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Unveiling Women's Veils of Authority

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UNVEILING WOMEN'S VEILS OF AUTHORITY

Lynne Hilton Wilson

ABSTRACT: *The Apostle Paul's theological explanation for female veil wearing (1 Corinthians 11:2–13) highlights the woman's head covering as an expression of female empowerment or "authority/exousia." It appears that the Corinthian saints struggled with this tradition, as Paul preceded the discussion with, "but I would have you know/thelō de" (1 Corinthians 11:3). Rather than merely restating the dress code for certain prayers, Paul laid out the doctrinal background underlying the imagery. He began with the order of creation from the Garden of Eden. God was the "kephale," meaning source or origin of Christ, who was the source of man, who was the source of woman. Paul taught that God's glory (referring to man) should pray unveiled, and by the same token, humanity's glory (referring to woman) should address God with her head covered (1 Corinthians 11:7). The early church interpreted the relationship between Adam and Eve typologically. The Edenic couple typified Christ and his Church — the Bridegroom and Bride. In this typological scenario, Eve (or the Church) worked through the mediator Adam (or Christ). In either a symbolic or literal interpretation, Paul described this empowering veil as a sign of unique female authority to pray and prophecy (1 Corinthians 11:5). By covering her head, female saints received "power on her head" and could interact with angels (1 Corinthians 11:10). Paul concluded by emphasizing that men and women are completely interdependent — woman was created from man, while man is born of woman (1 Corinthians 11:11–12). In this regard we see an equal status between men and women in their relationship with the Lord. Their relationship focuses on their union with each other and God.*

Western cultures often associate veiled women with subjugation and misogyny.¹ However, we find scriptural sources that communicate positive empowerment about veils as well (1 Corinthians 11:10; Exodus 34:33–35; Genesis 24:65). One of those examples, 1 Corinthians 11:2–13, empowers a woman to pray and prophesy with her head covered. While women’s veils in ancient societies were worn as a symbol of modesty, subservience, fashion, or marital status, we find early Christian women donning veils for prayers to be connected to prophecy, as a symbol of their authority and humility before God.

Cultural Background for Veiling Women

By way of background, for “a Roman woman, ‘to get married’ and ‘to veil oneself’ were exactly the same word. . . . The veil was the flag of female virtue, status, and security.”² Avant-garde Roman women of the first century were “more keen on showing off [their] elaborate hair-style than on constantly wearing an old-fashioned veil.”³ Ancient coins of aristocracy feature royal women wearing head coverings for a social or fashion statement.⁴



Faustina II, Wife of Marcus Aurelius, 147–175/76

1. Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum, eds., *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., (Detroit, New York, San Francisco: Thomson Gale, 2007), s.v. Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante, “Women,” in *The World of Roman Costume* (Madison, WI: University Press, 2001), 8, 155, 186.

2. Sarah Ruden, *Paul Among the People: The Apostle Reinterpreted and Reimagined in His Own Time* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2010), 85. “The veil held great symbolism: it reminded everyone that all freeborn women, women with families to protect them, were supposed to enter adulthood already married and that they were supposed to stay chastely married or else that they were chastely widowed until the end of their lives.” Ruden elaborated, “the ancients believed that it was female hair’s nature to inflame men, almost like breasts or genitals: men experienced women’s hair as powerfully inescapably erotic” (88).

3. Ibid., 86.

4. Zach Beasley, “Faustina II, Wife of Marcus Aurelius,” Photograph, *Beast Coins*, Permission received September 4, 2014, <http://www.beastcoins.com/Topical/RomanWomen/RomanWomen.htm>. Ibid., “Faustina I, Wife of Antoninus Pius”.



Faustina I, Wife of Antoninus Pius, 138–140

The veil also had religious significance for those who worshiped the Egyptian goddess of Night. The cult instructed women to anoint and cover their heads with a light piece of linen fabric while praying.⁵ In other circles, a Pharisaic Jewish woman veiled herself from head to foot whenever she left her home as a symbol of modesty and female subservience.⁶ In Middle Assyrian law, a wife claimed the right to wear a veil in public to differentiate her standing from a concubine or slave.⁷ Her *veil* was a sign of prominence and authorized her actions and inheritance as a legal wife.⁸ In contrast, the Christian practice of women

5. Jan Assmann, *From Akhenaten to Moses: Ancient Egypt and Religious Change* (Oxford University Press and American University in Cairo Press, 2014), 110. Bonnie Thurston, *Women in the New Testament* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing, 1998), 26. Worship of the Egyptian goddess of Night (Isis) was illegal in the early Roman Empire; the rites were practiced in Cenchreae, just a few miles from where Paul lived and preached in Corinth. Unlike many indigenous Roman religions, women in this Egyptian sect were allowed to serve as religious leaders. In this setting, women were equal or superior to their male consorts and considered worthy of being anointed and communing with deity.

6. Mishnah, *bGittin* 90b: “[A] man ‘who sees his wife going out into the street with her head uncovered,’ has cause for divorce. Even though the Mishnah was not codified until 160–200 CE, it records older rabbinic traditions and sayings, including many from the Second Temple period. The most influential rabbis quoted were Hillel and Shammai from the late first century BCE. Also see *Encyclopedia Judaica*, (2007), s.v. “Women.” C.D. Yonge, trans, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Reprint 2004), 817.

7. Hennie J. Marsman, *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003), 123. Deborah Lyons and Raymond Westbrook, *Women and Property in Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean Societies* (Boston: Center for Hellenistic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University, 2005), 1.

