

RESOLUTION

“So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours.” – 2 Thessalonians 2:15

For many years, an important question has been raised among brothers and sisters: When is head covering for a sister necessary in the light of the Scriptures, and in which cases is it not required? The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the 2 Thessalonians 2:15, writes that Christians should hold fast to the traditions that they were taught, whether by word of mouth or by the letters of the apostles. It is worth noting that all the epistles were written under the inspiration of the holy spirit and therefore must be accepted as the Word of Jehovah God for our instruction. However, the same apostle Paul, in his letter to the Colossians 2:8, gives a warning:

“Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ”

For decades, due to the absence of theocratic explanation in the literature, various groups developed their own opinions and interpretations regarding the matter of head covering for women. Over time, these personal views turned into dogmas and came to be regarded as binding norms. Consequently, in the matter of head covering, some refer to 2 Thessalonians 2:15 to justify adherence to human practices inherited from the past. However, such uninspired human traditions should not captivate faithful Christians and cannot serve as the foundation or part of their beliefs, according to Paul's words in Colossians 2:8.

Therefore, with God's help and through prayer, it is necessary for us to gain a clear understanding of the issue of head covering holding to the inspired tradition of the apostles and rejecting all human traditions, myths, and fabrications. We also need to examine what the Holy Scriptures say on this subject, as well as the theocratic literature based on God's Word, which helps us to understand the Bible and, most importantly, unites Jehovah God's people worldwide in a unified understanding.

The first thing we can take note of is the fact that the Bible mentions the requirement of head covering in only one passage, and only in two cases: when a woman is praying or prophesying. In the Law given by Jehovah God to His chosen people, Israel, there was not a single word stating that women were required to cover their heads under any circumstances, and this was not the custom of Jewish Christian women*. The first and last person to give instruction on this matter is the apostle Paul, whose words we read in 1 Corinthians 11:3-16:

“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. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman praying or prophesying

**(see W.T. №9, 1949, page 138, §21, English edition)*

with her head unveiled dishonoreth her head; for it is one and the same thing as if she were shaven. For if a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn: but if it is a shame to a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be veiled. For a man indeed ought not to have his head veiled, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man: for this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God. Judge ye in yourselves: is it seemly that a woman pray unto God unveiled? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.”

So, how were these passages of Scripture understood in the time of the early Bible Students? In the *book «The New Creation» 1904, Volume 6, page 271-272, English edition*, we read:

«We have already pointed out that the High Priest who typified Christ, the High Priest of our profession, alone went with uncovered head when in priestly attire; and that all of the under priests, who typified the Church. “the Royal Priesthood”, wore head coverings called “bonnets.” The teaching of this type is in full accord with what we have just seen, for in the gatherings of the Ecclesia of the New Creation the Lord, the antitypical High Priest, is represented by the brethren, while the Church or Royal Priesthood is represented by the sisters, whom the Apostle declares should likewise wear a head covering as indicating the same lesson – the subserviency of the Church to the Lord. The Apostle details this in 1 Cor. 11:3-7, 10-15.

Some have inferred that as the Apostle mentions a woman's long hair being given her by nature as a covering. that he meant nothing more than this; but verse clearly shows to the contrary – that he meant that women should not only let their hair grow long as nature provided for, but, additionally, should wear a covering, which in verse 10 he declares is a sign, or symbolic recognition of being subject to, or under the authority of man; symbolically teaching that the entire Church is under law to Christ. The record of verse 4 seems at first to be in conflict with the requirement that women keep silence in the ecclesias. Our thought is that while at the general Church service women are not to take a public part, yet in social meetings for prayer and testimony, and not for doctrinal teaching, there could be no objection to the sisters participating with their heads covered.

Respecting this matter of perpetuating the typical covering of their heads by the sisters, the Apostle urges it, but he does not state it to be a divine command. On the contrary, he adds: “If any man seemeth to be contentions [on the subject] we have no such custom [positive law in the Church].” It should not be considered a vital subject; though all who are seeking to do the Lord's will should be particular in this as well as in other regards from the time they discern its appropriateness as a symbol. The words, “because of the angels”, seem to refer to the chosen elders of the Church, who specially represent the Lord, the Head, in the ecclesias. – Rev. 2:1.

Summarizing, we suggest that the most liberal interpretation possible should be given to the inspired Apostle's words respecting the scope of the liberty of the sisters in the affairs of the Church. Our judgment of this we set forth thus:

1. The sisters have the same liberty as the brethren in the matter of the election of the Church's servants – the Elders and Deacons.

2. The sisters cannot serve as elders or teachers in the Church, because, the Apostle says, "I suffer not a woman to teach." (1 Tim. 2:12) This, however, need not be understood to hinder the sisters from participating in meetings not of the teaching or preaching kind; such as prayer and testimony meetings, Berean studies, etc., because the Apostle says that if she pray or prophesy (speak) it should be with her head covered, representing her acknowledgment of the fact that the Lord, the Great Teacher, is specially represented by the brethren. (1 Cor. 11:5, 7, 10) Such participation need not be considered teaching; because neither are the brethren who participate teachers; as the Apostle says, "Are all teachers?" No, the teachers or Elders are specially chosen, though always from among the males. – Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 2:24; 1 Cor. 12:28, 29.»

Also, in *W.T. №10, 1925, page 150, §39, 40, English edition*, we read:

«Again, the elders are referred to by the Apostle as angels in the text where he says: "For this cause ought the woman [in the congregation] to have a covering on her head, because of the angels." (1 Corinthians 11:10, margin) This is true because the woman is a type of the Church, and the elders are angels, or messengers, of the Lord, representing the Lord.

These things are mentioned here that each one who has an opportunity for service may recognize and appreciate the fact that he is a part of the Lord's organization and should deport himself accordingly.»

From these explanations, we could understand that in the days of the Bible Students, the brothers attended meetings with uncovered heads, while sisters, for the most part, covered their heads for the reasons mentioned above. However, even at that time, this issue was not approached fanatically and was not considered a vital, divine commandment, as we read above. This is also confirmed by photographs from meetings, missionary activities, and literature work of those times:



Pioneers in Romania, 1920s.

BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTIONS, 1909



The Bible Students Convention in the United States, 1909



Special assistants at the temple table, 1914



Literary room, 1914



Missionary work in Germany, 1920s



The Bible Students Convention in Italy, 1925



The Bible Students Convention in France, 1925



The first Ukrainian Bible Students Convention in Canada, 1920



The Bible Students Convention in the United States, 1922

But what changes took place among Jehovah's people in 1926? In the **book «Light» 1930, Volume 1, page 215, 216, English edition**, we read:

«...The remnant not only for sook Babylon, but in 1926 exposed her and denounced her in the language of the Scriptures, and then threw away from themselves all Babylonish customs, such as dress, names of holidays, sanctimoniousness, and like things, so that today nothing about the remnant can be culled Babylonish. (Isa. 14:22) In Britain the Lord's people were more given to ecclesiasticism, but when they saw their proper position they quickly forsook everything pertaining to Babylonish customs. The long coats, black ties, sanctimonious faces, hanging heads 'like a bulrush', ceased amongst the gatherings of the Lord's people. Instead, those coming together were joyful in the Lord and their faces shone with joy to have a part in his witness work.»

From this quote, we can understand the major changes that took place in 1926 with regard to clothing, including headwear. Since that time, formalism, pious appearances, and religious false holiness were left in the past. We read about this in the following publications of that time:

W.T. №3, 1927, page 46, English edition

«Men in various paths or walks of life are distinguished or designated by the clothing or garments they wear. A shepherd does not dress like a banker, nor does a farmer wear the garb of the merchant. You will probably ask then, How can a garment be used in connection with a Christian to identify him? The answer is, if a man is faithful to the Lord, and is walking in the footsteps of the Master, his very appearance shows that he is not mixed with the world. He does not have to wear some special kind of clothing to designate him. His countenance is different, and he looks different from other people. He can identify himself as a Christian because he recognizes that he has the testimony of the Lord through his spirit that he is the Lord's, and it is not difficult for other people to see that he is different from men of the world.»

Golden Age №182, September 8, 1926, page 782, 783, 788, English edition

Giving Sanctimoniousness the Ha-ha

«The discourses by these speakers were up-to date in their content and were well received. They emphasized the fact that the truth of divine revelation has come to stay and is marching on to victory; that the Lord God, whose name is Jehovah, is Himself taking a hand in human affairs during this crucial period and purposes to make Himself a name ... that now is no time for inaction on the part of Christians nor for idle dreaming of dreams, as is described in Joel 2:28, 29, but that God's faithful remnant must be as youths, young men of vision, who clearly see the Lord's purposes for our day and detect His movements and works and joyfully align themselves therewith.

Standing as they are in a most dangerous position, because the great dragon-like organization of Satan is thirsting for the destruction of those who keep the commandments of God, they keep themselves in a safe position by rendering holiness unto the Lord; and holiness means not a sanctimonious, goody-goody, ne'er-do-amiss in thought, word, or deed attitude, but utter devotion to Jehovah God; for it is only those who are active in God's service as His witnesses that He promises to cover in the shadow of His hand. Hypocrisy and the holier-than-thou attitude which hide their despicable head under a sober, pious, long-

frock-coated, solemn-voiced, devout-appearing- exterior were roundly trounced, especially by the Society's president, much to the amused enjoyment and genuine approval of the convention. They gleefully hailed the, dawning for them of release from foolish Babylonish trammels, which retard activity, and of greater exercise of themselves in the liberty wherewith Christ makes His own free.

As one conventioner testified in the London Tabernacle the Wednesday night after the convention: "I want to thank the Lord for the deliverance we have had from ecclesiasticism at this convention. I may be letting our American brethren in on some of our secrets over here," he frankly stated; and then he told how on one occasion, when opportunity was afforded him to deliver a discourse, he was declared barred from the speakers' platform because, forsooth, he was not dressed in ecclesiastical style but was clad in a profane gray business suit rather than in a sanctified long black frock coat.»

Let Us Keep Our Covenant

«Holiness, an absolute devotion to the Lord, is required; but sanctimoniousness is a pious deception. (Hebrews 12:14) It is a question of "passion versus principle"; in other words, a being governed by some extraneous or external influence or being controlled by God's Word...»

W.T. №13, 1930, page 200, §31, English edition

«It seems certain that it is an inherited weakness of man to desire to justify himself before other men. This desire has led many to take a compromising course in order that they might be well esteemed amongst men. If one could hear others say of him, 'What a sweet and beautiful character that man has!' that would tickle his ears. This improper desire has led many to give more heed to the manner of uttering speech and to their dress or personal appearance and to their dignified carriage and apparent goodness and sweetness than to the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom. Undoubtedly such selfish desire has led the clergy to garb themselves in much gold, loose and long gowns and gorgeous headdress, that they might be highly esteemed amongst men. A like selfish desire has led many consecrated ones to say in substance: 'I must give much attention to just how I look and to utter my speech with precision that all will know that I am an unusual man and therefore like the Lord.' In this they have misrepresented the Lord to themselves and to others.»

W.T. №22, 1938, page 352, English edition

«The royal priesthood is instructed not to exhibit their royal garments to the people. "And when they go forth into the utter [outer] court, even into the utter [outer] court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments." (Ezek. 44:19) This text cannot be construed to mean that the glorified saints in heaven will materialize in form or dress and exhibit themselves to the people on the earth. The text therefore must be limited in its application to Jehovah's remnant still on the earth who are before the people as Jehovah's witnesses. These are not to exhibit themselves and parade themselves before the people by misusing things of their spiritual office for selfish and vain-glorious purposes. They are not to pose before the people in a

sanctimonious manner as Jehovah's witnesses in order to impress others with their own importance or to cause the people to look upon them with awe. Such a course would be entirely displeasing to Jehovah. Jehovah's witnesses are his servants; and when they go before the people with his message in book form, or by other means of testifying, they are to give Jehovah all the glory and honor, and none to man. (Hag. 2:11, 12)...»

Book «Vindication» 1932, Volume 3, page 274-276, English edition

«...God gives the woman her hair for a head covering, and the woman is a picture of the church. (2 Cor. 11:2) Whether the woman's hair is rolled up in a knot on the top of her head or whether it is cropped is not material, but it is a shame to shave the head and then tie a white cloth over it and wear a black bonnet in order that others may see and say: "That is a real sanctimonious person." Nor are the men to wear long hair in order that they might appear as unusually pious souls and cause the people thus to say. Paul understood the Lord's instructions concerning the priesthood when he wrote that the women should not shave their head, nor the men wear long locks. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering." – 1 Cor. 11:3-15.

"They shall only poll their heads," says the Lord in his instructions to Ezekiel. To poll means to shear. There has been a lot of foolish talk concerning the women's bobbing or cropping the hair, but there is no scripture against so doing. We should not be foolish in trying to make rules which the Scriptures do not warrant. The sum of Jehovah's instructions to Ezekiel concerning the headdress of the priesthood is that they are to do nothing that would make them especially conspicuous or would call attention to the creature, but to do everything to call attention to the Creator. They are not to make themselves particularly conspicuous by dress or appearance or ultrapius expressions. It is improper for them to go about in a mournful manner or to appear as martyrs that they may impress others. Jehovah's witnesses are happy, joyful and faithful servants of God, boldly giving the testimony of Jesus Christ and calling attention of the people to the Word and name of the Most High. Whether a certain class like them or do not like them, it is not material. God's approval is the all-important thing.

