

Scriptural Headship



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A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and like the chain, a society is only as strong as its basic element. The basic element for any civilization is the family. Without a proper family structure the culture will collapse like a house built on sand.

Yahweh in His great wisdom realized that to be strong and unified the family must have a leader — a person who will take responsibility for the physical and spiritual welfare of that family. Neither a family nor Yahweh’s assembly can function properly without a head, and Yahweh has chosen the husband to be that head in the family relationship.

In the beginning when Adam was created Yahweh saw that He



was incomplete and needed a help mate, thus the creation of the first woman. From that point the relationship of husband and wife, as his helper, was defined.

Yahweh told Eve, “... Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you” (Gen. 3:16). Yahweh clearly says here that the man is to lead the family. Yahweh also emphasizes that the husband must love, respect, and care for his wife as if she were his own flesh.

Spousal abuse is never warranted, either mentally or physically.

If this loving behavior — ordained by Yahweh Himself — were followed in all marriages, we would not see the discord, heartache, and broken homes that plague our culture today. The husband and wife are each given a special role to fill and they will find happiness by meeting Yahweh’s expectations for each of them.

In the Scriptures a token sign of this sacred relationship is the veil or headcovering. In ancient times it was customary for the woman to have her head covered. This physical concealment of the hair was a sign of love and respect for her husband.

Paul wrote, “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 Yahweh” (1Cor. 11:3).

Here, Yahweh extends His jurisdiction to this earth through His authority. The apostle explains the proper relationship ordained by Yahweh between the Father, His Son, man, and woman. Yahweh is the Head of His spiritual family, with His Son immediately under Him. Paul says that man and woman also have their appointed places in respect to this authority.

The Apostle shows that the man is subject to Messiah even while being head of the woman. That means that the man is to be governed by Yahweh’s laws in respect to his relationship with his wife. Peter writes that wives are to “be in subjection to your own husbands,” 1Peter 3:1, and also that the man is to honor the wife “as unto the weaker vessel,” 1Peter 3:7.

Proper Roles Through the Covering

Continuing in 1Corinthians 11, the word “head” denotes authority, which is Paul’s topic in verse 3. It is significant that this topic concerns the actual head as an object lesson in Biblical leadership.

Paul continues, “Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors 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” (1Cor. 11:4-6).

The man is not to have his head covered in a worship setting. To do so would misrepresent and



confuse his proper role. On the other hand, being under the man’s authority the woman is to have her head veiled to show that distinction.

The word covered in verse 4, referring to the man’s covering, is from No. 2596, *kata* in the Greek. *Thayer’s Greek–English Lexicon*

of the New Testament says: “having his head covered.” Clearly, the Greek word *kata* found in verse 4 refers to a physical veil or covering. The word covered that refers to the woman in verse 6 is from another Greek word, which is derived from No. 2619, *katakalupto*, and is defined by *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*: “to cover wholly, i.e. a veil:— cover, hide.”

The two words that are used for our English word covered in verses 4 and 6 both carry the same meaning—to cover. However, when it pertains to the woman the Greek seems to be more precise when it defines a veil that covers her hair, hiding this natural covering which was given to her by Yahweh as a sign of beauty and power.

Recognized scholarship defines the substance of these verses in the following explanations:

- *Adam’s Clarke’s Commentary* note on 1Corinthians 11:6 states, “For if the woman be not covered. If she will not wear a veil in the public assemblies, let her...be shorn — let her carry a public badge of infamy; but if it be a shame — if to be shorn or shaven would appear, as it must, a badge of infamy, then let her be covered — let her by all means wear a veil.”

- *The Harper Collins Study Bible* note on 1Corinthians 11:5 reads, “Unveiled, or more generally ‘uncovered,’ perhaps with loose, flowing hair (typically associated with promiscuous women or priestesses of pagan cults).”

- *Jamieson Fausset and Brown Commentary* on 1Corinthians 11:6 explains, “A woman’s hair is given her by nature, as her covering (vs. 15), to cut it off like a man, all admit would be indecorous: therefore, to put away the head-covering, too, like the man, would be similarly indecorous. It is natural to her to have long hair for her covering: she ought, therefore, to add the other (the wearing of the headcovering) to show that she does of her own will that which nature itself teaches she ought to do, in token of her subjection to man.”

• *Barnes Notes* commentary on 1 Corinthians 11 says, “With her head uncovered. That is, with the veil removed which she usually wore. It would seem from this that the women removed their veils, and wore their hair dishevelled, when they pretended to be under the influence of divine inspiration. This was the case with the heathen priestesses; and in so doing, the... women imitated them. On this account, if no other, Paul declares the impropriety of this conduct. It was, besides, a custom among ancient females, and one that was strictly enjoyed by the traditional laws of the Jews, that a woman should not appear in public unless she were veiled.”