8. Ruden, *Paul Among the People*, 88. Ruden sees Paul’s request for Christian women to wear a veil as “Paul was being protective rather than chauvinistic.” The lack of a veil may have been distracting to men “and stigmatizing to women.”

veiling for prayers, as described in 1 Corinthians 11, differed from the cultural usage of the day.⁹

Paul among the Corinthians

Paul wrote to a culturally mixed audience of Christian converts in an attempt to redirect their understanding about women praying and prophesying while veiled.¹⁰ On his second apostolic mission he established a branch of Christianity in Corinth and stayed for eighteen months (Acts 18:1–11).¹¹ Yet, after his departure, the infant church struggled to understand the apostle's teachings (1 Corinthians 1:11; 5:9; 7:1; and 16:10–11). The letter insinuates that the saints struggled with inexperienced membership and conflicting backgrounds. This is not surprising in light of the fact that Corinth had a reputation for wealth, worldliness, and immorality. The city's unique geography allowed it to control the neck of land between mainland Greece and the Peloponnesus, making it a double port city.¹² As such, it seemed to have a double portion of promiscuity.¹³ Paul's letter attempts to realign several false moral and religious traditions.¹⁴

1 Corinthians 11:2–13

In 1 Corinthians, Paul boldly corrects the saints on many issues — one of which is the need for a woman to cover her head during certain prayers (1 Corinthians 11:2–13). He teaches the Corinthian women that they could participate in the sacred experience of speaking by divine inspiration,

9. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Keys to 1 Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 167, 170, 172.

10. In addition to the text that points to conflicting understandings of Paul's expectations, the names of Corinthian saints referenced in the epistle are half Greek and half Latin, suggesting different familial backgrounds.

11. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries: 1 Corinthians* (New York: Random House-Doubleday, 2008), 30–35. As evidence of the New Testament claims of a Jewish community in Corinth, archeologists found a broken lintel stone that announced the "Synagogue of the Hebrews" and other artifacts mentioned in the New Testament.

12. Between 625 and 585 BC, the Greeks cut a five-foot-wide track through the rock peninsula connecting the ports on the Aegean and Adriatic Seas to create a more direct sailing route around southern Greece. It saved travel time as merchants could pull or wheel their ships across the four-mile isthmus.

13. Fitzmyer, *Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries: 1 Corinthians*, 35.

14. Craig S. Keener, *1–2 Corinthians* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 92; argues that Paul addresses a "clash of social values: ... uncovered hair to many connoted seduction and immodesty."

with their veils signifying their authority to do so (1 Corinthians 11:5,10, NRSV). Yet many biblical scholars find these verses a jumbled mess or a discussion of hairstyles and dress.¹⁵ With this as a disclaimer (see note), I do not. I draw on restored scripture and teachings to help decipher the early saints' practice of covering a woman's head during particular prayers.¹⁶ I find these verses point to an exalted role of women.

Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. (1 Corinthians 11:2)

Paul opens the subject by commending the Corinthian saints for keeping the "ordinances" (KJV) or "traditions" (NRSV), he taught them. The word "ordinances" carries significant meaning for Latter-day Saints, but the Greek word "*paradosis*" has a broader definition that includes "handing over, delivery, hence *teaching* committed to a pupil ... transmission, handing down, hence that which is received."¹⁷ Here it is a noun and modern English translations use "directions" (DBT), "traditions" (RSV, ESV, NASV), or "teachings" (NIV). In the Greek Old Testament (LXX), in use at the time of the late Second Temple, *paradosis* also describes the teachings that were handed down orally.¹⁸

15. William Orr and James Arthur Walther, *Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries: 1 Corinthians* (New York: Random House-Doubleday, 1976), vii; "it is perilous to try to modernize Paul." Sarah Ruden speaks of this whole passage in parentheses with "grounds for considering these verses not genuine ... rough ... clunky repetition." A few pages later she bemoans, "the passage doesn't flow, it sputters with emotion, gets incoherent, changes tactics, and ends almost with a snarl." *Paul Among the People*, 85, 88. Other interpretations who also differ from mine are found in: Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 189, 179–91; Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing, 2000), 363.

16. As a disclaimer, my thoughts on 1 Corinthians 11:2–13 do not purport to be a culminating study on the scholarship available on this difficult passage. My observations come through my LDS lens. I understand that many real differences exist between the Corinthian branch and today's church. But even while honoring the historicity of first-century Christianity, we can find Paul's message illuminating to Christian women who veil to pray.

17. G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 1014. Emphasis in original. *Strong's New Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* defines *paradosis* as "from; transmission, a precept; spec. the Jewish traditionary law" (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 54 of the Greek Dictionary section.

18. The term *paradoseis* is found thirteen times in the New Testament, eight of which are in Matthew 15 and Mark 7, where Christ discusses the "traditions

For our discussion on 1 Corinthians 11, it is especially helpful to see how Paul uses the term “*paradosis*” in this epistle — both as a noun and verb.¹⁹ Just a few verses following Paul’s council to women veiling in prayer, he uses *paradosis* again, “I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you” (1 Corinthians 11:23).²⁰ The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* explains, “The essential point for Paul is that it has been handed down (1 Corinthians 15:3) and that it derives from the Lord (11:23).”²¹ Whatever type of teachings Paul refers to with “*paradosis*,” he passed down the practice of women praying with a veil.

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. (1 Corinthians 11:3)

The first phrase of verse 3, “*but I would have you know*,” or “*I want you to understand*,” suggests that the saints had, at least partially, misunderstood Paul’s previous instructions to “keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you” (1 Corinthians 11:2–3). Paul uses the next phrase four times in this letter, “*but I would /thelō de*” (1 Corinthians 7:32; 10:20; 14:5). Interestingly, each time he uses it to correct a misconception. In chapter 11, he explains why women should cover their heads while praying and why men did not (1 Corinthians 11:4–11). His tone sounds as if the saints of Corinth had a problem with following this specific teaching.

Paul wants to correct this misunderstanding, but rather than merely restate the dress code, he explains the important doctrinal background that underlines the veil imagery. He explains the series of relationships established

of the elders” with the Jewish scribes (Matthew 15:2, 3, 6; Mark 7:3, 5, 8, 9, 13; also see Galatians 1:14; Colossians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:15, 3:6; and 1 Peter 1:18). Some of these *traditions* refer to ritual behavior found *not* in the written law, but in the 10,000 oral laws. Pharisees and others claimed that these oral laws began with Moses and were passed down for 1,500 years. Others may be new Christian teachings as described in 1 Corinthians 11:2.

