

Bible and the Headlines: Deadly Locks

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April 2, 2025

From the wisdom of the internet comes the saying, “Your hair is the crown you never take off.” This “crown” is featured in many stories making headlines.

It was celebrity royalty in British Vogue’s article of March 26, “Millie Bobby Brown Trades Her Long Tresses For A Fresh Bob.” The British actress sought out the new look, “. . . after her flirtation with millennial pink hair.” Her new “crown” is called the “Millie Bobby Bob.” It is too early to tell if there will be many pretenders for the throne.

CNN on March 25th featured, “In Ecuador’s Mountains, A Photographer’s Search for Ultra-Long Hair.” The article tracked an Argentine photographer’s 20-year project “‘Las Pelilargas’ or ‘The Long-haired Ones,’ the body of work celebrates the shared cultural reverence for long tresses across the region.” Although she initially sought out women as subjects, her latest segment centered around the men of the region and the reasons for their lengthy tresses. The long-haired men saw their locks as a statement against their tribes treatment by the Spanish crown during colonial days.

The crown braid is a popular style but maybe fewer clients will ask for it after the March 30th story by Ohio network Spectrum News, “Report Finds Dangerous Chemicals In Synthetic Braiding Hair.” The article was among many such pieces commenting on a recent study by Consumer Reports, “The report states braiders and those who wear the products could be at risk for potential health problems as a result.” The ten most popular brands of braiding supplies were tested and all contained carcinogens. These toxins can be absorbed through the scalp and/or from hands that touch the hair and then consume food.

The Bible has many things to say about hair at various lengths, but the character known for both “hair” and “crown” is Absalom. He was King David’s son, and briefly a king of Israel (2 Sam 16:16). Before usurping his father’s golden crown, Absalom made a public spectacle of removing his follicle crown, “Whenever Absalom cut the hair of his head—he used to cut his hair once a year because it became too heavy for him—Absalom would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels by the royal standard” (2 Sa 14:26).

It was this follicle crown that cost Absalom his throne. During the battle between King David’s army and Absalom’s forces, “Absalom happened to meet David's men. He was riding his mule, and as the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak, Absalom's hair got caught in the tree. He was left hanging in midair as the mule kept on going (2Sa 18:9). While Absalom was suspended, David’s men turned him into a pin cushion (2Sa 18:14-15). With his death, Absalom’s golden crown reverted to David (2Sa 19:14).

Absalom did not live long enough for his follicles to become the type of crown God wants us to have. Proverbs 16 says, “Gray hair is a crown of splendor; it is attained in the way of righteousness” (v.31). May those who have earned this crown never take it off.