

**KEPHALE WARS:**  
**DOES *KEPHALE* (AHEAD@) MEAN SOURCE OR LEADER?**  
**A CASE STUDY IN FEMINIST METHODOLOGY AND SCHOLARSHIP**  
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Ever since the mid-1970s a veritable flood of books, periodicals, and articles has inundated the evangelical world with a whole new way of interpreting Biblical words and texts related to gender roles. Many have accepted this new approach without a lot of critical examination of the feminist claims and the alleged exegetical bases for them.

By the early- and mid-1980s I and many others had begun to take notice of this new approach to gender roles, and to raise serious questions about the hermeneutical methodology and the quality of scholarship upon which it was based. In the late 1980s I undertook a detailed study of how evangelical feminism interprets and uses the Bible to support its view of gender roles, with a view to writing a book about it.

I began the writing project in the early 1990s. What I had intended to be an introduction to the book turned out to be an entire book in itself, *Feminism and the Bible: An Introduction to Feminism for Christians* (1992). The next book focused on the alleged theological bases for the new feminist view. It was called *Gender Roles and the Bible: Creation, the Fall, and Redemption* (1994). I continued the project by writing a monograph on AHeadship, Submission, and the Bible@ (1996) but my publisher refused to publish it, as did the few others that I contacted. Recently my publisher expressed interest in issuing this book after all. But since it had lain dormant for nearly ten years, it was necessary for me to do research into more recent materials and to incorporate the results into the original work. This is what I have been doing the last few months; last week this work was completed and the revised manuscript sent to the publisher for publication later this year (they say). (A final area remains to be discussed, but I'm not sure I will ever get to it. It is AGender Roles, Church Leadership, and the Bible.@)

Throughout this project my main concern has been to challenge the hermeneutical methodology of feminist writers and scholars, and to show that their egalitarian conclusion can be reached only by blatantly disregarding the normal and accepted rules for interpreting the Bible and by failing to meet the standards of acceptable scholarship.

Today I am presenting a case study in feminist hermeneutics and scholarship, focusing on one of the subjects of my most recent study, namely, the meaning of the Greek word *kephale*, the literal meaning of which is Ahead.@ The issue is this: what metaphorical meaning does the word have when used in crucial gender texts such as 1 Cor 11:3, AThe man is the head of a woman@; and Eph 5:23, AThe husband is the head of the wife@? I will briefly present the results of the last 30 years of debate between leading feminists (egalitarians) and leading non-feminists (hierarchicalists, complementarians). This material can be found in detail in chapters 11-15 of my latest work.

**I. ROUND ONE: The Rise of Modern Evangelical Feminism, 1975-1985.**

- A. Major names: Letha Scanzoni, Nancy Hardesty, Paul K. Jewett, Patricia Gundry, Virginia Mollenkott, Catherine Clark Kroeger, Berkeley & Alvera Mickelson, S. Scott Bartchy, Philip Payne, Aida B. Spencer, Gilbert Bilezikian. See Cottrell, *Feminism and the Bible*, 263-268.**

Major names in the first wave of evangelical feminism (the 1970s):

Paul King Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (1975)

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *Women, Men and the Bible* (1<sup>st</sup> ed., 1977); periodical articles

S. Scott Bartchy, "Power, Submission, and Sexual Identity Among the Early Christians," in *Essays on New Testament Christianity* (Standard Publishing, 1978)

Patricia Gundry, *Woman Be Free!* (1977)

Catherine Clark Kroeger, periodical articles

Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, "Does Male Dominance Tarnish Our Translations?" *Christianity Today* (Oct. 5, 1979)

Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We're Meant To Be: A Biblical Approach to Women's Liberation* (1974)

Names from the early 80s – Payne, Spencer, Bilezikian.

In this early period:

**B. Denying the traditional understanding of *kephale* as Aleader, one in authority, feminists began to declare that, in NT times, *kephale* rarely (if at all) meant Aleader, and almost always meant Asource, origin.**

1. *Kephale* never or rarely meant Aleader, one in authority: **E.g., the Mickelsens avow that *Akephale* did not carry the Hebrew meaning of leader, authority or superior rank, and that Asuch a meaning does not appear in secular Greek of NT times.**

"There is no historical evidence," says Gasque, "that *kephale* was ever used anywhere in Greek literature in the modern sense of 'decision-making'" ("Role," 10). Spencer says, "Many excellent studies have been done in recent years to prove that 'head' (*kephale*) when used in Greek never stood for the decision-maker" ("Poet," 12). Philip Payne says the Greek specialists he consulted "all agreed that the idea of 'authority' was not a recognized meaning of *kephale* in Greek" ("Response," 118). Bartchy says that *kephale* "rarely carries the metaphorical meaning of 'one who possesses superior power or rank' (such as in 'head of a company' or 'head of the family')." "

"'Headship' is never linked with authority," says Atkins (*Split Image*, 161). Spencer says, "Many excellent studies have been done in recent years to prove that 'head' (*kephale*) when used in Greek never stood for the decision-maker" ("Poet," 12).

Others include slight qualifications, but their point is the same. In a 1987 work Catherine Kroeger says, "Among the Greeks, 'head' seldom, if ever, denoted the concept of 'chief' or 'boss'" ("Illustration," 5). She also says that "in the New Testament era *kephale* rarely had the sense of boss or chief as it does in English and Hebrew" ("Concept," 277). In a 1993 article she says that though the English word *head* has acquired the sense of Achief@ or Amaster,@ nevertheless Athis was rarely true of the Greek *kephale* in NT times@ (AHead,@ 376). In a 2002 work she repeats this claim: AKephale (>head=) did not ordinarily authority, ruler," but in ancient Greek "head does not generally carry that meaning" (*Roles*, 137). Keener echoes this claim: AThe modern sense of >head= is rare, though not unknown, in ancient Greek. . . . >Leader= is not a very common meaning the Greek word for >head=@ (*Paul*, 32).

2. *Kephale* usually meant Asource, origin.@ E.g., **Bartchy (1978) says that Ain Greek usage this term bears the metaphorical meaning >source, origin= rather than >chief,= >boss.=@**

For support he cites commentaries on 1 Corinthians by C. K. Barrett and F. F. Bruce, and an article by Robin Scroggs. He then applies this meaning to 1 Cor 11:3 and Eph 5:23, as well as to other passages that speak of the headship of Christ ("Power," 61, fn. 18; 79).

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Almost from the beginning of this movement, in a virtually unanimous voice egalitarians have claimed that this word in the original Greek word for head, *kephale*, has the metaphorical meaning of "source" or "origin" when used of male headship in Eph 5:23 and 1 Cor 11:3.