• Finally, the *Companion Bible* note on verse 5 states, “If she discards the covering which is the symbol of her position, she may as well discard that which nature has given.”

By voluntarily covering her hair during worship, a woman demonstrates her desire to comply with her special role toward her husband and to Yahweh. Not to do so would in effect be placing herself equal with her uncovered husband, which is forbidden by Yahweh.

The statement in verse 6, “but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered” is taken directly from the teachings of the Torah. In Deuteronomy 21 Yahweh explains that it was a dishonor to shave a woman’s hair and trim her nails, which Paul uses here to illustrate those women who refused to submit to their husband’s authority.



This shows that the covering of the hair, which all women have by nature, is not what Paul is talking about in this chapter, but a covering placed willingly over the hair. He says that if she won’t do that, she may as well shave her head.

“For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of Elohim: but the woman is the glory of the

man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man” (1Cor. 11:7).

The Apostle reveals here why the man is not to cover his head. Paul says that man is created in Yahweh’s image, and because of that fact the man is not to wear a covering or veil. However, since the woman was created from the man and in man’s image she is to wear a veil to show that she is taken from man and is under his leadership.

Male Caps from the Pagan Greeks



The Jewish tradition of the male kepha or yarmulke derives from a heathen Greek custom of wearing a beanie-like cap in sports competitions (see 2Maccabees 4:10-13). Greek philosophers wore the hat of the pagan god Hermes to show they were educated, a custom still seen in the beanie under the tasseled mortarboard

worn at graduation ceremonies.

In the Scriptures, the male headcovering was a sign of mourning, as seen in 2Samuel 15:30; 19:4, and Esther 6:12. Had the average man customarily worn headcoverings, the Scriptures would have no need to make special mention of it in these passages.

Man is to reflect the glory of Yahweh and the woman the glory of man. “Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels” (1Cor. 11:9-10).

Verse 9 reaffirms the fact that the woman came from man. Therefore, she is not only to have her head covered for her husband, but also for the angels. Some believe this speaks of the rebellious angels who refused to be subject to Yahweh’s authority and threw in with Satan, while others maintain that it refers to accepting the proper role Yahweh has given, just as do the angels in His hierarchy.

“Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in Yahweh. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of

Elohim” (1Cor. 11:11–12).

Paul maintains that even though the woman is under the man’s authority, that both are equally dependent upon each other, and that without the other each would be incomplete. Even though the man has the leading role, Paul notes that the man is formed in the woman’s womb, and both are always subject to Yahweh in all things. Men are commanded to love their wives, Ephesians 5:25.

“Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto Yahweh uncovered?” (1Cor. 11:13). The word uncovered in the above passage is from the Greek, *akatakaluptos* (No. 177 in Strong’s) and is defined by Strong’s as “unveiled or uncovered.” This Greek word *akatakaluptos* means to be physically uncovered, without a veil or headdress. Paul asks, is it right for a woman who is worshiping Yahweh to have her head uncovered? By Paul’s question we see that he certainly wanted to make known the importance for a woman to wear a veil while worshiping Yahweh.

Is Long Hair a Woman’s Covering?

The one concept that has not yet been examined is what a woman’s long hair represents. The majority of Biblical scholarship today will explain that long hair for a woman represents beauty and a gracefulness that Yahweh endowed her with upon the creation of Eve. Consider the following:



- “Women’s hair was a common object of lust in antiquity, and in much of the eastern Mediterranean women were expected to cover their head” (The *IVP Bible Background Commentary* note at 1Corinthians 11).
- “For a woman taking off her head covering in public and exposing her hair was a sign of loose morals and sexual promiscuity” (The NIV Study Bible note at 1Corinthians 11:5).

From the biblical sources above we find that a woman's long hair represents beauty, and by not wearing a headdress she is placing her beauty, or the power which Yahweh has given her through that natural covering, over her husband. She would essentially be placing her authority if not over, then equal to her husband's.

Yahweh has given long hair to a woman as a thing of beauty. By refusing to hide that beauty in a worship setting she is outshining her husband, which is not permissible in Yahweh's Word.

"Does 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" (1Cor. 11:14-15).

