



WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SHOVAVIM* AND MAINTAINING A FULL BEARD?

One who guards his beard is like one who guards the *bris*. To touch [i.e., trim the beard], even [only] with scissors, is forbidden (R' Yisroel Abuchatzaira, the *Baba Sali*, in letter printed in sefer *Hadras Ponim Zokon* pg. 41).



One who destroys his beard .. He destroys his sustenance (Parnasa) ... One who damages his beard indicates that he has blemished the holy *bris* (*Divrei Shmuel*, Slonim, *Kedoshim*).

* *Shovavim* is a season in the calendar, the weeks when the *parshios* of *Shmos* until *Mishpatim* are read when our Sages teach that it is auspicious to repent of sins, especially relating to the *Bris Kodesh*. Some have the customs of fasting and giving extra *tzedakah* during this time, and of reciting other prayers and *tikkunim*. When it is a leap-year, two more weeks are added, the readings of *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh*. The word *Shovavim* (Shin, Vav, Beis, Beis, Yud, Mem) is an acrostic for the names of the *parshios* read during this period.