

*A Hymn of Christ:  
Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Interpretation  
and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* by R. P. Martin<sup>1</sup>

Outlined and Summarized by Lee Irons

**Preface to the 1983 edition**

Two main approaches to Phil. 2:5-11:

1. The ethical interpretation – call to imitate Christ’s example<sup>2</sup>
2. The soteriological interpretation – drama of Christ’s descent/ascent

Martin holds to 2. His objections to the “ethical” view:

- The well-known syntactical difficulty of v. 5. “It is impossible to treat the two prepositional phrases as saying the same thing ... The call is for his readers to ‘adopt a way of life’ ... in their mutual relations (ἐν ὑμῖν), which is indeed (καί) how they should live ‘in Christ Jesus’” (xiv).
- How can we imitate the act of incarnation? How can we be exalted as Christ was? There is only one Kyrios.

Käsemann was right to object to the “ethical interpretation” and to propose instead that the hymn is a recital of the soteriological story of Christ, who is now exalted as Kyrios, under whose authority the church is summoned to live. The lordship of Christ is central.

Hermeneutical assumption: “We should isolate the meaning of the terms in the hymn from the use which is made of them by Paul in the verses which precede and follow them ... The hymn may well have had one meaning in its original form and yet an altered meaning in the context of Paul’s letter” (xvii).

The hymn celebrates the “way of Christ” (Weglied) – how the heavenly one was humbled but has now returned to his heavenly glory and received cosmic lordship. The lordship of Christ is the basis of the paraenetic appeal in v. 12 – the Philippians should “obey” Christ’s lordship. But since the Lord they obey is the crucified Jesus, they should live out their life-in-Christ in terms of a theology of the cross. (xviii)

Martin doubts Jeremias’ thesis that the phrases, “form of a servant,” “emptied himself,” and “humbled himself,” are allusions to Isaiah’s suffering servant. (xxiii)

---

<sup>1</sup> Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Strimple, “Phil. 2:5-11 in Recent Studies: Some Exegetical Conclusions,” *WTJ* 41 (1979) 247-68; Hurtado, “Jesus as Lordly Example,” ch. 9 in *From Jesus to Paul: Studies in Honour of Francis Wright Beare*, eds. Hurd and Richardson (Waterloo, 1983).

Lohmeyer's insight: the phrase "obedient to death" can only refer to the act of a *divine* being. It is "the ultimate limit of a freely willed obedience." (xxiv) Later, Martin expands this thought: "As Lohmeyer says in a brilliant insight, only a divine being can accept death as *obedience*; for ordinary men it is a necessity, to which they are appointed by their humanity" (217).

Contrast between ἀρπαγμός and ἐχαρίσατο. The antithesis of *snatching* is *receiving*. The prize of lordship that he chose not to snatch, has been bestowed upon him by God. (xxxix)

Martin's assessment of the opponents at Philippi – the same Jewish Christians who opposed Paul in Corinth. They have an over-realized, triumphalistic eschatology. Paul responds to their theology of glory with a theology of the cross. He intentionally inserts the phrase "even death on a cross" into the hymn. He does so in response to his opponents whom he later calls "enemies of the cross." (xxxvi-xxxix)

### **Preface to the 1997 edition**

Martin accepts the RSV's translation of v. 5: "which is yours in Christ Jesus." (xlviii)

"Paul's makeover of the earlier hymn." (xlix) Following Jeremias, Martin believes that the 4 lines Paul added to the hymn are:

Taking the servant's form (v. 7)

Even death on a cross (v. 8)

The heavenly, earthly and demonic (v. 10)

To the glory of God the Father (v. 11)

By thus redacting the hymn, Paul sought to correct its triumphalist emphasis on the victory of Christ.

