

Archilochus, fragment 122

χρημάτων ἄελπτον οὐδέν ἐστιν οὐδ' ἀπόμοτον
οὐδὲ θαυμάσιον, ἐπειδὴ Ζεὺς πατὴρ Ὀλυμπίων
ἐκ μεσαμβρίας ἔθηκε νύκτ', ἀποκρύψας φάος
ἡλίου λάμποντος, ὠχρὸν δ' ἦλθ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους δέος.

VOCABULARY

ἄελπτος, -ον: unexpected

ἀποκρύπτω: hide, conceal, cover over

ἀπόμοτος, -ον: 'sworn not to be...'; hence
'impossible'

δέος, -ους, τό: fear

ἡλῖος, -ου, ό: sun

θάλασσα, -ης, ἡ: the sea

θαυμάσιος, -α, -ον: wonderful, amazing

λάμπω: shine

μεσαμβρία < μεσαμβρία, ἡ: midday; broad
daylight

νύξ, νύκτος, ἡ: night

φάος, -ους, τό: light

χρῆμα, -ατος, τό: thing

ὠχρός, -ά, -όν: pale; pallid; yellow

COMMENTARY

TEXT: follows West (1971) *Iambi et elegi graeci*,
vol. I.47-8, but adopts Bentley's ὠχρόν in v. 4 to
produce a simple text for intermediate Greek
readers.

METRE: trochaic tetrameter catalectic

The poem's subject is the total solar eclipse on
the island of Paros, Archilochus' birthplace, in
648 BCE.

1. χρημάτων... οὐδέν: may simply be translated
as 'nothing'.

3. ἔθηκε (3rd s. aor. indic.) < τίθημι: usu. put,
place; here it may be translated as 'brought.'

ἐκ δὲ τοῦ καὶ πιστὰ πάντα κἀπίελπτα γίγνεται

5

ἀνδράσιν· μηδεὶς ἔθ' ὑμέων εἰσορέων θαυμαζέτω

μηδ' ἐὰν δελφῖσι θῆρες ἀνταμείβωνται νομόν

ἐνάλιον, καὶ σφιν θαλάσσης ἠχέεντα κύματα

φίλτερ' ἠπείρου γένηται, τοῖσι δ' ὑλέειν ὄρος.

VOCABULARY

ἀνταμείβομαι: take something (*acc.*) in exchange
with someone (*dat.*)

δελφίς, ἴνος, ὄ: dolphin

εἰσορέω (*Ion.*) = εἰσοράω: look upon, behold

ἐνάλιος, -α, -ον / -ος, -ον: in / of the sea; marine

ἐπίελπος, -ον: hoped for; expected

ἠπειρος, -ου, ὄ: the mainland; land

ἠχέεις, -εσσα, -εν (*poet.*) < ἠχῆεις: echoing,
resounding

θαυμάζω: wonder at; be amazed

θήρ, -ηρός, ὄ: wild animal

κῦμα, -ατος, τό: wave

νομός, -οῦ, ὄ: pasture

πιστός, -ή, -όν: believable

ὄρος, -εος, τό: mountain, hill

υἰέεις, -εσσα, -εν (*poet.*) < υἰλήεις: wooded

COMMENTARY

5. τοῦ: the definite article functioning as a
relative pronoun governed by the preposition
ἐκ (*i.e.*, 'from which' or 'because of which...');
cf. ἐξ οὗ ('since that time' or 'because of
which...'). The antecedent is the whole
situation described in vv. 1-4.

κἀπίελπτα: (*crasis*) < καὶ ἐπίελπτα. The καὶ is
emphatic and may be translated 'too.'

6. ἔθ' = ἔτι.

ὑμέων (*Ion.*) = ὑμῶν.

θαυμαζέτω: 3 *s. pres. act. imperat.*; its subject is
μηδεὶς (*i.e.*, 'let no one... be amazed...').

8. σφιν: 3rd *pl. dat. pron.* (*i.e.*, 'to them'); its
antecedent is θῆρες in v. 7.

9. ἠπείρου: genitive of comparison with φίλτερα.

τοῖσι δ': pronominal use of the definite article
(*i.e.*, 'to them' / 'to those ones'); the antecedent
is δελφῖσι (v. 7).

υἰέειν ὄρος: with this phrase understand
<φίλτερον γένηται>.

LH