The theory that *kephale* means "source" is extremely important for egalitarians. It is a key element in their view that the NT teaches an egalitarian rather than a hierarchical relationship between husbands and wives. Thus we are not surprised to see this idea affirmed over and over, nor to see so much effort spent in attempting to give evidence for it.

In the context of evangelical feminism, among the first to argue for this new meaning were Scanzoni and Hardesty. In their 1974 book they declare that Christ as "head" of the church "is not its ruler but the source of its life." For example, the term "head" in Col 2:9-10 "obviously means 'source.'" We should "think of the term 'head' in the sense of *arche* (beginning, origin, source)" (SH 1974, 30-31, 100).

In a later article Bartchy refers to "source" and "origin" as "the common metaphorical meanings" of *kephale* ("Jesus," 3). In another place he refers to "recent scholarship that has demonstrated that in Greek usage the metaphorical range of the term translated 'head' rarely included the idea of 'being in charge of something' and most frequently referred to the 'source of something.'" He concludes, "'Source,' then, is the meaning that led the list of *kephale*'s possible metaphorical references in the first century" ("Issues," II:10).

The Mickelsens were early to suggest this meaning for *kephale*. In their 1979 article, after denying that "final authority" was a meaning for *kephale*, they say that "a more common meaning was source, or origin, as we use it in the 'head of the Mississippi River'" ("Dominance," 23).

In their 1986 contribution to WAB [the Mickelsens] continue to suggest that "source of life" and "originator" are among the "common" and "ordinary Greek meanings of *kephale*" in NT times ("*Kephale*, 105). (Osburn says that the Mickelsens' view is representative of the evangelical feminist perspective on *kephale* (head) in Eph 5:23 and 1 Cor 11:3" [*Women*, 163].) Payne agrees and argues that in the crucial NT passages "the basic connotation of *kephale* for Paul seems to be 'source.'" This is one of "the normal Greek connotations" ("Response," 124, 131-32).

Citing the Mickelsens, Hull says that "careful scholarly research shows that it is more than wishful thinking that *kephale* can sometimes mean 'source' as well as 'authority over.'" Evidence for this comes from "a comprehensive (as against selective) examination of ancient literature" (*Equal*, 193). The specific examination to which she refers is one by Catherine Kroeger, included as an appendix in Hull's book. Kroeger says, "The concept of *head* as 'source' is well documented in both classical and Christian antiquity and has been long accepted by scholars" ("Concept," 267). "The ancients themselves defined 'head' as indicating 'origin' or 'source,'" she says ("Illustration," 5).

Bilezikian says that we can "discover from the biblical text itself" that the word "head" conveys "the idea of derivation, origin, starting point, and nurture" (*Roles*, 137). He says also that "the Greek word for *head* is properly rendered as 'source, origin.'" In all the crucial NT passages it has this meaning: "Source, origin, person or thing from which something else is derived or obtained" (*Roles*, 242, 250). In the NT texts it means "one considered preeminent but acting as servant-provider, or source (of life and growth)" (*Community*, 193).

In discussing 1 Cor 11:1-16 Keener says that the meaning of head as *source* certainly makes sense in this context, where Paul states that woman was derived from man (11:8). It also applies well, he says, to God as source of Christ in reference to the incarnation (*Paul*, 33-34). Fee concludes that Paul's connotation for *kephale* does not follow the Jewish idea of leader, but rather the Greek meaning of head as "source" of the body's working systems. He says, "The idea that the head is the source of supply and support for all the body's systems is a natural metaphor in the Greek world" (*Praying*, 151). Layman says that Christ's headship does not involve lordship but refers to Christ as the source, beginning, savior, and conservator of the church (*Headship*, 8). This is the only sense in which the husband exercises headship over his wife, namely, "the wife as woman has her source or beginning from the man" (*ibid.*, 10).

Grudem sums up this egalitarian trend in modern evangelicalism in these words: "The repeated claim by these authors is that *source* was a commonly known or easily recognized sense of the word *head* (*kephale*) for the Greek-speaking readers of Paul's epistles" ("Survey," 51).

**C. Main evidence (especially emphasized by feminists): Liddell-Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, which says of *kephale*: "in pl., source of a river, . . . generally, source, origin" (945). The**

**lexicon lists only two examples, neither later than the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.** (but these are prized like trophies among egalitarians): **Herodotus 4.91 refers to the "heads" (plural) of the Tearus River, i.e., the springs from which it begins to flow; *Orphic Fragments 21a* refers to "Zeus the head [*kephale*], Zeus the middle, Zeus from whom all things are perfected.** (Egalitarians insist that L&S have appropriately cited this as a case where *kephale* means "source.") **They also set forth a few other examples where they say *kephale* means source.**

Payne presents three such instances. The first two are from Philo (first century A.D.), who says in *The Preliminary Studies* 61 that Esau is "the progenitor, the head of the whole creature." He also says in *On Rewards and Punishments* 125 that "the virtuous one . . . will be the head of the human race and all the others like the limbs of a body which draw their life from the forces in the head and at the top." Payne's other example is Artemidorus Daldiani (second century A.D.), who in several places in a work called *Oneirocritica* says that dreaming about a head probably represents dreaming about one's father, since "the head is the source of life and light for the whole body" ("Response," 124-125. The references in *Oneirocritica* are 1.2, 1.35, and 3.66).

## **II. ROUND TWO: 1985-1990.** (Wayne Grudem's 1985 Survey of Uses of *Kephale*, & Responses.)

- A. Just as they were becoming comfortable and confident with their new approach to the meaning of *kephale*, Wayne Grudem tossed a bombshell into the playground of the feminists: an essay entitled **Does *Kephale* (>Head=) Mean >Source= or >Authority Over= in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,236 Examples** (*Trinity Journal*, Spring 1985; and as an appendix in George Knight's *The Role Relationship of Men and Women*, 1985 revised ed.).**

[[Grudem is the one who has done most of the work on this side of the issue.]]

Most of the 2,236 occurrences of *kephale* were tracked down by using the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae project at the University of California-Irvine, but Grudem added such authors as Philo, Josephus, and the Apostolic Fathers. The writings range from the eighth century B.C. to the fourth century A.D. The main point of the study was to examine each use of *kephale* in context to see if there could be any merit to the egalitarian claim that this word *rarely* means *authority over* but *usually* means *source* (when used in a metaphorical sense).

