



Bring the books...

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Unfolding Covenant History: From Samuel to Solomon (vol. 6), by David J. Engelsma. Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2020. \$28.95. 224 pages, hardcover. [Reviewed by Rev. David Noorman, pastor of Southwest Protestant Reformed Church in Wyoming, Michigan.]

As any reader of the first five volumes of the *Unfolding Covenant History* series would expect, volume six lives up to its name as a treatment of Old Testament history from a covenantal perspective. The latest volume, *From Samuel to Solomon*, covers an important and exciting development in the history of God's covenant: the manifestation of God's covenant in the structure and glory of a king and his kingdom.

The history of this volume is expansive, covering the life and ministry of Samuel, the rise and fall of Saul, and the glorious, yet imperfect, reigns of David and Solomon. The pages of holy Scripture that pertain to this epoch of history are expansive as well, and thus the reader will appreciate the author's efforts to bring it all together in a way that is both thorough and succinct, both insightful and readable.

The aim of the series is to demonstrate that Old Testament history is covenant history; the burden of this volume, *From Samuel to Solomon*, is to demonstrate that kingdom history *is* covenant history. That kings and kingdoms are front and center in this history in no wise detracts or distracts from God's covenant, but rather it enables God's people to see the covenant of grace in a new light. In the author's introductory words, "Covenant and kingdom are not rivals. They are two aspects of one and the same saving relationship of God in Christ with his elect people. The covenant is a royal covenant; the kingdom is a covenantal

kingdom. Jesus Christ is both a sovereign friend and a friendly sovereign" (xv).

The reader will enjoy the sound and edifying treatment of familiar and favorite Bible stories, and along the way the reader will be introduced to or reminded of other stories that are sometimes overlooked or misunderstood. When difficult questions of interpretation are faced, the author is careful to make his case from the word itself, and thus he helps the reader to face his own questions in the same way. This approach was much appreciated.

From beginning to end, the history from Samuel to Solomon is treated as our Lord Jesus Christ intended it to be, as the inspired revelation of Himself as the royal Mediator of the covenant. The history covers highs and lows, successes and failures, but in both extremes the reader is directed to Jesus Christ as our true Mediator and eternal King. As a result, the reader will be edified, not only by exciting chapters like the chapter covering David's victorious warfare, but also by sobering chapters, such as the treatment of David's lamentable fall into sin and the divine chastisement that followed it.

Unfolding Covenant History continues to be a valuable series for Reformed students of the Word. I am thankful that Professor Engelsma and the RFPA have continued to the publication of this volume, and I heartily recommend it to all. I sincerely hope that a seventh volume might not be out of the realm of possibility.