

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. The question addressed here is, should women be covered when in worship today? Should men?

The Bible teaches Yahweh is invisible, has always existed, and is the Sovereign over the universe. Nevertheless, for nearly six thousand years, mankind has been allowed to go his way and do as he wants without Yahweh's interference with man's end to rule himself, his way. From time to time, Yahweh has chosen and called certain ones to represent Him on earth and blessed them as they followed His Ways and taught others by their own example.

Presently, mankind generally resists the rule of Yahweh, rebelling against the rule of His Law. But at some time in the future, known only to Him, the laws given to them whom Yahweh has chosen and called, and who have consecrated their lives to Him, will be enforced throughout the world when His Son Yahshua returns to rule all nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5).

Yahweh, the Supreme Headship

Sovereignty begins with Yahweh, and He has placed His Son Yahshua immediately under Him in authority. It has pleased the Father, that in His Son should all the fullness of Sovereignty in heaven and on earth reside (Matt. 28:18). He has also committed all judgment to His Son, Yahshua (John 5:22) Whose judgment is according to Truth (John 8:16; Rom. 2:2).

Yahshua did nothing of Himself, but as He had been taught so He spoke (John 8:28). In the next verse, He affirmed, "For I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:29).

The human family also has its own order and position. The male has been given both the authority and responsibility to guide his wife and their children. Just as the Savior-Son is placed under the rule of the Creator-Father, so also are a man's wife and their children positioned under his headship.

Not a New Rule

One of Yahweh's commands not often regarded seriously, is found in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 11. It is assumed by some, that the content of this chapter establishes a new set of rules that override Old Testament Commandments.

Greek society was replete with philosophy and vain deceit, the traditions of men and rudiments of the world (Col. 2:8) and stood in marked contrast with the Way of Yahweh as revealed in the Scriptures. Corinth, too, was a gentile Assembly ignorant of, and unfamiliar with Jewish culture that was imbedded in the Old Testament, as it is written: "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in Elohim, adorned themselves...in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of Elohim of great price. being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him master: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well" (1 Pet. 3:4-6).

For this reason, the Apostle Paul introduces the subject of **headship**, saying, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Messiah...and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I

would have you know, that the head of every man is Messiah; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Messiah is Elohim” (1 Cor. 11:1-3).

The Apostle Paul’s exhortation establishing **headship** finds its root in Genesis 2:21-23, and 3:16: *And Yahweh Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of this ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which Yahweh Elohim had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.” Unto the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; AND THY DESIRE [SHALL BE] TO THY HUSBAND, AND HE SHALL RULE OVER THEE.”*

The Apostle further amplifies 3:16, by saying, *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Master. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Messiah is the head of the Assembly: and He is the Saviour of the body*, Ephesians 5:22-23.

Male Headcovering Improper

The Bible provides us with symbolic representations to show our willing conformity to His precepts and to remind us that Yahweh Himself is the Principal authority. The Apostle asserts that adherence to Yahweh’s authority is manifested by what is worn or not worn of the head during worship and prayer. *Every man praying or prophesying, having [his] head covered, dishonoureth his Head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with [her] head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered*, 1 Corinthians 11:4-6.

Note well: Paul clearly states the woman should cover her head when worshipping. 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. A shorn woman faces dishonor and disgrace.

Pagan Greek and the Yarmulke

Likely, some of the males of the Corinthians Assembly had continued wearing a beanie-type of headcovering called a “*yarmulke*,” prominent in the pantheistic worship culture of Greece. The Greek distinction between an educated man and one not so cultured, was the wearing of the hat of Hermes. Often, even today, beneath the tasseled mortarboard worn by the graduating classes of institutions of higher learning, is a “*kippah*.” The custom of men wearing a *yarmulke* did not come from the Bible (even contemporary Jews who wear a “*kippah*” during synagogue and prayer services, admit to having nothing of Bible authority for such a practice) but was adopted from pagan Greek philosophers which was afterward assimilated by Jews. The “*kippah*” is also called a “skullcap.”

