

- 7-

## *An Introduction to the Chiastic Structure of the Passage—Part 2*

In this chapter, I wish to analyse the structures of Arguments B and A'. (Please see Figure 6.2 for an explanation of these terms!)

In Argument A, Paul has informed us that every man who prays or prophesies having something “down from his head” (by which is understood in the present book a covering of some sort, but not necessarily a veil—c.f. Esther 6:12 in the Greek Septuagint) but that a every woman who prays and prophesies unveiled shames her head, and, in the case of the woman, an analogous illustration for the shame—that of a shaved and unveiled woman—is offered. Here in Argument B, Paul continues Argument A by explaining the shame of the man, and also offering a cryptic explanation for the shame of the woman, as well as developing a positive, rather than a negative, rationale for the woman’s headcovering when praying and prophesying. Thus, Argument B continues Argument A and provides us with some (welcome!) explanations for things that Paul has said in Argument A.

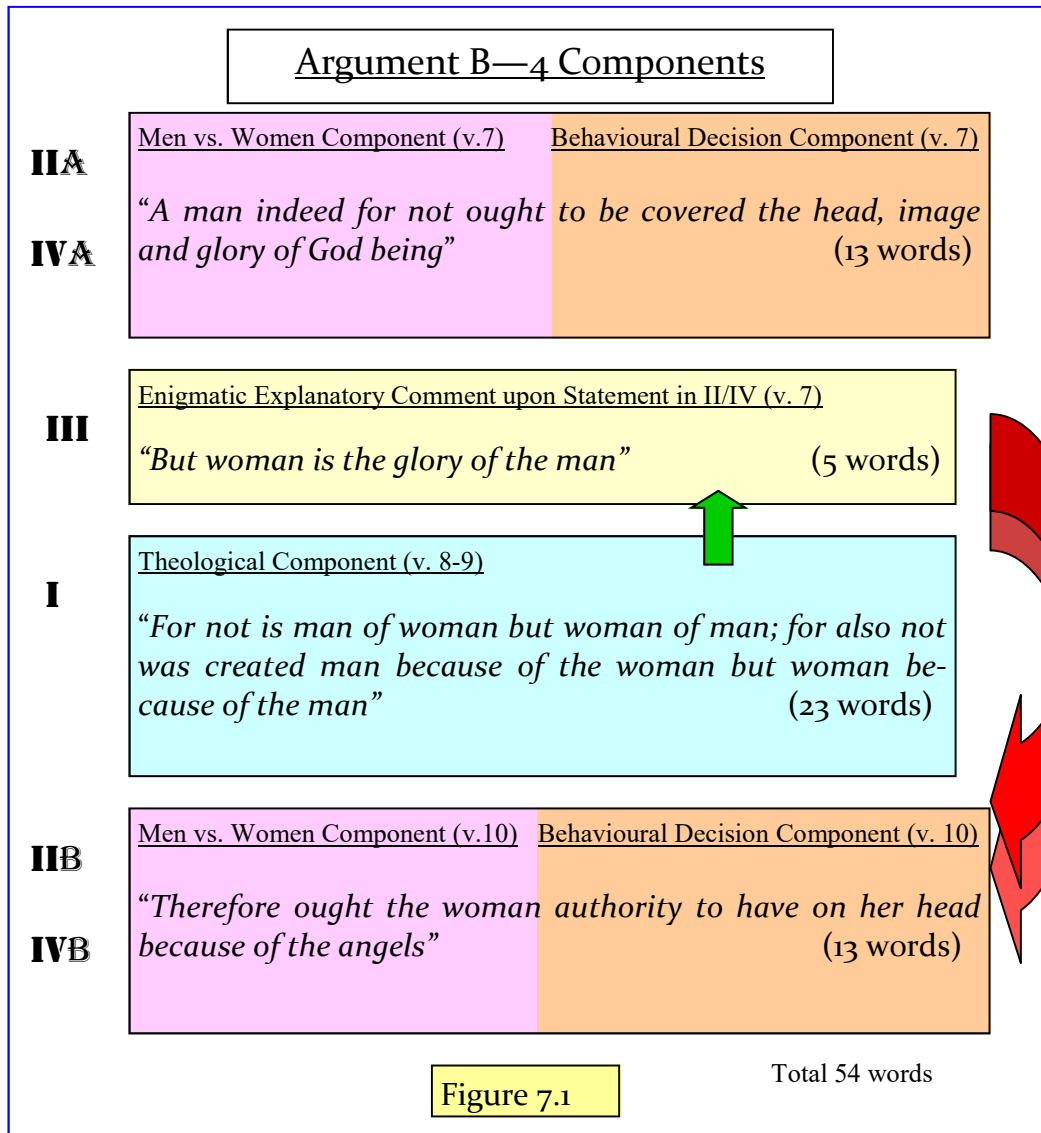
Here (Figure 7.1 on the next page) is an analysis of the structure of Argument B.

### The Four Components of Argument B

The same four components that we identified in Argument A are present in Argument B, but with one difference—components **II** and **IV** are “merged together” since in Argument B the “behavioural decisions” (**IV**) are incorporated into the “men vs. women” components (**IIA** and **IIB**).

#### I) The Theological/Biblical Component (verses 8 and 9)

The “theological” component is located in the middle part of the structure, and amplifies aspects of the hierarchical relationship between men and women which was introduced in Argument A. Unlike in Argument A, there is no mention of God or of Christ in this theological/biblical component. (However, as we will see, the corresponding theological statement in Argument A' does refer to the Lord and to God as well as the man and the woman and so this more closely matches A—as we might expect from



the chiastic structure.)

The theological component of Argument B, introduced by the word “for” (*gar*) gives us an explanation for *why* woman is the glory of the man. This “direction of the argument” is indicated by the upwards green arrow in Figure 7.1.

