

## ~HEAD COVERING (183)

- Aside from being an item of dress, head covering has a spiritual significance among God's servants in connection with headship and subjection.
- The apostle Paul sets forth the God-ordained principle of headship operative in the Christian congregation, saying,
- But I want you to know that the **head** of every man is the Christ. In turn the **head** of a woman is the man. In turn the **head** of the Christ is God. (1 Corinthians 11:3)
- Paul points out that a **head** covering is a sign of authority that the woman should wear in acknowledging the **headship** of the man, submitting herself to proper theocratic authority, when she is praying or is prophesying in the congregation.
- Every man that prays or prophesies having something on his **head** shames his **head**. (1 Corinthians 11:4)
- But every woman that prays or prophesies with her **head** uncovered shames her **head**, for it is one and the same as if she were a woman with a shaved **head**. (1 Corinthians 11:5)
- For if a woman does not cover herself, let her also be shorn, but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. (1 Corinthians 11:6)
- That is why the woman ought to have a sign of authority upon her **head** because of the angels. (1 Corinthians 11:10)
- The apostle shows, conversely, that the man should not wear a **head** covering when taking the lead before the congregation, as when praying or prophesying. It is his normal position under God's arrangement.
- For the man to wear a **head** covering in these instances would bring shame upon his own **head**. It would also indicate disrespect for Jesus Christ as his **head** as well as for the Supreme **Head**, Yehowah God, for man is, God's image and glory, originally made as God's representative on earth.

- He should not obscure this fact by wearing a head covering. The man was created first, prior to the woman, the woman is out of man and was created for the sake of the man.
- Her qualities are an expression of the man's honor and dignity, just as the man's qualities are a reflection of the honor and dignity of God.
- Therefore the Christian woman should be happy to acknowledge her subordinate position by the modesty and subjection she displays, and she should be willing to represent this visibly by wearing a veil or other material as a head covering.
- She should not try to usurp the man's place but should, rather, uphold his headship.
- Every man that prays or prophesies having something on his **head** shames his head. (1 Corinthians 11:4)
- For a man ought not to have his **head** covered, as he is God's image and glory, but the woman is man's glory. (1 Corinthians 11:7)
- For man is not out of woman, but woman out of man. (1 Corinthians 11:8)
- And, what is more, man was not created for the sake of the woman, **but woman for the sake of the man**. (1 Corinthians 11:9)
- That is why the woman ought to have a sign of authority upon her **head** because of the angels. (1 Corinthians 11:10)
- Paul calls attention to the naturally long hair of the women in the congregation to which he wrote as a continuous God-given reminder that the woman is by nature subject to the man.
- She should, therefore, acknowledge this when performing what are customarily the man's duties in the Christian congregation, and she should wear some form of **head** covering besides her hair, which she normally always has.
- She will thereby show that she recognizes the God-ordained **headship** principle and that she makes a distinction between her

normal daily activities and the performing of special duties in the congregation when, for example, there is no qualified male member present, or when she is teaching others individually in a formal session for Bible study in the presence of her husband or a male member of the congregation.

- Besides, in connection with the Lord neither is woman without man nor man without woman. ([1 Corinthians 11:11](#))
- For just as the woman is out of the man, so also the man is through the woman, but all things are out of God. ([1 Corinthians 11:12](#))
- Judge for your own selves. Is it fitting for a woman to pray uncovered to God? ([1 Corinthians 11:13](#))
- Does not nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him. ([1 Corinthians 11:14](#))
- But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? Because her hair is given her instead of a **headdress**. ([1 Corinthians 11:15](#))
- As a powerful reason for the congregation of God to follow this procedure, the apostle points to the angels of God, who are sent forth to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation.
- But with reference to which one of the angels has he ever said; Sit at my right hand, until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet? ([Hebrews 1:13](#))
- Are they not all spirits for public service, sent forth to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation? ([Hebrews 1:14](#))
- These mighty spirit persons are interested in and concerned with Christians keeping their places within God's arrangement so that theocratic order and pure worship are maintained before God.
- That is why the woman ought to have a sign of authority upon her **head** because of the angels. ([1 Corinthians 11:10](#))
- The need for this counsel to the congregation at ancient Corinth is better understood when we realize that it was the general custom then for women always to be veiled in public. Only those of loose morals went unveiled.

- And the pagan priestesses at the temples evidently followed the practice of removing their veils and letting their hair hang disheveled when claiming to be under divine inspiration.
- Such a practice in the Christian congregation would be disgraceful and a flouting of Yehowah God's arrangement of **headship** and subjection.
- Paul concluded his argument by saying that if anyone disputed for any custom other than what Paul set forth, the congregation should nevertheless follow the apostles counsel regarding the wearing of a head covering. This makes such instruction applicable at all times and places in the Christian congregation.
- However, if any man seems to dispute for some other custom, we have no other, neither do the congregations of God. (**1 Corinthians 11:16**)
- The Hebrews in ancient times, aside from wearing a **headdress** as an article of apparel, would cover their heads to signify a condition of mourning.
- And David was going up by the ascent of the Olives, weeping as he went up, with his **head** covered, and he was walking barefoot, and all the people that were with him covered each one his head, and they went up weeping as they went up. (**2 Samuel 15:30**)
- And their majestic ones themselves have sent their insignificant ones for water. They have come to the ditches. They have found no water. They have returned with their vessels empty. They have been put to shame and have been disappointed, and they have covered their **head**. (**Jeremiah 14:3**)
- Women also showed modesty in this way. When Rebekah was about to meet Isaac, she proceeded to take a **headcloth** and to cover herself, evidently as a symbol of her subjection to him as the one who was to become her husband.
- Then she said to the servant; Who is that man there walking in the field to meet us? And the servant said; It is my master. And she proceeded to take a **head**-cloth and to cover herself. (**Genesis 24:65**)

**See Also HEADDRESS**  
**See Also HEADSHIP**