

reason the interpretation of these chapters is of great importance for understanding one of the central themes of the Old Testament.

It has generally been the case that I Samuel 11:14-12:25 has been granted little or no place in attempts by critical scholars to assess the historical situation in which Israelite kingship was established. This is largely due to the fact that I Samuel 11:14-12:25 has generally been regarded as a late and historically untrustworthy appendage to the preceding narratives of I Samuel 8-12. Even from the standpoint of conservative biblical scholarship, which has recognized the historical trustworthiness of I Samuel 12, it has generally been treated merely as Samuel's farewell address at the time of Saul's inauguration to be king and little further of significance has been attached to the events described in the chapter. It is our contention, however, that neither of these approaches do justice to the content and importance of this passage, and that instead of a relatively insignificant appendage to the preceding narratives, one here encounters the climax to the narrative sequence of I Samuel 8-12 in which the key to the interpretation of this section of I Samuel is found. It is also here that a perspective is found in which the pro and anti monarchical tension which has so often been pointed to in these chapters is to be understood. I Samuel 11:14-12:25 is thus to be regarded as a vitally important passage which is of great significance for understanding the concept of kingship in Israel at the time of its establishment and also for delineating the relationship which existed between human kingship and Yahweh's kingship.

In the discussion which follows it is our purpose to demonstrate by exegetical, literary critical, and form critical analysis that many features of I Samuel 11:14-12:25 strongly indicate that the assembly which is here described is properly understood as a covenant renewal ceremony, and that there is good reason to view this ceremony as an historically appropriate if not necessary event at this particular