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JONATHAN EDWARDS'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY: THE RE-ENCHANTMENT OF THE WORLD IN THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT. By Avihu Zakai. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003. Pp. xvii, 348.

Analysis of Jonathan Edwards's historical thought reveals that the mental universe of this New England divine transcended his local setting in Northampton and the narrow intellectual life of provincial New England. It was Edwards's reaction to the metaphysical and theological implications of Enlightenment historical narratives, which increasingly tended to set aside theistic considerations in the realms of morals and history, that led in part to the development of his unique redemptive mode of historical thought—the doctrine that the process of history depends entirely and exclusively on God's redemptive activity as manifested in a series of revivals throughout time, and not on autonomous human power.

Edwards's life of the mind evolved along three main stages; during the 1720s, following his conversion, he formulated his natural philosophy in order to provide an alternative to the dominant mechanical philosophy view of the essential nature of reality; during the 1730s he developed the premises of his philosophy of salvation history, whose full and systematic exposition appeared in the *History of the Work of Redemption*; finally, during the 1750s, after his expulsion from his parish and living in exile at Stockbridge, Edwards immersed himself in the task of responding to the Enlightenment debate on moral philosophy. In these three spheres, he tried to explain the meaning of divine agency in time and the Deity's redemptive work for fallen humanity.

Edwards fully understood the serious challenges posed by Enlightenment ideas to religious faith and experience. He was alarmed by the conception of history as a self-contained and independent domain, free from subordination to God and not affected by

His ever watchful eyes. With great dismay he observed that Enlightenment historical narratives not only deprived the realm of history of teleological ends and theological purposes, but stipulated that history did not manifest the presence of God's redemptive activity. In response, he constructed his own theological teleology of history which celebrates God's glory and sovereignty in determining and regulating its course. By providing an alternative view of the meaning of history that would lead eventually to the re-enchantment of the historical world, Edwards intended to demonstrate the infinite power of God's sovereignty in the order of time.

Edwards's main achievement in the field of historical thought was the development of a singular evangelical historiography according to which revivals and awakenings constitute the heart and core of the historical process. This philosophy of salvation history exercised an enormous influence in New England and America in general, and was thus installed at the center of the story of the predominant Protestant culture of America.

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