What Grudem was doing here was *lexicology*, which is the basis of *lexicography*. This required a re-examination of the existing lexicons. One problem with the claim that *kephale* can mean "source" is that New Testament Greek lexicons do not list such a meaning for the word. These include the older works by Robinson, Cremer, and Thayer; and the Moulton-Milligan lexicon (Grudem, "Survey," 52). It is true also of more recent lexicons of NT Greek, i.e., the latest German edition of Bauer and its English version, the 2000 edition of BDAG; and the Louw-Nida Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains (see Grudem, "Kephale," 467). The compilers of these works certainly could not have been unaware of egalitarians' strong lobbying on behalf of their new meaning of "source" or "origin," but the evidence obviously was not considered convincing. In fact, the BDAG (2000 ed.) specifically questions the meaning of *source*. When speaking of *Christ and Christians as head and members*, it says *not source* and lists as a reference Joseph Fitzmyer's 1989 New Testament Studies article, *Another Look at Kephale in 1 Corinthians 11:3* (BDAG, 542).

But what about the Greek lexicons that *do* list "source" as a meaning for *kephale*, especially LS-GEL? It will be remembered that this lexicon provides only two examples of this suggested meaning, neither of which is later than the fifth century B.C. One is Herodotus' reference to the "heads" of the Tearus River; the other is the reference to Zeus in the *Orphic Fragments*. The date of these examples in itself would call into question their relevance for the meaning of *kephale* in the NT, which is separated from them by half a millennium. But assuming their possible relevance, what can

be said about them? The bottom line:

**1. Grudem argues that Liddell and Scott got it wrong.** [The compilers of the lexicon simply misunderstood their own examples.] **In the examples they cite, *kephale* means Abeginning point@ or Aextremity,@ not Asource, origin.@** E.g.,

The key to a proper understanding is to recognize that the second most general meaning of *kephale* is "extremity," which is the category under which LS-*GEL* enters the sub-heading of "source." The *most* general meaning, of course, is the literal head, which exists at the topmost or extreme position on the body. By analogy, anything that existed at the extreme end of a thing was called its *kephale* or "head." Thus with a river, its beginning point was called its *kephale* because it was at one extremity of the river; the term connotes "extremity" and not "source" as such. That this is the case is shown by the fact that the Greeks also referred to the ending point or mouth of a river as its *kephale*, i.e., its other extremity. LS-*GEL* lists an example of this but draws no conclusion therefrom. BUT:

Grudem draws the proper conclusion when he says that the example from Herodotus (listed in LS-*GEL*) and other such examples "do not prove a new meaning ('source') for *kephale*, but only provide specific examples of a well-established and long-recognized sense, 'top, furthest extension, end point, beginning point'" ("Survey," 57-58). It is true that one of the extremities of a river is also its source, but Cotterell and Turner point out that this "does not mean the two expressions--'extreme end' and 'source'--are closely related in *sense*: they merely have the same potential referent." I.e., "not all 'extreme ends' or even 'starting points' are also 'sources.'" To assume otherwise is a co-referential error (the assumption that two words used to refer to the same entity will carry the same sense)" (*Linguistics*, 142-43).

The quotation from Herodotus about the "head" (literally "heads") of the Tearus River has little relevance to the NT use of *kephale* for another reason. The latter speaks of *persons* who are "heads," namely, Christ and husbands; but a river is a *thing*. Indeed, in LS-*GEL* this entry is a sub-heading under the general meaning listed thus: "of things, *extremity*." Grudem asserts that "it is improper to take a meaning from a category that is specifically stated to apply to 'things' and then apply it to persons" ("Survey," 58).

But what about the other example from LS-*GEL*, the one from *Orphic Fragments* 21a? This one *is* about a person, namely, Zeus. The question, though, is whether the term *kephale* in this example actually means "source." The full text, as given by Grudem, is as follows:

Zeus was first, Zeus is last with white, vivid lightning:  
Zeus the head [*kephale*], Zeus the middle, Zeus from whom all things are perfected.

Grudem argues convincingly ("Survey," 59-60) that there is no reason to take *kephale* as meaning more than "beginning" or "first one" in this context, i.e., the one who exists at the beginning of time. This is consistent with the first line of the text, which says, "Zeus was first," as well as last (cf. "alpha and omega"). Does this support the egalitarian claim that *kephale* means "source"? No, because "beginning point" is not the same as "source." The assumption that these concepts are equivalent is a common fallacy in egalitarian literature. Saying that Zeus is the *kephale* in the sense of "first" is not to say that he is the *source* of anything. The latter also may have been true in the writer's mind, but it is not the same idea. See Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 143-144.

Thus LS-*GEL* turns out to be a rather weak basis for affirming that *kephale* means "source, origin" in the NT. Neither of its examples seems to justify distinguishing this connotation from the more general meaning of "extremity."

If neither of the LS-*GEL* examples is valid, then the whole claim that *kephale* could mean "source" in ancient Greek literature seems to be without foundation. This was Grudem's conclusion in his 1985 article: "We are left with no evidence to convince us that 'source' was a common or even a possible meaning for *kephale* in Greek literature." Thus it is "a claim made without any real factual support" ("Survey," 61).

But what about the 2,336 texts (8<sup>th</sup> century b.c. to 4<sup>th</sup> century a.d.) uncovered by Grudem's study? What did his examination

of these texts reveal? Most, of course, refer to the physical head (2,034 uses). Metaphorical uses occur in 302 cases. Of these, he found 49 texts (16.2% of the metaphorical uses) where *kephale* means "a person of superior authority or rank, or 'ruler,' 'ruling part.'" Also, he found NONE with the meaning of "source."

2. **In the survey of 2,336 examples (covering almost everything from the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), Grudem found 49 uses of *kephale* in the sense of a person of superior authority or rank, or >ruler,= >ruling part,=@ and NONE in the sense of A source.@ (2,034 uses refer to the physical, literal head.)** (The numbers have been revised slightly since 1985, but are approximately the same.) [More details:

Since twelve of the 49 examples are from the NT, we may exclude them at this point in order to avoid charges of circular reasoning. That leaves a total of 37 out of 290 metaphorical examples, or 12.75% that refer to "authority." These 37 come from the LXX (13), other Greek translations of the OT (5), Herodotus (2), Plato (1), Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (1), Plutarch (7), Philo (5), Apostolic Fathers (1), the Greek Anthology (1), and Libanius (1) [from Grudem, "Survey," 68]. (Grudem chose not to include the Patristic writers, which would have added many more texts with this meaning.)