19. 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 1 Corinthians 11:2, 23; 5:3; Colossians 2:8; Galatians 1:14.

20. Looking beyond Paul into other early Christian sources, we find *paradosis* generally referring to unwritten sacred “tradition given by Christ, preached by apostles, guarded by fathers.” These teachings handed down through words or example and included the sacrament of Jesus’s Last Supper and “the later activities of the Twelve.” Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 1014–15.

21. G. Kittel, ed., Geoffrey W. Bromiley, translator, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1965), 6.172–73; Buchsel, “παράδοσις.” In 1 Corinthians 11:23, Paul uses *paradosis* to imply the Lord’s Supper.

from the order of creation: God-Christ-man-woman. Paul reviews that God is the *head* of Christ, who is the *head* of man, who is the *head* of woman. The word “head/*kephale*” has multiple meanings in both Greek and English and most often refers to: 1) the physical head or body and 2) figuratively, the origin or source.²² According to the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, the word “head/*kephale*” used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 deals with the relationship of man and woman “at the very foundations of their creaturehood.”²³ Whether or not we understand, or agree with Paul, it appears that he sees God the Father as the source, starting point, or origin of Christ (John 20:17),²⁴ who was the “origin” of man (John 1:3), and man, via his side-rib, the “origin” of his partner, woman (Genesis 2:22).²⁵ By the end of his argument, this linear connection loops around into a circle with woman becoming a co-creator with God (1 Corinthians 11:12).

22. Murphy-O'Connor, *Keys to 1 Corinthians*, 169–72. For a different perspective, see Wayne Grudem, “Does Kephale (‘Head’) Mean ‘Source’ or ‘Authority Over’ in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples,” *Trinity Journal* ns 6.1 (Spring 1985): 38–59, https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/tj/kephale_grudem.pdf. Grudem argues against the definition of “source,” but his study demonstrates that 53% of the 2,336 examples of ancient Greek Literature he examined use “head” physically, and the next most common use, 23% of the texts, use it figuratively to mean the “starting point” (51).

23. Gerhard Kittel, ed, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1965), 3:679. I disagree with this interpretation that “woman is the reflection of man to the degree that in her created being she points to man, and only with and through him to God.” This speaks more of the perspective of the translators (writing for Nazi Germany) than Paul’s text as he explains in 1 Corinthians 11:8–11.

24. God the Father created Jesus’s spirit body, His mortal body, and His resurrected body (see Luke 1:34–35; Acts 13:34). Latter-day Saints (LDS) believe Jesus is the literal “Son” of God and the premortal Jehovah, God of the Old Testament (Mosiah 3:5–8). The Father then is the source of the Son. Because they define God and Christ through the Trinity, my description runs contrary to that of most Christian biblical scholars, who prefer the definition of superior authority or rank. The Council of Nicaea was called in 325 CE to determine the relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Christ. The issue was not resolved for centuries. For the LDS view of the Father and Son, see Joseph Smith-History, 1:17; 3 Nephi 9:15; D&C 130:22.

25. For many Trinitarian scholars, this chain is difficult because the Old Testament does not explicitly discuss Jesus Christ as source or creator of man, rather Elohim or Jehovah. For Latter-day Saints though, the pre-eminence of Christ’s deification in earlier dispensations makes sense of this difficult passage. Some Christian scholars question how Paul understood the Godhead, with the Father as the source of the Son, but it is not as confusing for those who deny the Trinity. Latter-day Saints also define the creation through Moses 3:23; Abraham 5:17; 3 Nephi 9:15; and D&C 29:34.

This chain of interlocking relationships links humanity with their creators and becomes the foundation of Paul's instruction here.²⁶ Three times in ten verses he uses different words to describe the genders intertwining origins — the woman, Eve, originates from the man, Adam, and a man-child comes from woman (1 Corinthians 11:3, 8, 12, NASB). Both genders are connected to their creators. Looking at Paul's defense as a whole, he discusses a symbiotic connection in which men and women have mutual responsibility for one another.

This bears highlighting, as Paul does not make a case for male superiority.²⁷ In the same section, he speaks of woman as privileged with authority and indispensable to men and vice versa (1 Corinthians 11:10–12). Outside of these verses, we find “head/*kephale*,” used forty-nine times in the New Testament to describe either a physical head or the Savior.²⁸ While some interpret this verse to say men are to rule over women, I do not find evidence for that in the Pauline epistles at large, nor specifically in the context of 1 Corinthians 11. Whenever Paul refers to a “ruler” he uses other words — for example, “*rulers/archon* (Romans 13:3), “*rule/preside/proistemi*” (1 Timothy 3:5; 5:17), “*rule/govern/brabeuo*” (Colossians 3:15), and “*rule/leader/hegeomai*” (Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24) — not *kephale*.²⁹ Part of the transforming teachings that the

26. An alternative definition of “head/*kephale*” is “authority,” as a result, some scholars, including Robert Allard, Mark Finney, and Ed Christian, see Paul teaching the proper ecclesiastical relationships — beginning with God who presides over all, to Christ who presides over men, and men who preside over women. Robert E. Allard, “Freedom on your head’ (1 Corinthians 11:2–16): A Paradigm for the Structure of Paul’s Ethics,” in *Word & World* 30, no. 4 (Fall 2010): 399–407. Mark Finney, “Honour, Head-coverings and Headship: 1 Corinthians 11.2–16 in its Social Context,” in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33, no.1 (2010). Also, Ed Christian, “Prophets under God’s Authority: Head coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:1–16,” in *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 1, nos. 1–2 (1999): 291–95.