Paul is admonishing the Corinthian men here not to have long hair, because such was intended naturally for the woman. This word covering does not mean a physical covering and cannot replace the added covering that the woman is commanded to wear while praying or prophesying. The word covering in verse 15 is from the Greek *peribolaion* (**Strong's** No. 4018), and is defined by **Strong's** as "something thrown around one, i.e. a mantle or veil." The difference between the covering mentioned in verse 6 and here in verse 15 is that the covering in verse 6 is not a natural covering from Yahweh, but a man-made object used to cover the head. The covering in verse 15, which is a natural covering that frames the face and serves to enhance the woman's beauty, is not a man-made covering, but one given by Yahweh. Notice the following comments on verse 15:

"Long hair is given to her as a covering. This is not the same word as that used in verses 5-6. The point here is that as the hair represents the proper covering in the natural realm, so the veil is the proper covering in the religious" (**Ryrie Study Bible** note at 1Cor. 11:15).

"Her hair... for a covering — Not that she does not need additional covering. Nay, her long hair shows she ought to cover her head as much as possible. The will ought to accord with nature" (**Jamieson Fausset and Brown Commentary** note at 1Cor. 11:15).

Reasons Women Are to Be Covered

Dake's Annotated Reference Bible note at 1Corinthians 11 gives the following reasons, some historical, that a woman is to be covered in worship:

- “It has been the custom for ages for women to be veiled (Gen. 24:65; 38:14, 19; Ruth 3:15; Isa. 3:23).
- “It was a Jewish law that no woman be seen in public unveiled. Among Greeks, Romans, and other nations it was also the custom.
- “Only public prostitutes in the East went without veils, hence to pray or prophesy without a veil would be identifying [True Worship] with harlotry.
- “If a woman appeared in public without a veil she would disgrace her head – the husband. It would be the same as women who had their hair shorn off as punishment for whoredom and adultery.
- “The man was not to wear a veil because he was the image and glory of [Yahweh]. The women needed one because she is the glory of the man being created for him. The woman needed to wear her veil on her head as a sign of her husband’s power over her...
- “The woman needed to cooperate fully with the husband and keep the customs as being equally blessed of [Yahweh].
- “It was becoming for a woman ...to be veiled and not common for a [righteous] woman to pray or prophesy unveiled. That would make her like the heathen priestesses who prayed and delivered the oracles bareheaded or with dishevelled hair.
- “It was natural for women to have long hair, thus indicating they should be veiled.”

In today’s society that is being driven in many respects by the

liberation movement, the concept of the headcovering may seem out of place. Yet, only 40 years ago it was not considered out of place by devout worshipers who understood the significance of the headcovering in worship. As a people called out for the hope of becoming a kingdom of priests, we conform to a higher calling, Revelation 5:10. We submit to the One we worship with the hope that we would be pleasing to Him.

Paul wrote that when it comes to True Worship, we must not let the world, its ways or customs dictate how we will honor Yahweh: “I entreat you, then, Brothers, by the mercies of [Elohim], to offer your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to Elohim, for this is your rational worship. Do not conform to the fashion of this world; but be transformed by the complete change that has come over your minds, so that you may discern what [Elohim’s] will is — all that is good, acceptable, and perfect,” Romans 12:1-2, *The Twentieth Century New Testament (TCNT)*.

Paul completes his discourse on the headcovering in 1 Corinthians 11 by enjoining: “If, however, any one still thinks it right to contest the point — well, we have no such custom, nor have the [Assemblies of Yahweh]” (*TCNT*).

Neither do we. Our desire as Yahweh’s people is to honor Him in all things, putting our own interests and wants secondary regardless of whether it may conflict with popular practice or social dictate. In so doing, we show our humility and willingness to conform to Yahweh’s Word, while resting in the assurance that He will honor our worship.



Rapture Ready?

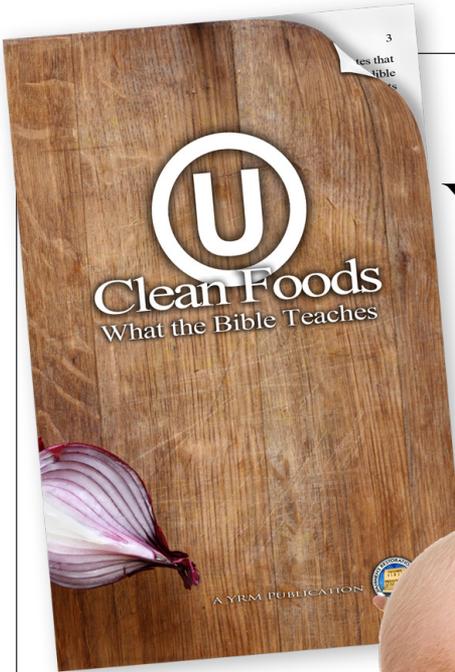
We are nowhere told in the inspired Word to expect to be snatched away to heaven to watch our earthbound loved ones suffer and die agonizing deaths during the worst-ever disasters and conflagration prophesied to engulf this planet. In fact, the word "rapture" never appears in the Scriptures.



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