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1 Corinthians 11:2-16 in the Received Text

In this chapter, the “headcoverings” passage in 1 Corinthians 11 is presented both in Greek and in English translation. We use the Received Text, the Textus Receptus, and also indicate the differences between this text and the Nestle-Aland text (NA27).

There are some slight differences between the TR and NA27 in this passage:

- The TR has ἀδελφοί (brethren) in v. 2, whereas NA27 omits this.
- NA27 inserts τοῦ (the) before the second occurrence of Christ in v. 3.
- The TR has ἑαυτῆς whereas NA27 has αὐτῆς in v. 5.
- In v. 7, NA27 has ἡ γυνή whereas the TR has γυνή.
- The words for man and woman in v. 11 in NA27 are in the opposite order to that of the TR throughout this verse.
- The TR has ἢ (or) at the beginning of v. 14—this is missing in NA27.
- The order of the words αὐτὴ ἢ φύσις in the TR of v.14 is different in NA27.

<p>please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. XI. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.</p> <p>2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.</p> <p>3 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. 4 Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.</p> <p>5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesiech with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. 6 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.</p>	<p>2 Ἐπαινώ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι πάντα μου μέμνησθε, καὶ καθὼς παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, τὰς παραδόσεις κατέχετε. 3 θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι, ὅτι παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἡ κεφαλὴ ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν· κεφαλὴ δὲ γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνὴρ· κεφαλὴ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ θεός. 4 πᾶς ἀνὴρ προσευχόμενος ἢ προφητεύων, κατὰ κεφαλῆς ἔχων, καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ. 5 πᾶσα δὲ γυνὴ προσευχομένη ἢ προφητεύουσα ἀκατακλύπτῃ τῆ κεφαλῇ, καταισχύνει τὴν κεφαλὴν ἑαυτῆς· ἐν γὰρ ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῆ ἐξυρημένη. 6 εἰ γὰρ οὐ κατακλύπτεται γυνή, καὶ κειράσθω· εἰ δὲ αἰσχρὸν γυναικὶ τὸ κείρασθαι ἢ ξυρᾶσθαι, κατακαλυπτέσθω. 7 ἀνὴρ μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ὀφείλει κατακλύπτεσθαι τὴν κεφαλὴν, εἰκὼν καὶ δόξα θεοῦ ὑπάρχων· ἡ γυνὴ δὲ δόξα ἀνδρὸς ἐστίν· 8 οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ</p>
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<p>ἐκ γυναικός, ἀλλὰ γυνή ἐξ ἀνδρός· 9 καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἐκτίσθη of woman, but woman of man. For also not was created ἀνὴρ διὰ τὴν γυναῖκα, ἀλλὰ γυνή διὰ τὸν ἄνδρα· man on account of the woman, but woman on account of the man.</p> <p>10 διὰ τοῦτο ὀφείλει ἡ γυνή ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπὶ τῆς κε- Because of this ought the woman authority to have on the φαλῆς, διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους. 11 πλὴν οὔτε ἄνθρωπος head, on account of the angels. However neither [is] man χωρὶς γυναικός, οὔτε γυνή χωρὶς ἀνδρός, ἢ ἐν κυρίῳ· apart from woman, nor woman apart from man, in [the] Lord. 12 ὡσπερ γὰρ ἡ γυνή ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρός, οὕτως καὶ ὁ ἀνὴρ For as the woman of the man [is], so also the man διὰ τῆς γυναικός, τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. 13 ἐν ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς by the woman [is]; but all things of God. In yourselves κρίνατε· πρέπον ἐστὶν γυναῖκα ἀκατακάλυπτον τῷ θεῷ judge: becoming is it for a woman uncovered to God προσεύχασθαι; 14 ἢ οὐδὲ αὐτὴ ἢ φύσις διδάσκει ὑμᾶς, to pray? Or not even herself nature does teach you, ὅτι ἀνὴρ μὲν ἐὰν κομᾷ, ἀτιμία αὐτῷ ἐστίν· 15 γυνή that a man if have long hair a dishonour to him it is? A woman δὲ ἐὰν κομᾷ, δόξα αὐτῇ ἐστίν; ὅτι ἡ κόμη ἀντι- but if have long hair; glory to her it is; for the long hair instead περιβολαίου δέδοται αὐτῇ· 16 εἰ δέ τις δοκεῖ φιλόνηκος of a covering is given to her. But if anyone thinks contentious εἶναι, ἡμεῖς τοιαύτην συνήθειαν οὐκ ἔχομεν, οὐδὲ αἱ ἐκκλησίαι to be, we such custom have not, nor the assemblies τοῦ θεοῦ. of God. 17 Τοῦτο δὲ παραγγέλλων οὐκ ἐπαινῶ, ὅτι οὐκ But [as to] this charging [you] I do not praise [you], that not</p>	<p>7 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. 8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. 9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. 10 For this cause ought the woman to have power or head because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. 12 For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. 13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? 15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. 16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.</p>
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- Finally, I would like to mention that v. 15 is one of a small number of verses where there is a difference between the Received Text and the Byzantine Majority Text: the Byzantine Text omits the word αὐτῇ (to/for her) at the end of the verse.

