criticisms aside, this volume is a thorough treatment of Goodwin's "grand project" and Carter accomplished what he set out to do.

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Phillip A. Hussey, *Supralapsarianism Reconsidered: Jonathan Edwards and the Reformed Tradition*. T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology. London: New York: T&T Clark, 2024.

Phillip Hussey's book of theological retrieval focuses on the doctrine of modified supralapsarianism as codified by Jonathan Edwards. Originally a dissertation under his advisor, Michael McClymond, this study elaborates Edwards's lapsarianism which has infrequently been explored. He interacts with Edwardsean scholars with varying opinions and sometimes gives evidence of his disagreement. The author states that Edwards's position is in fact the "penultimate goal of the present work." The ultimate purpose is, however, "to engage the fundamental question at the heart of the debate, and, in turn, provide a constructive, though modest, dogmatic account of integrating God's decree concerning Christ's predestination, God's decree concerning creation, and human predestination" (54–55).

Hussey covers much ground in this volume as it is divided into three parts. In part 1, the author provides the theological context of the debate by separating three Reformed theologians from others: Francis Turretin (1623–1687), Petrus van Mastricht (1630–1706), and Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680). These theologians varied in their lapsarian approach, and each were read by Jonathan Edwards. Turretin is described by the author as "Infralapsarianism Exemplified," Mastricht, "Lapsarianism Mediated," and Goodwin, "Supralapsarianism Modified." He states, "All in all, this vignette of seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy presents a diversity of lapsarian opinions with varying degrees of theological complexity and nuance" (54).

In chapter two, Hussey considers the work of Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) and Karl Barth (1886–1968), the two foremost critics of lapsarianism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Bavinck described the "inadequacy" of the debate between infralapsarianism and supralapsarianism and discussed problems with both. Barth offered a "Purified Supralapsarianism," as he exposed the weaknesses of

supralapsarianism in the seventeenth century and provided what he saw as a better version.

In part 2, Hussey describes the primary focus of the book as an account of "Edwards lapsarianism." In three chapters, he covers all the major categories where the doctrine is logically necessary for Edwards's form of supralapsarianism. He articulates his subject with significant detail. Fortunately for readers, the volume summarizes the decrees as they are uncovered. In the final chapter, Hussey summarizes the seven decrees, then consolidates and expounds them in the following pages.

The first decree is *the election of Jesus Christ ad extra*. According to Hussey, Edwards teaches that the election of the Son, who eternally and naturally proceeds from the Father (*ad intra*), leads to his election (*ad extra*). This election *ad extra* is neither Arian nor adoptionist theology but rather points to the declarative glory of the Father's love toward the Son. This is also demonstrated in the decree of the Triune God to create the world. Establishing this election of Christ *ad intra* and *extra* leads to the following decree.

The second decree is *the decree of the incarnation and salvation of the elect*. In the covenant of redemption, Edwards maintained that God made this covenant, thus establishing the decree of the incarnation and the hypostatic union of the birth of the God-man in order to redeem the elect. This pact, Hussey writes, "is a contrivance and intervention of wisdom for the executing of the decree of redemption" as revealed in the fifth statement (149). This involves the decree to create mankind liable to the Fall (*creabilis et labilis*). Edwards describes the covenant of redemption as finding fulfillment in the covenant of works, whereby Christ perfectly fulfilled all the obligations given to Adam.

The third decree is *the decree of the covenant of works*. Edwards's thinking about the covenant of works was consistent with the Reformed tradition except in one point. The census of Reformed orthodoxy frequently mentioned that if Adam had kept the requirements of the covenant, he would have inherited everlasting life. Edwards objected to this, "The natural order cannot, even in perfect obedience, merit heaven apart from God's gracious condescension in Jesus Christ" (130). Hussey comments, "One of mankind had to belong to heaven already in order for the rest of mankind to inherit such a habitation. The hypostatic union . . . enables human creatures to share in God's happiness in a manner impossible for the natural state of humanity" (131). Christ, as the heavenly man, would fulfill in his life and death all duties of this covenant thus giving man eternal life.