27. After carefully counting each piece of advice to women and men in the New Testament (and in the Pauline corpus specifically), I found more positive statements than negative ones. For a discussion each negative reference (including 1 Corinthians 14:34–35; and 1 Timothy 2:9–15) by Paul to women see Lynne Hilton Wilson, *Christ’s Emancipation of Women in the New Testament from their Cultural Background and Baggage* (Palo Alto, CA: Good Sound Publishing, 2015).

28. References in the New Testament where “head/*kephale*,” speaks of the Savior are found in: Acts 4:11; Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 2:10; 1 Peter 2:7.

29. Timothy and Barbara Friberg, *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 77; “active rule over, be leader of.” *Strong’s New Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* defines it, “first (in rank or power): chief (ruler), magistrate, prince, ruler (16, #758).

Lord restored denounced unrighteous dominion and superiority of any kind (Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17, etc.).³⁰ Paul's verses on veiling women encourage a positive interrelationship between man, women and God; they do not promote gender supremacy.

Paul does not intend this lineup to sound demeaning, as he explains in verses 10 and 12. His analogy applies specifically to the order of creation. In the ancient world, ideas that linked someone with deity were honorable and empowering. The New Testament does not suggest that women needed a detour or middleman to communicate with God. Both men and women pray directly to God the Father (Luke 11:1–2; Acts 1:14; 16:13; Romans 8:26; etc.), both men and women had access to the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1–11), and both build the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 12:12–31). Paul describes men and women as team players, not as competing individuals lined up in order of importance (1 Corinthians 12:7). There are a few odd verses that contradict this.³¹ Yet the majority of the New Testament — including the Pauline epistles — encourage women to pray, serve, teach and witness.³²

Paul's orderly line-up does not disrupt the other scriptural admonition for men and women to work side by side as companions, "help meet[s]," "counterpart[s]" (Genesis 2:18, KJV, YLT), or "yokefellow[s]" (Philippians 4:3). By working in the same direction with God, men and women assist in building God's kingdom on earth. Whether this team effort is described as an alignment from the order of creation or as working side-by-side, the result is the same. Christ, Peter, and Paul taught that husbands and wives need to work toward the same goal to become joint heirs (John 17:21–23; 1 Peter 3:7; Romans 8:17). In 1 Corinthians 11,

30. The Gospels record many references to Jesus calling for leaders to serve. For example: "whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mark 10:44).

31. For example, 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 sticks out like a sore thumb, interrupting Paul's teachings on the positive relationship of men and women. Not knowing Paul's circumstances inhibits our full understanding. Greek manuscripts from Ephesus, some of the most trusted and oldest New Testament manuscripts, do not include 1 Corinthians 14:34–35. Additionally, textual critics find a break in the text between verse 33 and 36. Paul's thought, is contradicted by these two verses which suggests a later editor added them as his interpretation. It seems odd that Paul contradicts himself within the same portion of the same epistle. These troublesome verses fit with thinking from the end of the first century. I find it easier to see them as added by a copyist rather than Paul.

32. Matthew 5:3–11; 9:19–22; 14:21, 15:23; 38; 28:5–10; Mark 7:25–29; 14:4–6; Luke 7:39; 10:4, 39–42; 13:12; John 4:7–27; 8:10; 17:21; Acts 1:14; 9:36; 16:1, 36; 17:4, 12, 34; Romans 1:8; Philippians 4:3; and Ephesians 5:25, 31; etc.

Paul advocates mutually supportive relationships (11:11), but first he describes the order of creation as a linear link to God to explain why women cover their heads during special prayers.

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered,
dishonoureth his head. (1 Corinthians 11:4)

In the context of verse 4, Paul states that men who cover their head dishonor their “head” or God.³³ He uses the dual meaning for head: “Every man praying or prophesying, having his *head* [physically] covered, dishonoureth his *head* [figuratively].” In keeping with the creation narrative, Paul’s injunction follows the reasoning that man was created in the image and glory of God, so when man communes with God, he should not cover himself but acknowledge that affiliation (Genesis 1:27). By covering his head, a man would cover the image of God, thereby figuratively denying the power and dignity the Creator bestowed on him at creation. *In other words*, if man covers his head, he dishonors his *origin*. To do otherwise was to devalue his Christian beliefs. However problematic male head covering may have been, it appears the bigger issue was that women were not covering their heads, as this becomes the subject for the next five verses.

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. (1 Corinthians 11:5)

The first phrase in verse five clarifies an enormous breakthrough in worship for Christian women. Paul explicitly declares that women prayed and prophesied in early Christian public worship. Paul’s example of women praying and prophesying may refer to private, personal experiences, but the larger context suggests they were part of a special congregational experience with both men and women. It corresponds with Joel 2:28, where the Spirit pours out the gift of prophecy on both men and women as “your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.”

This Christian practice marked a dramatic departure from Paul’s previous Pharisaic traditions,³⁴ where female Jews’ religious experiences

33. For more information on men wearing veils in the first century AD, both the social and liturgical, see, Mark Finney, “Honour, Head-coverings and Headship,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33, no. 1 (2010).

34. *Mishnah*, *Ketuboth* 6.6; *Gittin* 9.10. Jewish women were not allowed to speak in their worship or synagogue, nor in any public gathering — in fact, a husband could divorce his wife for speaking to another man (see chapter 6, under “Divorce”).

were sharply curtailed — from pilgrimages to synagogue worship.³⁵ More applicable to Corinth, in Greco-Roman religious traditions, women usually worshiped with other women. When both genders joined in Greco-Roman fertility cults, women acted as prostitutes.³⁶

Paul's choice of wording for "prophesy/propheteuo/to speak forth under inspiration" may refer to women giving sermons or a testimony as well (Revelation 19:10). In either case, it represents enormous liberation as the whole idea of women participating in the public worship services was limited at the time.³⁷ Jewish men dominated the public world and confined women's worship primarily to their homes.³⁸ Outside of her home, the Pharisees preferred women unseen and unheard.³⁹ Paul's

35. *Mishnah, Kiddushin*, 4:13. The Mishnah forbade women from teaching in the synagogue. After the New Testament, sometime around the second century AD, rabbis added lattice barriers to their synagogues to further separate the women from the men. Archeologists have found these lattice barriers in a Mesopotamian synagogue from AD 245. Then to segregate even more, between the third and seventh centuries, separate entrances and galleries were built to keep the women on separate floors from the men. See *Encyclopedia Judaica* (2007), s.v. "Synagogue." Not only did some Rabbis discourage women from speaking and worshiping in public, one view discouraged women from learning the Mosaic Law even at home. *Mishnah, Sotah*, 3.4. "If a man gives his daughter a knowledge of the Law it is as though he taught her lechery."