"The heavy theological, ecclesiological and ethical freight" contained in the term πολιτεύεσθε (1:27). Martin's paraphrase: "let your life in the polis of God's realm be worthy of your adherence to the good news." (li)

"The obedient one is to be obeyed." (lii) "The call is *not* to cultivate the virtues of verses 6-8 but to yield obedience to the obedient one who is now hailed as cosmic Lord (verses 9-11)." (lvii-lviii)

Martin says that he is more disposed now (in 1997) than in earlier editions of the book to see some echoes of Isaiah's *Ebed Yahweh*.<sup>3</sup> (lx, n 35)

Response to N. T. Wright's interpretation.<sup>4</sup> (lxv-lxxiv)

---

<sup>3</sup> For a robust defense, see Gundry, "Style and Substance," in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays ... in Honour of Michael D. Goulder*, eds. Porter, et al (Leiden, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh, 1992), pp. 56-98. Originally published in *NTS* 37 (1986) 321-52.

Wright's view as summarized by Martin:

- Wright understands the participle ὑπάρχων as causal: "... who, precisely because he was in the form of God," etc. Thus, the humility of Christ is the revelation of God's character.
- Following Hoover, Wright interprets ἀρπαγμός to mean "something to be used for his own advantage." Thus, on Wright's view, Christ possessed equality with God and decided not to take advantage of this possession.
- Instead of exploiting his status of equality with God, he reinterpreted it as a vocation to obedience and death.
- Incarnation and crucifixion are therefore appropriate vehicles for the dynamic self-revelation of God.

Martin's critique:

- Re. ἀρπαγμός, Martin argues that one can forego the opportunity to use a prize that is held out in prospect. Christ refused to use what he did possess (being in the form of God) as an opportunity to advance to what he did not yet possess (equality with God). This makes sense of the basic idea behind the noun, which corresponds to the verb ἀρπάζειν, "to seize."
- It is arbitrary to equate "being in the form of God" and "equality with God." Wright would even insert the word *this*: "who, being in the form of God, did not regard *this* divine equality as something to be used for his own advantage." Although the article τὸ could be anaphoric, Martin argues that there is another possibility: it functions merely to identify εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ as the direct object of ἠγγήσατο rather than ἀρπαγμόν. (The clause reads: οὐχ ἀρπαγμόν ἠγγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ.)
- At the conclusion of his career, the exalted one is accorded a dignity as world-ruler. He receives a divine equality that *in the nature of the case* could not be his as pre-existent (before time and creation). This is the meaning of "more-than-highly exalted" (v. 9).
- Wright sees in the "story" of the hymn the revelation of the divine character as love. In response, Martin says, "We are in the realm of a hypothetical meta-story that floats above the text and is not ... as closely linked to the text as it professes to be." The text makes no mention of God's love or of Christ's sacrifice on behalf of others.

## Introduction

Deals with the Pliny reference ("singing alternately a hymn [*carmen*] to Christ as to a god")

## Part I: Background and interpretation

### Chapter 1: Traces of carmina in the NT

## Chapter 2: Philippians 2:5-11: Its literary form

Ernst Lohmeyer, *Kyrios Jesus: Eine Untersuchung zu Phil. 2,5-11* (1928) – seminal study  
J. Jeremias (1953) – modified Lohmeyer’s literary analysis

## Chapter 3: Philippians 2:5-11: Its authorship

Arguments against Pauline authorship:

- Greek text based on a Semitic original; un-Pauline terminology
- The language test – hapax legomena; absence of Pauline terms (e.g., no reference to redemptive significance of Christ’s death ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν)
- Ebed Yahweh teaching not attested elsewhere in Paul
- Paul’s debt to his predecessors (pre-Pauline Hellenistic Christianity in Syria)

Arguments for Pauline authorship:

- Hymnic style and content could explain unusual vocabulary
- Even θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ adds nothing distinctively Pauline
- Pauline doctrine in the hymn (Jesus as lord of glory; two Adams)

Expanding on the “two Adams” theme as a distinctively Pauline teaching: “W. D. Davies has offered a positive suggestion when he maintains that the teaching about our Lord as the last Adam is characteristically Pauline. In his discussion of the Second Adam doctrine he reaches the conclusion that ‘the conception of Christ as the Second Adam was probably introduced into the Church by Paul himself’. If this is so ... our hymn is the most conspicuous example, along with Romans v and 1 Corinthians xv, of the way his renewed mind was working in the formulating of the contrast between the first Adam and the last Man from heaven.” (58)

In the end, Martin says that the arguments for and against Pauline authorship are finely balanced. He postpones decision until after the exegetical section (Part II).