### **II and IV) The “Men vs. Women” Plus Behavioural Components (verses 7 and 10)**

In Argument B, these components are separated— the “men” components occur at the beginning of Argument A and the “woman” components at the end. Both parts are expressed in terms of what ought to be done. This

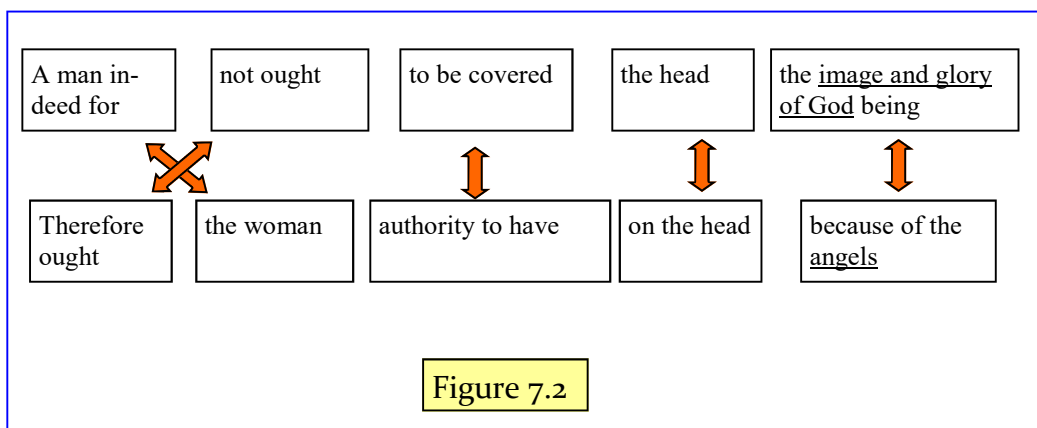
contrasts with Argument A where Paul simply explains what “is” the case, and gives commands (e.g. “let her be covered!”) and it also contrasts with Argument A’ where Paul lets Nature teach and relies of the judgement of the Corinthians to work out the correct result. There is a clear progression as we work through Paul’s arguments in this passage!

Components **II/IV~~A~~** and **II/IV~~B~~** have a clear parallel structure:

*“A man indeed for not ought to be covered the head the image and glory of God being.” (v. 7)*

*“Therefore ought the woman authority to have on the head because of the angels”. (v. 10)*

The (basically) parallel nature of these two statements is illustrated in Figure 7.2 below:



As will be discussed later, this parallel structure may go some way to explaining the reference to angels in v. 10. (Angels too, are, like man, in some real sense, the image and glory of God). This reference is very widely discussed in the commentaries and a number of interpretations have been put forward.

We also note that the (also widely discussed) reference to “authority” on the woman’s head matches the “not ought to be covered” head of the man.

### **III) The (Short!) “Additional Explanatory” Section (end of v. 7)**

The explanatory component again explains something about the woman, and it both follows on from the first part of the “Men vs. Women”/

Behavioural Decision component, **II/IV~~A~~**, and also is itself explained by the “theological” component (hence the upwards green arrow in Figure 7.1). The section labelled **II/IV~~B~~** about the authority on the woman’s head and “because of the angels” (v. 10) is introduced by the words “*dia touto*” which means “therefore”. As a result of this we can see that section **III** provides a (somewhat cryptic!) explanation for section **II~~B~~/IV~~B~~**. This is indicated by the red arrows in Figure 7.1. (Thus, the order of the argument is **I** -> **III** -> **II~~B~~ /IV~~B~~**).

### Discussion of Argument B

Argument B does not make any overt reference to either praying or prophesying (unlike A and A’), and neither does it make use of a “hair” illustration. We will nevertheless assume that the surrounding context means that we are still in “praying or prophesying territory”, and also that the repetitions of the connecting word “for” (which occurs three times in Argument B) also require this.

Let us for now look at Argument B as a completion of Argument A.

We considered Argument A as teaching first about the head of the man and Christ, and then secondly about the head of the woman and the man. Let us see how Argument B completes both of these teachings.

### The Head of the Man and Christ (continued from Argument A)

This teaching is continued in v. 7, and our little “explanatory word” “for” near the start of this verse leads us to expect that v. 7 will relate to something that has been said previously. I see this “for” as initiating the whole of Argument B and relating it to the whole of Argument A. This seems much more likely to me than seeing Paul’s teaching about men’s non-headcovering in v. 7 being an explanation of the statements about shorn or shaven women in v. 6!

OK then, let’s assume that v. 7 explains, not vs. 5 and 6 but v. 4 which is also about men and headcovering. Here are the two verses placed together:

*“Every man praying or prophesying down over the head having shames the head/Head of him” (v. 4).*

*“A man indeed for not ought to be covered the head the image and glory of God being.” (v. 7).*

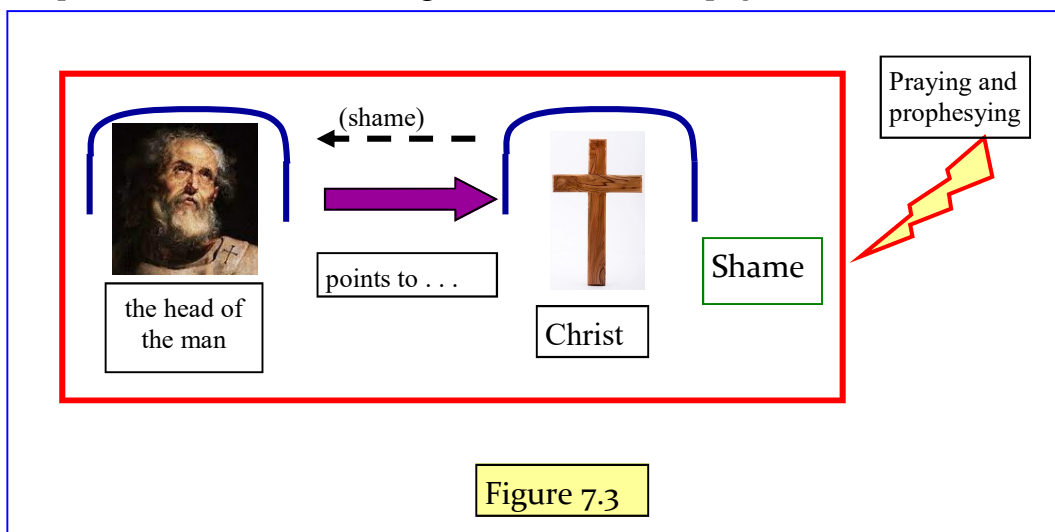
Now we already know from verse 3 that the head of the man is (i.e. “represents”) Christ, and the head of Christ is God, and we have already assumed that the context of “praying and prophesying” applies to v. 7 even though it is not specifically mentioned (otherwise we would probably have to assume that v.7 teaches that a man can never have anything on his head ever!) Our two verses seem to state the same general instruction about headcovering in “opposite”, contrasting ways.

