

#29: Acharei Mot (אחרי מות) "After the death" / #30: Kedoshim (קדושים) "Holy Ones"
Torah ~ Lev. 16:1-20:27 | Prophets ~ Ezek. 22:1-20; Amos 9:7-15 | New Covenant ~ Romans 11:1-36; 1 Cor. 6:9-20

Our Covering

In this weeks Torah Portion is the Feast of Yom Kippur in *Leviticus 16*. The word Kippur means "to atone for" and "to wipe away." Two goat's was used on Yom Kippur, one for the sacrificial payment of sin and one for removal of sin. But these sacrifice's only temporarily covered their sins as they were a "picture" of Yeshua paying for and removing our sins when we accept Him. Therefore they pointed forward to the redemptive work of Yeshua.

It is from Yom Kippur that we get the word "Kippah" in which we as believers are reminded that we are covered by the atoning blood of Yeshua. Wearing a Kippah is a tradition, it is not a Biblical commandment given by God. This tradition is so old that Yeshua could have possibly worn some type of Kippah (head covering). Even though it is a tradition, wearing a Kippah has a very good Biblical basis. In *Exodus 28:40, 43* the Priest was instructed to cover their heads while doing their service in the Temple.

1 Peter 2:9 says that believers in Yeshua are a Royal Priesthood unto God. Today we do not have a Temple but we do have our Congregations. When we wear our Kippahs during a service at our Congregations it is a picture of the Priest in the Temple during their service for the Lord. So wearing a Kippah symbolizes our submission to God's calling as Priest.

When Messianics wear a Kippah we are saying three things, (1.) that we are apart of the Royal Priesthood of God, (2.) that Yeshua's blood is our Kippur/covering, (3.) we acknowledge our submission to His headship/authority over our lives.

I do not believe that Messianics should wear a Kippah during our everyday lives outside of the Congregation, for it can be a stumbling block for others. But it is very appropriate to wear a Kippah during services as the Priest did in the Temple.

Head Coverings

Paul teaches us about head coverings in *1 Corinthians 11:1-16*, but these verses are often misunderstood. One of the reasons for the confusion in this chapter is due to people misinterpreting what Paul is referring to in *verses 3-5*.

The "head" in *1 Corinthians 11:3* that Paul is referring to is not the head on our body but is the "spiritual head/authority" which we are under. The spiritual head/authority of men is Messiah, Yeshua. The spiritual head/authority of women is their husbands. So the interpretation of *1 Corinthians 11:4* is that any man that prays/teaches under the headship/covering of another authority is dishonoring his proper authority.

So *1 Corinthians 11:5* is saying that any woman that prays/teaches under the headship/covering of another authority is dishonoring her proper authority. Paul goes on in *1 Corinthians 11:6-16* to use the hairstyle customs as a "symbol" (v. 15) to teach them the proper spiritual covering/authority that they should have in their Congregations and their homes.

Having a shaved head in ancient times was frequently a sign of humiliation. *Leviticus 13:45* says "the leper on whom the sore is, his clothes shall be torn and his head bare" NKJV. In First Century Corinth, a woman whose head was shaved was one who was, for one reason or another, dishonorable.

So *1 Corinthians 11:1-16* is not talking about physical head covering "garments" and it is not necessarily about hairstyles even though Paul uses it as a symbol to get his point across. But this portion of scripture is referring to our "spiritual head covering of authority".

What about Tallits?

Rabbinic sources record that for centuries Tallits (prayer shawls) have been used to wrap oneself while praying. This is called "going into your prayer closet". In *Matthew 6:6* Yeshua said this very same thing. *Acts 18:3* says that Paul was a "tentmaker", but Paul wasn't making "tents" for camping or living, he was making Tallits to pray under.

In Closing

Wearing a head covering is not a Biblical requirement, but Messianic believers have a good Biblical basis for wearing one.