## Chapter 4: Philippians 2:5-11: Main lines of 20<sup>th</sup> century interpretation

The 19<sup>th</sup> century legacy

1. The dogmatic view (Lutheran)
2. The Kenotic theory (Thomasius)
3. Ethical example – supplies “was” in v. 5; see Martin’s critique (69-73, 84-88)

20<sup>th</sup> century hypotheses

1. The background in heterodox Judaism – Iranian myth of the primal man (Lohmeyer)
2. The non-Jewish Hellenistic background (Käsemann) – cosmic drama of Gnostic *Urmensch*
3. OT background – Ebed Yahweh, two Adams

4. Specific Hellenistic examples – divine hero Christology (Knox); fate (E. Schweizer)
5. Historical allusions – Caligula and Nero (Bornhäuser)
6. Baptismal setting (Jervell)

## **Part II: An exegetical study of the hymn in the light of recent interpretation**

### Chapter 5: The Pre-Existent Being (v. 6a)

Three main interpretations:

1. Philosophical (Lightfoot) – μορφή = οὐσία
2. Septuagintal (Hering, TWNT, Cullmann, et al) – μορφή = εἰκὼν = δόξα
3. Religionsgeschichte (Bultmann, Käsemann) – the heavenly man myth

Martin opts for view 2, and goes on to argue that Paul's Two Adams doctrine forms the conceptual background to the hymn, particularly verse 6 (116-20, 142, 161-64). Other scholars cited by Martin who see Adamic connections:

- C. K. Barrett, *From First Adam to Last* (1962)  
Matthew Black, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Second Adam," *SJT* 7 (1954) 170-9  
L. Bouyer, "harpagmos," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* (Strasbourg) xxxix (1951-2)  
in honour of J. Lebreton, 281-88  
Cullmann, *Christology of the New Testament*, pp. 175-77  
W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, pp. 36ff  
E. Lohse, "Imago Dei bei Paulus," in *Libertas Christiana: Festschrift F. Delekat*, pp. 124-6  
A. E. J. Rawlinson, *The NT Doctrine of the Christ*, pp. 132f  
R. Scroggs, *The Last Adam* (1966)  
D. Somerville, *St. Paul's Conception of Christ or the Doctrine of the Second Adam* (Edinburgh, 1897).

### Chapter 6: His Choice (v. 6b,c)

Main interpretations:

1. Active sense ("an act of robbery or usurpation")
2. Passive sense
  - a. *Res rapta* (already possessed, "a prize to hold fast")
  - b. *Res rapienda* (not yet possessed, "a thing to be seized")
  - c. Mediating view (Jaeger – "to treat as a piece of good fortune;" Hoover – "something to be used for his own advantage")

Martin combines *res rapta* and *res rapienda*: "The μορφή θεοῦ is *res rapta*, for the pre-existent Christ has His place within the Godhead. He is 'the Image' of the Father. Bound up with this existing possession is the exercise of cosmic dominion, which the hymn calls the name and office of Kyrios. This authority constitutes a *res rapienda*; and the issue before the pre-incarnate One is whether He will treat His possession of His μορφή as a

vantage-point, *ein Vorsprung*, from which He will reach out to the exercise of lordship in His own right and independently of God the Father ... On the contrary, the hymn declares, He did not raise Himself up in proud arrogance and independence – although He might have done so – but chose by the path of humiliation and obedience (vv. 7 ff.) to come to His lordship in a way that pleased God (v. 9).” (152)

### Chapter 7: His Incarnation (v. 7a,b)

Various interpretations of “He emptied himself”:

1. “He exchanged the μορφή θεοῦ for a μορφή δούλου” (the Kenotic view)
2. “He became poor” (Dibelius)
3. “He became a member of the slave class” (Bornhäuser; Maurenbrecher)
4. “He became Man” (traditional view)
5. “He placed Himself under demonic powers” (Käsemann, Bornkamm)
6. “He took the role of Isaiah’s Servant” (poured out his life unto death) (Jeremias)
7. “He became the righteous sufferer” (E. Schweizer)

