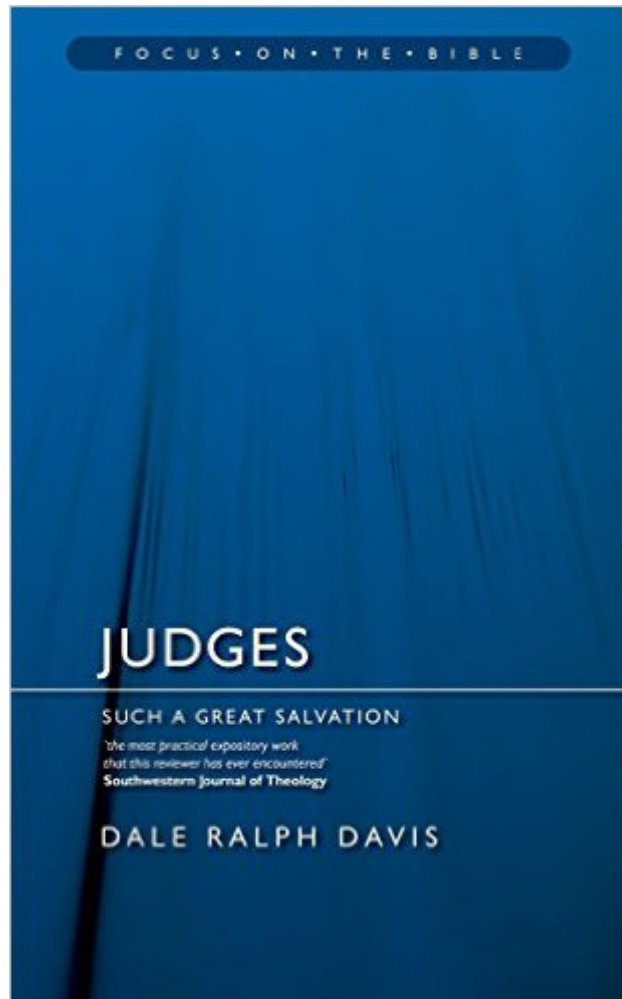


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Judges: Such A Great Salvation (Focus On The Bible)



Synopsis

The Church has a problem with Judges, it is so earthy, puzzling, primitive and violent - so much so that the Church can barely stomach it. It falls under the category 'embarrassing scripture'. Such an attitude is, of course, wrong so Ralph Davis here makes Judges digestible by analysing the major literary and theological themes discovered in each section, providing a 'theocentric' exposition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Here is an author who truly bridges the gap between the ancient text and the modern reader. Davis writes in an incredibly readable style. He is an Old Testament scholar who doesn't sound like one. His illustrations and applications are interesting and relevant, yet anchored to the message that the original author intended. His insight is evident in this quote from page 96: "Here is an amazing paradox. Gideon must have assurance of Yahweh's promise, but when assurance comes, it terrifies rather than fortifies him. . . We western Christians do not understand Gideon's agony. Such talk is strange to us. We long to reach our warm hand through the print of our Bible page, pat Gideon's shoulder, and sooth him with 'Don't worry, Brother Gideon, God's not really scary like that - if only you had a New testament...' A pained, perplexed look could come over Gideon as if he had just heard a theological ignoramus. And so he did. This sort of talk (v.22) is strange to us, because we have no real sense of the terror and awesomeness of God, for we think intimacy with God is an inalienable right rather than an indescribable gift." That thought alone is worth the price of the book. I

eagerly look forward to reading his latest volume on 1 Kings.

I'm not one who generally buys Bible commentaries. Nor am I one who generally buys books of any kind by an author I have never heard of. The reason I bought this particular commentary (from an author I had never heard of) is because I have a slight addiction to heavily discounted books. This commentary by Dale Ralph Davis will, I'm afraid, only further my addiction. Its value far exceeds what I paid for it. Davis uses fresh, succinct, and insightful language to convey the meaning of each passage and to draw out its pastoral implications. Allow me to share a couple snippets. Speaking of Israel's infidelity and Yahweh's wrath in Judges 3, Davis says, "Yahweh's wrath is the heat of his jealous love by which he refuses to let go of his people; he refuses to allow his people to remain comfortable in sin. Serving Cushan-rishathaim may not sound like salvation to us -- and it isn't, but, if it forces us to lose our grip on Baal, it may be the beginning of salvation. We must confess that Yahweh's anger is not good news nor is it bad news but good bad news." And again, regarding the incident of Samson and the lion in Judges 14: "The mangled lion is meant as Yahweh's sign to Samson. It shows him what Yahweh can and will do through him... We must not ignore such previews. David argued that if Yahweh made him able to wipe out the lions and bears that attacked Jesse's sheep, he would also give him guts and skill to knock off the King Kong of Philistia (1 Sam. 17:34-37). Mark suggests that if the disciples had understood the feeding of the 5,000 they would not have been astounded at Jesus' presence on the lake (Mark 6:51-52). No, you needn't expect lions to come roaring out of vineyards; but you should notice this pattern in God's ways. He will, by some smaller episode of deliverance or provision, show you how adequate he is so that you will be encouraged to rely on him in upcoming and possibly more demanding circumstances."

With his simple, practical style, D. Ralph Davis is one of the most readable and incisive Old Testament commentators around. What one most appreciates about his commentaries is his applicatory style as he simply and clearly expositions the book according to the biblical account. This commentary is not concerned with academic minutiae of the Judges account - it is meant to aid the pastor to bring out the essence of the text. Davis somehow manages to nurse the marrow out of the Hebrew text and present it for your delightful and worshipful consumption in the redemptive-historical context. This commentary is a great aid for pastors - one of the best authors I have read for preaching in an Old Testament book. I enjoy his writing so much I use my copy as a devotional study with my wife. I can also highly recommend his book on Joshua as well. His books should be in every Christian pastor and lay person's library.

This commentary is an excellent reading commentary for devotional use, or for help in leading a Bible study on the book of Judges. This commentary is easy to read, avoids interacting with the Hebrew, is filled with illustrations, and makes the text practical. It reads as though it is a collection of slightly edited sermons from the book of Judges put together to form a commentary. The main strong point of this commentary is that it takes the fairly difficult book of Judges and shows how even the obscure stories are relevant to modern life. More than once I had an "ah-ha" moment while reading this commentary, and was grateful to Davis for making the text come alive. Judges is not an easy book to read in a Christ centered way, and Davis is a great help with this. Because it is a collection of sermonic material, it also helps with application, and provides illustrative material. This volume would be excellent for personal use, or for any lay leader in the church. No commentary can accomplish everything, and because this is a lay level commentary, it has some omissions. It does not consider technical details, or matters of introduction. Also, because it seems to have come from sermons, there are occasional themes that are simply not dealt with. This is hardly much of a criticism, considering how much helpful material is in the book. But I have found it helpful to consult Davis together with one or two other commentaries to fill out the picture.

This book is practical, entertaining, and spiritual. I am using it to help me teach an 8th grade Judges class. It would be over their heads to have them read it, but I am gleaning powerful things to share. The writing makes me smile and "ah-ha" out loud at times. Recommended!

Another excellent commentary from Dale Ralph Davis. I absolutely devour his books and consequently have tons of notes written all over the margins of my Bible. Great book from a great teacher--and it helps that he gets me laughing while he's teaching!

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