36. Thurston, *Women in the New Testament*, 26. Greco-Roman women had several opportunities to worship in their religious organizations. Religious cults developed around occupations, social classes, and stages of women's life. For example, young girls worshiped the goddess *Fortuna Virginitis*; newly married youth worshiped *Fortuna Primigenia* to encourage childbirth. The cult of Venus, *Changer of Hearts*, promoted marital fidelity in women. *Fortunata Muliebris* was for women who married only once. Prostitutes worshiped *Fortuna Virilis* in men's baths. Sects trained young boys and girls to become "divine organs of inspiration and prophecy." Ben Witherington III, *Women and the Genesis of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 15. *Pythoress*, the prophetess or oracle of Apollo, was a widow from Delphi who tended the temple fires faithfully. Women acted in orgiastic rites such as the Greek Dionysian and Bacchanalia mysteries. The greatest Roman religious honor for women was the six Vestal Virgin priestesses (*ibid.*, 25).

37. *Encyclopedia Judaica* (2007), s.v. "Women."

38. Dan W. Clanton, *The Good, the Bold, and the Beautiful* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 24; "From kosher laws to the recitation of the *Shema*, from private prayer to Sabbath practices, not only would women have been present, they would have been active participants due to their dominance in the private, domestic sphere."

39. Judaeus Philo, *Special Laws III* (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1967), 169, 171; "Marketplaces and council-halls, law-courts and gatherings, and meetings where a large number of people are assembled, and open-air life with full scope

statement is an enormous step forward for women in communal worship.⁴⁰

In verses 5 and 6, Paul states that women should cover their heads during special prayers or prophesying — unlike men. However, his argument seems exactly the opposite for women. When a woman covers “her head/*kephale*” (physically), she showed honor and respect to “her origin/*kephale*” (husband, Christ, and God). To rephrase Paul’s words, a man honors his relationship to God by uncovering his head, while a woman honors her ultimate head, God, by veiling her head.⁴¹ Paul explains this dichotomy in verse 7, but first in verse 6, he expresses his opinion that a woman’s head without a covering is as disgraceful as shaving her head.⁴²

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. (1 Corinthians 11:7)

for discussion and action – all these are suitable to men both in war and peace. The women are best suited to the indoor life which never strays from the house. ... A woman then, should not be a busybody, meddling with matters outside her household concerns, but should seek a life of seclusion.”

40. Carol Myers and Toni Craven and Ross Shepard Kraemer, eds., *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001). The New Testament includes over a hundred examples of Christian women in public worship as witnesses, co-workers, servants of the church, leaders of house churches (Acts 12:12; 16: 15, 40; Romans 16:3–5; 1 Corinthians 1:11; Colossians 4:15), including one “prominent among the apostles” (Romans 16:7, *isv*).

41. I use the word *veiling* because some English translations use the word “unveiled” (American Standard Version, English Revised Version, New Heart English Bible, World English Bible, etc.), while others use “uncovered.” The Greek is a vague reference to something “down from the head.”

42. Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, in *The New Complete Works of Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1999), 751. Josephus mentions a woman named Bernice who shaved her head in conjunction with taking a Nazarite vow. Even though her vow was noble and voluntary, she was still publicly humiliated and shamed for the loss of her hair. This phrase from 1 Corinthians 11:6, had a dramatic effect in the late fourth century, when the early Church father Chrysostom wrote, “If thou cast away the covering appointed by the law of God, cast away likewise that appointed by nature.” St. Chrysostom, “Homily XXVI,” in *Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Philip Schaff (Oxford: Parker, 1891), 152.

In verse 7, Paul references both creation stories from Genesis chapters 1 and 2.⁴³ Modern revelation teaches of a spiritual creation before the physical creation, which may help clarify the dichotomy between the two Genesis accounts (D&C 29:32; Moses 3:5). Genesis 1:26–27 describes both male and female created “in the image of God,” and both are given dominion over the earth. Genesis 2:20–22 describes Adam naming all the animals, unable to find one equal or complementary companion for himself, until God takes part of his rib cage to create a “partner” (New English Bible), or “his one before” (Genesis 2:20, Transparent English Bible).⁴⁴

Paul references both of these creation stories, yet he does not follow our Genesis wording.⁴⁵ Instead, Paul changes the first creation account from plural to singular with only man representing the “glory of God.”

Genesis 1:27	1 Corinthians 11:7
God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.	<i>he is the image and glory of God</i>

It appears that Paul wants to accentuate woman as the “glory of man,” as something different from the “glory of God” (1 Corinthians 11:7) — which causes this reader to ask *why*? Some limit the discussion to gender-distinctive clothing, but I see Paul exploring the theology behind human interactions with God.

Within the context of this chapter, letter, and New Testament at large, we can safely assume Paul does *not* mean that God created woman solely to glorify men, nor that man could use woman for his glory in a manipulative or disrespectful manner. Although Josephus and many contemporaries of Paul disagreed, Paul repeatedly states that woman is not inferior to man

43. *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), s.v. “Ancient Sources.”

44. A more literal translation is found in the Transparent English Bible (TEB) where they use side, not rib; “And YHVH ELOHIM made a deep sleep fall upon the *soil*-man, and he slept; and he took one from his sides, and he closed flesh under it. And YHVH ELOHIM built the side that he took from the *soil*-man into a woman, and he made her come toward the *soil*-man. And the *soil*-man said, “This one this time — bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh! To this one will be called “woman,” because from a man this one was taken” (Genesis 2:21–23).