Martin points out the δοῦλος-Κύριος contrast: “The fact that δοῦλος is found in the text – and it is used only here in the New Testament of Christ – is *prima facie* evidence that there is an intended contrast with Κύριος ... The pre-incarnate Christ refused lordship in His own right by an act of seizure, but at the end of His career as the humiliated and obedient δοῦλος He is granted that κυριότης which *might* have been His in His pre-existence.” (175) “Δοῦλος emphasizes obedience to the will of another person, in this context κατ’ ἐξοχήν God Himself; and the obedience of Christ, at length vindicated and rewarded, is a dominant motif in the entire passage.” (176) What is meant by the phrase, “taking the form of a δοῦλος”? It means that He had a lord, and that He had to subordinate His own will to that of His master. (177)

Does the hymn allude to Isaiah’s Servant? If so, why is the term δοῦλος employed, when the LXX translates *ebed* with παῖς?

Although the LXX generally translates *ebed* with παῖς (Isa. 42:1; 49:6; 50:10; 52:13), there are two occasions where δοῦλος is used (Isa. 49:3, 5).

Euler proved by exhaustive examination the interchangeability of δοῦλος and παῖς.<sup>5</sup>

- Aquila reads δοῦλος in Isa. 52:13, where the LXX had παῖς.
- The verb δουλεύω is used in Isa. 53:11 (LXX). (187-89).

### Chapter 8: His Abasement (vv. 7c-8)

The reflexive pronoun ἐαυτόν in the phrase “he humbled himself” is important because it emphasizes the fact that Christ’s action was free and voluntary (199).

---

<sup>5</sup> K. Euler, *Die Verkündigung von leidenden Gottesknecht aus Jes 53 in der griechischen Bibel* (Stuttgart, 1934).

Ὅμοιόμοια (“becoming in the likeness of men”): This word has two meanings in the NT:

1. Identity or equivalence (e.g., Rom. 6:5: “we have been united with him in the same death that he died”)
2. Similarity, resemblance (e.g., Rev. 9:7: “in appearance the locusts were like horses”)

Which meaning is being used here? Meaning 1 would yield the statement that Christ became completely and fully man (i.e., a real incarnation). Meaning 2 would imply that he only appeared in human form but in reality he was a divine being (i.e., a theophany or divine epiphany).

Various interpretations:

1. Some take the phrase (interpreting γενόμενος = born) as a reference to Christ’s virgin birth
2. Some interpret the phrase as similar to Rom. 8:3, “the likeness of sin-dominated flesh” (Johannes Weiss); Paul dare not express the complete humanity of Christ in view of his doctrine of human nature as in the grip of the demonic power of sin; “in this, Paul grazes the later heresy of ‘Docetism’” (203)
3. Apocalyptic usage (e.g., “one like the son of man,” Dan. 7:13; Ezek. 1:26; Enoch 31:2; Rev. 1:13) (Otto Michel); the ὁμοιόμοια formula expresses sense of hesitancy as the seer tries to put into human terms a vision of a supra-historical, other-worldly reality (205-6)

Σχήμα (“the appearance of a man”): His outward appearance was such that those who saw him gained the impression that he was a man.

Ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν (“he humbled himself”): Many see here an allusion to the humiliation of the Isaianic *Ebed Yahweh* (ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει, Isa. 53:8 LXX). But if this is so, Martin asks, why does the hymn omit any reference to the Servant’s vicarious sin-bearing on our behalf? (212)

Ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου (“obedient unto death”): Käsemann’s arguments for view that “obedience unto death” means that Christ submitted to the demonic powers (218-19):

- Those agencies which now confess his lordship are those to which he had been subjected in his humiliation (v. 10)
- Christ passed through the three metaphysical states: divine, human, infernal
- The hymn uses as its scaffolding the Gnostic myth of the Redeemer who descends into the created world, escapes the malevolent powers that control the world, and in this manner opens up a way for his followers to escape as well

Response to Käsemann (219-23):