Verse 7 tells us that man is the image and glory of God, and we know, e.g. from many verses such as Colossians 1:15 and from biblical typology (e.g. Eph. 5:25, Rom 5:14) that the man or husband represents Christ, and also God, in various ways.

Then also we know from v. 3 that one of the ways this representation occurs is by the man’s physical head symbolically and metaphorically representing Christ. Perhaps we could say this representation of Christ is concentrated and focused on the physical head of the man.

Let us now see how Argument B builds on and expands Argument A.

Here (Figure 7.3 below) is part of the earlier diagram (Figure 6.6) which emphasises the understanding that when a man’s physical head is covered



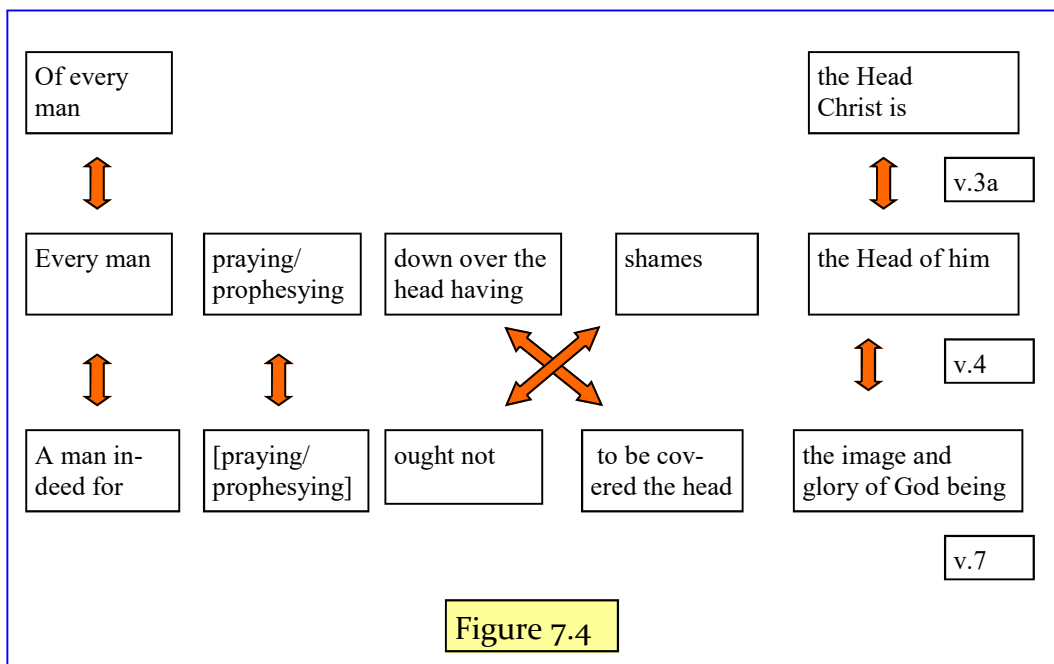
when praying or prophesying, the “head” which is being shamed is Christ, the “Head”, rather than the man’s physical head. On this understanding, the shame also “applies” or “reflects backwards” to the man’s physical head, but the structure of the passage seems to point to the man’s “metaphorical” head, Christ, as the primary, initial meaning. Please see Figure 7.4 of the next page for structural evidence for this. (A helpful and

“balanced” discussion on this “physical vs. metaphorical” aspect of the second reference to “head” in v.4 is found in C. K. Barrett’s 1 Corinthians commentary).

In Argument A, verse 4 shows the consequences for the metaphorical or spiritual head of wrong behaviour by the man in relation to his physical head. Argument B, in verse 7 completes the picture by presenting the parallel but “inverse” picture: enjoining the correct behaviour by the man in terms of his physical head in the light of his spiritual or “metaphorical” significance.

(There seems to be a slight asymmetry here however since it is the *man as a whole* rather than just his *head* that, in v. 7, bears the weight of the above “metaphorical significance”. I have argued previously that these are equivalent concepts, and note that in other places the physical head and the whole person are considered as equivalent - for example, the woman with uncovered head shames her head, but that the shorn or shaved woman is described as shaming *herself*— even though *the locus of shame* is her head. The pattern of such “equivalences” in our passage, if such a pattern exists, (as I suspect it does!) needs to be investigated at some stage—with an aim of incorporating the above asymmetry in a wider pattern. But I have not done this yet.)

Anyway, here, first are verses 3a, 4 and 7 set out together to show the structural parallelism (Figure 7.4, below).

