

Responsibility of Headship

The covering of the head is a powerful symbol of subjection in the Scriptures. The headship authority of Almighty Yahweh is—or is not—reflected in whether men or women wear coverings in worship. Should women be covered when in worship today? Should men?

The Bible teaches that Yahweh is invisible, has always existed, and is the Head of the universe.

For almost six thousand years mankind has been allowed to go his way and do as he sees fit. Yahweh has not interfered with man's goal to rule himself man's way. From time to time He has selected certain peoples and called them to be His representatives on this earth. They would be blessed as they followed His ways and would teach others by example.

Eventually the laws given to Abraham will be enforced throughout this entire world. Wars will cease and the full potential of mankind will be realized as the benevolence of Yahweh is forced upon this earth by the Son Who will rule with a rod of iron.

The Bible reveals that mankind in general will resist the rule of Yahweh and rebel against His government. Yahweh is calling out a few down through history to be His chosen people.

To those who have voluntarily consecrated their lives to Him, Yahweh has already revealed in His Bible the way of life He expects of us. Even little things we dare not ignore, for Yahweh is very precise in His expectations of His people. This is especially true of the more obvious and visible doctrines thought to be of no significance by worldly religions.

Not a New Rule

One of Yahweh's commands often considered to be insignificant is found in chapter 11 of 1Corinthians, dealing with headcoverings. This periscope demands a careful examination and will explain Yahweh's perception of His creation.

It might be assumed that this chapter establishes a new set of rules that supersede Old Testament Commandments. Nothing could be further from the truth. Paul summarizes what is already found in the New Testament.

Keep in mind as we examine the message of Paul to the Corinthian Assembly that they lacked the Israelite background. It was a Gentile Assembly. The people were unfamiliar with customs rooted in the Old Testament, but were converts from Hellenistic society. The people retained much of the cosmopolitan Greek culture from which they came.

Ignorance and lack of familiarity is the reason for the misunderstanding regarding whether women should have their heads covered for worship and prayer. This is what Paul deals with in this chapter.

To the Corinthian Assembly consisting of Gentiles newly converted from paganism, Paul writes:

But giving you this charge, I praise you not, that you come together not for the better but for the worse; For first of all, when you come together in the Assembly, I hear that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it, for there must also be factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you," 1Corinthians 11:17-18 TSS.

The charge Paul had given the Corinthian Assembly was important enough to bring to their attention and explain the rationale behind Yahweh's command.

Let us learn from Paul as we study his comments in 1Corinthians 11. We will see that the points he makes are originally found in the Old Testament and are not a "new" or "Pauline" doctrine.

Paul lays the groundwork for his admonition in the first verse.

"Be imitators of me, even as I also am of the Messiah. Now I praise you that you remember me in all things, and hold fast the traditions, even as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is the Messiah; and the head of woman is the man; and the head of the Messiah is Yahweh," verses 1-3 TSS.

The basic thrust of Paul's writings deals with the sovereignty of Yahweh and the extension of His jurisdiction to this earth. This leadership authority affects each of Yahweh's people, but each one in a different way. Yahweh is guiding His family into a closer relationship with Him, and here divulges His plan for both male and female. It deals with headship.

In the initial verses of chapter 11 Paul urges us to follow Him even as he follow Messiah. Our Savior is the Head of every man, we read in verse 3.

Yahweh the Supreme Head

Sovereignty begins with Yahweh, our Heavenly Father. He is the Head of His spiritual family. He is invisible and has never been seen by human eyes. Yahweh has placed His Son immediately under Him in authority.

He has also given to His Son the responsibility of all judgement, John 5:22. Yahshua's judging is exactly as the Father wants, John 8:16. Yahshua is completely subservient to the Father in all things. Yahshua joyfully continues to do His part in fulfilling the mission given Him.