## **B. Feminist responses , beginning with the 1986 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Atlanta, GA.**

The turning point in the discussion of *kephale* was Grudem's 1985 article, which has been cited many times in the preceding text. It was not, however, the end of the discussion. As soon as it appeared it sparked a flurry of egalitarian research aimed at discrediting Grudem's work and disproving his conclusions. The 1986 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society provided a platform for attacking his thesis. Most of the plenary sessions dealt with feminist issues, and most of these were strongly pro-feminist. Two of the plenary presentations dealt with the meaning of *kephale* and were designed to refute Grudem. One by Catherine Kroeger was entitled "The Classical Concept of 'Head' as 'Source'"; it was later printed as an appendix in Hull's book, *Equal To Serve* (1987). The other presentation was by Gilbert Bilezikian; it was called "Case Study of an Eisegetical Fabrication: Wayne Grudem's Treatment of *Kephale* in Ancient Texts." It was printed as an appendix in the second edition of Bilezikian's book, *Beyond Sex Roles* (1990). Various participants, including Grudem, gave formal responses to these presentations at the ETS meeting. (I attended this meeting and heard all the presentations and responses.) Two years later, at the 1988 annual ETS meeting, Grudem gave an update on the state of the discussion entitled "The Meaning of *Kephale* ('Head'): Recent Developments."

In the meantime another response to Grudem was being prepared by Richard Cervin, namely, "Does *Kephale* Mean 'Source' or 'Authority Over' in Greek Literature? A Rebuttal." It appeared in the Spring 1989 issue of *Trinity Journal*.

1. **One presentation: Catherine C. Kroeger=s AThe Classical Concept of >Head= as >Source,=@ later printed as an appendix in Gretchen Hull=s *Equal To Serve* (1987).**
  - a. **She cites a few examples from early Christian writers [Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, e.g.] where she says *kephale* is used in the sense of A source,@ none earlier than the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.** [She does not mention their dates.]

Additional instances are presented by Kroeger. She affirms that there are "abundant examples in ancient literature" where "*kephale* has in the Greek the value of origin or source" ("Hermeneutic," 6). In her main study of the subject, however, she presents only a few examples where *kephale* is being used in a metaphorical sense, none earlier than the fourth century A.D. One is the Christian writer Athanasius (whose date, fourth century A.D., is not mentioned), who is quoted as saying, "For the head (which is the source) of all things is the Son, but God is the head (which is the source) of Christ."<sup>1</sup> Another example is Cyril of Alexandria (fifth century A.D., also not mentioned). Kroeger cites a paragraph from one of his writings and then comments,

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<sup>1</sup>"Concept," 268. (The Greek word here translated as "source" is *arche*.) Kroeger cites another example from Athanasius (276).

"*Kephale* is defined as 'source' (*arche*) no less than four times in this single paragraph" ("Concept," 268-69). Other examples are from Theodore of Mopsuestia (fifth century), Basil (fourth century), and Eusebius (fourth century) ("Concept," 276-77).

**b. Mostly she cites, from general Greek literature, [numerous] cases where the literal head is depicted as the source of something: hair; wetness; some kind of moist or viscous substance, such as tears, saliva, and earwax. Even sperm [and thus the source of human life. The rest of the body draws its sustenance and health from the head ("Concept," 269-73)]. In Greek mythology Athena sprang full-grown from the head of Zeus. [[The goddess Persephone was believed to receive the souls of the dead, hold them in her bosom for nine years, then send them forth again into new life. Kroeger describes and depicts ancient statuettes of Persephone's head, from which are emerging the souls who are being given new life. "These statuettes reveal a naive conception that the avenue to and from this world lay through her *head*," says Kroeger; and this illustrates the Greek notion of "head" as "source" ("Illustration," 4-5).]]**

**All of this is supposed to prove that *kephale* (Ahead) means A source!**

BUT NOTE: These are not statements in which the term *kephale* is being used in a metaphorical sense to mean anything, but rather are cases where the literal head is depicted as the source of something. This seems to be the sort of thing that constitutes the bulk of the "abundant examples in ancient literature" which, according to Kroeger, show that *kephale* means source.

**2. Another presentation at the ETS meeting: Gilbert Bilezikian, A Case Study of an Eisegetical Fabrication: Wayne Grudem's Treatment of *Kephale* in Ancient Texts, later published as an appendix to his *Beyond Sex Roles*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1990).**

**a. He briefly reviews the testimony of the Greek lexicons but dismisses them as ambiguous and inconclusive (*Roles*, 217-19). Then He examines all 49 of Grudem's examples where *kephale* means "leader," according to Grudem, and says that Grudem misinterprets every one of them. None means A ruler, one in authority; most mean A source.**

**b. One example: when Plutarch says in *Pelopidas* 2.1.3 that the general of an army is like the "head" of a body, he adds the idea that the army's safety depends on the general. Bilezikian takes this last idea as determining the meaning of the general's headship. I.e., "the general's function as the 'head' of the troops is explained as the general's being the source of their safety, the cause of their continued existence." Therefore *head* means "source," in this case the source of safety and continued existence (*Roles*, 226-27).**

**III. ROUND THREE: 1990-1991. Grudem's response to his critics, in A The Meaning of *Kephale* (>Head=): A Response to Recent Studies, printed first in *Trinity Journal* (1990) and then as an appendix in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (1991).**

**A. Reply to Kroeger.**

**1. All of Kroeger's examples from ancient authors who supposedly use *kephale* in the metaphorical sense of "source" (namely, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, Cosmas**

Indicopleustes, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Basil, and Eusebius), **come from the 4<sup>th</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. How does this help understand what *kephale* meant in the 1<sup>st</sup> century?**

As Grudem says, "Since all the additional metaphorical examples cited come from the fourth century A.D. and later, it does not seem that they are very helpful for determining New Testament usage." The question is *not* what *kephale* meant in A.D. 500 but rather what Paul meant when he used *kephale* when writing his letters to the churches in the first century (464).

The second criticism of Kroeger's work is directed mainly at her citations of examples in which the ancient Greeks depicted the physical head as the source of many things, such as saliva, earwax, and sperm. The theory is that because the Greeks perceived the head (the literal *kephale*) to function as the source of such things, the word *kephale* actually had the meaning of "source." But this argument involves a serious logical fallacy:

**2. Kroeger's many examples of the Greeks picturing the (literal) head as the source of something (saliva, earwax, sperm) is an example of the *function fallacy*, i.e., confusing function with meaning. An equivalent would be to say that because a cow is the source of milk, the word cow must mean source.**

Grudem says that such examples simply refer to the physical head of persons and describe *functions* that can be observed. These texts do not use *kephale* metaphorically to mean source (465). That the head happens to be (or is thought to be) the source of various substances and entities is simply a phenomenological fact (or speculation). This does not imply that *kephale* thus means "source," just because its referent *functions* as a source of certain things. This "function fallacy" thus wrongly assumes that a particular and sometimes incidental function of a thing is equivalent to the meaning of that thing.