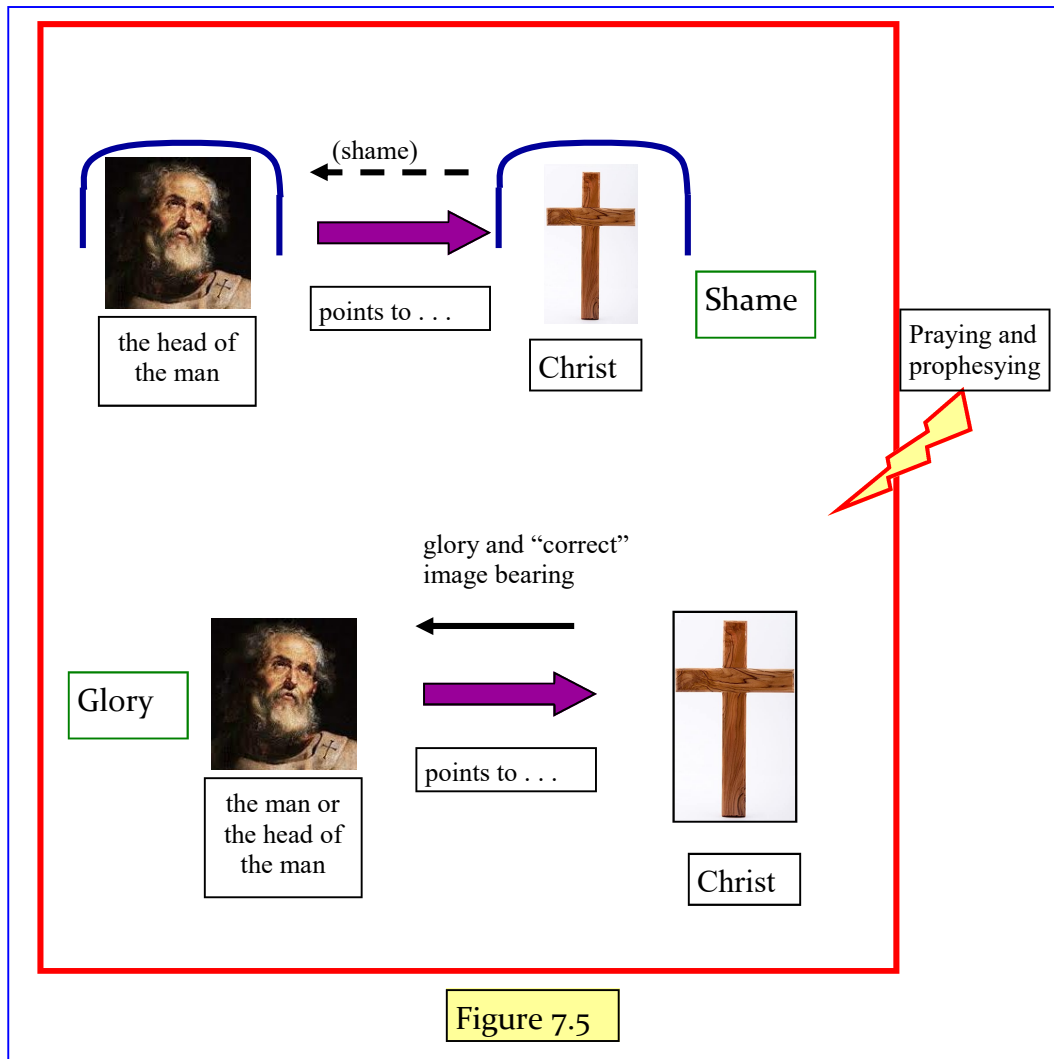


Note on Figure 7.4

Verse 3a describes a “general” truth. Verse 4 explicitly refers to the times when the man is praying or prophesying, and v. 7, I suggest, contextually refers to these times: even if the verse does not explicitly state this, the connecting word “for” nevertheless links these contexts.

Glory/Shame and Headcovering in the Case of the Man

We have seen in Argument A that every man who prays and prophesies with something down from his head shames his head, and when discussing Argument A we suggested that that the shame resulted from the metaphorical significance of the man’s head in representing Christ. We are now in a position to see how Paul’s argument here “works” (please see Figure 7.5 below:



Note on Figure 7.5

Figure 7.5 shows incorrect (above) and correct (below) headcovering behaviour by the man. These two parts of the diagram correspond to Argument A and Argument B respectively.

Having established in Argument A that a man shames his head by covering it with something when praying or prophesying, now in **II/IV~~A~~** of Argument B Paul says that a man ought not to veil his head (we assume in the context of praying and prophesying) because he is the image and glory of God, and Paul has already taught that the head of the man metaphorically represents Christ. I think we can reasonably infer from this that the reason the head should not be covered is that it would, metaphorically, cover up Christ when Christ alone should be glorified through the praying and prophesying. This would therefore be, at least symbolically, shaming to the man's head—i. e. Christ and this would reflect back as shame on the man's physical head, and therefore on the man himself—and this again is wrong as he is the image and glory of God, and so his physical head should not be covered: the image and glory of God should not be obscured.

This, or something like this would appear to be Paul's underlying argument here for the "non-covering" of the man's head. There are some aspects of this that are not clear, at least to me however. One thing which Paul does not explicitly state, but which I assume must be part of the argument is that Christ is pre-eminently and paradigmatically the image and glory of God, (please see for example Hebrews 1:3) and man's designation in this way is derivative. So the man's head symbolically represents Christ, and the man himself, as image and glory of God in a derivative sense, also represents Christ. (We have referred briefly earlier to this "equivalence" or perhaps we should say, "the part standing for the whole" (*pars pro toto*) in relation to the man's head and the man himself, but which has not really been investigated.)

The way in which Paul's argument is worded I assume also takes into account the glorious fact that Christ is, as a result of the incarnation, now and forever both God and man, and so in v. 3, with its account of headship, Christ is placed between man and God. Christ thus links God and man, and makes it possible for man (too) to be the image and glory of God. It is this, then, that (I suggest) allows for the "equivalence" in Paul's argument between i) the avoidance of shame in the case of Christ (v. 5) - provided the man does not cover his head and ii) man maintaining his role as the image and glory of God (v. 7) - provided the man does not cover his head.



This contrasts with what, as readers/hearers, we *might* have been expecting Paul to say in v. 7—namely that a man ought not to cover his head because the man’s head represents Christ. However, Paul does not say this, but rather completes the “universal scope” of his argument by taking it all the way back to both the man and God in v. 7, just as v. 3 also started with man and concluded with the head of Christ being God (and also verses 13, 14 and 16 have references to God at or near the end of each verse!)

I feel I’ve offered only a muddled explanation here, and I hope the reader can do better.

### The Head of the Woman and the Man (Continued from Argument A)

Let us now move on to see how Argument B regarding women’s headcovering behaviour continues and completes Argument A. The case of the woman is more complicated because of the presence of the additional “explanatory clause”, “but woman is glory of a man” (end of v. 7). This clause is itself explained by v. 8 which is the “theological/biblical” statement for Argument B. Unlike the corresponding theological statements for Arguments A and A’ however, neither God nor Jesus are mentioned in this central statement. Like Argument A however, it describes a hierarchical arrangement vis-a-vis men and women.