The human family also has its own order and position. The male has been given the responsibility to lead and guide the family. Just as the Savior is placed under the leadership of the Father, so the woman is placed under her husband's leadership. The woman was created to be a helpmeet and give balance to the man through her femininity. Man is to be strong; to be the leader of the family and the protector of his wife who is the weaker vessel, 1Peter 3:7.

In creating the family unit, Yahweh has brought together two different human beings having individual goals and needs. The wife and husband are to complement each other in this delicate family arrangement. Each is given a special role to fill, and each will find joy and fulfillment when both adhere to the expectations Yahweh has set for them.

Male Headcovering Improper

The Bible has given us symbolic representations to show our willing conformity to His precepts and to remind us that He Himself is the top authority in all things. His Son Yahshua is directly under Him. On earth, man has the supreme authority over the family with the wife his helpmeet under him.

We are reminded that Adam (man) was created first. Woman was taken out of man's side, not from his head to dominate, nor from his feet to be trodden down. The woman is from Adam's side to be a helping partner, Genesis 2:21-23.

Paul shows that adherence to Yahweh's authority is carried out by what is worn on the head during worship and prayer. Notice Paul's words:

"Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as

though her head were shaved. If a woman does not cover her head she should have her hair cut off; and if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, she should cover her head," 1Corinthians 11:4-6 NIV.

Paul clearly states the woman should cover her head when worshiping. She should have a covering or veil on her head. He does not say her long hair is a covering and is all that is needed. In fact, she is to cover her hair. If she does not cover her hair, then she should shave off her hair.

Of course Paul knows in having her head shaved the woman faces dishonor and disgrace. In the 1940's it was a common sight in France to see woman with shaved heads because they had collaborated with the Germans. This was done to shame them, for a woman without her crowning glory is indeed a disgrace. Therefore, Paul says she should cover her hair with a veil.

Pagan Greek and the Yarmulke

Perhaps some of the congregation had begun following the Jewish tradition of the Greeks in wearing a beanie-type headcovering known as a "kepha" or "yarmulke." Jewish authorities admit there is no Bible basis allowing men to wear a head covering as is done today. Wearing a hat came from the Greek sports custom according to 2Maccabees 4:10-13, Smith-Goodspeed.

The Greek sign of an educated man was wearing of the hat of Hermes as was done by the philosophers. This yarmulke is still visible under the tasseled mortarboard worn by the graduating classes from education institutions. The custom of men wearing a yarmulke did not come from the Bible, but was adopted from pagan Greek philosophers and assimilated by Jews.

When a man covered his head in the Old Testament it was to indicate deep sorrow, such as with David in 2Samuel 15:30, who covered his head and went barefoot. Other examples are 2Samuel 19:4 and Esther 6:12. Had it been the custom of men to wear a headcovering, these Scriptures would not have had to make special mention of their covering their heads.

Only High Priests Covered

Aaron's sons did indeed wear a bonnet (cap) according to Exodus 28:40-41 (also verse 4) when they functioned as priests, Leviticus 10:6. The average Israelite did not have his head covered either in the synagogue or Temple.

Paul goes on to explain, "*A man ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of Yahweh, but the woman is the glory of man, for man did not come from the woman, but woman from man,*" 1Corinthians 11:7-8. Man is to reflect the glory of Yahweh, and the woman is to reflect the glory of man. Man was first created in the image of Yahweh, and from his side was taken woman who was made for the sake of the man (paraphrasing verse 9).

Pattern from the Heavens

On earth the woman is positioned next to the man in the same fashion as is Yahshua our High Priest who is subservient to Yahweh in the heavens. Therefore, the man does not cover his head, but the woman, who mirrors the man, does wear a covering on her head out of respect for the position that Yahweh has given her on earth. She is not to overshadow or overpower the man. Therefore she covers her glory (her hair).