Cotterell and Turner, in *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (144), are correct when they say that this kind of argument is the "least helpful of the types of evidence advanced." It is obvious that the Greeks did make such observations regarding the head, they say, but this is quite irrelevant with regard to what the word *kephale* means. A consistent application of this approach would lead to absurdities. These examples are given: "Our employers are the source of our income, books are the source of our knowledge, and the good well-watered land the source of our food, but no one in their right mind would suggest that 'source' is a sense of the words 'employer', 'book', or 'land.'"

The conclusion is that this line of so-called evidence proves nothing at all with regard to the meaning of *kephale*. Cotterell and Turner grant that it is possible to theorize that such a view of the physical head might have given rise to a metaphorical use of *kephale* as source, but examples where *kephale* is actually used in this way would have to be produced (*Linguistics*, 144).

## **B. Reply to Bilezikian.**

Since Bilezikian's main form of attack is to systematically examine Grudem's examples of *kephale* as "leader" and attempt to show that he had misinterpreted every one of them, Grudem's reply is mainly an analysis of Bilezikian's own method of interpreting these various references. As noted above, in many of the non-biblical examples and in all of the NT references, Bilezikian argues for the meaning of "source" or "origin" rather than "authority." But exactly what is the nature or method of his reasoning? Unfortunately for him, in almost every case his reasoning is blatantly and embarrassingly fallacious. Specifically,

**1. Bilezikian's problem is basically the same *function fallacy* of which Kroeger is guilty.**



Even when it was first presented at the ETS meeting in 1986, Bilezikian's essay was exposed by Grudem and others as an exercise in futility because it was laced with the Afunction fallacy.@ This continues to be Grudem=s basic criticism of Bilezikian. He points out how over and over Bilezikian finds some sort of function attributed by the context to the person called "head," and claims that this function is what defines the term. Almost invariably this function is semantically adjusted so that it represents the person as the *source* of something; thus "source" becomes the definition or meaning of *kephale*.

In explaining Bilezikian's view above we cited the example of Plutarch's *Pelopidas* 2.1.3, which says that in an army "the light-armed troops are like the hands, the cavalry like the feet, the line of men-at-arms itself like chest and breastplate, and the general is like the head." Bilezikian insists that the meaning of *head* in this text comes from the statement that follows, which says that the general, "in taking undue risks and being over bold, would seem to neglect not himself, but all, inasmuch as *their safety depends on him*" [italics added]. Obviously, then, according to Bilezikian, "the general's function as the 'head' of the troops is explained as the general's being the source of their safety" (*Roles*, 226). Grudem's critique of this hermeneutical methodology is devastating:

2. **Grudem: ABilezikian treats a number of examples in this same way: he looks around in the context until he can find something that the person called >head= is the >source= of, whether leadership or protection or financial support, etc. This is not hard to do because in the nature of things in this world, *everything* is the >source= of something else--the ground is the source of food, rivers are the source of water, trees are the source of leaves, cows are the source of milk, even rocks are a source of stability and support. Conversely, to take the example above, the soldiers are also a >source= of strength and support for the general. But that does not mean that >hand= or >foot= or >chest= can all mean >source.=@ (*Recovering*, 459)**

In my judgment Grudem's AKephale@ succeeded in exposing the fallacious reasoning, the many distortions, and the misrepresentations that seemed to characterize the egalitarian literature on *kephale* up to that point. He is not wrong, I think, to suggest the presence of an underlying egalitarian bias that is determined to reject the meaning of "authority over" no matter what the evidence says. For example, he points out that in his overall theology --

3. **Bilezikian rejects all authority relationships among Christians as being improper, and the distorted interpretations he forces upon Grudem=s 49 examples show Athe length to which Bilezikian will go in order to carry out his fundamental opposition to the idea of authority within human relationships@ (ibid., 463).** The implication is that anyone with this presupposition would have a very difficult time interpreting the references to *kephale* objectively. Also, commenting on the egalitarian propensity for coming up with ill-attested new meanings for *kephale* (e.g., "source," "preeminence"), Grudem says, **AOne begins to wonder if there is not a commitment to find *any other* meaning than the meaning >authority over, leader=@ (ibid., 447).**

Finally, Grudem comments on the paradoxical way in which egalitarians describe the frequency of examples for the various meanings of *kephale*:

- C. Grudem concludes that when writers such as [Gordon] Fee, AKroeger, the Mickelsens, Payne, and Bilezikian all dismiss the meaning "authority over" as "rare," but say that the meaning "source" is "common." Perhaps we can be forgiven for realizing that all of these six writers have also been vocal proponents of an "evangelical feminist" position that seeks to deny any unique leadership role for men in marriage or the church and for wondering if their strong commitment to this viewpoint has affected their judgment on the meaning of *kephale*.@ (*Recovering*, 466)

In my opinion Grudem is more than justified in raising this question of bias, and it seems to be apply to just about every aspect of the egalitarians' handling of the evidence for the meaning of *kephale*.

#### IV. ROUND FOUR: Kroeger (1993) vs. Grudem (1997/2001).

The next significant publication:

**A. See Kroeger's article, "Head" in IVP's *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (1993). She still argues for the classical view of head as source.**

**1. The references supposedly proving this "classical view" are the same as in her 1987 article; she lists them thus: Kern *Orph. Fr.* 2 nos. 21 a.2., 168; Plato *Leg.* IV.715E and sch; Proclus *In Tim.* II 95.48. (V.322); Pseudo-Aristides *World* 7; Eusebius *Praep. Ev.* 3.9; Deveni papyrus col. 13, line 12; Stobaeus *Ecl.* 1.23; Plutarch *Def. Orac.* 436D; Achilles Tatius, fr. 81.29." These writers, she says, were using *kephale* with *arche* (>source= or >beginning= . . .) as did the translators of the LXX version of Isaiah 9:14-15" (ibid.). Kroeger then cites Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Philo, Photius, and Aristotle as equating head with source.**

An important point for Kroeger is that --

**2. Many of these writers, she says, equate *kephale* with *arche*, which she always explains as meaning source, beginning (as if these meanings were interchangeable, and as if it did not ALSO mean ruler). I.e.,**

She interprets this conjunction to mean that these words can be used interchangeably. When this occurs, she inevitably assigns to *arche* the meaning of source or beginning (meanings she tends to equate with one another), ignoring the fact that *arche* often means ruler. Based on this assumed interchangeability, she then transfers *arche*'s meaning of source or beginning to *kephale*. Ergo, *kephale* means source. Kroeger notes that Grudem tries to find the meaning of ruler or dominion in *arche* when used synonymously with *kephale*, but this concept did not find wide acceptance among the ancients (ibid., 375-376).