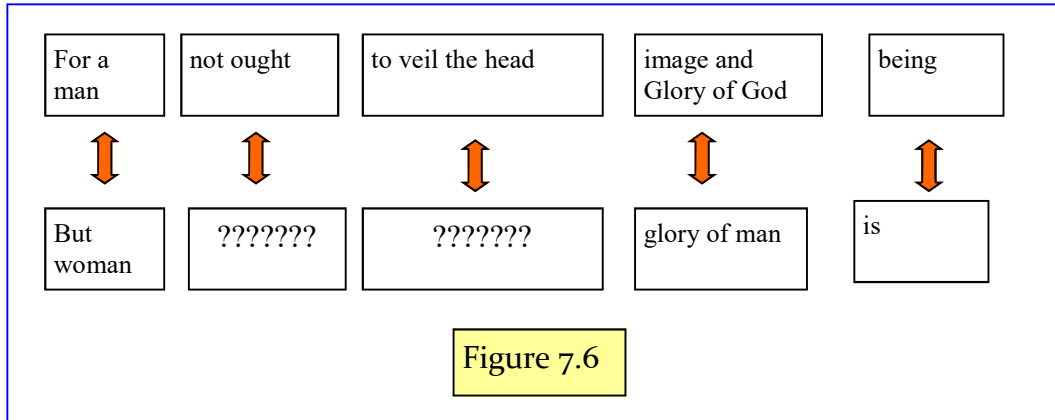
Having completed his argument for “non-covering” by men (an argument which has been “stretched out” over Arguments A and B), Paul has now “set up” the situation for what I believe to be his main purpose, the argument regarding the need for veiling by women when praying/prophesying, and I’m assuming, as with the case for the men that this “praying/prophesying” context carries over from Argument A, even though this is not explicitly stated.

Where has the argument regarding women reached? Basically in Argument A, we reached the conclusion that the unveiled head produced shame—both metaphorically for “the man” and also for the woman herself (concentrated on her physical head) and that this shame for the woman was equivalent in some sense to the shame resulting from being shaved and unveiled in a public context.

This is now followed by the explanatory interlude regarding the non-covering of the head by the man (v. 7), and we can reasonably expect that this will serve as a parallel for the contrasting situation of the woman—

just as in verses 4 and 5 of Argument A. Paul does this, but in an enigmatic form! Rather than offering a full statement about women that is exactly parallel (but contrasting) to v. 7, (this comes later (v. 10)—and has been given in Figure 7.2!) he offers, in v. 7b, a truncated form of the contrast we are surely and reasonably expecting at *this* point!

This is shown in Figure 7.6 below.



Well, we can, mentally at least, “fill in the blanks”: the woman ought to veil the head because she is the glory of man!

As already noted, Paul will go on to confirm the need for veiling in v. 10, but he first, in vs. 8-9, explains one aspect of the “purpose” of woman’s creation which “because of the man”, (and also “from the man”). We can infer from this that the woman, through her actions is, in the normal course of events, as in the creation account, a “helper” for man, and therefore she represents him through her actions. When we combine this with the statement that woman is the glory of man, we can see that, in the normal course of events, a woman’s actions should represent the man and thereby bring glory to him. We now have the key to “unlock” Paul’s brilliant argument!

When the woman is praying and prophesying unveiled, her head, the man, is “on display”, and she herself is the glory of the man because she is representing him and acting on his behalf as vs. 7b-9 make clear. At various other times this would all be correct and proper, but this is not one of those times: rather this is a time, and praying and prophesying are actions, where God alone should be glorified: her actions and her deportment are bringing inappropriate glory to the man. As has been discussed earlier in the book, the result of this is actually shame, not glory for the man. Appropriate glory, to the right person, in the right time, in the right place and in the right way are all very well, but none of these conditions apply here,

and, if an inappropriate claim to glory produces shame in a culture where “honour and shame” values matter, how much more shame will attach when the inappropriate claim to glory takes place in the presence of God who alone should be glorified, and before the worshipping congregation!

Well, what is the solution to this dilemma? The answer is for the woman to veil her head! In that way, her “metaphorical head”, the man, is symbolically covered up, and this shows to everyone—to God, to the congregation and to the angels that, at this particular time, she is not intending to represent the man. He has been covered up!