Here are some brief comments on particular Greek words that occur in the passage:

1) Kome and komao

In verses 14 and 15, the Greek noun *kome* refers to long hair, and the verb, *komao* means to have long hair or to grow the hair long/let the hair grow long. There is also a possibility that these terms refer to hair that has been beautified or “coiffured” in some way. (*Kome* and *komao* appear to be related to the root verb *komeo* meaning to tend or to care for.) Both of these uses are consistent with Paul’s claim that if a woman “komao”s her hair, it is a glory to her (and dishonouring if a man does this). The word is related to our English word comet—named after the comet’s long filamentous tail. We will be working mainly on the assumption that *kome* and *komao* basically refer to long hair whether or not it has undergone additional “coiffuring”. Part of the reason for this is that the additional

“coiffuring” meaning is somewhat conjectural, and part because in 1 Tim 2:9, Paul appears (at least, in one interpretation of this verse), to disapprove of a particular example of “coiffuring” - namely braided hair. In our passage by contrast, there is no suggestion that Paul disapproves of some hair *per se* on a woman, but rather (according to the interpretation proposed in the present book) that it is the public display of such hair—in everyday life generally (and certainly when praying to God in church) - concerning which Paul expects the Corinthians to give judgement.

The “standard” Greek word for hair, *thrix*, is not found in our passage, and hair is not specifically mentioned outside of verses 14 and 15, although hair is clearly implied by the use of the words sheared and shaved in verses 5 and 6.

2) Katakalupto

This verb is the root word for the references to being covered or veiled (and also to being uncovered when the prefix *a-* is used) in verses 5-7 (though interestingly, it is not used, in reference to men, in the expression “having “something down over his head” in v. 4—perhaps because some headgear that might have been worn by men would not be accurately described using *katakalupto*-type words, or perhaps Paul is anticipating the later argument in v. 14, and using a more general expression that could possibly include the dishonouring effect of a man’s long hair. Nevertheless, the Greek expression for “having something down over the head” is used to describe the headcovering worn by Haman who was mourning when he had been shamed in the Septuagint version of Esther 6:12). The word *katakalupto* is a combination of *kata* meaning “down” and *kalupto* meaning to cover or conceal. The idea then is to “conceal down” - as with a head-covering type of veil. The corresponding noun is *katakalumma* but *katakalumma* does not specifically occur in our passage. (The related noun *kalumma* occurs in 2 Cor. Ch. 3 where it specifically refers to a veil that covers the face).