Any course of action that is extreme or excessive is displeasing to the Lord. ... We should be diligent and strive to be very accurate in our work and give great care to see that it is done right and to the honor of the Lord.

We should not be man-pleasers, but should strive to please God...»

From these quotations, we can clearly understand what the emphasis was at a time when the remnant of the faithful was finally cleansed of religious formalism and sanctimoniousness. As for head coverings and head coverings themselves, a reasonable and theocratic explanation, which has remained unchanged and unaltered throughout the subsequent history of Jehovah's Witnesses, can be found in ***W.T. №22, 1926, page 349, 350, English edition:***

Some interesting questions

«Question: Is it always necessary for the consecrated women, when attending a meeting of the Lord's people or where the Lord's Word is being expounded, to wear a hat or other head covering?»

Answer: The scripture with reference to women having their heads covered reads: "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) In the next chapter of the same epistle St. Paul illustrates the body of Christ, by making reference to the human body; and then he stresses the fact that each one of the Christ body, like each member in a human body, has his function to perform. In connection with the head covering he says: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head." (1 Corinthians 11:4) It is manifest that the lesson intended thereby is this:

The man and the woman respectively represent Jesus and the church his body, Christ Jesus being the head thereof. The man represents Christ and is the head over the woman, representing the body members. When a man appears before a congregation of believers, or in any meeting to teach the Word of the Lord, he is the representative of Christ Jesus. The man should have his head uncovered, because "the head of every man is Christ". A consecrated woman might be called upon to offer public prayer or even to lead the service. There might be no man present to lead, or some men might be present who are not competent to lead; or it might be a meeting where any woman would be privileged to speak. Under such circumstances the apostle says that the woman who does pray or prophesy should have her head covered, because if she does not she dishonors her head. In other words she would thereby assume to represent the man, who must be uncovered. She would thus fail to recognize the order that the Lord has made in the church and would also be casting dishonor upon the head of the house.

But when the woman is merely attending a meeting, sitting in the congregation to listen to the man pray or preach, there is no Scriptural authority saying that she must have her head covered at that time. But suppose a woman is attending a Berean study, and propounds a question, and is asked to give answer to the question. She is neither praying nor prophesying in this, and there is no Scriptural rule requiring her head to be covered at such a time.

*Sisters attending conventions or meetings of the class often find it very difficult to be comfortable if compelled to keep their hats on. Being uncomfortable, it is difficult for them to listen to the speaker. Under such circumstances the apostle's statement above mentioned should not be used to defeat the very purpose of the meeting so far as the sisters are concerned. **They should be permitted to sit quietly in a meeting, with their heads uncovered, and listen to the discourse or lesson and profit thereby.**»*

Worth mentioning that this quotation outlines not only the specific instances when a sister needs to cover her head, but also when there is no need for it and no Scriptural requirement; We can also note that the covering refers to any headdress, in this case it is a woman's hat, which was the headdress at that time. There is no Scriptural rule or theocratic instruction regarding the style, shape, color, or material of the head covering. Also, there is no specific

requirement or theocratic directive that it must necessarily be a headscarf. Different peoples and diverse cultures have different types of head coverings. In the *book «The New Creation» 1904, Volume 6, page 329, English edition* when advice was given regarding the funeral service and who could conduct it, regarding head covering it was written:

«...We would suggest further that if no brother be found competent for the occasion there would be no impropriety in such a reading by a sister – wearing some kind of a head-covering.»

Also, in *W.T. №9, 1949, page 137, §12, English edition*, we read:

«...Therefore, in view of the angels, woman has to wear a symbol of subjection on her head.” Or, “That is why she ought to wear upon her head something to symbolize her subjection, out of respect to the angels, if to nobody else.” (1 Cor. 11:7-10, Moffatt; An. Amer. Trans.)...»

Next, let us consider in more detail the reason why the apostle Paul wrote about head covering to the congregation in Corinth, the meaning of his words, and the theocratic order on this matter for our time although we have already read a brief and quite clear answer in the above mentioned quotation from *W.T. №22, 1926*. For this purpose, along with this resolution, we propose a careful study and examination of *W.T. “Woman” №9* from 1949, where the matter of head covering is discussed in great depth and detail, since in this resolution it is possible to include only the main quotations and thoughts. Thus, in *W.T. №9, 1949, page 136-138, §10-17, 19, English edition*, we read:

«...Bear in mind that man’s head is Christ Jesus and woman’s head is man as we read: “Any man who prays or prophesies with a veil on his head dishonours his head, while any woman who prays or prophesies without a veil on her head dishonours her head; she is no better than a shaven woman. If a woman will not veil herself, she should cut off her hair as well. But she ought to veil herself; for it is disgraceful that a woman should have her hair cut off or be shaven.” (1 Cor. 11:4-6, Moffatt) That is, in the apostle’s day it was disgraceful for a woman to have her hair clipped short, or worse still, all shaved off with a razor. How so? Why, then it was the custom among the pagans of the Roman Empire for slavegirls to have their hair cropped to denote their bondage and menial position. Besides that, when a woman was found guilty of immorality, either fornication or adultery, she was sentenced by the court to have her head shaved bald. The Roman Empire, and notoriously the city of Corinth to the Christians in which the apostle wrote, were very corrupt. So if a woman appeared on the streets without a veil to cover her face she was taken to be a person of low morals and of easy virtue. Hence women who were anxious to keep their respectability never appeared in public with face exposed to everybody.

...Since it was the custom for a woman to appear veiled in public, the apostle Paul did not wish the Christian sisters to violate that accepted rule of respectability by going to congregational meetings unveiled. If they did attend unveiled, they would build up the reputation that the women of the Corinthian congregation were low in morals. It was not a case of defying custom and giving womankind her entitled freedom to appear barefaced publicly. It was simply a case of being “all things to all men”, denying ourselves, so as not

to cause some to stumble and thus hinder the spread of the truth and the growth of the Christian congregation there. – 1 Cor. 9:19-27.