- There is no proof that “those under the earth” are demonic, hostile powers; the entire phrase in v. 10 could simply signify the whole cosmos

- There is no explicit reference to a descent into Hades in v. 8; only “obedience unto death, even death on a cross;” this remains true even if “even death on a cross” is considered to be a Pauline interpolation
- There are too many features which set this hymn apart from the Gnostic myth. Bornkamm writes: “There is no place in the act (of the Gnostic Redeemer who comes down into the fallen world of men and returns to his heavenly sphere with his redeemed souls) for obedience in humiliation and bodily suffering – death upon the cross. But for our hymn it is just at this point that the Christ-event finds fulfillment. Indeed, it is the obedience of Jesus which gives coherence to the whole. His giving up, in His pre-existence, of His equality with God and His descent into the human state of slavery take on meaning – as also does His exaltation to be Lord which follows – only because they are based on His obedience unto death.”<sup>6</sup> (223 n1)

### Chapter 9: His Exaltation (v. 9)

The “controlling factor” that binds together the two sections (vv. 6-8 and 9-11) is the theme of “obedience and its vindication.” (230) “The obedience of Christ is crowned by this act of Exaltation in which the Father raised Him from the dead, and elevated Him to the place of honour.” (231) Michaelis sees the obedience of Christ as the “all-controlling theme” of the hymn.<sup>7</sup>

The debate over whether Christ merited the reward. Roman Catholic interpreters traditionally said Yes. But the idea of Christ receiving his exaltation as a reward was repugnant to Reformed theologians. Calvin translated διὸ καί with *quod facto* (“which done”). Barth also rejects the concept of reward here.

Martin rejects merit as well, and appeals to the verb χαρίζομαι (< χάρις). “The obedience of Christ did not force the hand of God, as a doctrine of merit implies.” (232) Exaltation was not a reward but “an act of grace.” (244) It was the “by-product” of Christ’s humility and service, “something unsought-after by the disinterested Lord.” (247) The exaltation of Christ “is due to the Father’s good pleasure (ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ, v. 9).” (248)

What is “the name” that Christ received at his exaltation? Can’t be “Jesus,” since he bore that name from his circumcision. Other options:

1. “Kyrios”
2. The office of Lordship
3. The self-revelation of God in Christ
4. Unknown

---

<sup>6</sup> Bornkamm, “Zum Verständnis des Christus-hymnus Phil 2.6-11,” *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, II, 182.

<sup>7</sup> W. Michaelis, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Philipper* (Theologischer Handkommentar; Leipzig, 1935).



What is the force of the prefix ὑπερ- in the verb ὑπερυψώω? Two views:

1. Comparative force: Christ was exalted to a position which he did not previously possess
2. Superlative force: “God exalted him to the highest station” (Beare), without any suggestion that he was raised to a higher position than he had in his pre-existent state (cp. the usage of the same verb in Psalm 97:9 [96:9] LXX).

#### Chapter 10: The Universal Homage (vv. 10-11a)

The phrase ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ can be interpreted as follows:

1. All creatures bow the knee and confess the Lordship of Christ as they call upon his name.
2. When the name of Jesus is proclaimed every knee should bow. This view suggests that Jesus was the object of worship in the early church.

Allusion to Isaiah 45:23: “What God had announced as a future promise is now, for this hymn, a reality,” with the difference that whereas Isaiah expected all the nations to turn to Yahweh, the hymn expands the scope to “all sentient beings throughout the cosmos.” (256)

Various interpretations of the threefold division of the cosmos:

1. Angels in heaven, men on earth, departed dead in Sheol (Clement of Alexandria, Theodoret)
2. Angels in heaven, men on earth, demons under the earth (Chrysostom, Lohmeyer)
3. Hostile spirit-forces (i.e., demons) that used to control the inhabitants in heaven, on earth, and in the underworld but which are now subjected to Christ (E. Peterson, Cullmann, Käsemann)

In support of view 3, many scholars argue that the verb ἐξομολογέομαι does not necessarily mean “to confess with faith” and can mean “to admit, acknowledge, recognize” even by an unwilling foe.