45. E.A. Speiser, *The Anchor Bible Genesis* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 7. Although Paul deviates from the English versions of Genesis 1:27, we do not know if his memory or copy of the text may have been different, thus he uses a singular man, rather than using the *plural* to denote humanity as in Genesis 1:27. Biblical commentaries often mention the plural nature of *Adam* in Genesis 1:26–27.

(1 Corinthians 11:7, 11).⁴⁶ Understanding what Paul means by “the woman is the glory of man” (1 Corinthians 11:7), is vital to understanding why Paul thinks a woman should cover her head during special prayers.

Narrowing in on the “glory of God,” Moses understood that God’s work and glory is “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). Without the union of man and woman in procreation, God’s work and glory cannot be eternally achieved. The union is a glorious thing and it produces more glory. Nevertheless, in the hierarchy of God, the glory of humanity should not overshadow the glory of God. As children are born to a woman, she represents the “glory of man[kind]” and veils her head out of respect to her ultimate head, God.

Paul describes woman as a symbol of human potential as she facilitates human reproduction and glory. Paul teaches that during this time when men and women commune with God through prayer and prophecy, the man takes on a vicarious role to represent the “image and glory of God,” while a woman represents the image and glory of supplicating humanity (1 Corinthians 11:7). Man does not cover because he acts in the image of God. Woman, on the other hand represents humanity, so she reverently and symbolically covers humanity’s glory when she stands in the presence of God.⁴⁷ This interpretation is consistent with the scriptures that describe woman or bride as a symbol of God’s people or the church.⁴⁸

For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.
Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman
for the man. (1 Corinthians 11:8–9)

46. Josephus, *Against Apion*, in *The New Complete Works of Josephus*, 973. “A woman is inferior to her husband in all things.”

47. Catherine Thomas, CES Symposium, unpublished manuscript, 1992. “What makes all of this so hard in practice? It may seem unfair that the man is subject to a perfect head, and the woman to an imperfect head. But how much humility the man must cultivate to hear the Lord’s voice! And how much humility the woman must exercise to encourage and rely on her imperfect husband to make that connection. The man’s presidency over the woman is designed to be as much of a tutorial for him as it is for the woman to submit to his presidency. A very fine tuning is required of each. The challenge of perfecting ourselves is great indeed, but the challenge of perfecting ourselves in a relationship is greater.” Catherine Thomas pointed out the delicate innuendoes and powerful learning opportunities this connection creates.

48. Isaiah 50:1; 66:8; Hosea 1; 3:1; Jeremiah 3:8; 33:11; John 3:29; Revelation 21:9; etc.

According to Genesis 2:18–23, woman's arrival in Eden fulfilled the need for man's "counterpart" (YLT) or "authority corresponding to him" (ISV) or "a helper suitable for him" (NSB) or "help meet" (KJV). Significantly, God did not provide Adam immediately with a wife but waited for him to name "all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field" (Genesis 2:20). It is as if God waited to introduce this important creation until Adam recognized his own inability as a single man, "but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him." Once Adam recognized his need, he received a co-partner or equal, not a subordinate or servant.

In this sense, woman is "the glory of man" because she allows humanity to achieve their potential and glory. God created females to carry and grow embryos. This does not mean women are valued only if they can produce offspring. Nor does it mean that most women bear children. However, it is why Adam named his wife "Life" or "Living," translated as "Eve/*Chavvah*." With this unique potential to bring forth life, woman reflects the work of Christ himself. Just as Christ labored to create sons and daughters of God, so God designed a woman's body to create mortal sons and daughters. But woman cannot do this alone. The physical creation of each human requires the work of woman and man working together as God planned.

Through the spousal relationship, a woman and a man became a mutually supporting entity. This may be misunderstood with many influential translations of Genesis 3:16, when Eve is told, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (KJV). But there are other valid translations that speak of a joint responsibility "and he will rule *with you*"

(TEB) or “he will govern *with you*”.⁴⁹ Adam was no dictator.⁵⁰ The partnership is more important than either of the single entities. Only as a unified entity can either person experience lasting glory. God created Adam and Eve so a glorious union could potentially be formed.

Allegorical View. Paul’s words about the order of creation have also been interpreted allegorically. We see Paul using an allegorical view in this same epistle, when he refers to Jesus as the “last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45).⁵¹ Early Christian writers built on this theme: “Eve is a type of the church as Adam is a type of Christ. As Eve was made out of a part of Adam, so the church is part of the Lord Jesus. The church is called His bride as Eve was Adam’s bride.”⁵² Typologically, Adam and

49. Personal correspondence to author with the translation team at *Power on High Ministries*. The KJV of Genesis 3:16 uses “rule over,” although this biblical translation speaks more of the translator’s belief than of the text. According to the Hebrew scholar Legrand Davies, the KJV translation of “rule over” in Genesis 3:16 is based on the last two letters of the sentence translated as “over her.” In Hebrew, the “beth” is a prefix or inseparable preposition. Hebrew dictionaries include its meaning as: *in, at, to, on, among, with, towards, according to, by, because of, on top of, besides*, and about twenty other such meanings. All are valid, depending on the interpretation of the passage. Adam ruling “with” Eve is in keeping with LDS doctrine outlined in D&C 132:19. However, many translators disagree with this interpretation, so I rely on living prophets for clarification. Elder L. Tom Perry explained, “Since the beginning, God has instructed mankind that marriage should unite husband and wife together in unity. Therefore, there is not a president or a vice president in a family. The couple works together eternally for the good of the family. They are united together in word, in deed, and in action as they lead, guide, and direct their family unit. They are on equal footing. They plan and organize the affairs of the family jointly and unanimously as they move forward.” L. Tom Perry, “Fatherhood, an Eternal Calling,” *Ensign* (May 2004): 71.

