what they want to do despite heaven or hell. But there are many Christians who want to serve God more than anything with ever fiber of their soul. I've talked to many, many Christians who were thinking about getting a tattoo. But after showing them the satanic origin of the tattoo they realized a tattoo was not the will of God. And it was for those "good and faithful servants" of the Lord Jesus Christ that this was written for.

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Matthew 25:23

Friend, God loves you and desires more than anything you love and obey Him. He desires first of all obedience unto salvation by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12). And after salvation, His will for you is to serve and love Him with all you heart, body, mind and soul.

You won't regret it!

It'll be worth it one day!

If you are truly a Christian and still have doubts about whether the tattoo is the perfect will of God, go back through this article with an open Bible and an open hear. Prayerfully, look up the verses. And before you start, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to "guide you into all truth" (John 16:13).

17 Ye therefore, beloved, **seeing ye know these things before**, beware lest ye also, **being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.**

18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:17-18

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