Textual problem: ἐξομολογήσεται (aorist subjunctive) or ἐξομολογήσεται (future indicative)? The witnesses are evenly divided. A related question: Is the universal homage occurring now in this age, or will it only occur at the parousia? The already/not-yet pattern of NT eschatology would suggest a both/and answer. Christ is already victorious over his foes, yet the foes are still in opposition (as evidenced by the persecution of the church militant), and so we await their final subjugation at the parousia.

“The Christ-hymn enables the Church to see beyond the present in which the Head of the Church reigns invisibly and powerfully – but known only to faith – to that full proof of His reign in the heavenly sphere in which all the powers are veritably subject to Him and His dominion is manifestly confessed.” (270)

## Chapter 11: The Christological Confession (v. 11b-c)

Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός: “The Christ-hymn reaches its climax in the utterance of the whole cosmos: ‘Jesus Christ is Lord.’ The accent falls on the last word which is placed first in the Greek phrase [Κύριος], and thereby given special force.” (271)

Εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς (“to the glory of God the Father”). Various views:

1. The phrase is part of the confession itself (Vincent, Meinertz, Prat)
2. It’s a Pauline addition:
  - a. Jeremias – it just doesn’t fit into his metrical analysis
  - b. Added in order to safeguard the unity of the Godhead; Jesus is not a second god; the homage paid to Christ in no way detracts from the worship of God the Father (Käsemann, Bonnard, Beare)
  - c. It reiterates the *Leitmotiv* of the entire hymn that the exalted Lord does not exercise his authority in any selfish manner but at the Father’s behest (Martin)

Of whom is God the Father here? Is he is the Father of Jesus, or of believers? Martin follows Käsemann here and sees it as both. “The hymn is concerned with the interrelation of two worlds, the divine and the human.” (278)

The Bousset-Lohmeyer controversy:<sup>8</sup>

1. Bousset interpreted the Lordship of Christ in cultic terms – Christ is here confessed as Lord of the church.
2. Lohmeyer disagreed with Bousset and “acutely saw” that Christ is here proclaimed as Lord of the entire universe. There is no mention of a confessing church.

Käsemann and Martin side with Lohmeyer. “It is not religious worship which is offered to the regnant Christ, but cosmic acclamation of Him as Lord. It is not the song of the redeemed, but the cry of the subjugated ... The formula runs ‘Lord’, not ‘our Lord’.” (279) “It is set in a framework which has little connection with the Church’s worship; rather the primary application of the lordship is to the cosmic spirit-powers which admit their subservience to the enthroned Christ. They utter the cry: He is Lord. The Church overhears this and identifies herself with it, thereby committing herself to His sovereign rule. She thus confesses that she too belongs to the *Regnum Christi* ...” (282)

### **Part III: Philippians 2:5-11 in its first century setting**

“These verses, cast in lyrical and liturgical form, portray a soteriological drama. They are not a piece of Christological speculation which answers our question who Christ was, but the record of a series of events of saving significance ... The drama of verses 6ff. tells

---

<sup>8</sup> See G. Vos, “The Kyrios-Christos Controversy,” *Princeton Theological Review* XII (1914) 636ff; XV (1917) 21-89.

how it came about that Christ has received a cosmocracy and why He is now installed as the heavenly Kyrios, with all creation under His control. As befits a drama, the language is picturesque and set in the form of a story ... The ‘plot’ is told in spatial terms and by the use of a kinetic imagery – thus we read of a divine being, who is not identified with God, but is on a par with Him. He is faced with a choice, which He makes. The consequence of this momentous decision is an epiphany, as He who was ‘above’ came ‘down’. His appearance is marked by self-humbling and obedience to the farthest point, to death. The imagery of movement is continued in the thought that God lifted Him up and bestowed upon Him a kingly name and office, before which angelic powers and the entire cosmos bend down in submission. The epiphany is thus completed; and the incarnate One resumes a place in the celestial sphere. In so doing He has joined together heaven and earth; and brought under His authority those cosmic powers which up to that point had had control in the realms of creation. In this sense they are ‘reconciled’ and brought into unity and harmony with the divine will. For the hymn, this is the soteriology which is important; and it is Christ’s present Rule that is of supreme moment.” (295-96)