50. Bruce C. and Marie K. Hafen, “Crossing Thresholds and Becoming Equal Partners,” *Ensign* (August 2007): 27.

51. The Old and New Testaments are filled with examples of relationships between men and women to allegorically teach about our relationship to God. While some allegorical views from the middle ages went to extremes that offend modern scholarship, others have enough evidence to suggest the author suggested multiple levels of meanings, like Jesus’s parables (i.e., see John W. Welch, “The Good Samaritan: Forgotten Symbols,” *Ensign* (February 2007): 41).

52. Ambrose, quoted in Alonzo Gaskill, *The Savior and the Serpent: Unlocking the Doctrine of the Fall* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 115. It appears that Adam conveys the command to Eve, who walks by faith. Gaskill sees this as significant: “Again, according to scriptural accounts, Eve had less information than Adam — she could not see as clearly, as it were — and thus Adam was to be her guide, to whom she was to cling. Similarly, you and I have less information about the things of salvation than do Christ and His prophets — we labor under a veil,

Jesus are wounded in the side to bring forth the life of Eve and the Church respectively. As Adam's wounded side produced mankind, so Christ's wounds provide the way for mankind to return to God the Father. Christ as the second Adam and as the Savior champions fallen humanity. Eve represents all those born of women, who become the Church and join Adam/Christ in a covenantal relationship. Furthermore, "Adam and Eve were commanded to be one, and, in like manner, Christ and His Church are to be one."⁵³ In this allegorical scenario, the Church (or Eve) works through the mediator Christ (or Adam) to become unified as the scriptural Bridegroom and Bride (Revelation 18:23; Isaiah 61:10; Joel 2:16. etc.).

Restored Perspective. Stepping outside the Pauline text for a moment, we can find insights from the restoration that shed light on this perspective.⁵⁴ Elder Bruce Hafen explains, "The concept of interdependent, equal partners is well-grounded in the doctrine of the restored gospel."⁵⁵ From the restored perspective, sealing of eternal partners may happen on either side of the veil. Men and women continue to progress and can be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise to fulfill their eternal potential (D&C 132:18–19). However, without this sealing of companions, their work of procreation and eternal glory cannot be achieved (D&C 132:17). It is the inter-reliance of the couple, unified to do God's work, that allows them to develop into a glorified state. This is when they join in "the patriarchal priesthood," meaning, "the priesthood shared by husbands and wives who are sealed."⁵⁶ The restoration also provides hope for those not sealed in ideal relationships. Whether due to death, living single, or an unhappy marriage, all can hope for celestial relationships in the world to come.⁵⁷ I think Paul refers to this glorious potential union in these verses (11:8–9).

For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head
because of the angels. (1 Corinthians 11:10)

as it were — and hence they must be our guides, to whom we must cling. To take matters into our own hands is to bring heartache and trials into our lives (as Eve did metaphorically into hers)" (119).

53. Gaskill, *The Savior and the Serpent: Unlocking the Doctrine of the Fall*, 114.

54. M. Russell Ballard, "This Is My Work and Glory," *Ensign* (May 2013).

55. Hafen and Hafen, "Crossing Thresholds and Becoming Equal Partners," 27.

56. Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, s.v. "Priesthood, Patriarchal."

57. Ezra Taft Benson, "To the Single Adult Sisters of the Church," *Ensign* (November 1988). Gordon B. Hinkley, "To the Women of the Church," *Ensign* (November 2003).

In verse 10, Paul emphasizes that the veil identifies a woman's power and authority to act in that "ordinance" (11:2). Women become agents of authority or "power/*exousia*" during that time of prayer and prophesy. The KJV translates the word *exousia* in this case as "power," and the RSV as "veil." The NIV comes closest to the original Greek with "authority." 1 Corinthians repeatedly addresses the topic of authority — specifically the need to respect authority and who has the authority.⁵⁸ Here Paul returns to the subject again and focuses on women's authority to act in church worship. Clarifying even further, the Young's Literal Translation (YLT) reads, "because of this the woman ought to have a token of authority upon the head, because of the messengers."⁵⁹

Paul returns to the creation theme referring to angels in the last phrase of verse 10. Angels protect the creative order of Eden.⁶⁰ Not only do angels guard the "the way of the tree of life" (Moses 4:31), but here angels also have a connection to woman with "authority" or "a veil on her head" (1 Corinthians 11:10, NIV, RSV). Paul teaches that women need this sign of authority "because of the angels."⁶¹ Covered with "authority/*exousia*," it is possible that during worshipful prayer, the veil signaled the messenger angels to provide the woman with the word of God to prophesy or testify. 'Or perhaps, when the woman wore her

58. For Paul's discussion on authority in this letter see: 1 Corinthians 7:37; 9:4-18; 11:10; 15:24.

59. The translations of the KJV, NIV, NRSV, EVS, ASV, etc. all that state the veil refers to a woman's authority or power. The Anchor Bible reads, "the genuine force of *exousia* is best brought out by the simple translation, 'a woman ought to have authority over her head.'" Fitzmyer, *Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries: 1 Corinthians*, 417.

60. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 189; many biblical scholars interpret the angels in this verse to refer to the fallen angels that became "the origin of demons" through sex with mortal women [sexually libidinous]. Orr and Walther interpret the angels as "guardians of the order of nature and are so concerned with proper respect for God in worship (261). Lockwood quotes early church fathers (Ambrose, Ephraim, Primasius) who thought the angels referred to bishops or presbyters, while Lockwood argues that the New Testament usage of "angels" designates "supernatural beings" (374).