Kroeger then applies her conclusions from classical Greek to the NT: The concept of head (*kephale*) as >source, >beginning= or >point of departure= is readily apparent in the Pauline corpus (ibid., 376). She applies this especially to 1 Cor 11:3 and Eph 5:23. Focusing mainly on 1 Cor 11:3, Kroeger raises the issue of the supposed analogy between the subordination of the Son to the Father and the subordination of woman to man. She emphatically rejects any such intra-Trinitarian subordination, apparently equating it with the Arian subordinationism which the church fathers rejected. Her argument is that,

**3. Contrary to the idea that 1 Cor 11:3 means that the Son was subordinate to the Father, the church fathers argued vehemently that for Paul head had meant >source.= As evidence she cites the following: Athanasius (*Syn. Armin.* 26.3.35; *Anathema* 26. Migne PG 26, 740B), Cyril of Alexandria (*De Recte Fide ad Pulch.* 2.3, 268; *De Recte Fide ad Arcadium* 1.1.5.5 (2). 63.), Basil (PG 30.80.23), Theodore of Mopsuestia (*Eccl. Theol.* 1:11.2-3; 2.7.1) and even Eusebius (*Eccl. Theol.* 1.11.2-3; 2.7.1.) Finally she appeals to John Chrysostom (PG 61.214, 216), who, she says, declared that only a heretic would**

**understand Paul=s use of >head= to mean >chief= or >authority over.=@ [Chrysostom=s dates are c. 347 to 407 A.D.]**

Kroeger=s bibliography at the end of the article cites Bedale, Cervin, Fitzmyer, Grudem=s 1985 essay, her own 1987 essay, and the Mickelsens. She does not mention Grudem=s 1990 essay.

**B. Grudem responded to Kroeger=s article at the 1997 ETS meeting. A more complete response was published as AThe Meaning of *kephale* (>Head=): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged@, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 44/1 (March 2001), 25-65.**

Since Chrysostom is the only church father actually quoted by Kroeger, Grudem=s analysis begins with him. We will remember that Kroeger claims that the >church fathers argued vehemently that for Paul *head* had meant >source.=@ Specifically, AJohn Chrysostom declared that only a heretic would understand Paul=s use of >head= to mean >chief= or >authority over.= Rather one should understand the term as implying >absolute oneness and cause and primal source= (PG 61.214, 216)@ (AHead,@ 377).

Grudem shows that when this reference from Chrysostom is actually examined in context, one can see that

**1. Grudem first examines Chrysostom=s writings, and shows that Kroeger completely misreads and misinterprets the selection she cites from him.**

What Chrysostom is doing here is showing how the Arians (the Aheretics@ to whom he refers) were misusing 1 Cor 11:3 to prove their heresy that Jesus is not true deity but is inferior to the Father because Baccording to 1 Cor 11:3BChrist is under subjection to the Father. Chrysostom=s reply basically is to *agree* that Christ became obedient to or subject to the Father, but that this does not nullify the fact that Athe Son is of the same substance with the Father@ and that he is fully equal with the Father in his divinity. The same is true in the husband-wife relationship, says Chrysostom: AFor what if the wife be under subjection (*hupotasso*) to us? It is as a wife, as free, as equal in honor. And the Son also, though He did become obedient to the Father, it was as the Son of God, it was as God@ (cited in Grudem, AEvaluation,@ 27).

Thus, rather than *denying* that *kephale* means Aleader, one in authority,@ says Grudem, Chrysostom actually Aassumes that *kephale* does mean >authority over,= because he *agrees* that the Son is obedient to the Father.@ Chrysostom has no quarrel with the Arians over the meaning of *kephale*; in fact he agrees with them (*ibid.*, 26-27). The issue was not whether *kephale* in 1 Cor 11:3 means Aleader,@ thus placing Christ in a role of subjection to the Father; Chrysostom acknowledges this. The issue rather was whether the Son=s subjection implied inferiority. Chrysostom says *no!* Thus Kroeger=s assertion that Chrysostom says Aonly a heretic would understand Paul=s use of >head= to mean >chief= or >authority over.=@ is simply false (*ibid.*, 28).

To show that Chrysostom did not use *kephale* to mean Asource@ but did use it to mean Aruler@ or Aone in authority,@

**Grudem then sets forth ten other quotations from Chrysostom=s works. Several of them clearly affirm that the husband=s role as *head* is to Arule over@ his wife, e.g., AWe hold the place of the head, and are surpassed [in virtue] by the body [i.e., the wife]. We are ordained to rule over them; not merely that we may rule, but that we may rule in goodness also@ (AHomily 13 on Ephesians@).**

Actually Chrysostom uses *kephale* to describe six different headship relationships: God is the Ahead@ of Christ; Christ, of the church; the husband, of the wife; Christ, of all things; church leaders, of the church; and a woman, of her maidservant. AIn all six cases, he uses language of rulership and authority to explain the role of the >head,= and uses language of submission and obedience to describe the role of the >body=@ (*ibid.*, 33). AWhat then shall we make of Kroeger=s statement that John Chrysostom declared that only a heretic would understand

Paul=s use of *head* to mean *chief* or *authority over*? It is simply false (ibid., 34).

We should note that Chrysostom lived from c. 347 to c. 407 AD; thus his writings are not exactly definitive for how *kephale* was used in the first century AD. Kroeger herself does not reveal the dates of her references.

**2. Grudem examines in detail the other nine references which Kroeger names from five other patristic writers, which supposedly show that the Church fathers argued vehemently that for Paul *head* had meant *source*. Grudem=s conclusions:**

**a. All five writers lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D, and thus have little relevance for the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.**

**b. These writers oppose Arian subordinationism, not the Son=s subordination to the Father as such.** Kroeger is simply mistaken to apply the name of the heresy *subordinationism* to the Son=s subordination to the Father as taught in 1 Cor 11:3. Also, Kroeger=s claim that Church fathers denied the subordination of the Son to the Father is incorrect (Grudem, *Evaluation*, 35).

**c. Kroeger falsely equates the words *kephale* and *arche*, arguing that since the latter means *source, beginning*, that=s what the former must mean when the two are paralleled with one another. She basically ignores the fact that *arche* also means *ruler*, and that this is the meaning intended by the church fathers when they paired it with *kephale*.**

I.e., Kroeger argues from some false assumptions about the relation between *kephale* and another Greek word, *arche*. One simply cannot assume that because two words share one meaning, this implies that they share all their meanings.<sup>2</sup> The fact that *kephale* is sometimes used as a synonym for *arche* does not imply that *kephale* means *source*, even if *arche* sometimes means that. *Arche* has several meanings, e.g., *source, beginning, ruler*. Kroeger=s inclination is to see the first two meanings in *arche* every time it is used as parallel with *kephale* and to import both of these meanings (telescoped into *source*) into *kephale*. She does not acknowledge that *arche* also means *ruler*; thus she simply closes her eyes to the fact that in many of the patristic citations pairing *arche* and *kephale*, *arche* means *ruler*, as does *kephale*. Therefore to find examples of *kephale* used as equivalent of *arche* does not prove that *church fathers argued vehemently that for Paul head had meant source* (ibid., 37).