But if the woman prayed or prophesied in the general congregation of mixed attendance, there was a reason higher than popular custom for her to veil herself. It was to honor her head in God's arrangement, that is, the man. Just as it was dishonoring to the man's head, Christ Jesus, to pray or prophesy from under a veil, as when Jewish men throw a tasseled shawl or scarf called a tallith over their head when offering prayer today. Was God flattering man and tickling his conceit by this arrangement, and at the same time unreasonably humiliating the womenfolk? Not at all; but it was an arrangement for both man and woman to honor Theocratic headship. "Man", the apostle explains, "does not require to have a veil on his head, for he represents the likeness and supremacy [or, glory] of God; but woman represents the supremacy [or, glory] of man. (Man was not made from woman, woman was made from man; and man was not created for woman, but woman for man.) Therefore, in view of the angels, woman has to wear a symbol of subjection on her head." Or, "That is why she ought to wear upon her head something to symbolize her subjection, out of respect to the angels, if to nobody else." (1 Cor. 11:7-10, Moffatt; An Amer. Trans.) When we thus have explained the reason for a practice, then we see its fitness and we willingly comply with it, out of honor to God and his Christ. We want to recognize and honor Theocratic headship.

Just who the angels here meant are, out of respect to whom our Christian sisters should submit to the above regulations, has been argued in a number of ways. But just taking what information the pure Scriptures give us, they appear to be the unseen spirit angels. These God uses as his messengers and deputies and at times in the past they materialized in flesh and appeared to mankind. That these have an interest in our congregational meetings is suggested by Ecclesiastes 5:5, 6, reading: "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thy hands?" (Am. Stan. Ver.) Especially should this be the case now that Jehovah God has sent to the temple the "angel of the testament" or "messenger of the covenant". – Mal. 3:1, Douay and Am. Stan. Ver.

...God has chosen certain angels for special duties toward us as Christ's disciples, and the apostle Paul suggests to us some measure of responsibility we have before these angels when he tells Timothy: "I charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels to observe these rules without any discrimination, and to be perfectly impartial." (1 Tim. 5:21, An Amer. Trans.) Surely, then, our Christian sisters can uncomplainingly submit to something ordained by an Authority higher than man, out of respect for these angels. If man does not understand or appreciate, they do...

So, in the apostolic days when and where it was customary for women to veil their heads and faces in public, why did Christian women do so? In order not to offend popular usage and create misunderstanding and bring reproach? Yes; but especially to show the subjection of the female to the male sex, in view of the angels...

...God has so adjusted the body and given such especial distinction to its inferior parts that there is no clash in the body, but its parts all alike care for one another." (1 Cor. 12: 21-25, An Amer. Trans.) It should be that way in the congregation of God's people. There

should be no clash or disunion because of the relative prominence and inferiority of male and female as to privileges of service.

...The apostle advises us to use common sense and to make observations for ourselves based on how we are naturally made: “Judge for yourselves; is it proper for an unveiled woman to pray to God? Surely nature herself teaches you that, while long hair is disgraceful for a man, for a woman long hair is a glory. Her hair is given her as a covering.” (1 Cor. 11:13-15, Moffatt) Does woman resent her natural tendency to long hair? Does she not consider her hair to be a glorifying feature about her and hence try to keep it and to wear it attractively? God gave her long hair as a sign of her subjection to the male, not for her oppression but for her covering; and yet this covering which symbolizes subjection is becoming and beautifying to the female. Without it what would she look like? And so how nicely God has balanced everything for comfort! ...»

«If any person disputes the matter and contends for another custom that seems to allow womankind more freedom publicly, then let it be sufficient to say that neither we apostles nor the congregations of God have or follow the custom contended for by the opposer. Accordingly, Moffatt renders 1 Corinthians 11:16: “If anyone presumes to raise objections on this point – well, I acknowledge no other mode of worship, and neither do the churches of God.” ... So would the apostle require veiling today!»

Thus, based on this information, we could understand why the apostle called on the Corinthian Christian women to cover their heads in public places and at meetings. Firstly, there was a local custom, the failure to observe it would have brought bad reputation to the local congregation. Secondly, in Corinthians chapter 11, the apostle emphasizes the headship of the man and the submission of the woman; therefore, according to Paul’s words, the head covering is necessary as a sign of authority over the woman, for the sake of the angels. The apostle states that if a wife prays or prophesies without covering, then by this she dishonors her head. Therefore, the need to cover the head in certain cases is a theocratic directive and instruction. Paul mentions only two cases of such necessity: when the wife prays and prophesies. The following quotations help to understand the meaning of these words in the past and in the present time.

W.T. №9, 1949, page 138-141, §20-22, 24, 31, 32, English edition

*«Note that the apostle is discussing the matter of a woman’s praying or prophesying publicly in a mixed congregation of God’s people. When doing these things it would at all times be proper to wear a veil to show her doing these things only in subjection to the male members of the congregation. Back there in apostolic days the holy spirit was poured out upon both sexes, so that at meetings of the congregation the women as well as the men would be inspired by the spirit and would have a prayer to offer or a prophetic explanation to make. Hence it was well for the women to be prepared at meeting for such unexpected operations of the spirit upon them by being veiled. **Today, however, the spirit does not operate outwardly in this manner so as to inspire the women as well as the men to pray and prophesy or explain Scripture.** But on other occasions, apart from formal meetings of the congregation, it would not be necessary or required for feminine members to cover their heads that way. We remember how when Samuel’s mother Hannah visited the tabernacle at*

Shiloh she stood and prayed for the birth of this boy. She did not wear a veil or headcovering hiding her face; otherwise High Priest Eli would not have noticed the silent movement of her lips and thought that she was drunk. – 1 Sam. 1:9-27.

*Although the veil is of great antiquity as a part of female attire, yet there is nothing to show in Scripture that women who were devoted to God, like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, etc., wore or had to cover their faces with a veil when in public on ordinary occasions, either in Egypt, Palestine or Syria. The custom of veiling, therefore, did not arise with the Jewish Christian women. It was observed by the Christians of the first century because of what was considered chaste, so as not to offend public taste and thus hinder others' accepting the Kingdom message. **Since customs have changed, and since in many progressive lands it is not the custom for women to veil themselves in public to appear decent, moral and respectable, Christians in such lands are under no obligation to veil themselves in public or when attending congregational assemblies. The apostle's argument does not require them to be veiled under such circumstances.** Of course, if they want to pray or prophesy at a Christian assembly of mixed membership, then they should veil or cover their head as a symbol of subjection. In that case they will not be like the famous pagan prophetesses known as sibyls who came under demon influence and prophesied with unveiled faces, so that their twisted features and foaming mouth showed up together with their frantic gestures. The pagan priestesses, too, prayed or delivered their predictions bareheaded or with disordered hair.*

The apostle faced the facts when he undertook to discuss women's praying or prophesying among their Christian brothers. The women did pray or prophesy under inspiration. For a woman to be a prophetess among God's consecrated people was not a novelty...»