Martin’s description of the first century background: Hellenistic man lived in fear of the astral deities, blind fate, astrology, and magic. In this hymn, Christ the Cosmocrator is set forth as the answer. (306-11; cp. 281)

### **Appendix 1: The key questions concerning Phil. 2:5-11<sup>9</sup>**

#### Literary questions:

1. Is the pericope pre-Pauline or Pauline?
2. If pre-Pauline, was it originally composed in a Semitic language or in Greek?
3. Did it originate from Palestinian or Hellenistic Christianity?
4. Is the conceptual background Gnostic (*Urmensch*) or Scriptural (*Ebed Yahweh* or Adam)?
5. What is the literary structure of the hymn (division of lines & stanzas)?
6. If pre-Pauline, which lines were added by Paul?
7. What was the original *Sitz im Leben* of the hymn – eucharist, baptism, creed, etc.?

#### Exegetical questions:

8. What word or words should be supplied to fill in the ellipsis (v. 5)?
9. What does ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων (v. 6) mean?
10. How should οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο (v. 6) be translated?
11. What does ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν (v. 7) mean?
12. Are there allusions (e.g., μορφὴ δούλου) to Isaiah’s *Ebed Yahweh* in the hymn?
13. Why did Paul add θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ (v. 8)?
14. What is the significance of the prefix ὑπερ- in the verb ὑπερύψωσεν (v. 9)?
15. In view of διὸ καὶ and ἐχαρίσατο (v. 9), was Christ’s exaltation a reward or a gift?
16. What is τὸ ὄνομα that Jesus received (v. 9)?

---

<sup>9</sup> Martin nowhere formally lists these as the key questions, but they are the main interpretive questions he addresses throughout his volume.

17. What do ἐπουρανίων - ἐπιγείων - καταχθονίων (v. 10) refer to?  
18. Why did Paul add εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός (v. 11)?

Theological questions:

19. Is there an “Adam Christology” here?  
20. Does the hymn teach the pre-existence of Christ?  
21. Is the kenotic theory of the incarnation valid?  
22. Did Christ receive something (vv. 9-11) that he did not have before (v. 6)?  
23. Do we have “Christological monotheism” here?  
24. Is the universal confession of Jesus as Lord past or future? Cultic or cosmic?  
25. How does the hymn function in the context of Paul’s paraenesis (1:27-2:18)?

**Appendix 2: Proposed Poetic Structures for Philippians 2:6-11**

Ernst Lohmeyer (1928)

6 stanzas of 3 lines each

- I (a) ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων  
(b) οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο  
(c) τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ
- II (a) ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν  
(b) μορφὴν δούλου λαβών  
(c) ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος
- III (a) καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος  
(b) ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν  
(c) γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου [θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ]
- IV (a) διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν  
(b) καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ  
(c) τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὄνομα
- V (a) ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ  
(b) πάντων γόνυ κάμψη  
(c) ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων
- VI (a) καὶ πάντα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται  
(b) ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς  
(c) εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός

Joachim Jeremias (1953)

3 stanzas of 4 lines (2 couplets) each

Pre-existence

- I (a) ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων  
(b) οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,  
(c) ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν  
(d) μορφὴν δούλου λαβών

Incarnation

- II (a) ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος  
(b) καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος  
(c) ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν  
(d) γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου [θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ]

Exaltation

- III (a) διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν  
(b) καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα  
(c) ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψη  
[ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων]  
(d) καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς  
[εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς]

R. P. Martin (1967)

6 stanzas composed of couplets

- A (a) ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων  
(b) οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ  
B (a) ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν  
(b) μορφήν δούλου λαβὼν  
C (a) ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος  
(b) καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος  
D (a) ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν  
(b) γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου [θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ]  
E (a) διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν  
(b) καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα  
F (a) ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψη  
[ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων]  
(b) καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς  
[εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς]