

Thus, the synergistic soteriology of the Arminian Remonstrants is an Arminian monocovenantalism in which they deny the Protestant Reformation distinction between law and gospel in light of the believer's evangelical obedience and man's free will. Having clarified that, I highly recommend Barrett's book to readers because the spirit of Dort's defense of the gospel during the Arminian controversy is important for preaching and defending the good news of the gospel in the global mission field.

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David Gibson and Jonathan Gibson, eds. *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her: Definite Atonement in Historical, Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Perspective*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

The doctrine of definite atonement, popularly known as "limited atonement," is a doctrine that, while having an early and distinct place in Reformed theology, has been, and continues to be, contested both within and outside of the broader Reformed tradition. The editors of this volume bring together an impressive array of scholars to "paint a compelling picture of the beauty and power of definite atonement" (17). J. I. Packer opens up the volume with a foreword that recalls his now classic introduction to John Owen's treatment of the same subject. In the preface, the editors, David and Jonathan Gibson, set the tone for the volume: a humble, irenic approach that eschews animosity or self-righteousness.

Following this, we come to the first chapter, the editors' helpful introduction to the volume. Here, they express their aim "to show that history, the Bible, theology, and pastoral practice" provides a unified understanding for articulating definite atonement, and, as such, these four areas are to be seen as "four mezzanine levels of the one house" rather than four separate perspectives or "windows" (37). Moreover, the editors see definite atonement as analogous to doctrines such as "the Trinity or the two natures of Christ"; that is, it is not derived solely from the exegesis of particular passages nor a purely logical construct; rather, it is a "biblico-systematic doctrine" (38). They, in turn, offer the metaphor of a web as a description of how they have arrived at definite atonement; thus, they see this volume as a "*map* through and to the doctrine of definite atonement" (39). The remainder of the chapter gives a snapshot of the four "levels" that are treated in the volume.

The first section deals with definite atonement in church history and consists of seven chapters written by seven different authors. Michael Haykin draws from John Gill's (1697–1771) evidence for definite atonement in patristic authors in order to discuss a sampling of authors, namely, Clement of Rome and Justin Martyr (ca. 100–165), Hilary of Poitiers (310/315–367/8), Ambrose (ca. 340–397), Jerome (ca. 347–420), and a few others. Before embarking on this, he states that definite atonement was not a point of controversy during this era; therefore, rather than “direct assertion,” we find “implied comments” tending in its direction (59). David Hogg argues, in the third chapter, that “medieval theologians ... wrote about predestination, divine foreknowledge, free will, and the atoning death of Christ” in such a way that was consistent with, and, in addition, “preparatory and foundational for the doctrine [of definite atonement]” (75).

In one of the most relevant chapters in this section, Paul Helm, building on his earlier work in Calvin studies (*Calvin and the Calvinists* [1982]), argues that Calvin's use of “indefinite or indiscriminate language” is consistent with “being committed to definite atonement” (97), *contra* those who deny that Calvin would affirm definite atonement (e.g., R. T. Kendall). He discusses Calvin's understanding of three main areas: (1) providence and the future; (2) aspiring toward something not necessarily decreed by God (e.g., the salvation of every person); and (3) “the language of universal or indiscriminate invitation” in preaching (108). Further supporting this, he offers a case study of Calvin's interpretation of two biblical passages relevant to definite atonement.

Raymond Blacketer demonstrates that Theodore Beza, while an explicit proponent of definite atonement, was not as distant from Calvin as some would suppose, for “neither Calvin or Beza provide a fully elaborated doctrine of the extent of Christ's redemption, though [a] tendency [in them] toward particularism [is discernable]” (140). Thus, Beza served as a bridge between those eras characterized by implied statements in favor of definite atonement and “the Synod of Dordrecht (or Dordt, 1618–1619) [which] formulated the doctrinal boundaries of Reformed thought on [definite atonement]” while leaving “room for variation” (122).

Lee Gatiss, in chapter six, describes the historical context of the Synod of Dort, the “Canons or judgments” arising from the teaching of this Synod (i.e., the Canons of Dort) on the death of Christ, and developments following after the Synod. He notes a few things of importance regarding the Synod of Dort. First, it is here that definite atonement “achieved confessional status” (143). Second, the British delegation of Reformed theologians at the Synod (e.g., John Davenant) espoused a strand of hypothetical

universalism, which likely influenced the teaching of the Canons of Dort that Christ's work effectually redeemed the elect (Article 2.8) "without denying an ultimately *ineffectual* universal redemption in addition" (157). This, in turn, reflects for Gatiss both variations among the Reformed and the relative lack of concern regarding hypothetical universalism.

This brings us to the chapter by Amar Djaballah, who provides the helpful service of giving context to and summarizing the French work of Moïse Amyraut's (1596–1664) *Brief traité de la predestination* (English translation, Charenton Publishing, 2017). Amyraut saw himself in continuity with Calvin (over against Beza) and the Canons of Dort in advocating his version of hypothetical universalism. Djaballah notes modern-day views akin to Amyraut's own. In the last chapter of this section, Carl Trueman offers a penetrating analysis of how John Owen, in response to the criticisms of Richard Baxter, works through the connections between atonement and justification, the relationship between Christ's death and his mediatorial role, and the Trinitarian nature of salvation expressed in the covenant of redemption.

