

I find it interesting that, in at least one passage, Hartshorne seems to recognize the primarily noncognitive function of mythical language—what he often speaks of as "tall tales."

"The origin of creation science," he says, "is neither science nor philosophy. Nor is it intellectually responsible theology. Rather, it is poetry, and its function is to communicate feeling and express an attitude. God beheld what he had created and 'saw that it was good.' Somehow in response to divine decisions a good world order was coming into being. That it was coming into being preceded only by God, or by God and nothing, is not definitely asserted and, in view of the rebuke in Job [*sc.* according to which a human being cannot understand God's creative power], is not in order. We do not, in biblical terms, know how, or just with what, or without what, the creating is done. This is all beside the religious point, which is the reality of God as *somehow* voluntarily producing the basic world order and the essential *goodness* of the result. Also significant is the way God observes that result and only then 'sees that it is good'" (*Omnipotence and Other Theological Mistakes*: 74 f.).

'Tis a pity that Hartshorne doesn't recognize more clearly and consistently that mythical language doesn't cease to function primarily in the noncognitive way he allows here even when it is demythologized so as to become "symbolic," or "analogical" talk. In fact, a closer look reveals that he quite fails to follow up his own insight: "the religious point" turns out to be a quasi-*metaphysical* point, instead of remaining the *existential* point suggested by his talk of "communicating feeling and expressing an attitude."

Incidentally, one realizes, in reflecting on this, how tremendously significant the Heideggerian-Bultmannian conceptuality-terminology really is. Vague, ordinary language terms such as "feeling" and "attitude," which can only too easily foster subjectivism of one kind or another, are interpreted by terms like "existential self-understanding," or "understanding of existence," as distinct from "existentialist understanding."

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