

Andrew of Saint Victor († 1175) was an exegete of a rare quality who set out to expound Scripture according to its literal sense, guided by the examples of Jerome and Hugh of Saint Victor.

The books of Samuel and Kings had a great influence on the spirituality and theology of the Middle Ages. To the medieval mind, they were more than just historical accounts; they attested to an important period in God's dealings with this world. When interpreted typologically, they could also relate to other periods in the history of salvation. Yet before such higher spiritual wisdom could be attained, students at the school of Saint Victor first had to study the scriptural texts at the most basic level of allegorical interpretation: their historical, or literal, sense. The *Commentary on Samuel and Kings* offers such a literal explanation and gives an opportunity to study Andrew at work: as a critical researcher, who used concepts of grammar, literary theory, and science to elucidate the text and who made Jewish exegesis available to Christian scholarship, and as a compiler. His meticulous scholarship on the literal sense of Scripture formed an important component of the curriculum of the school at Saint Victor, where thorough learning was seen as a preparation for mystical knowledge and spiritual understanding.

The source text of this volume appeared in the series *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* as Andreas de Sancto Victore – *Expositio hystorica in librum Regum* (CCCM 53A). References to the corresponding pages of the edition are provided in the margins of this translation.

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