The fourth decree is *the decree of the Fall*. In chapter five, Hussey argues that Edwards had a modified supralapsarian position similar to Thomas Goodwin (172). He explains that God permitted the Fall for humans to receive the "greater benefits as a result of the Fall." He describes the *felix culpa* (175), (or "happy fault"), as capturing Edwards's explanation that the Fall brought elect mankind into an estate of happiness because they would experience the redemption accomplished in Christ (184).

The fifth decree is *the decree to redeem*. The covenant of grace finds its eternal moorings in the covenant of redemption, but this is historically accomplished with the elect in the covenant of grace. This covenant involves two parties: Christ and the church. Edwards illustrated this by the "marriage covenant," wherein both parties are obligated to accept each other. Edwards said, "Through possession of Christ, the spouse's enjoyment of Christ shall be like the Son's intimate enjoyment of the Father" (147). This is God's primary design. However, according to Edwards, a covenant partner does not exist if he does not historically exist. In the covenant of redemption, the Father and Son historically existed; in the covenant of works, God and Adam historically existed; and in the covenant of grace, Christ and the church *must* historically exist to experience redemption (147). In short, "distinctions need to be made and maintained between (1) the decree of redemption; (2) the covenant of redemption; and (3) the historical work of redemption" (150).

The sixth decree is *the decree of particular election and rejection*. This decree, according to Edwards, happened *after* the Fall. This is a significant alteration from the traditional form of supralapsarianism. Normally, these thinkers advanced that predestination happened *before* the Fall. In one sense, according to Edwards, the predestination of the elect happened before all time by virtue of the covenant of redemption. However, in another, God hates man's sin only after Adam sinned. In this modified supralapsarianism, God responds with mercy to the elect (according to the decree to redeem) and only after man fell does God respond with judgment to the reprobate. In the words of Darren Pollock, "Edwards attempts to depict God's counsels in a way that is supralapsarian with regard to the elect, but sublapsarian with regard to the reprobate."[2]

The seventh decree is *the decree of damnation*. "Hell," according to Edwards, is a "world of hatred," which God prepared "on purpose for the

2. Darren M. Pollock, "Reprobation," in *The Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, ed. Kenneth P. Minkema and Adriaan C. Neele (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2017), 496.

expression of God's wrath" (189). Edwards firmly believed that God did not create man specifically to reprobate and damn the sinner and distinguishes reprobation from damnation. Hussey comments, "The rationale is straightforward: if the human creature refuses to answer actively that ultimate end for which she was created, then God will act upon her "passively" in her destruction, and, in so doing, glorify the hypothetical end of vindictive justice" (189).

Part 3 consists of one chapter before Hussey's conclusion of the book. He advances a modest proposal of "supralapsarianism reconsidered" in the tradition of Edwards's modified version. According to Hussey, there are certain problems with Edwards's account (such as whether the incarnation would have happened without the Fall, and the problematic view God's vindictive justice). Nevertheless, there are also promises that go a "long way toward answering the critical questions intimated in the critiques of Karl Barth and Herman Bavinck" (213). Hussey finishes with a "Desiderata for Supralapsarianism" and an exposition of the *felix culpa*.

I have three points of criticism about this book that in no way detract from the insight of the work. First, in chapter four, Hussey addresses the angelic covenant and reward (132–34). In my mind, this treatment does not seem relevant to Edwards's lapsarianism. Second, a significant refrain for Hussey is the *felix culpa* ("happy fault"). Although Edwards's thought may have been consistent with the *felix culpa*, I am concerned that doing so is rather anachronistic; without evidence that he actually used the phrase, I would have preferred if Hussey had used it sparingly. Third and finally, I would have preferred Hussey to do a more chronological study, such as the development of Reformed lapsarianism from seventeenth to the twentieth century using the same theological figures: Turretin, Mastricht, Goodwin, Edwards, Bavinck and Barth. From there, he could have cited Edwards as providing a defense of modified supralapsarianism to answer the objections of Bavinck and Barth.

These criticisms aside, Hussey's monograph is a laudable book which requires the full attention of the reader to trace out the tightly reasoned, logically consistent implications of Edwards's lapsarianism. Although I am not convinced that we need to resurrect the infralapsarian and supralapsarian debate, this volume is very persuasive. Anyone who deals with Edwards's order of the divine decrees will need to reckon with this volume.

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