

Study of his writings confirms that, when Bultmann wants to speak of what characterizes God on any serious idea of God, Christian or otherwise, he most commonly speaks of "*das Jenseitige*" (or in some cases, "*das Jenseits*"), and thus of "*die Jenseitigkeit Gottes*."

Thus, in his most nearly formal definition of "myth," or "mythology," in the programmatic essay, he says that "[t]hat mode of representation is mythological in which *das Unweltliche, Göttliche* appears as *Weltliches, Menschliches*, *das Jenseitige* appears as *Diesseitiges*, as when, for example, *Gottes Jenseitigkeit* is thought of as spatial distance" (22, n. 2 [42, n. 5]).

Or, again, in the sentence in the text to which the above is a footnote, he says: "Myth talks about *dem Unweltlichen* [as] worldly, *dem Göttlichen* [as] human[ly]. . . . Therefore, the motive for criticizing myth, that is, its objectifying representations, is present in myth itself insofar as its real intention to speak of *einer jenseitigen Macht* to which both we and the world are subject is hampered and obscured by the objectifying character of its assertions" (22 f. [10]).

Then, at the end of the same essay, where Bultmann expressly denies that the demythologizing he has attempted to carry out still leaves us with "a mythological remainder," he concludes with the statement that, properly demythologized, "*[d]ie Jenseitigkeit Gottes* is not made *zum Diesseits* as [it is] in myth; rather the paradox of the presence of *des jenseitigen Gottes* in history is affirmed" (48 [42]).

In his later comprehensive reply to his critics, he says: "Myth actually talks about *den jenseitigen Mächten oder Personen* as though they were *diesseitigen, weltlichen*—contrary to its real intention. ¶"For what is this intention? Myth talks about *jenseitigen Mächten*, about demons and gods, as powers on which we know ourselves to be dependent, of which we do not dispose, whose favor we need and whose wrath we fear. . . . In this way myth gives expression to a certain understanding of human existence [I]t knows of *eine andere Wirklichkeit* than *die Weltwirklichkeit* that science has in view. It knows that the world and human life have their ground and limit in *einer Macht* that lies *jenseits* everything falling within the realm of

human reckoning and control—in *einer transzendenten Macht*. ¶"But myth talks about *dieser jenseitigen Wirklichkeit und Macht* inadequately when it represents *das Jenseitige* as spatially distant, as heaven above the earth or as hell beneath it. It talks about *den jenseitigen Mächten* inadequately when it represents them as analogous to *den diesseitigen Mächten* and as superior to these powers only in force and unpredictability. . . . Myth talks about gods as human beings, and about their actions as human actions. . . . Myth thus makes the gods (or God) into human beings with superior power. . . . ¶"In short, myth objectifies *das Jenseits* into *Diesseits*, and thus also into the disposable, as becomes evident when cult more and more becomes action calculated to influence the attitude of the deity by averting its wrath and winning its favor. ¶ "Demythologizing seeks to bring out the real intention of myth, namely, its intention to talk about human existence as grounded and limited by *eine jenseitige, unweltliche Macht*, which is not visible to objectifying thinking" (183 f. [98 f.]).

Immediately following, Bultmann speaks of God as "*das Jenseits*," or "*das Jenseits der Welt*," that we cannot talk about "as it is 'in itself,' because in doing so we would objectify *das Jenseits*, God, into *einer diesseitig-weltlichen Phänomen*" (184 [99]).

Later in the essay, in discussing "talk about the act of God," Bultmann speaks of "the idea of *der Unweltlichkeit, der Jenseitigkeit* of divine action" being preserved "only if such action is represented not as something taking place *between* occurrences in the world but as something that takes place *in* them, in such a way that the closed continuum of worldly occurrences that presents itself to an objectifying view is left intact. God's act is hidden from all eyes other than the eyes of faith. The only thing that can be generally seen and established is the 'natural' occurrence. In it God's hidden act takes place" (196 f. [111]).

Finally, in the concluding paragraphs of the essay, Bultmann argues that "demythologizing is a demand of faith itself." Only by demythologizing myth, which is to say, only by interpreting it in existential terms, can faith clearly grasp "*die Jenseitigkeit und Verborgenheit* of divine action." And in

the same context Bultmann also says that "[d]ie Unsichtbarkeit Gottes excludes any myth that would make God and God's act visible" (207 [122]).

In another essay on demythologizing, Bultmann also speaks of God as "*eine transzendente Macht*," and as "*das Transzendente*," although in this context, too, he still relies on the contrast between "*das Jenseits*" and "*das Diesseits*" (GV 4: 134 f. [161]).

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