«Hundreds of years prior to that Pentecostal day of A.D. 33 the prophet Joel had foretold that in the Christian era Jehovah would pour out his spirit upon women as well as men, women of all ages and stations, and they would prophesy. On Pentecost, as the faithful remnant of Jews were met together, both men and women, Joel's prophecy began fulfilling. The holy spirit came down upon men and women alike and they spoke with tongues and explained God's will to their listeners. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:1-18) In the matter of prophesying thus under spirit inspiration, the four virgin daughters of Philip the evangelist are mentioned as prophesying as late as twenty-three years after Pentecost. (Acts 21:8, 9)...»

«...In the first century women did not keep silent in the church when God's spirit moved them to prophesy. Today when answering questions, telling experiences and making demonstrations our consecrated sisters are not teaching or trying to teach and dictate to the men. If they are expressing themselves in accord with Watchtower publications and in submission to counsel from the Watchtower Society on Theocratic order and procedure for Jehovah's witnesses, then the women are not teaching. It is God through his organization that is doing so. The women are merely using the spiritual provisions He makes for all his people and are repeating what they have been taught.»

«...In final fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29 his spirit has been poured out in these last days of this world. It has been outpoured with mighty activating power upon all consecrated flesh,

male and female. Irresistibly the Lord God's daughters and maidservants must prophesy, explaining His will and purpose to others according to his prophetic Word. So, with his blessing and therefore his unmistakable approval, women are engaging in spreading his Word from house to house and in public places. They are carrying on private Bible studies with Watchtower publications in the homes of the ignorant. As mothers, they are instructing their own children in God's Word. They are acting as missionaries to lands calling for spiritual help. They are offering the spiritual sacrifices of praise to God everywhere, together with their Christian brothers. Records show more women are engaging in this service than men.»

Book «Prophecy» 1929, page 196, 199, English edition

«...The greatest witness to the name of the Lord ever given on earth has been in progress since the year 1922, and still progresses. Such marks the second or complete fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel.

In the prophecy it is written: “And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit; and they shall prophesy.” (Acts 2:18) Prior to 1922 the preaching of the gospel had been done chiefly by a few of the consecrated ones. After that time practically all of the anointed have actively engaged in giving the testimony to God's purpose to set up his kingdom, his vengeance, and the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Prophesying, or preaching, may be done either by word of mouth or by placing in the hands of the people the message of truth in printed form. Such has been done, and is now being done, by young men and young women as well as old men and old women. “All flesh” therefore means all those among the men and women who are consecrated and anointed with the spirit of God, regardless of sex or previous condition.

It seems clear that the term “young men”, used in the prophecy, means the younger brethren of Christ Jesus, regardless of sex, because no sex distinction is recognized in Christ. (Gal. 3:28) “Young men” is a term symbolically used to denote strong, vigorous, active and zealous ones in the Lord and in his service, regardless of age. “Old men” symbolically represents those who are listless, dreamy, and indifferent to what is to be done or is being done. It is the “young men”, that is to say, the active ones in the Lord's service, who see visions. A vision means a clearer understanding of God's purpose; and those who see and understand are moved with a zealous devotion to the Lord, and they serve joyfully, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Prov. 29:18)...»

W.T. №17, 1928, page 262, §28, English edition

«... “Your young men shall see visions.” Young men are vigorous and active and strong. These represent the class that see God's purposes concerning his people and who are diligent to perform their duties and do so with gladness of heart. Through his prophet God says: “Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.” “Prophecy” means to preach, speak or sing, and that is exactly what God commands that his people must do in this day. (Isaiah 12:1-6) Today there are hundreds of colporteurs and thousands of class workers going from door to door preaching the good news of the kingdom to the glory of God.»

Due to a misunderstanding of the above excerpts regarding the meaning of the word “to prophesy” in modern times, many disagreements and discussions have arisen. Consequently, for a comprehensive understanding of this subject, based on the above-mentioned quotations, it is appropriate to consider the following questions: Are we literal prophets today, and do we possess the gift of prophecy? Has the holy spirit been poured out upon us in the literal sense? Are our words inspired when we preach the Good News? And, as a result, are dedicated women obligated to cover their heads while participating in all these theocratic activities – such as preaching, distributing spiritual literature, singing, and conversations on Bible topics – if all of this is equated with literal prophesying?

Book «Light» 1930, Volume 1, page 196, 198, 199; English edition

«“Some one may ask, Since the fulfilment of the various time prophecies demonstrates that God’s methods of operating are slow, may it not be that the kingdom will not be ushered in for five, ten or even twenty-five years? Our reply is, we are not a prophet; we merely believe that we have come to the place where the Gentile times have ended...”»

«However, the Elijah class, God’s people, continued to bear witness to the name of the Lord as best they could. “They shall prophesy” (bear witness in this humiliated condition) 1260 days, or forty-two months, during which period of time they should be despised or trodden down, treated with contempt by those who hate God’s kingdom, particularly by the clergy and the principal of their flocks. (Rev. 11:2, 3)»

Book «Light» 1930, Volume 2, page 163, 164, English edition

«Those of the remnant bear the commission of “the testimony of Jesus Christ” and must prophesy if they would be faithful. They must now take an active part in the service of the Lord in telling of God and his kingdom through Christ. It is upon these that the spirit of the Lord is poured out, and those receiving the spirit “shall prophesy”. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:18) God has spoken, and his faithful servants must prophesy. (Amos 3:8) These constitute the “feet” of Jesus Christ, who must now deliver the message. (Isa. 52:7, 8) And in giving this testimony the remnant is not to honor the creature, but to give all honor and glory to the Creator.»

«...It is one of the visions foretold by Joel, when he wrote: “Your young men shall see visions.” (Joel 2:28) The “old men” dream dreams. Because they have wanted to dream and be at ease many who have made a covenant with God have dreamed that all the fighting is done and that now they must only wait to be taken on flowery beds into heavenly glory. Not so with the “young men”, which means those who are strong in the Lord, strong in faith and giving glory to God. These are now privileged to have a vision of things about to come to pass...»

