

The petition of the Lord's Prayer, "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven," evidently presupposes that (1) God's kingdom comes because, or insofar as, God's will is done; and (2) whereas God's kingdom is yet to come, because God's will is yet to be done, on earth, God's kingdom has always already come, because God's will is always already done, in heaven.

But how, exactly, are these presuppositions to be understood, especially if one takes seriously that "heaven," no less than "earth," is distinct from God, because it, too, is something created by God?

In my view, as in Hartshorne's, the cosmic order constituted by natural law(s) is not God, but something created by God, in the sense that it comes into being and is maintained, not simply by the metaphysical essence of God as such, but only by certain contingent decisions of God, by God's doing things—these things rather than those—that are, in the theological sense, completely free or gratuitous. In this sense, God wills that a certain cosmic order prevail, and God's will is *eo ipso* done, insofar as any other decisions about what is to be done or not done, and so all creaturely freedom to make contingent and, therefore, similarly free and gratuitous decisions, is exercised only within the limits set by the natural law(s) constituting this particular cosmic order. Put differently, anything that actually happens is always a further determination of a more or less determinate possibility, which, although it is more or less indeterminate relative to the still more determinate thing that actually happens, is also more or less determinate relative to indeterminate possibility simply as such, being determined, in the first instance, by the decisions of God establishing the natural law(s) constituting the cosmic order of the epoch in question.

This means that, in creating any actual world, God first establishes the natural law(s) constituting a given cosmic order, thereby creating the more or less determinate possible world of which any actual world is yet a further determination, determined, however, not by God's decisions, but by the decisions of the creatures themselves within the limits set by the decisions of God. In other words, although all actual things are indeed created *by God*, they are all also *self-created*, each by itself as well as by all of the other

actualities that have already been created within the cosmic order constituted by God in establishing the natural law(s) constitutive of the given epoch. But if creation by God is completed only by self-creation in this twofold sense, self-creation, for its part, necessarily presupposes God's creation of the relevant cosmic order and therewith of the more or less determinate possibility of which every fully determinate actuality is ^{not} a further determination.

My suggestion is that "heaven," in the sense in which it is used in the petition whose presuppositions we are trying to understand, refers to the more or less determinate possibility that God first creates in creating any fully determinate actuality —namely, by establishing the natural law(s) constituting the relevant cosmic order. Because this more or less determinate possibility is determined solely by God, God's kingdom, or rule, has always already come, because God's will has always already been done, in "heaven," which, in this respect, is significantly different from "earth." I would further suggest, in other words, that by "earth," in the sense of the term presupposed by the petition, we properly understand fully determinate actuality, which is always self-created in the twofold sense previously explained as well as created by God. Because anything actual, being in part self-created, cannot be determined solely by God, there is always the possibility that on earth God's kingdom, or rule, has yet to come, because God's will has yet to be done—namely, by each fully determinate actuality in determining itself and the other actualities that remain to be created, also by themselves as well as by God.

By thus taking account both of God's constituting cosmic order through establishing natural law(s)—thereby unilaterally creating "heaven"—and of every actuality's also being self-created in a twofold sense—by other actualities as well as by itself, thereby creating "earth"—I have, in effect, confirmed Hartshorne's observation, "Always, there is a mixture of (1) providence, (2) good or bad chance, and (3) one's own self-management, good or bad: these three . . . [T]his must be so, and in any possible world state. Providence makes life's gamble possible. It does not play the game for us" (*The Darkness and the Light*: 206).

It remains to reflect that "earth" and "heaven," so understood, are closer in meaning to what the Nicene Creed speaks of respectively as "the visible" and "the invisible" (or "the seen" and "the unseen") than they are to "the earth" and "the heavens" referred to in Gen 1:1. There seems little doubt that what Gen 1:1 means by "the heavens" is the dome of the sky above us, with its sun and moon, stars and planets, somewhat as though they were all located on the inside of a inverted cup viewed by someone looking up at it from the plane on which the cup rests. But if this were to be taken as the meaning of "heaven" in the petition whose presuppositions we are concerned to understand, it would presuppose, in effect, that, while God's kingdom has always already come, because God's will has always already been done, in the sky and among the so-called heavenly bodies, this is not so on earth—which is hardly what the petition presupposes. On the other hand, to take "heaven" in the petition to mean "the invisible" or "the unseen," makes perfectly good sense. For the possible as possible, no matter how determinate, is precisely not visible or seen, or otherwise the object of our ordinary sense perception, while the actual as such is typically accessible, directly or indirectly, to sense perception of one sort or another, whether or not it literally can be seen.

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