61. David W. Bercot, ed., *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), s.v. "Veil." The early Christian father, *Tertullian* (c. 198), understood the angels referenced by Paul, to be devils, "This refers to the event, when on account of 'the daughters of men,' angels revolted from God." Similar ideas spread throughout Christianity.

emblem of authority, it signaled to the angels that the mouthpiece was now ready to receive divine instruction.⁶²

Angels fill many assignments as “*aggelos*/messengers” of God. Here Paul’s angels have some connection to praying veiled women and power or authority. Imparting the same gospel, though removed by a dispensation from Paul, Brigham Young notes that one of the roles of angels is to guard the entrance to heaven. Sentinel angels receive “signs and tokens” from both women and men to return to the presence of God.⁶³ President John Taylor references these teachings of Paul as he addresses women on similar truths about guardian angels and gender:

Thou hast obeyed the truth, and thy guardian angel ministers unto thee and watches over thee. Thou hast chosen him you loved in the spirit world to be thy companion. Now, crowns, thrones, exaltations, and dominions are in reserve for thee in the eternal worlds Thou wilt be permitted to pass by the Gods and angels who guard the gates, and onward, upward to thy exaltation in a celestial world among the Gods, to be a priestess queen upon thy Heavenly Father’s throne, and a glory to thy husband and offspring, to bear the souls of men, to people other worlds (as thou didst bear their tabernacles in mortality) while eternity goes and eternity comes; and if you will receive it, lady, this is eternal life. And herein is the saying of the Apostle Paul fulfilled, that the man is not without the woman, neither is the woman without the man, in the Lord; that man is the head of the woman, and the glory of the man is the woman. Hence, thine origin, the object of thy ultimate destiny. If faithful, lady, the cup is within thy reach; drink then the heavenly draught and live.⁶⁴

In keeping with the ideas of John Taylor and Brigham Young, Joseph Smith’s translation of this verse suggests similar thoughts.

62. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 189.

63. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1855), 2:31. Brigham Young said this at the dedication of the cornerstone of the Salt Lake Temple on April 6, 1853.

64. John Taylor, “The Mormon,” (August 29, 1857), quoted in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Latter-day Prophets Speak: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Church Presidents* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1993), 10.

Joseph Smith makes only one change to 1 Corinthians 11 in his inspired version.⁶⁵ He changed the word “power” in verse 10, to “covering.” In Joseph Smith’s mind, a woman was “to have *a covering* on her head because of the angels.”⁶⁶ In this context, when female saints covered their heads with veils to pray and prophesy, they functioned with divinely acknowledged power. It becomes a sign of obedience and an exercise of faith which opens the door to the ministry of angels (Moroni 7:29–33, 37).

Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. (1 Corinthians 11:11–12)

Paul ends his explanation by stressing the complete interdependence of men and women — woman was created from man, while man is born of woman. Paul’s description encompasses the Edenic creation and birth process. In this unique role, each mother opens the veil to mortality, just as Jesus opened the veil of immortality. A woman’s womb symbolizes a veil of life as spirit children pass from heaven to earth through her. In this task, woman acts as a veil.

Verses 11 and 12 focus on the underlying theology of the reciprocal union that occurs between a husband and wife. With two references to God’s interaction with the couple, “*in the Lord ... all things of God*,” Paul intimates a covenantal relationship with God (also see D&C 132:15). Through this trio of unity, we understand the mutuality of eternal marriage.⁶⁷ Paul’s promotion of marital interdependence is consistent with

65. Joseph Smith’s translation of 1 Corinthians took place in the early 1830s, over a decade before the temple endowment was revealed to the saints in 1842.

66. Thomas A. Wayment, ed., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the New Testament: A Side-by-Side Comparison with the King James Version* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 272; emphasis added.

67. Hugh Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies* (Provo, UT: FARMS and Deseret Book, 1986), 93; describes the covenantal partnership between God, a husband and wife as a system of checks and balances: “There is no patriarchy or matriarchy in the Garden; the two supervise each other. Adam is given no arbitrary power; Eve is to heed him only insofar as he obeys their Father — and who decides that? She must keep check on him as much as he does on her. It is, if you will, a system of checks and balances in which each party is as distinct and independent in its sphere as are the departments of government under the Constitution — and just as dependent on each other.”

statements made earlier in the same epistle (1 Corinthians 7:2–3, 12–14).⁶⁸ The interrelationship of genders speaks to the worth of women as equals to men. I see Paul's request for a woman to wear a veil during prayer as having nothing to do with gender inequality and everything to do with her relationships and authority to participate in Christian worship.

Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? (1 Corinthians 11:13)

In this new Christian order, Paul teaches the primitive saints that it is comely or proper for women to pray and prophesy or testify. Her veil witnesses to her authority to act in that proper manner. The word “comely/*prepo*” also means “fitting, to stand out, to be conspicuous, eminent, becoming, seemly, or fit.” Paul concludes this subject by reminding the Corinthian saints, who had been disposed to contentions in the past (see 1 Corinthians 11:16), that they were not a law unto themselves on this matter. He calls for a unity of the faith among all the churches of God — even in the practice of women wearing veils when praying and prophesying. He asks the saints to take responsibility for themselves and judge if a veil worn during certain prayers could signify the order of creation with divine relationships between God and mortals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, within Paul's list of corrections to the Corinthian saints (“*I want you to understand,*” 1 Corinthian 11:3), he addresses the issue of women wearing veils during group prayers and prophesying in early Christianity (11:2). His counsel acknowledges Christian women's participation in public worship. His instructions capture the order of creation — a fortifying link between women, men, Christ, and God — that endowed humanity with God's power. The woman's head covering represents her authority or “power on her head” in the presence of angels (11:10). Essentially, Paul asks whether it is “not better to pray and prophesy with humility before God and with a sign of her authority?” For Paul, the sanction derived from the creation allows God's glory (referring to man) to pray unveiled; and by the same token, humanity's glory (referring to woman) should humbly commune with God veiled. As he explains

68. Perhaps Paul repeated his messages on unity and equality within marriage, to combat the culture where the average middle and upper-class Roman divorced four to five times each. David Instone-Brewer, *Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible: The Social and Literary Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 73.

these principles, he recognizes and encourages unity between men and women in their covenant relationship with God.

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