**d. Some of Kroeger=s nine citations show just the opposite of her claims.** I.e., *kephale* seems to be much better understood therein as *ruler, authority over* than as *source* (e.g., Basil and Eusebius; ibid., 42-44).

**e. Grudem=s summary: In none of the references did any Church father argue vehemently that for Paul *head* had meant *source*. And none of the references argued against an interpretation of 1 Cor 11:3 that placed Christ in a subordinate position relative to the Father. Indeed, some of the references specify that Christ is obedient to the Father and that the Father rules over him. In light of this evidence, it seems that Kroeger=s assertion that Church fathers were quick to recognize the danger of understanding 1 Cor 11:3 to mean that Christ has a subordinate position relative to the Father is also false.**

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<sup>2</sup>As Grudem says, Kroeger is making a methodological error to think that she can import all the senses of *arche* into the meaning of *kephale* (*Evaluation*, 33, note 17).

3. Grudem examines in detail each of Kroeger's 14 references to the so-called Aclassical@ writers, which she cites as proving *kephale* meant Asource@ because it was equated with *arche*, which meant Asource.@ Grudem's general conclusions:

a. The dates for these 14 sources range from the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Over half are from the Christian era and hardly represent Aclassical@ Greek. (E.g., Photius died in A.D. 891.) Thus Grudem says it is misleading to say that all of these writers represent the Aclassical Greek@ view of *kephale*, especially Photius. AThis is the most egregious disregard of dating in all the citations that give the appearance of support for an early, >classical= view of head as source, because Photius is far from being a pre-NT writer. He died in AD 891" (ibid., 51).

b. Eight of the 14 statements are variations of a single quotation, i.e., the Liddell-Scott quote about Zeus, praising him as AZeus the head [*kephale*], Zeus the middle, Zeus from whom all things are perfected.@ Two of these citations do not even use *kephale*, but use *arche* instead. Either way, according to Grudem, the point is not AZeus the source,@ but AZeus the *beginning*."

[[where (according to Grudem) Zeus is the *beginning*, not the *source*.]] These concepts are by no means equivalent. [Thus none of these references show *kephale* to mean source.@]

c. Some references are ambiguous (Irenaeus, Philo), and at least two clearly use *kephale* in the sense of Aruler@ (Isaia 9:14-15, LXX; Photius).

d. Summary: (of Kroeger's 14 citations) 4 references do not even use *kephale*; 7 of the remaining 10 are from the Christian (not the pre-NT classical) era; the remaining 3 are about Zeus as Abeginning.@ This means Athat the fourteen references in this section boil down to one piece of evidence,@ in which *kephale* most likely means Abeginning,@ not Asource.@ All in all, Anot one of the fourteen references turned out to support the meaning >source= for *kephale*.@

4. Kroeger's dubious scholarship.

One glaring and troubling characteristic of Kroeger's article on AHead@ is its dubious scholarship, evidenced by its many inaccuracies and misleading implications. At the very beginning of his AEvaluation,@ Grudem mentions his Aconcerns about the level of care and accuracy with which evidence has been quoted@ (ibid., 25).

At first glance, when reading Kroeger's article, one may tend to be impressed with the apparently high level of scholarship implied by the numerous citations from original sources which the author lists to corroborate her assertions about *kephale*. However, anyone with even a small measure of research experience will get a different impression when attempting to locate the actual sources. First,

a. The citations are so brief and obscure as to be pedantic/elitist, and very difficult to find. E.g. the citation of only the Migne reference (e.g., APG 61.214, 216") when the more readily available English version could have been given (see Grudem, AEvaluation,@ 28, note 9).

b. Second, even if one succeeds in tracking down all the given sources, as Grudem has, he or she will find that -- Many of the references are simply incorrect.

E.g., in citing Theodore of Mopsuestia, the bibliographical data from Eusebius are mistakenly given instead (ibid., 42). The citation from Proclus does not exist (ibid., 47). Pseudo-Aristides should be Pseudo-Aristotle (ibid., 48). ADeveni Papyrus@ is

misspelled; it should be *Adervini* (ibid.). All of us are subject to typographical errors, and Kroeger has admitted to the scrambling of a couple of references (ibid., 54). In Grudem's mind, though, this is a rather low estimate. He says:

**Grudem: Of twenty-four key references to ancient literature, fourteen were accurate, but ten were not: four did not contain *kephale*; two had the wrong author listed, three had the wrong reference listed, and the one from Chrysostom did not exist at all. I agree . . . that the majority were accurate, since fourteen of twenty-four key references is more than half. But the standard of accuracy in scholarly works is not to get the majority of one's references right. They should all be right. This article fell far short of the standard of accuracy required for academic work.**

An even more serious problem is the misrepresentation of the source material to make it appear to support the "source" theory of *kephale* when it does not. Grudem points out that --

- c. Some of Kroeger's quotes from the church fathers supposedly supporting the source theory were actually not the thoughts of the fathers themselves but were the words or views of the Arian heretics being cited and refuted by the fathers.**
- d. Kroeger does not mention the dates of her sources, thus concealing the fact that most are from such late dates (e.g., 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) as to be irrelevant to the issue.**

Grudem mentions especially the citation from Photius: "This is the most egregious disregard of dating in all the citations that give the appearance of support for an early, classical view of head as source, because Photius is far from being a pre-NT writer. He died in AD 891" (ibid., 51; see 54).

