

To Pull, Drag, or Draw (ἐλκύω)

By Luther Walker

To draw (ἐλκύω) expresses the concept of moving an object from one area to another by attraction or pulling.

During Christ's earthly ministry, after Jesus declared that He was the bread of life that came down from heaven, the crowd following Him from the other side of the sea where He fed them began to murmur. They knew that Jesus was the son of Joseph, so how could He come down from heaven? In response, Jesus instructed them to stop murmuring, for no one has the ability to come to Him except the Father draws him, John 6:44.

When Jesus is lifted up, He will draw all men unto Himself, John 12:32. The time for the judgment of this world has come. Just as a seed of wheat must die to produce more, through His death, many more sons of the light will be produced, John 12:36.

After the death of Christ, the disciples returned to their fishing business. They spent the night out on the sea but did not have any success. In the morning, the resurrected Christ spoke to them from the shore and instructed them to cast out the nets on the other side of the boat. Once they did this, the catch was so large they could not draw it into the boat, John 21:6. Realizing the man on the shore was Jesus, Peter jumped into the sea and swam to shore while the other disciples drew the net to land, John 21:7.

After Paul rebuked a demon who had possessed a young slave girl to deceive people who lived in the city of Philippi because she was following Paul around, claiming that he was presenting a way of salvation, her masters dragged Paul and Silas to the authorities in the marketplace, Acts 16:19. They realized that because Paul rebuked the demon she had lost her divination abilities, and therefore, her value to them.

Having partiality of persons is detrimental, for the rich man drags others into court and attributes false things to them, James 2:6-7.

When Paul was found in the Temple by some of the Jews from Asia who were seeking to kill him, they took the opportunity to stir up the people against him. Supposing Paul had brought Gentiles into the Temple, they seized him and dragged him out of the Temple, shutting the doors, Acts 21:30.

Temptations do not come from God, but each one is drawn out (ἐξελκόμενος) and enticed by his own desires, James 1:14.

To draw is used in the sense of attracting along with dragging. Although Christ had done many signs and wonders among the Jews, most did not believe; however, the ones who came to Him were attracted by the Father. Their faith in Christ did not come from them, but the Father drew them in, for He knows who are His. In the same way, because Christ was lifted up in crucifixion and raised three days later, He attracts many to Him. This is a gentle type of drawing, not forceful. Although God desires that all men be saved, He did not determine that certain ones would perish and, therefore, will not force anyone to be saved. It is the kindness of God that brings us to repentance

(change of mind), not an authoritarian hand. We also see the subtle side of drawing out with how temptations come upon men and ultimately produce sin by drawing them out of their safe place and enticing them through their own strong desires. On the other side is the dragging out by force, as with a net or a rich man taking others into court.