W.T. №22, 1949, page 340-342, §8, 9, 11, 14, 16, English edition

«...the pure Christianity (but not churchianity) is today the same as Christianity was in its infancy. It has suffered no setback, no crippling, no weakening by not having God’s active force or spirit operate now with miraculous spiritual gifts. The absence of such gifts does not surprise us. It was foretold by the apostle Paul in the first century, saying: “But whether

there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” (1 Cor. 13:8) The ceasing of gifts of tongues and passing away of gifts of prophecy and of knowledge is no sign of God’s disfavor nor of any powerlessness or weakness of his spirit. Not all Christians were meant to have those miraculous gifts, and not all have had them. Speaking of his own day Paul asks: “Are all apostles! are all prophets! are all teachers! are all workers of miracles! Have all the gifts of healing! do all speak with tongues! do all interpret!” (1 Cor. 12:29, 30) The apostle asks all these questions in such a way that the required answer is No! Hence lacking some or all such gifts would be no evidence of God’s displeasure but it would show his different way of operation. We do not control the giving of such miraculous gifts nor the giving of particular gifts, but God does so, Theocratically. He endows the members of his church as he wills, from Jesus Christ on down. And his spirit can operate and does operate just as mightily today without those spiritual gifts as it did with them in the first century. In fact, the faithful remnant of the true Christian church today are, by Jehovah God’s spirit, accomplishing a mightier witness for his name and kingdom than ever before in the Christian era.

Since miraculous spiritual gifts have long passed away as no longer necessary in this advanced day of the true church, it would be useless for any consecrated Christian today to desire earnestly any of them, such as foreign tongues, ability to translate them, power to heal, prophesying or inspired preaching, etc. The time for such has passed, and Jehovah God would never answer the prayer for them. Nineteen centuries ago it was a good and effective way to establish and build up the Christian congregation by means of those awe-inspiring gifts of the spirit to its members. But the remnant of the true church today under God’s leading and by his spirit is following a more excellent way than that of using spiritual gifts. It is the way of love...»

«To show how superior this way is, the apostle illustrates how essential it is. Suppose one had some or all the gifts miraculously given by God’s spirit. Yet if one lacked the cultivation of this vital quality, love, one would come to nothing. Still talking of gifts of the spirit, the apostle opens up the thirteenth chapter of his epistle and says: “If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” (1 Cor. 13:1, 2, Rev. Stan. Ver.)...»

«The gift of prophecy was superior to that of foreign tongues. “He who prophesies addresses men in words that edify, encourage, and console them. He who speaks in a ‘tongue’ edifies himself, whereas he who prophesies edifies the church. Now I would like you all to speak with ‘tongues,’ but I would prefer you to prophesy. The man who prophesies is higher than the man who speaks with ‘tongues’ – unless indeed the latter interprets, so that the church may get edification. . . . Set your heart on the prophetic gift, and do not put any check upon speaking in ‘tongues’.” (1 Cor. 14:3-5, 39, Moffatt) Because of its power to edify a person’s brethren in the language which they understood, the gift of prophecy was one to be desired above various other gifts. In fact, Paul lists those with the prophetic gift next to the apostles, saying: “God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.” He lists tongues of various kinds eighth and last. The gift of prophecy was

imparted to both men and women. The prophecy of Joel 2:28, 29 predicted that the spirit would be outpoured upon both sexes and that the sons and daughters and the menservants and maidservants would prophesy. Just so the record shows that women as well as men participated in this gift. The four virgin daughters of Philip the evangelist prophesied. And Paul wrote to regulate the prophesying by women among the Corinthian congregation, saying they should be veiled when doing so, out of respect for the consecrated men who represent the church's Head, Jesus Christ. He says: "The head of the woman is the man; . . . every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head." – 1 Cor. 11:3-5; Acts 21:8, 9.»

«The gift of prophesying or of inspired preaching passed away after the apostles of the Lamb Jesus Christ died; but today, by the power of God's spirit, the preaching of the Kingdom gospel for the salvation of humankind is being carried on as never before...»

From the cited quotations, it is evident that Jehovah's Witnesses in our time are not literal prophets, and they do not possess the gift of prophecy, and do not speak under the inspiration of the holy spirit when they preach or explain biblical truths. And this can be stated as an obvious and indisputable fact. Also, for greater clarity, let us consider analogies and provide examples that will help to understand this issue better.

The coming of Jesus Christ to the temple of Jehovah was a literal fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi 3:1: **"...and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he cometh, saith Jehovah of hosts."** This occurred in 33 AD, at the time when Jesus literally cleansed the temple in Jerusalem according to Matthew 21:12, 13. In fulfillment of the prophecy to a greater extent, in 1918 Jesus Christ came not to a literal, but to a spiritual temple. In the year 33, there was a literal fulfillment of the prophecy to a lesser degree, and in 1918 began its spiritual fulfillment and cleansing to a greater degree, as evidenced by the events from the history of God's people known to all of us.

In the year 33 A.D., on the day of Pentecost, the words of the prophet Joel 2:28, 29 about prophesying began to be fulfilled literally, to a lesser degree. This is what we read about this in Acts 2:14-18: **"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day. but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh: And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams: Yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."** And so, since this prophecy had already been fulfilled literally on the day of Pentecost and was fulfilled on the first Christians, after Christ's coming to the spiritual temple in 1922, there was an outpouring of the double spirit on the remnant of the faithful, no longer in a literal sense, but in a spiritual sense. And the unprecedented scale of the preaching activity of Jehovah's people throughout the earth is evidence of the fulfillment of this prophecy to a greater extent. Since then, Jehovah's Witnesses have prophesied in a spiritual sense, not in a

literal sense. Therefore, dedicated women, while carrying out their preaching duties, are not required to cover their heads since they are not literally prophesying, as was the case in the time of the apostles under the direct influence of the holy spirit.

With God's help, we have examined the issue of prophesying in detail. Now we have to understand under what circumstances a woman should cover her head during prayer? We are also interested in whether this instruction from the Holy Scriptures applies only to married women or to all dedicated female believers?

Book «The Means Everlasting Life» 1950, page 160-163, §9-13, English edition

«So women could pray and prophesy at a congregational meeting if they were moved by the holy spirit with an inspired message. That they were to do so the fulfillment of the prophecy required ... Joel 2:28-32, ASV.

The apostle Peter, under inspiration of that same spirit on the day of Pentecost A.D. 33, quoted this prophecy of Joel and declared it was beginning fulfillment that day. What “daughters” or what “handmaids” prophesied that day or later under inspiration of the spirit? Acts 21:8, 9 says concerning Philip the missionary: “This man had four daughters, virgins, that prophesied.” (NW) We can be sure, however, that at assemblies of God's consecrated people these “daughters” and “handmaids” did so with Theocratic deportment, with heads veiled, with a sign of authority on their heads. They did this particularly out of regard for the heavenly angels who are “all spirits for public service, sent forth to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation.” – Hebrews 1:14, NW.