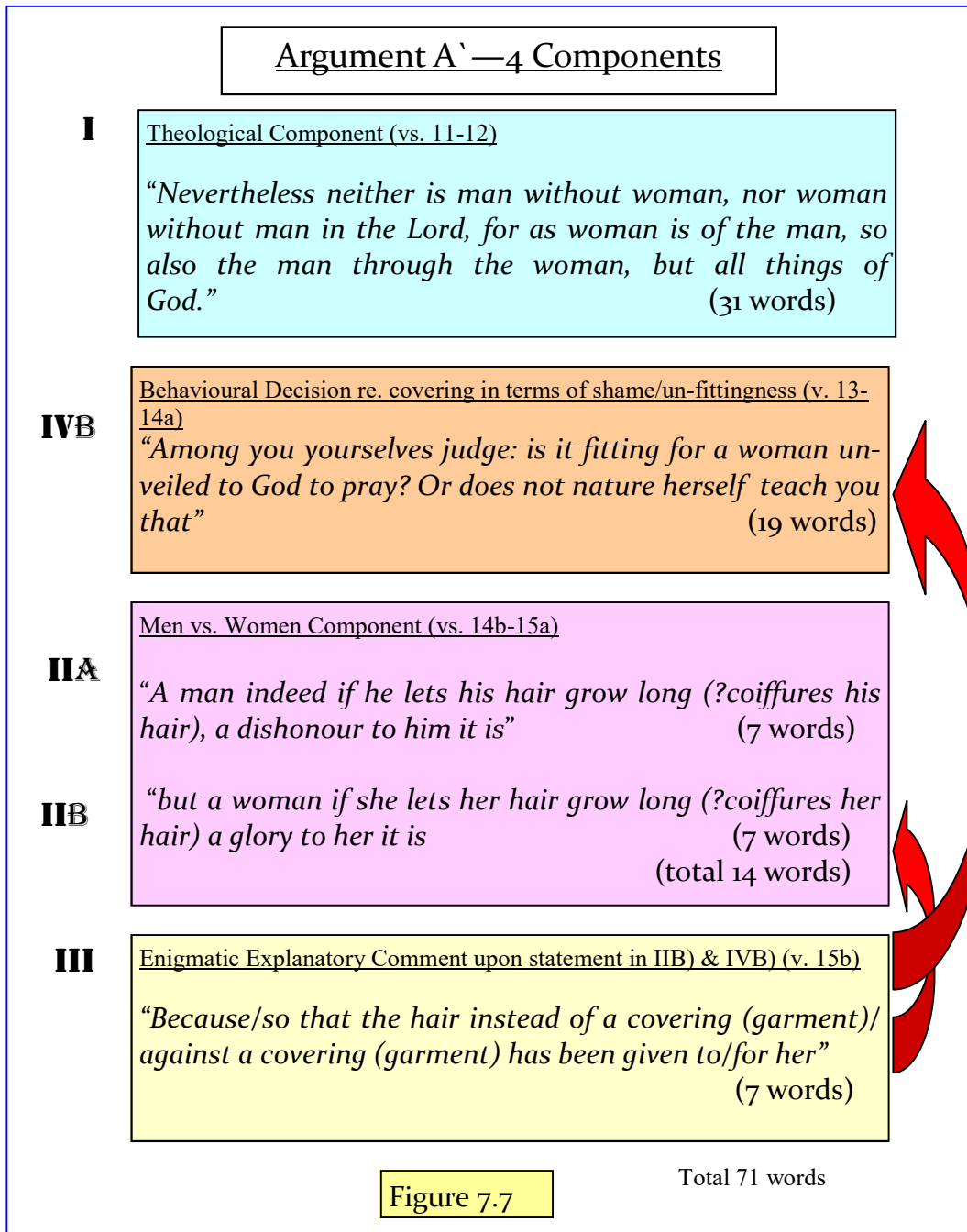
This is appropriate for another important reason too, and that is that at these times of prayer to God or receiving a prophecy from God, the woman actually is not representing the man. Rather, she has, at this time, by-passed the man, and is speaking directly to or from God Himself. This explains the “difficult” verse, verse 10, in which Paul describes the veil as the “authority” on the woman’s head. The authority is the authority to speak directly to or from God at these times without “going through” the normal “hierarchical channel” (i.e. the man!) as described in v. 3. The angels, as guardians of the created order and who are concerned for God’s glory understand the significance of the veiling at this time and are reassured.

Well, that was an attempt to “piece together” Paul’s argument from the information with which he has provided us. I hope you think it is a plausible reconstruction. Before moving on, I would like to repeat an earlier thought which is that it is not only in connection with prayer and prophecy in the public meetings of the church that the veil can operate in this way. In a number of instances in “everyday life” when the woman is in public, she can also indicate, by veiling, that she is not actively and publicly representing her husband and/or intervening on his behalf: there are some areas of public life which, in a Complementarian view of the relationship between men and women, are, or should be, the particular province of men and not women. The veil at these times also indicates that the woman, though her “non-participation” in these areas, is entitled to protection, and active intervention for her protection if needed. What those areas of public life are, or should be, is part of the ongoing discussions regarding what constitutes a traditional Christian world view. For myself, I am very much a traditionalist, but I will leave this discussion for others better qualified and with more insight than me.

Well, let us now move on to Argument A’.

### The Four Components of Argument A' (verses 11-15)

The four components of Argument A' correspond closely to the four components of Argument A, although differing in order. The structure Argument of A' is illustrated in Figure 7.7 below. We have already discussed this section of Paul's argument in considerable detail in Chapters 5 and 6 so this section will be treated more briefly here.



### I) The Theological/Biblical Component (vs. 11-12)

What distinguishes Argument A' from Argument "A plus B" is that Argument A' has, as its theological basis, the interdependence of men and women *in* the Lord and *from* God. This is different from, but complementary to, the hierarchical view in the earlier part of the passage. As in Argument A, the theological component is stated at the start of the argument.

### IVB) The Behavioural Decision in Terms of Unfittingness (v.13)

Just as in Argument A, the behavioural decision component is restricted to the case of women. (Unlike Argument B where the behavioural decisions concern men and women.) Paul in Argument A' only speaks of the woman praying, rather than praying or prophesying as in Argument A, and we suggested earlier that this "matches" the single "hair aspect" of long hair in this section contrasted with the double aspect of shaved and/or sheared in Argument A.

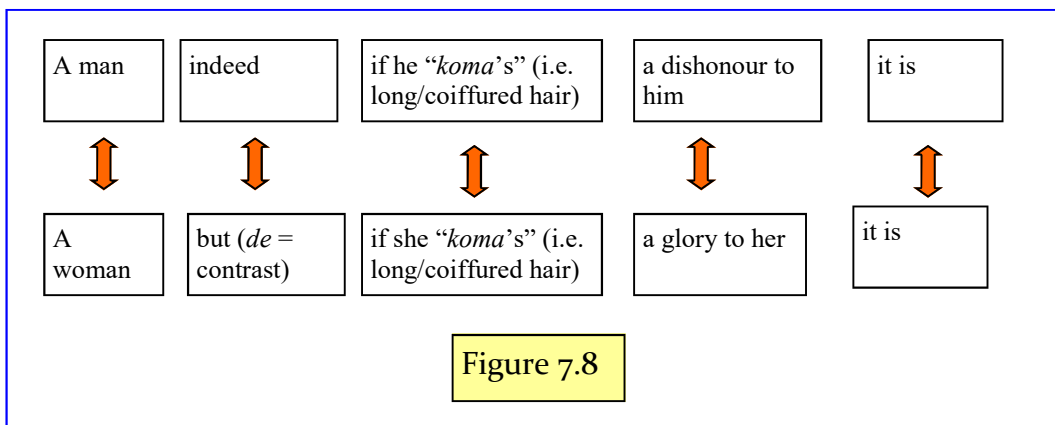
Another difference is that the behavioural decision for women here primarily concerns the "church" situation—which is shown to be "equivalent" to (by Paul's use of "or" at the start of v. 14), and explained by analogy with, the "everyday life" (long hair) situation for women in verses 14b-15 (as described further below). By contrast, the behavioural decision in Argument A primarily concerns the "everyday life" situation for woman (shaved or shorn) which, by the use of the expression "for one and the same thing it is" is shown to be equivalent to the "women in church" situation.