The only references in the Bible to men covering their heads was during instances of deep sorrow, as when David did so (2 Sam. 15:30, 19:4) upon having to leave Jerusalem for reason of his son Absalom usurping regal authority and afterward, upon hearing of Joab the death of his son and Haman who in Esther 6:12, covered his head in mourning over having fallen out of favor

with the king. Had it been the custom of men wearing a headcovering, these Scriptures would naturally have made special mention of the reasons for them covering their heads.

Only the Priests Covered

“A man ought not to cover his head since he is the image and glory of Yahweh” (1 Cor. 11:7). Man is to reflect the glory of Yahweh, even as the woman is to reflect the glory of the man. While Aaron’s sons did indeed wear a headcovering (Ex. 28:40-41) when they functioned as priests (Lev. 10:6), apart from the priests in the performance of their Tabernacle or Temple duties, no other male of Israel had their heads covered. Not in the age of the Tabernacles of Moses and David, during the Temple era, or in the synagogues of Palestine.

Pattern from the Heavens

On earth, the woman is positioned to the man as Son Yahshua is to Father Yahweh. Therefore, the man does not cover his head but the woman, who mirrors the man, does out of respect for the position Yahweh has given her on earth. She is not to overshadow the man, hence the reason she covers her glory (her hair). *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels*, 1 Corinthians 11:10. “Power,” here is *exousia*, G.1849, (in the sense of ability) meaning power or authority. The inference here, is that angelic hosts witness earthly events, and by a woman having her head covered, she is noted as having deferred in respect for Yahweh and those proclaiming His Word. Eastern cultures demand women veil themselves as a token to their being under the authority, protection, and power of their husbands.

Long Hair to be Covered

Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto Elohim uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for [her] hair is given her for a covering, 1 Corinthians 11:13-15.

If the Apostle proceeded with many words to prove that a man should be bare headed when he prayed or prophesied and a woman veiled when she did so, then to argue that a woman’s long hair suffices as her headcovering makes void all that he has established in proper headship.

Because of the confusion in understanding the meaning of the above text, we need to examine the exact words in the Greek text. The word “uncovered” in verse 5, is G.177, *akatakaluptos* a negative particle, and meaning *unveiled*. The prefix “a” means “not,” as the “a” in “**a**moral” which means **not** moral. But the word “covered” in verse 6, is G. 2619, *katakaluptos* and means, to *cover wholly* or, to *veil*. The inference here is to cover up, not long hair.

In verse 15, covering is from G.4018, *peribolaion*, meaning a mantle, vesture, something thrown around one, like a mantle of veil. The sense is, that a woman’s hair frames (*peribolaion*) her face, much like a frame enhances a picture. For a further analysis of 1 Corinthians 11:3-16, see the YAIY Quick Study Sheet entitled ***Women’s Headcoverings***.

Women to be Dressed in Modest Apparel

No discussion on Biblical Headship is complete without a mention concerning the demeanor and conduct of the woman of Yahweh. In 1 Timothy 2:9-13, we read: *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided*

hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing piety) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

Furthermore, as we previously noted in 1 Peter 3:3-4, of the woman: *Whose adorning let it not be that outward [adorning] of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But [let it be] the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, [even the ornament] of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of Elohim of great price.*

We conclude, moreover, that because a woman's long hair is "a glory" given her, it is altogether proper that she should have her hair covered to subdue her "dignity," "honor," "praise," even "worship" (G.1391, *doxa*) as that which may occasion sensuality and hence, a distraction.

Conclusion

It was a custom among women of the Bible to cover their heads with a veil. An example is found in Numbers 5:12-31, in which a husband uncovers his wife's head whom he has suspicions of infidelity. So long as she covered her head, she was judged in subjection unto her own husband (1 Pet. 3:5). There are other examples from the Scripture, as in Genesis 24:65 when Rebekah met Isaac approaching her in the field.

So ought also, women comport themselves in Assembly to show themselves in subjection to Yahweh's Word, the Messiah, and to their own husbands.

Paul ends his exhortation, by exclaiming, *But if any man seem to be contentious* (anxious to dispute the matter, **Moffat**), *we have no such custom, neither the Assemblies of Elohim*, 1 Corinthians 11:16.

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