"For this cause ought the woman to have power [SEC] No. 1849, exousia] on her head because of the angels," verse 10. *Exousia* is from No. 1832 (in the sense of ability) meaning power or authority. The veil is that authority that propriety required a woman employ to cover herself. This likely implies that angelic throngs are always witnesses of earthly events and by having her head covered, the woman is noted for her respect for Yahweh and those who are

preaching His Word. Eastern cultures demanded that woman veil themselves as a token of their being under the authority, protection, and power of their husbands.

Long Hair to Be Covered

From what we have read thus far, does 1Corinthians 11:13-16 summarize Paul's discussion here about leadership saying that a woman's hair is given to her for a covering and she needs nothing else? If Paul went through all this just to prove that a man should be bare headed and that a woman's long hair shows that she need not cover her head, he wasted many words. Notice:

"Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to Yahweh with her head uncovered? Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, but that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For long hair is given her as a covering. If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the Assemblies of Yahweh," 1Corinthians 11:13-16 NIV.

A man is not to have flowing locks or long hair because it is disgraceful to him. But a woman's flowing locks are a glory to her. Paul does not mean that a woman's hair is the only covering she needs. He is making the point that we should follow nature. Man has short hair, indicating no veil or covering. Woman has long hair, a veil is needed.

Paul points out that long hair is a woman's glory. *"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for [her] hair is given her for a covering"* (1 Cor. 11:15). Her hair gives her a special glory (SEC No. 1391 "*doxa*" meaning "glory as very apparent") and is translated as dignity, glory, glorious, honor, praise, and worship.

A woman's hair is a glory to her and is given her as a covering (Greek *peribolaion*) or mantle (as something thrown around as a wrapping) of dignity, glory, honor, praise and worship. Her appearance is altogether lovely because her long hair enhances her dignity in a glorious way, says Paul. She should wear a veil to cover and subdue her glory (her hair) so that she does not out "glory" her husband!

Understanding the Greek

Because of the confusion caused in translating the Greek text, it is difficult to determine what is exactly meant. Let us examine the exact words in the underlying Greek text.

The word uncovered in verse 5 is *akatakalyptos* in the Greek; the prefix "a" means "not," as the "a" in our "amoral" means not moral and *akatakalypto* means not covered. But the word covered appears twice in verse 6 and is from the Greek *katakalypto*, meaning to cover up. The Greek root in no way means to have long hair but defines a covering over the hair in verse 5, 6, and 7.

In verse 15 covering is from the Greek *peribolaion*. It means a mantle, vesture, something thrown around one like a mantle or veil. *Peribolaion* appears only one more time, in Hebrews 1:12, where it appears as an outer covering. The sense is that a woman's hair frames (*peribolaion*—is placed around) her face much like a frame enhances a picture.

Old Testament Examples

It was the custom of the women of the Bible to cover their heads with a veil. An example can be found in Numbers 5:12-31 where the husband uncovers the head of his wife whom he suspects is unfaithful. As long as her head was covered she was considered faithful. Women in the Assembly should wear a head covering to show that they are in subjection to Yahweh's Word, the Logos, the Messiah and willingly conform to Paul's picture of True Worship.

Other examples of women having their heads covered are Genesis 24:65, Rebekah; Songs of Solomon 5:7 (a type of Yahshua the king and the Shulamite virgin representing the Assembly).

Paul ends his exhortation saying that in the assembly the men are to be bareheaded and the women are to wear a covering over their glory, which is their long hair:

"But if anyone is contentious [anxious] to dispute the matter—Moffatt], we have no such custom [I for my part have recognize no other practice in worship than this—Goodspeed], neither the assemblies of Yahweh," 1Corinthians 11:16.

While some may want to dispute the conclusion given above, Paul does not dispute the issue. Clearly, women are to cover their heads in the assembly. Ladies should have their heads covered with a veil or a hat out of respect for Yahweh, respect for Yahshua, and respect for the brothers and sisters gathered to worship Yahweh.

© 2007 Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua
2963 County Road 233, Kingdom City, Missouri 65262
View us online at: www.YAIY.org
Call Toll Free: (877) 642-4101
Main Line: (573) 642-4100