An important and significant contrast between A and A' is that here, in A', the woman's action in praying unveiled is described as "unfitting" whereas in A, actual shame when praying/prophesying was involved. I suggested earlier that "unfitting" was part of the way along the "honour-shame" axis in the direction of shame, but was a "lesser" error. I also attempted to explain this lesser state of "unfittingness" by suggesting that here, in A', it was only the woman's deportment (unveiled) and not her action (prayer to God) that constituted the unfittingness, whereas, in A, it was the action (i.e. praying/prophesying) which, conducted unveiled, attempted to represent, and therefore inappropriately glorify, the man in the presence of God and the congregation that warranted the greater stricture of "shame". This is only a suggestion however. Nevertheless the lesser stricture in A' sort of correlated with the single section allocated to Argument A' contrasting with the two sections allocated to Argument A plus B in our passage.

### IIA/B) The “Men vs. Women” Component (vs. 14-15)

Following on from **IVB**, the “Men vs. Women” component of Argument A` is the “hair illustration” rather than the “substantive issue” of the need for a woman to veil when praying; (as noted, in Argument A, the corresponding contrast in Argument A concerned not hair length, but the substantive issue of headcovering/veiling when praying/prophesying). Here, the “Men vs. Women” component “sets up” the illustration or analogy for the woman praying. This illustration is the inappropriate wearing of glorious long or coiffured hair by an unveiled woman in public, and this corresponds, as we have already argued, to the substantive issue of the problem of inappropriate honour (i.e. unfittingness) that attaches to a woman who is praying to God in the public assembly of the church.

The contrasting situation between men and women in Argument A` is structural as well as conceptual (Figure 7.8 below):



This contrast between men and women is not only a “teaching point” for men’s hair length, but an example of “theological chiaroscuro” in which the glory of the woman is emphasised by comparison with the dishonour of the man.

### III) The Enigmatic Comment (v. 15b) upon the Statement in IIB

The explanation for and/or consequence of the (inappropriate) glory of the woman’s long hair (in an inferred public setting) has been extensively discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. Broadly, the conclusion was reached that in such circumstances, modesty and propriety, through the wise tutelage of nature, required a covering, a *peribolaion* to be worn by the woman over her head (as for example, with the customary use of the Roman *palla*).

Thus section **III** refers back to section **II B** (smaller red arrow in Figure 7.7).

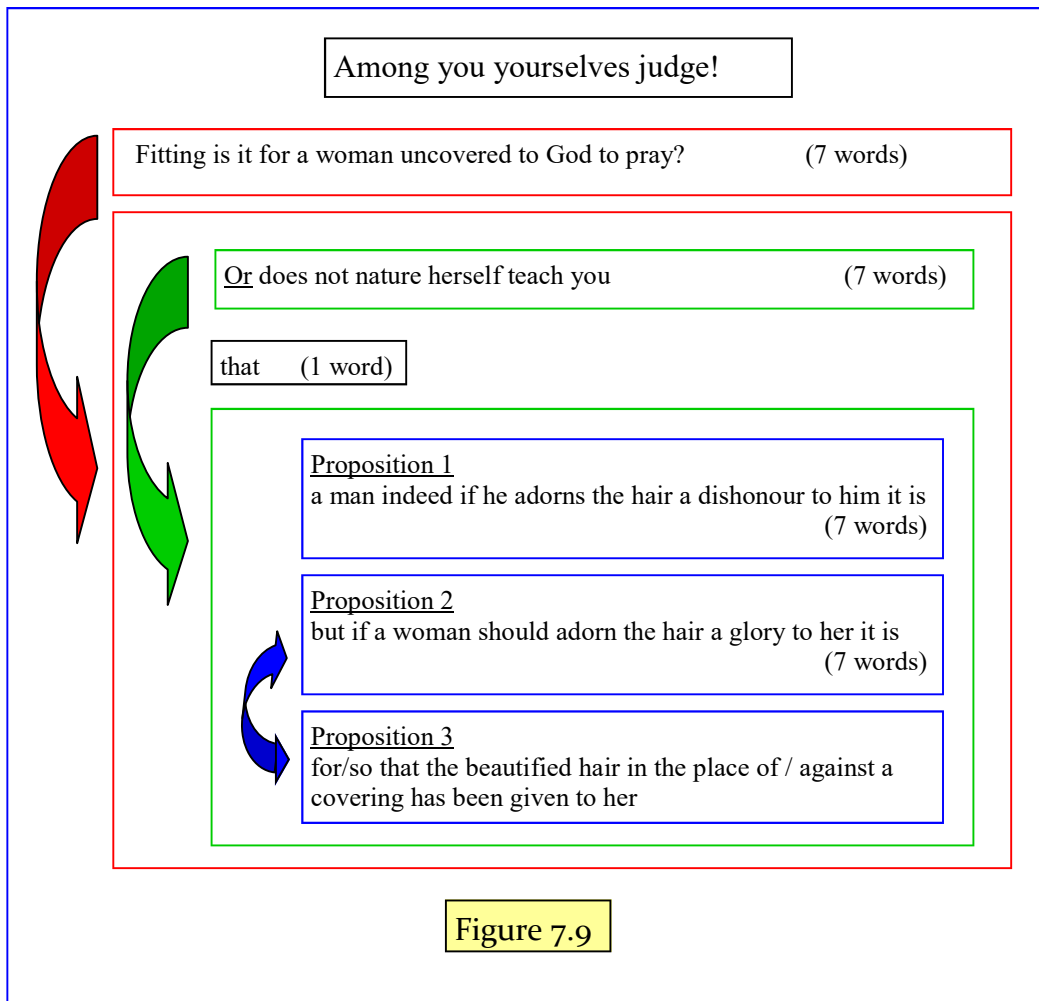
However, this conclusion in **III** also “fed back” into section **IV B** (large red arrow!) because the “answer” to the long hair illustration (i. e. covering) a was also the answer to the unfittingness of the woman being unveiled whilst praying—as was shown by Paul’s use of the word “or” (in the Received Text of v. 14) which indicates an equivalence between the substantive issue of veiling whilst praying to God (v. 13) and the illustration of being covered when having glorious long hair in public (v. 15a).