In the apostle's day, and especially there in the scandalously immoral city of ancient Corinth, it was the custom for respectable women to go veiled in public. For a woman to go otherwise to public assemblies was to brand her a woman of low moral standards and easy virtue. Women who were caught committing adultery or fornication were punished with shaving off all their hair; while slavegirls had their hair clipped short. So for consecrated women of the congregation to go unveiled in public and to meetings would bring a bad name and misunderstanding upon the faith and organization. In the public eye it would be all the same as if they had their hair shaved off as punishment for immoral conduct. In these modern times or in lands where custom does not require women of the community to go veiled as a sign of respectability, Christian decency does not require the woman to comply with that ancient custom for the sake of the faith and organization. If a woman is of a race whose females do not naturally grow long hair, then her short hair is no reproach to her.

But regardless of popular custom, if a woman today should rise in a congregation and pray or prophesy to the believing men and women present, she should veil her head or have a “sign of authority upon her head because of the angels”. Paul says of the congregation: “Judge for your own selves: Is it fitting for a woman to pray unveiled to God? . . . However, if any man seems to dispute for some other custom, we have no other, neither do the congregations of God.” – 1 Corinthians 11:13-16, NW.

In a certain community only women may be Christian believers. As is right, they meet together for prayer and study, as Lydia and other Jewish women used to do by the riverside in ancient Philippi of Macedonia. (Acts 16:13, 14) According to custom then, Lydia and her companion worshipers were veiled in that public place, but today women assembling together need not be. However, if any of them receives an appointment through the

Theocratic organization to keep order and conduct the meetings for Bible study and for considering how to preach to others, it would appear proper for her to wear a sign of authority upon her head while so performing. This would symbolize that she recognizes the Theocratic headship of the man and that she is temporarily or circumstantially serving in the congregation in place of the man who should fill that position. In a home where a husband, the head of the house, calls upon his wife or other believing woman to offer prayer over the meal, the woman's recognition that the man presides over the woman should oblige her to wear a sign of authority on her head while so praying. In everything faithful women should show submission to the one whom God, the Head of the Christ, has placed in authority. This way she lovingly and beautifully portrays how the congregation, the bride of Christ, is subject to her Theocratic Head, the Bridegroom. – Ephesians 5:24-32.»

W.T. №17, 1950, page 303, English edition

Questions From Readers

«Must consecrated women who participate in congregational meetings have their heads covered? – Reader in California.

*After stating that the head of the woman is man, the head of man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God, Paul writes: “Every woman that prays or prophesies with her head unveiled shames the one who is her head.” (1 Cor. 11:3-10, NW) Commenting on this, the book “This Means Everlasting Life” states: “In the apostle’s day, and especially there in the scandalously immoral city of ancient Corinth, it was the custom for respectable women to go veiled in public. For a woman to go otherwise to public assemblies was to brand her a woman of low moral standards and easy virtue. . . In these modern times or in lands where custom does not require women of the community to go veiled as a sign of respectability, Christian decency does not require the woman to comply with that ancient custom for the sake of the faith and organization. . . But regardless of popular custom, if a woman today should rise in a congregation and pray or prophesy to the believing men and women present, she should veil her head or have a ‘sign of authority upon her head because of the angels’.” (Pages 161, 162) **Hence if a Theocratic assignment requires a woman to pray at or to conduct a Bible study meeting she should wear a sign of authority while so performing, to show recognition of the Theocratic headship of the man and “because of the angels”. However, no head covering is necessary when she participates by merely answering questions put to the audience or relating experiences or serving in demonstrations.»***

As historical evidence supporting the material presented, we offer to your attention photographs taken during preaching activity, the singing of spiritual songs, Bible studies, meetings, and conventions of the 1930s - 1940s. These photographs clearly reflect how the issue of head covering was understood among Jehovah’s Witnesses in various countries during that period.



Preaching activities in Germany, 1930s



Pioneers in Britain, 1940s



Preaching with banners, 1930s



Preaching with banners, 1930s



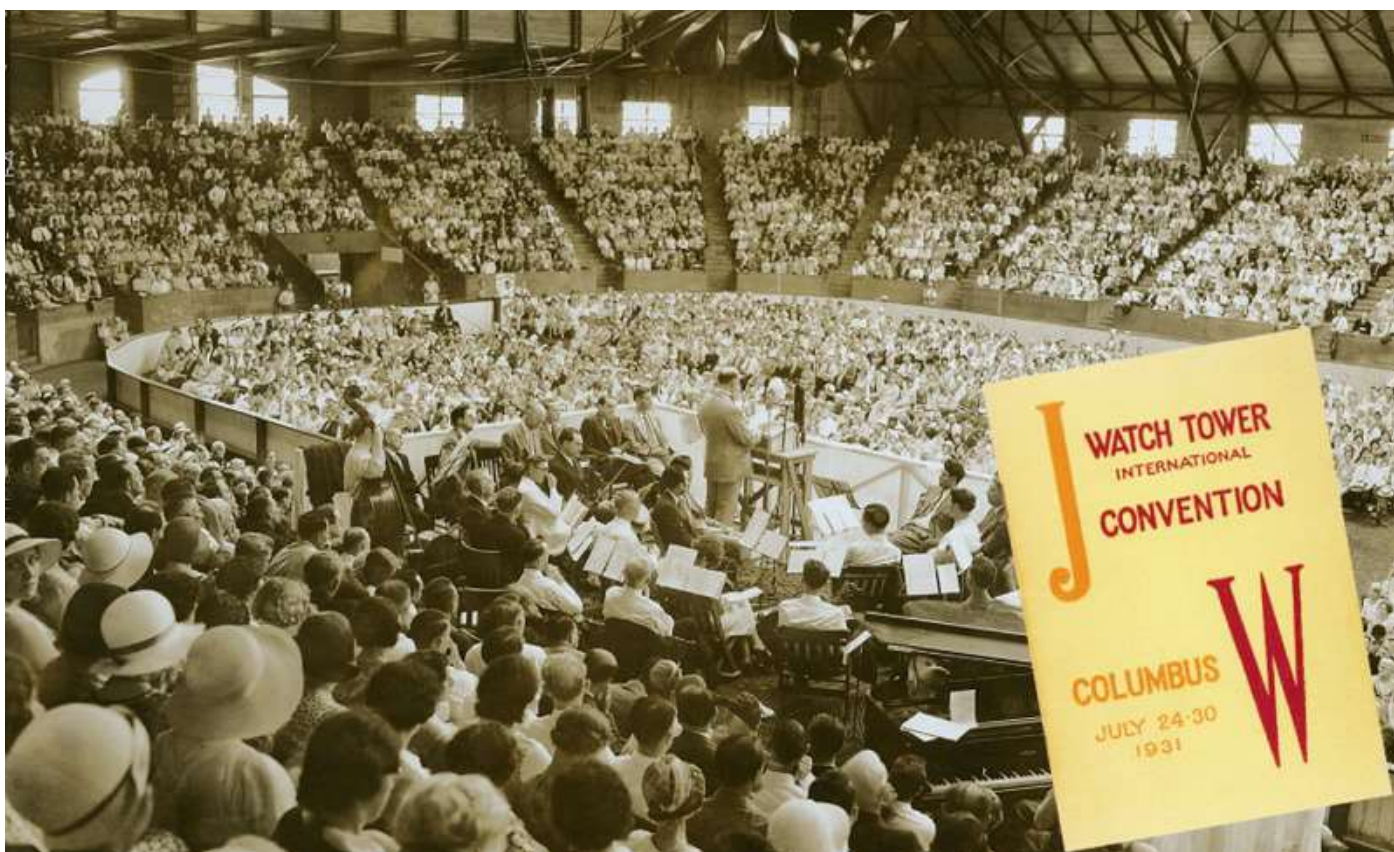
Preaching with magazines in Mexico, 1945