- e. Another such problem is Kroeger's selective editing when citing sources. In her 1998 ETS response to Grudem's original version of his *Evaluation*, Kroeger cites a few sentences from a paragraph in Chrysostom which seem to indicate that he understands *kephale* to mean source. Grudem reveals, however, that she omitted sentences from the same paragraph that clearly show that Chrysostom understood the head to be the one who is leader and director of the body. After citing Chrysostom's full paragraph Grudem says, "The words missing from her quotation disprove the point she is trying to make." When readers are thus exposed to the entire statement, they will rightly conclude that one has not been truthful in handling the evidence (ibid., 56).**
- f. Grudem sums up his concerns by saying that "the article is troubling at its core, not only for what it claims, but for the model of scholarly work that it puts forth." The article should be troubling to those who care about accuracy in scholarly work. The article is peppered with references to extra-Biblical literature and therefore gives the appearance of careful scholarship. But only someone with access to a major research library, the ability to translate extensive passages from untranslated ancient Greek literature, and many days free for such research, could ever have discovered that this is not careful scholarship. In fact, in several sections its disregard of facts is so egregious that it fails even to meet fundamental requirements of truthfulness.**

[Sadly, this is not the first time that concerns have been raised about the trustworthiness of materials written by this author, says Grudem (ibid., 65). He cites examples of reviewers of her work that use such language as wanders widely from the facts, is wildly anachronistic, and is misleading or downright false (ibid., note 102). I found the same to be true in Kroeger=s attempt to argue that in 1 Tim 2:12 Paul=s use of the word *didasko* for Ateach shows that he is talking about teaching *false* doctrine. She bases this on an alleged distinction between *didasko* and *didaskalia*, which she defends by citing three pages from the TDNT article on *didasko*. I checked these pages and found that they say *nothing at all* about such a distinction. In fact there is nothing in the entire article that supports her view (Cottrell, *Feminism*, 314, 336). I cannot think of any way this reference could have been cited merely by mistake. ]

## V. ROUND FIVE: The Knockout Punch.

[From the beginning of the *Akephale* wars complementarians have pointed out **and feminists have acknowledged** that lexicons of NT Greek uniformly list such definitions for *kephale* as Asuperior rank, Aruler, Achief, and Aauthority,<sup>3</sup> but do not include the definition of Asource.]

**A. Feminists acknowledge that lexicons of NT Greek uniformly list such definitions for *kephale* as Asuperior rank, Aruler, Achief, and Aauthority, but do not include the meaning Asource. Thus they depend heavily on the one small section in the Liddell-Scott lexicon of classical Greek.** Above I have summarized the arguments, mainly of Grudem, that the Liddell-Scott lexicon is just mistaken in its attempt to find the meaning Asource in the two ancient writings it cites as examples. This is consistent with the view that *kephale* simply did not have the meaning of Asource or Aorigin in ancient Greek literature.

A recent incident has given strong support to this thesis, and it involves the Liddell-Scott lexicon.

**B. In 1997 Grudem sent a copy of his work on *kephale* to the editor of Liddell-Scott for consideration. The editor of on-going Liddell-Scott supplements, Peter G. W. Glare, sent a reply dated April 14, 1997. Grudem first reported this correspondence in the December 1997 issue of *CBMW News*, in an article called AThe Meaning Source >Does Not Exist=: Liddell-Scott Editor Rejects Egalitarian Interpretation of >Head= (Kephale). A description and the full contents of Glare=s letter are given in the 2001 *JETS* article evaluating Kroeger=s 1997 AHead article.**

**C. Key comments in Glare=s letter are as follows: AThe entry under this word [*kephale*] in LSJ is not very satisfactory. . . . I am in broad agreement with your conclusions. . . . *Kephale* is the word normally used to translate the Hebrew *rosh*, and this does seem frequently to denote leader or chief without much reference to its original anatomical sense, and here it seems perverse to deny authority. The supposed sense >source= of course does not exist and it was at least unwise of Liddell and Scott to mention the word. . . . I hasten to add that in most cases the sense of the head as being the controlling agent is the one required and that the idea of preeminence seems to me to be quite unsuitable, and there are still cases where *kephale* can be understood, as in the Septuagint, in its transferred sense of head or leader (Grudem,**

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<sup>3</sup>See Grudem, ASurvey, 63-64.

**AEvaluation,@ 59).**

- D. Other recent developments with respect to lexicons only confirm Glare=s conclusions. Grudem concludes that all these developments Aseem to indicate that there is no >battle of the lexicons= over the meaning of *kephale* but that the authors and editors of all the English lexicons for ancient Greek now agree (1) that the meaning >leader, chief, person in authority= clearly exists for *kephale*, and (2) that the meaning >source= simply does not exist.@**

## **CONCLUSION:**

In a significant article in the Spring 2004 *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, Grudem asks the question, **AI s Evangelical Feminism the new Path to Liberalism?@** One of the **Adisturbing warning signs@** that such is the case is the promotion of **Auntruthful or unsubstantiated claims as established fact@** (**AFeminism,@ 63**). One of these **Aunsubstantiated claims@** is **Athe claim that the word *kephale* (>head=) often meant >source=@** (**ibid., 68**). The point of my lengthy and sometimes tedious history of the modern debate over *kephale* in three chapters of my book has been to show that Grudem is correct: there is literally *no valid evidence* to substantiate the claim that *kephale* meant **Asource@** or **Aorigin@** in NT times. On the contrary, *Akephale* is found in over fifty contexts where it refers to people who have authority over others of whom they are the **>head=@** (**ibid.; see AKey Issues,@ 57**).

When I first began my personal study of evangelical egalitarianism in the late 1980s, I became appalled by its blatant disregard for the accepted rules of hermeneutics or Biblical interpretation. My heart=s cry was, **AThey can=t do this to my Bible!@** Thus I undertook to write a book demonstrating that the egalitarian interpretations of the gender material in the Bible are simply wrong. I was eager to show that the egalitarians= conclusions are based on **Aevidence@** that is simply non-existent.

In my first (introductory) volume of this project, I said that **Amy thesis is this: the feminist hermeneutic, i.e., the feminist attempt to find egalitarianism somewhere in the Bible, is a case of theology *ex nihilo*.@** In other words, **Athe egalitarian view has been brought into existence . . . literally out of nothing. The alleged Biblical basis for it is non-existent. It is literally >created out of thin air=@** (Cottrell, *Feminism*, 297).

**One of the five Afeminist myths@ that I described in my 1992 work (*Feminism and the Bible*) was Athe feminist myth that head means >origin=@ (308-313). There I concluded Athat the meaning of >head= (*kephale*) as >one in authority= still stands. The feminist attempt to reinterpret *kephale* as >source= has no basis in the Greek world or in the New Testament. It is a case of theology *ex nihilo*, a view willed into existence in order to support egalitarianism@ (ibid., 313). My conclusion here, fourteen years later, is the same. The massive onslaught against the non-NT evidence for the traditional meaning of *kephale* has been in vain. The evidence for the meaning of **Aleader, one in authority@** among Greek-speaking people of NT times is firm.**

[The five feminist myths: 1) the myth of mutual submission  
2) the myth that “head” means “origin, source”  
3) the myth about alleged female heretics at Ephesus  
4) the myth that the “authority” in 1 Tim. 2:12 is *sinful* authority  
5) the myth that Gal 3:28 trumps all other gender texts