3) Peribolaion

The only noun that Paul uses which appears to refer to a specific item of clothing in our passage is *peribolaion* in verse 15. This is literally “that which is thrown around”. (The modern/traditional ladies’ garment, the bolero appears to have a similar etymology). The word *peribolaion* is related to the verb *periballo* which means to encompass something (e.g. the embankment surrounding Jerusalem in Luke 19:43) or to put on—especially an item of clothing. The idea then is of a garment that sur-

rounds and this is perhaps somewhat different from a veil in which the “key idea” is that of concealment, though the end result would have been similar in both cases (with the possible additional feature that a *peribolaion* might suggest a larger or more substantial type of covering garment as would be appropriate to correspond to when a woman is wearing *long hair*). In his use of the word *peribolaion* it is suggested that Paul might have been thinking of a garment like the Roman *palla* which was a sort of wrap or cloak which had sufficient material for the woman to throw it over and around her head and shoulders when in public. Similar garments are worn by women in many parts of the world (e.g. the *dupatta* in India and other parts of South Asia).

It is sometimes suggested that the woman’s *peribolaion* must be a glorious covering, but the word just means a covering garment in a “neutral” sense. If it describes clothing which is glorious or splendid, then additional words are used for the “splendour” aspect e.g. in the Septuagint of Ezek. 16:13. By contrast, *peribolaion* is used to describe a covering like sackcloth in Is. 50:3!

4) Anti (v. 15)

This interesting little word in v. 15, is used where Paul, in explaining why a woman’s long hair, when worn, is her glory, says “. . . for (*hoti*) the long hair (*kome*) anti a covering garment (*peribolaion*) is given to her”. (There are also other possible meanings for *hoti* which will be discussed later in the book).

The correct translation of *anti* is quite controversial, and we will discuss this in more detail later in the book. The original meaning of the word in classical Greek was “opposite” - two items being physically located opposite or against one another - but by New Testament times the word expanded its meaning, and came to refer in a more “metaphorical” way to various types of relationship or correspondence between two items. The relationship between the two items could be one of equivalence, contrast or substitution/replacement (please see, for example, BDAG pp. 87-88). These meanings can really be quite different—especially since the ideas of “equivalence” and “contrast” are opposites! - so *anti* is not an easy word to translate! Nevertheless, I note that almost all translations of 1 Cor. 11:15 understand *anti* in the sense of equivalence—for example,

“. . . for/that the long hair as (*anti*) a covering (*peribolaion*) is given to her”.

However, I think there may be a difficulty here, and that is that this clause

seems to function, as noted above, as an explanation for what immediately precedes it—namely that if and when a woman has long or beautified hair, it is her **glory**. The explanation that the long or beautified hair is her glory because it is equivalent to a covering garment really doesn't, as I understand it, make sense! After all the purpose of long or beautified hair is to show off the woman to best advantage—and hopefully to let what is seen on the outside illustrate her intrinsic wonderfulness! That, I suggest, is the meaning here of glory i.e. in its best sense, although a more “superficial” meaning by Paul is, I suggest, also possible!! The display of glory is nevertheless sort of the opposite of what happens when the woman is covered over by a peribolaion.

Later in the book, I will be looking in more detail at the translation of *anti* and will be suggesting two alternatives to the above translation.

5) Physis (“nature”) in v. 14

It is generally agreed that *physis* has a wider meaning than our word nature, and could perhaps be translated as “the way things are when correctly understood”. This is in contrast to people and things that are “against nature”. Paul appeals to what nature, *physis*, teaches “you”, i.e. the believers at Corinth—so the “correctly understood” aspect would include a specifically Christian perspective, rather than nature according to, for example, Greek philosophy. This will be discussed further later in the book.

6) ἢ (“Or”) at start of v. 14

This little word, omitted in NA27, is important as it links the teaching in v. 13 about the “unfittingness” of a woman praying to God unveiled with Paul's illustration from “nature” about the need for a headcovering (in public) when a woman has glorious long hair. The word “or” shows that answering the second rhetorical question(s) in verses 14-15 correctly is in some sense equivalent to answering the first rhetorical question in v. 13!