The second section of this volume deals with pertinent biblical data pertaining to definite atonement. Paul Williamson, in the ninth chapter, persuasively demonstrates that the election of and intercession for Israel, as well as the need for atonement to be made for both corporate and individual sins, points to definite rather than universal atonement. J. Alec Motyer presents the exegetical case that the death of the suffering servant of Isaiah was complete and efficacious for those elect for whom this death was intended and that this view does not undermine the case for universal proclamation of the gospel in light of the broader context of Isaiah. In chapter eleven, Matthew Harmon works through relevant passages of the Synoptic Gospels and the Johannine literature to demonstrate that Christ died to glorify his Father, to accomplish "salvation for his people" (267), and for the sins of "the world," namely, people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Jonathan Gibson, in the twelfth chapter, builds the case that definite atonement is taught in the Pauline Epistles alongside the universal implication (Jew and Greek) and proclamation of the gospel, which he fills out and expands upon in chapter thirteen by exploring definite atonement in Paul's theology of salvation. Here, he drives home what he and David Gibson stated in the first chapter: "Definite atonement is a *biblico-systematic* doctrine" (352). He brings into view Paul's teaching on the indivisibility of God's saving work, the relationship between the atonement and union with Christ, the Trinitarian nature of salvation, and the goal of salvation to bring glory to God. These two chapters are, in many ways, the center of the volume, as they draw together some of the theological insights found in the historical

section and anticipate much of what will be seen in the theological section. Concluding this section, Thomas Schreiner works through specific passages of the Pastoral (1–2 Timothy, Titus) and General Epistles (esp. 1–2 Peter, Hebrews) in defense of definite atonement.

The theological perspective on definite atonement comprises the third section of this volume. Donald MacLeod, in debate with Karl Barth, argues that God has determined “to bring his named [elect] ones to glory” and “actually to save them,” rather than “make salvation possible” or merely contribute to it (434). Robert Letham, taking the indivisible work of the Trinity, the incarnation, and the atonement into account and relating them to one another, argues against James B. and Thomas F. Torrance’s rejection of definite atonement.

Garry Williams, in conversation with and critique of James Ussher (1581–1656) and D. Broughton Knox (1916–1994), with a trenchant eye to the “biblical portrayals of atonement [that] locate the particularity in the sacrifice itself, not simply in its application” (472), argues that penal substitutionary atonement, by its very nature, is definite. Williams takes up a second chapter to work through the charge against definite atonement that it confuses commercial debt with penal substitution, reducing atonement to a price paid to pay off the debt that is sin. By demonstrating that punishment for sin must be specific to sin as an answer to and contradiction of it, Williams demonstrates that penal substitutionary atonement is specific and definite as it “in itself answer[s] the sins committed by actual people” (508).

Stephen Wellum argues that general atonement proponents sever the vital link between Christ and his people, whom he represents as their high priest, separating, in turn, the unbreakable link between the provision of salvation and its application. Henri Blocher, concluding this section, essentially provides a summary statement of much of what had been said before by given attention to theological prolegomena, important historical figures (e.g., Augustine, Charles Hodge, Karl Barth, and Bruce McCormack), and presenting key arguments against competing positions, with some additional insight.

The fourth and briefest section of this volume looks at definite atonement practically. Daniel Strange argues against universal redemption from the fact that some die without being evangelized and offers reasons why definite atonement motivates Christian mission. Sinclair Ferguson, in debate with John McLeod Campbell, shows the cogency of definite atonement, as well as the ground it gives for assurance of salvation. John Piper, in the final chapter, engages with the denial of definite atonement by Mark Driscoll and Bruce Ware and offers various pastoral applications of the doctrine

(e.g., it promotes gratitude and strengthens worship).

The combination of depth and breadth offered by the contributors of this volume in defense of definite atonement is a superb achievement. Rigor and clarity of expression are sustained throughout the book, and, moreover, the promise to do so in a humble, irenic manner is fulfilled. Both old and new opponents of definite atonement are dealt with fairly and answered evenly and with precision. Also, it is made clear that such figures as Amyraut, while rejecting definite atonement, were still within the pale of Reformed orthodoxy. Of course, as with any multiauthor volume, there are occasional points of difference among the contributors, but this strengthens rather than weakens the overall case presented.

Two weaknesses ought to be mentioned. First, there was a certain amount of repetitiveness as one progressed through the volume, but this is inevitable given that it is a seven-hundred-page treatment of a particular doctrine from four different perspectives. Second, the pastoral perspective was the least developed of the four levels and was at times strongly reminiscent of the prior theological perspective, especially since the former, like the latter, was characterized by thorough engagement with opponents of definite atonement. It seems possible that other areas of the volume could have been trimmed down to afford more space to develop this perspective.

Despite these weaknesses, this is essential reading on the oft-misunderstood and oft-contested doctrine of definite atonement and, as such, cannot be recommended enough. The opponent or doubter of definite atonement would be amiss if they failed to consult this volume, and the friend of the doctrine will gain much benefit by perusing its pages. This volume will likely be a standard defense of definite atonement for generations to come.

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*Herman Bavinck on Preaching and Preachers.* Translated and edited by James P. Eglinton. Peabody, MA; Hendrickson, 2017.

In the English-speaking world, it is only in the last fifteen years that Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) has emerged from the shadow of Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920) and been more widely appreciated. Outside of the Dutch-American community, he has remained in relative obscurity. A hitherto too-small number of non-Netherlanders have been familiar with his work in English translation: his Stone Lectures on *The Philosophy of Revelation* (1909); the translation by the New Testament commentator William