

Phil 2:1-11 tws

ἄρπαγμος – v. 6

BDAG

something to which one can claim or assert title by gripping or grasping, something claimed, a piece of good fortune, windfall, prize, gain, it remains an open question whether the windfall has already been seized and is waiting to be used, or whether it has not yet been appropriated. In favor of the former is the contrast between Adam (implied as a dramatic foil) and his anxiety about death and equality with God and Jesus' majestic freedom from such anxiety, with culmination in the ultimate vindication of Jesus, whose destiny contrasts with Adam's implied fate, 'did not consider equality with God a prize to be tenaciously grasped'

L&N

that which is to be held on to forcibly, something to hold by force, something to be forcibly retained, 'he always had the nature of God and did not consider that remaining equal with God was something to be held on to forcibly', 'may mean not only to grasp something forcefully which one does not have but also to retain by force what one possesses'

Vine

It may have two meanings (a) in the active sense, the act of seizing, robbery, (b) in the passive sense, a thing held as a prize, 'who though He was subsisting in the essential form of God, yet did not regard His being on an equality with God as a prize and a treasure to be held fast, but emptied himself thereof'

Little Kittle p. 80

a. the act of seizing, b. what is seized, and c. something regarded as gain or utilized, in Phil. 2:6, meaning c "He did not regard equality with God as a gain, either as not to be let slip, or as to be utilized" "He did not regard it as a gain to be equal with God" the reference being, not to resistance to temptation, but to a free (if unexpected) act of self-abnegation.

Colin Brown Vol. 3, p. 604

Contrast between vv. 6&7. 6b states what Christ might have done, i.e. seized equality with God; v. 7 states what he chose to do, i.e. give himself, *harpagmos* denotes that which Christ refused to seize. In particular, it denotes "the enjoyment and use of 'equality with God' in its characteristic expression, namely, the title of lordship as a springboard from which he might, had he so decided, have aspired to be the universe's ruler. He had the opportunity to grasp what lay within his reach – since he shared God's throne as his 'form' – and by an act of self-assertiveness and pride he might have striven to be Lord in his own right, but 'equality with God' in this way was an intolerable thought." He chose, therefore, to empty himself and take the form of a servant which in turn provides the ground and pattern for Christian conduct.

Liddell & Scott, p. 104

Robbery, anything that is seized, plunder

Thayer, p. 74

The act of seizing, robbery, a thing seized or to be seized, booty, to deem anything a prize – a thing to be seized upon or to be held fast, retained

Greene, Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament, p. 22

Rapine, robbery, thing plundered, what is retained with an eager grasp or eagerly claimed and conspicuously exercised

Expositor's Greek Testament Vol. 3, p. 436-7

Its significance must largely be determined from context, especially in close connection with 'being equal with God.' Possibly 'His equality with God as a prize to be clutched,' something He already possessed and resolved not to cling to. Argues for reference to future attainment, to grasping at the Lordship which would be given Him as stated later in the passage, so "He did not regard the being on an equality with God as a thing to be seized, violently snatched."

Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, Vol. 3, p. 432

A prize, a thing to be grasped, a highly prized possession, Christ did not regard His divine equality as a prize which was to be grasped at and retained at all hazards, but, on the contrary, laid aside the form of God, and took upon Himself the nature of man. The emphasis in the passage is upon Christ's humiliation. The fact of His equality with God is stated as a background, in order to throw the circumstances of His incarnation into stronger relief.

Robertson, Word Pictures, Vol. 4, p. 444

A prize to be held on to rather than something to be won

Wuest, Word Studies, Vol. 2, pp. 64-5

A thing unlawfully seized, or a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards. He was willing to waive His rights to that expression if the necessity arose. This is the essence of humility used here.

Κεῖνω – v. 7

BDAG

to empty, "of Christ, who gave up the appearance of his divinity and took on the form of a slave" – "he emptied himself, divesting himself of his privileges"

L&N

To completely remove or eliminate elements of high status or rank by eliminating all privileges or prerogatives associated with such status or rank" – "to empty oneself, to divest oneself of position"

Vine

“Christ did not empty Himself of Godhood. He did not cease to be what He essentially and eternally was.” “The clauses which follow the verb are exegetical of its meaning, especially the phrases ‘the form of a servant.’ and ‘the likeness of men.’”

Little Kittel p. 427

“This can hardly mean that Christ negated himself, nor is it suggested that he aspires beyond his existing state. The point, then, is that Christ does not selfishly exploit his divine form but lays it aside to take the form of a servant. The preexistent Lord is the subject. He remains himself, but changes his mode of being.”

Colin Brown, Vol 1, p. 546ff.

Words mean literally “he emptied himself”, He emptied himself in the sense that he freely exchanged his pre-existent, divine mode of being for common, human, earthly existence, the heavenly Christ did not selfishly exploit his divine form and mode of being, but by his own decision emptied Himself of it or laid it by, taking the form of a servant by becoming man, cf. 2 Cor 8:9, Possibly reference to “He poured out His soul” in Isa. 53:12.

Lutheran Formula of Concord rejected the idea taught in the kenosis theory. Neither the Gospels nor Phil. 2 present the picture of the abandonment of any divine attributes. They do, however, show Jesus clearly accepting the status and role of a servant. The motive and guiding principle in all of Jesus’ actions was love, humility and obedience to the Father, as Phil. 2 shows. As a servant, Jesus accepted the limitations that were the Father’s will. Phil. 2 sees Christ as having a preOexistent state, the state of humiliation as a servant in his life and death, and a state of exaltation in which he is universally acknowledged as Lord

V. 7 and v. 8 are not 2 successive acts, but two parts of one act. All describe the entirety of Christ’s life, culminating on the cross

Robertson Vol. IV, p. 444

Empty. Of what did Christ empty himself? Not of his divine nature. That was impossible. He continued to be the Son of God. There has arisen a great controversy on this word, a Kenosis doctrine. Undoubtedly Christ gave up his environment of glory.

Thayer p. 344

To empty, make empty, he laid aside equality with or the form of God (said of Christ)

Vincent Vol. III, p. 433

Emptied Himself, The general sense is that He divested Himself of that peculiar mode of existence which was proper and peculiar to Him as one with god. He laid aside the form of God. In so doing, He did not divest Himself of His divine nature. The change was a change of state: the form of a servant for the form of God. His personality continued the same. His self-emptying was not self-extinction, nor was the divine Being changed into a mere man. In His humanity He retained the consciousness of deity, and in His incarnate state carried out the mind which animated Him before His incarnations. He was not unable to assert equality with God. He was able not to assert it.

Wuest Vol. II, p.67

This form of God, Christ laid aside in His incarnation. Both expressions came from our Lord's nature, His act of glorifying Himself and His act of humbling Himself. Both are consistent elements of the essence possessed by the Triune God.

But in exchanging one form of expression for the other, He emptied Himself. The question arises, "of what did He empty Himself?" He did not empty Himself of His deity, since Paul says that the expression of His deity was a fact after His incarnation, that expression implying the possession of the essence of Deity. He set aside the outward expression of His deity when expressing Himself as a bondsman. It was the outward expression of the essence of His deity which our Lord emptied Himself of during the time when He was giving outward expression of Himself as a bondsman. But the emptying Himself of the expression of Deity is more implied by the context than stated specifically by the verb "emptied."