

## "BECAUSE OF THE ANGELS"

"For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels" (1 Corinthians 11:10). This verse has for centuries been the object of much uncertainty. What is meant by the terms, "power on her head" and "because of the angels?"

In these verses Paul refers either directly or indirectly to the hair some fifteen times. As water in baptism is the element through which a beautiful symbol is depicted, and as bread and fruit of the vine serve beautifully as the symbols through which we partake of Jesus' death in the communion, even so does the hair serve as a symbol of subjection. To make any other application of Paul's teaching would be to disallow his reasoning. Man honors God by wearing his hair short, while woman honors God by wearing her hair long.

The phrase "power on her head" is a most effective way of expressing the woman's ability to demonstrate her subjection. As Jesus in John 10:18 expressed power over His own life to "lay it down" and to "take it again," so does the woman with her hair have power to demonstrate her will to submit to the will of God. This idea is also found in Acts 5:4 where the word "power" is used to speak of the ability of Ananias and Sapphira to sell their land and in Rom. 9:21 where Paul speaks of the potter's control over the clay.

As to angels, the Scriptures give us insight through Jesus' statement, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven THEIR angels do always

behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 18:10). Early disciples acknowledged the presence of angels in the incident regarding Peter and Rhoda (Acts 12:15). Much comfort is to be found in Hebrews' explanation, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14). We can be confident, therefore, that God's people are watched over by His angels sent for our well-being.

To further understand the verse in question, it would be well that we first understand two others: Luke 15:7 and Ephesians 4:30. Jesus states in Luke, "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" and Paul in Ephesians says, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God." If joy exists in heaven when a sinner repents, and if grief to the Spirit of God results from disobedience, so must the angels who minister unto us be made joyful when we obey God and grieve when we disobey. When Christian women (or men, for that matter) wear their hair improperly and thus disregard God's will, it surely brings grief to their ministering angels. Because of this and in appreciation of God's kindness in providing angels to minister to us, Christians should carefully adhere to Scriptural teaching regarding their hair.

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