Preaching with Magazines 1940s



Preaching with Books and Magazines 1940s



Convention in Ohio, 1931 *(from this day on, God's people became known as Jehovah's Witnesses)*



Convention in Buffalo, 1944



Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, 1946 (*The participants of the congress received the book "Let God Be True"*)



Meeting in Cyprus, 1940



Meeting in Costa Rica, 1940



The Bethel Family at Sydney, Australia, Saying Goodbye to Two Pioneers Setting Out Across the Continent.

Bethel family from Australia, 1939



Underground meeting after the ban of the organization in New Zealand, 1940s

"Świadkowie Jehowy", którzy przeżyli niemieckie
Obozy Koncentracyjne.
Fot. na Konwencji w Krakowie 25 i 26.5.1947 r.



Convention in Poland, 1947



Convention in Romania, Veluren, 1926.



Convention in Romania, Bucharest, 1946



Singing songs, 1940s



Singing songs together at a convention in the 1930s and 1940s.



Singing songs together at a convention in Buffalo, 1946



Meeting in Bucharest, Romania, 1947



Convention in Borislav, 1932

Let's summarize. According to theocratic teaching based on the Holy Scriptures, from 1926 up until 1950, we can identify the following situations in which dedicated women, regardless of their marital status, (whether married or not) **are required to cover their heads**:

1. If a woman is given the opportunity to offer a prayer in a family setting or at a meeting where no dedicated brothers are present. (This does not refer to a situation where she simply listens to a brother say a prayer and then says "Amen" at the end. In this case, she is not authorized to pray for the dedicated and non-dedicated present, nor is she appointed to lead in prayer. Therefore, in this situation, she is not obligated to cover her head.)

2. If a theocratic assignment requires a woman to lead a Bible study meeting, or to take the lead and leadership in place of a brother in a meeting. (This does not refer to situations where a woman is sitting and listening to a talk at a meeting, singing songs, answering questions during the Watchtower or book study, commenting, or sharing field service experiences. In such cases, she is not taking the place of a man and does not have the responsibility of leading or directing a theocratic activity. Therefore, she is not under obligation to have a sign of authority on her head.)

3. If cultural and regional customs require women to cover their heads in public, because an uncovered head may be perceived as a sign of immoral behavior, Christian women who strive to maintain a good witness and avoid giving cause for the temptation or reproach respectfully follow these norms. (Such a practice was appropriate and justified in ancient Corinth, where believers needed to take local customs into account for the sake of honor and order in God's congregation. This is not about religious traditions, rituals, or church-imposed requirements concerning the appearance of worshippers in a particular denomination. Jehovah's Witnesses must remain completely free from all forms of religious formalism.)

The information presented on these pages is not intended to force or compel anyone to change their views on this matter. The publication of quotes from Watch Tower Society literature and historical facts will help every sincere student of God's Word to reasonably and carefully examine this matter of head covering. This will provide an opportunity to make an informed choice based on convincing evidence, accurate theocratic understanding, and personal conviction.

How can the Christian congregation continue to function as a unified body if, on this matter, dedicated Christians may hold different opinions?

In *W.T. №22, 1947, page 344, §24, English edition*, for example, a discussion is described concerning the observance of the Sabbath between a Greek and a Jew, in which they are unable to reach an agreement. How should they resolve the misunderstanding in a theocratic manner? Here is the answer:

«...What now? Should Jew and Greek now get heated over the matter, become impatient and intolerant toward each other and judge and condemn each other? Not according to the counsel of the apostle. He gives us to understand that this question is not all-important, and hence the one who understands the subject Scrip-turally should be patient and forbearing toward the one still unable to see his full liberty in Christ. Certainly so, because the one backward in his knowledge has no wrong intentions but is trying to honor the Lord upon the basis of the Scriptures that he believes in but does not fully understand. Intolerant argument would get neither of them anywhere. Why not preach the main issue, the Kingdom, and let this minor matter be straightened out calmly with the Lord's spirit over a period of time?»

Therefore, the main thing we must always focus on is justifying Jehovah's Name and proclaiming God's Kingdom under the leadership of Jesus Christ. **If someone, like the Jew in his time, does not yet accept the matter of head covering as explained in the theocratic literature, or acts differently because of their own conscientious beliefs, no**

one has the right to judge them or force them to change their opinion. At the same time, those who rely not on the theocratic teaching but on their personal understanding of the Bible regarding this matter should not judge those who hold the correct view based on the arguments and evidence from the Society's literature, which are grounded in Scripture and historical facts. This very attitude is reflected in the historical evidence dozens of videos and hundreds of photographs from that time. Regardless of whether a sister had her head covered or not, everyone participated in the ministry with a spirit of unity, harmony, and peace. It is also important to remember that for many women, a head covering was simply a part of everyday attire, and its presence did not always indicate a firm conviction about the necessity of covering the head. Moreover, in those photographs we can also see brothers wearing head coverings – which only highlights the cultural and practical nature of this article of clothing, rather than its strictly spiritual or symbolic significance.

Therefore, we urge all our dear brothers and sisters to show Christian forbearance, sincere respect, and patience toward one another, always keeping in mind the words of the Apostle Paul:

“...but God hath called us in peace.” – 1 Corinthians 7:15

May Jehovah help us to maintain the spirit of unity, love, and peace in all our relationships and joint service. May our reflection on this important question strengthen our faith, deepen our understanding of God's will, and help each of us make conscious, informed decisions in a spirit of love, peace, and respect.

We thank Jehovah God for the light He sheds through His Word and theocratic instruction.