In discussing this section of Paul’s argument earlier in the book, we drew attention to the odd fact that, whereas in Argument A, the (putatively) shaved woman appeared (in a dramatic “teaching moment by Paul!) to be one of , (or indeed, “one and the same” as (v. 5b) one of!!) the praying or prophesying women - rather than an “independently chosen” woman, by contrast, here in Argument A`, the woman with the glorious long hair is not required to be to be the same as the woman who prays—rather she seems to have been “independently chosen” as a hypothetical example because of her long hair! A possible/partial explanation for this “discrepancy” was a practical one: a woman with “normal length hair” could cut this off and become shaved or shorn immediately, but a woman with normal length hair could not become a woman with glorious long hair immediately—hence the requirement for a (hypothetical) substitute! If anyone has a better explanation please let me know!

The “essence” of Argument A` is that it is fitting for a woman to be veiled when praying to God as a matter of modesty and appropriateness: it is a way for the woman to show publicly that she is not “in the limelight” for herself, but because of the prayer being offered to God; this and the glory of God are “the important things”, and we assume that prophesying constitutes and entirely equivalent case.

I would like to conclude this chapter with two diagrams. The first, (Figure 7.9 on the next page) is a diagram illustrating one aspect of the structure of Argument A` which shows how the answer to the “unfittingness of praying to God unveiled” is provided by the “problem of the glory of long hair in public” illustration which in turn is solved by the provision of a covering garment. The various arrows in this diagram are reasonably self-explanatory.

The second diagram is a summary diagram (Figure 7.10 on the next page but one) showing (in rather small print!) Arguments A, B and A` set out



together and in sequence. The diagram uses the same “colour-coding” as in the individual diagrams. I’m sure that this structural analysis could be greatly improved, and that there are many structural aspects that I have completely missed or misunderstood. I hope that, nevertheless, that the “message” of this diagram forms a sufficiently adequate structural basis for the overall arguments that have been put forwards in this book for the proposed interpretation of the passage.





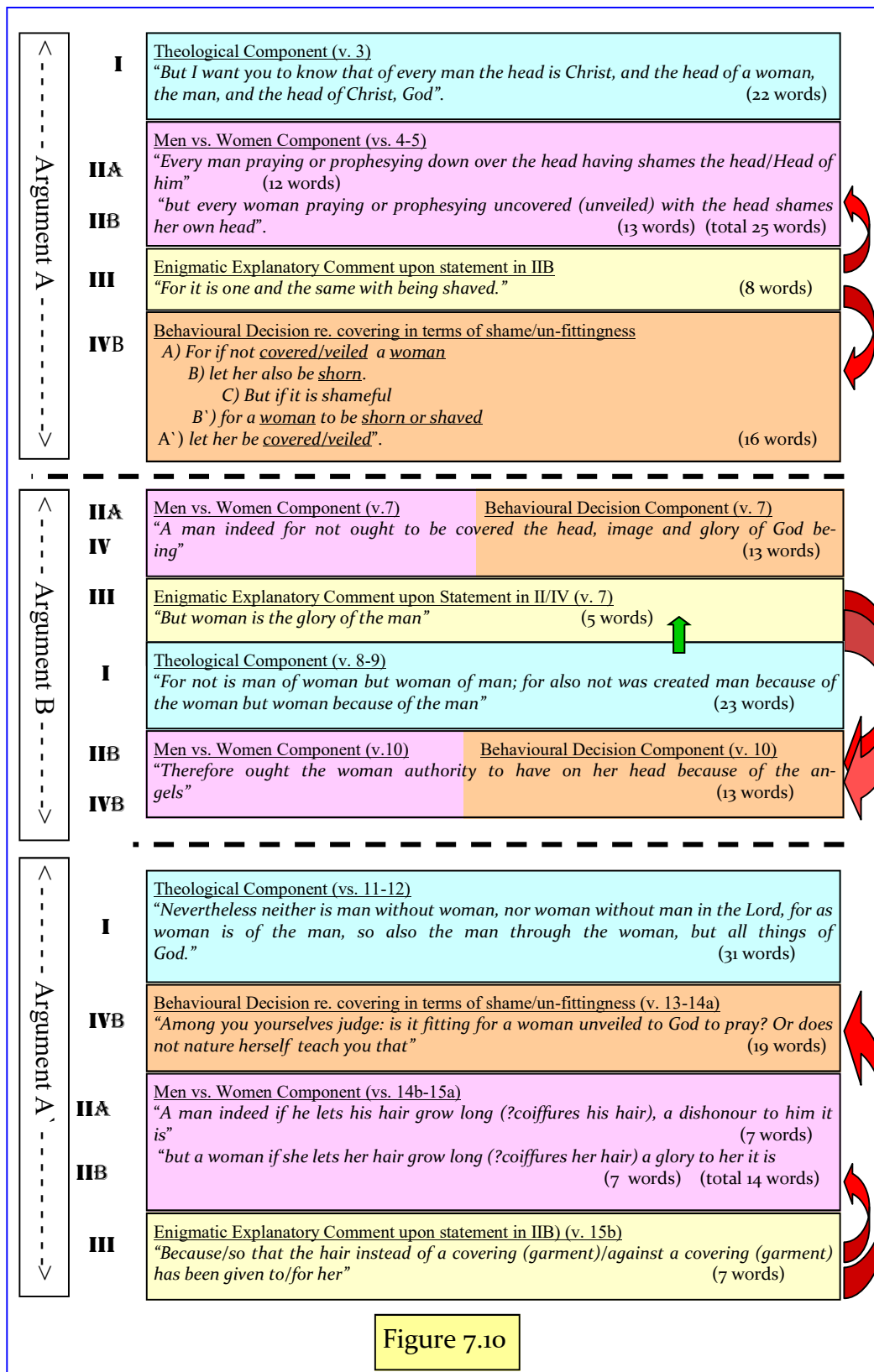


Figure 7.10