

**Which definition of kephale is correct?
Examining the Controversy of Women and Head Coverings: Part 1**

1. Study 1 Corinthians 11:2 in light of 11:3-16. How is it related?

1 Cor 11:2 serves as a complimentary introduction before Paul's criticism of specific Corinthian church practices regarding women (11:3-16), the Lord's Supper (11:17-34), and spiritual gifts (12:1-14:40).

2. Study 1 Corinthians 11:3. What is the meaning of "head"?

There has been considerable debate about what Paul meant by the Greek term "kephalē". The traditional view has held "head" as designating "authority over". Non-traditional views believe that "head" refers to "source" as exemplified by the expression "head of a river", which Paul used to indicate that women are made of the same substance as men. Which view is correct?

The textual evidence indicates substantially that "authority" is the best definition for Paul's Greek term "kephalē".

All the major lexicons that specialize in the New Testament period give the meaning "authority"; none give the meaning "source".

Commentators who ascribe to the meaning of "source" can only base their interpretation on two examples of "kephalē" in ancient literature, and these two ancient manuscripts were written more than four hundred years before the time of the New Testament.

One of the texts, *Herodotus 4.91*, shows that "kephalē" refers to the "end points" of a river, which includes both the beginning and end of a river. The evidence is not persuasive for the meaning "source".

The other text, *Orphic Fragments 21a*, does not provide enough context for one to conclusively define "kephalē" as "source."

Because most recent studies of every use of "kephalē" in extant literature demonstrate that it was never used to indicate "source" until 500 AD, the forthcoming *Lidell-Scott* will change their entry.

The Septuagint, which the apostle Paul used as an important source for the Old Testament and his theology, never once alludes to the meaning of "source".

Within the context of his Epistles on the subject of men and women, the apostle Paul's never used "kephalē" to mean "source"; he used it to refer to "authority".

Eph 5:23 is a prime example of this. When verse 23 is read within context of the verses preceding and following it, "kephalē" is undeniably meant as "authority".

Eph 1:22 is another example where "head" refers to "authority" and not "source". This differentiation is seen as the preceding verses provide the context to this understanding in affirming the supremacy of Christ over everything and over all time.

To continue reading, go to: www.Helpmewithbiblestudy.org/11Church/PublicWhichDefinitionCorrectKephale.aspx