

## Esoteric Bible Studies

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### TEXT

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, dishonoreth his head.

5.—But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth 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.

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 on her 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.

—*Ist Corinthians, Chapter 11.*

### INTERPRETATION

The entire Bible is written so that it has one meaning for the masses of the people and another meaning for the esoteric student. From the esoteric or inner viewpoint, in the chapter under consideration man and woman refer to the masculine and feminine principles and not to man and woman in their physical form. Will denotes the male quality of the soul and imagination the female quality. When will is the stronger attribute of the soul, the Ego wears a male body; when imagination is the stronger, the body is female. But whether the sex is male or female, the opposite qualities are present in an undeveloped state.

Initiation is the process of developing both poles equally (see verse 11). This is the message of St. Paul as given in this chapter.

Verses 5 and 6 contain a beautiful, spiritual meaning when perceived with the inner understanding. It is impossible to translate one language literally into another. Just as "naked" means esoterically to be without the soul body, so the head of the woman being covered means the spiritual development of the feminine or heart principle, which includes the awakening of the pineal gland and pituitary body, and the harmonious functioning of the third ventricle of the brain, creating in the neophyte the crown of thorns and in the spiritually awakened one the crown of eternal glory. The man is admonished to remain uncovered because this development is the essential work of the feminine principle. All through the workings of nature it is the masculine principle that plants the seed while the province of the woman or feminine principle is to nourish and develop that which has been planted.

Verse 7 says, "Man is the image and

glory of God, but the woman is the glory of man." "Man" here refers to the equilibrium of both principles, for it is only the Adept who is really made in the image and likeness of God. "Woman is the glory of the man," means that no man, i.e., no human being, may attain this stage of development until the feminine or heart principle is awakened within, for this is the great Christ principle.

Verse 9 does not refer to the inferiority or subjection of woman as has been taught for so long, but means that the most important part of development is the awakening of the great feminine principle, the Christ within. "How shall I know the Christ is mine save through the Christ in me?"

An endeavor to explain this chapter literally has given rise to many unusual and erroneous conceptions. Verse 10, for example, was explained by some of the earlier church Fathers to mean that a holy conception could take place through the ears: "Thou who didst conceive through the ears," says an old Latin hymn referring to Mary. There is also an old superstition traced to the Talmud, that spirits both good and evil could impregnate woman through the ears, and even in this modern day so literal have been these interpretations that there are some churches which no woman is permitted to enter unless her head is covered. The beautiful spiritual truth which St. Paul was teaching in verse 10 was that of the lifting of the spinal spirit fire to the head through living the life of purification and regeneration, which awakens the spiritual organs in the head and generates the halo or spiritual glory to be found there. Then the life of man becomes as that of the angels, purified from the taint of passion. He lives and loves as do the angels and the flowers.

Verses 14 and 15 are most interesting in the light of present developments. Hair is a product of the vital body and symbolizes the womanly qualities. Woman has usually worn long hair, for she possesses the preponderant fem-

inine qualities. Man's hair is usually shorn, for he possesses the preponderant masculine qualities. We are approaching the Aquarian Age which has been called the Woman's Age for the reason that its principal work will be *the lifting of the fallen feminine pole in both man and woman*, a nearer approach to the balancing of the two principles. It is the strengthening of the masculine pole within woman that is accountable for her modern masculine attire, shorn hair, and encroachment upon man's place in the world's work; while man through the opposite process is expressing more of the feminine qualities.

The lack of equilibrium between the two poles is the reason for the restlessness that is abroad in all the world today, and which is causing much upheaval in private life, such as divorce and companionate marriage; also in national life it is causing the upheaval of governments and thrones. The occultist knows this turmoil to be but the preparatory stage for that great divine event toward which, as Tennyson sings, all creation moves. It was this inner knowledge that caused Christ Jesus to say, "I came not to bring peace but a sword."

Back in the dim dawn of our present civilization a wise Master who was symbolically called Hermes Trismegistus, gave what he called the great Law of Polarity as the fundamental requisite of understanding.

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Live for something—have a purpose,  
And that purpose keep in view.  
Drifting like a helpless vessel  
Thou can'st ne'er to life be true.  
Half the wrecks that strew life's ocean,  
If some star had been their guide,  
Might have long been riding safely,  
But have drifted with the tide.

—*Selected.*

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There is no poverty harder than ignorance; no wealth more valuable than knowledge; no madness worse than conceit.—*Mahomet.*