

Not Weighing God's Book with Standards Current Amongst Men-
One Perspective- Some Provisional Theological Discussion Notes.

- a) these standards, whatever universe of discourse (u.d.) they occur within, philosophical, theological, sociological, political, anthropological, historical, scientific, common-sensical
- b) they do not, when facing the revelation, judge the revelation to be true or false, that is, they do not provide the criteria that verifies (a highly complex procedure) the revelation. They may, however, try to.
- c) verification, which heuristically involves the affirmation of the truth, falsity, possibility, impossibility, necessity of a proposition or set of propositions, is not considered to be viable in relation to the revelation. Why it might not be so is another question.
- d) these u.d., may, however, recognise (this is the key term) that the judgement the revelation makes upon itself IS IN ORDER, occurs, happens, is the case.
- e) thus the only thing these u.d. judge is that a truth-claim is in order.
- f) deciding whether the revelation makes a truth-claim is different from deciding whether it is true. In the latter the validity of truth-claims are decided upon. I suggest the function of our u.d. is the former. This is a highly important distinction.
- g) is it the question of the impossibility of premises taken away from any of these u.d. truthfully inferring the revelation as a conclusion? Could the revelation either as a complex whole or via one of its parts supply premises that directly provides or goes towards providing a conclusion in one of the u.d. thereby enlarging the horizon of a particular u.d.? e.g. how does the concept of a soul affect micro- and macro-Economics.

- h) crudely put, if it is a question of the impossibility of utilizing premises then it may be the case that the u.d. and revelation share different logics-this is problematic.
- i) does this mean that the revelation supplies its own credentials, that it is self-guaranteeing, that it just has to be accepted at face-value and the u.d. are then totally irrelevant? Because revelation has a non-propositional aspect as well as a propositional one it makes the question of credentials interesting and very difficult to unpack. Let us return to the irrelevancy of the u.d.
- j) it may be the case that they are not irrelevant. I suggest the u.d. are an aid to recognising the nature and type of truth-claim the revelation makes.
- k) I am reminded of the inadvertent assistance given to understanding the role of religious language by the dogmatic philosophical school of Logical Positivism. Now defunct, it was highly influential in the twenties, thirties and forties. It had developed a principle of verification which it combined with a theory of meaning to form a crude yet initially impressive tool. In demarcating empirical and logical discourse from religious discourse, they highlighted the non-factual nature of religious statements, which for the Logical Positivists consigned religion per se to the realm of factual meaninglessness and emotion. Simply put, the proposition 'God exists' is equivalent to 'hooray to life'. Their unintentional service was in showing that religious statements do not share the same expectations as scientific statements or statements of a straight-forward empirical type.
- l) if the u.d. do not supply premises that verify the revelation, I suggest they lay bare the scope and nature of the revelation through laying bare the scope and nature of their own respective enterprises.
- m) this does not mean that the laying bare of the revelation is contingent upon the laying bare by the u.d. Neither does this devalue the u.d. For if the human situation, which we could characterise as the existence that has not heard the revelation or if heard not understood (nearly all of us) with its implicit

- questions, is represented in the fullest and most responsible sense by the u.d., then the revelation will only truly be an answer if the questions themselves are understood.
- n) paraphrasing Karl Barth and continuing with the question-answer model, the questions within and arising from the u.d. do not supply the answer. This is why revelation is recognised (by some) as the answer to all questions. Does the answer supply the questions? Perhaps not, for then there would be no situation that has really not heard the revelation.
- o) the u.d. do not then prove, demonstrate, verify or whatever, the revelation but they do in their responsible enactment SHOW the revelation, lay it, so to speak, bare.
- p) the u.d. then, have a positive role in relation to the revelation even though from the point of view of the revelation they cannot supply viable criteria.

-- to be continued.

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