

The Savior Generals: How Five Great Commanders Saved Wars That Were Lost - From Ancient Greece to Iraq

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Stirring portraits of five commanders whose dynamic leadership changed the course of war and history by prominent military historian Victor Davis Hanson.

"Victor Davis Hanson has written another outstanding and eye-opening book"--The Washington Examiner

Prominent military historian Victor Davis Hanson explores the nature of leadership with his usual depth and vivid prose in *The Savior Generals*, a set of brilliantly executed pocket biographies of five generals (Themistocles, Belisarius, William Tecumseh Sherman, Matthew Ridgway, and David Petraeus) who single-handedly saved their nations from defeat in war. War is rarely a predictable enterprise—it is a mess of luck, chance, and incalculable variables. Today's sure winner can easily become tomorrow's doomed loser. Sudden, sharp changes in fortune can reverse the course of war.

These intractable circumstances are sometimes mastered by leaders of genius—asked at the eleventh hour to save a hopeless conflict, one created by others and frequently unpopular politically and with the public. The savior generals often come from outside the established power structure, employ radical strategies, and flame out quickly. Their careers regularly end in controversy. But their dramatic feats of leadership are vital slices of history—not merely as stirring military narrative, but as lessons on the dynamic nature of consensus, leadership, and destiny.

Victor Davis Hanson is the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow in Residence in Classics and Military History at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, a professor of Classics Emeritus at California State University, Fresno, and a nationally syndicated columnist for Tribune Media Services. His many books include the acclaimed *The Father of Us All*, *A War Like No Other*, *The Western Way of War*, *Carnage and Culture*, and *Ripples of Battle*. Business has its turnaround artists; so does warfare. Classical historian Hanson presents five generals who retrieved wars from defeat, three Americans (William Sherman, Matthew Ridgway, and David Petraeus) and two from ancient history (Themistocles of Battle of Salamis fame and Belisarius, briefly the restorer in the 500s of the Roman Empire). As a group, they exhibit commonalities that Hanson develops through the specific situations they confronted. In each case, despondency descended on wars going wrong, and dispelling it as much as a strategic change of course lay behind these generals' successes. Each one, Hanson argues, was a good communicator, up the line to their leaders, down the line to their soldiers, and more widely to civilians. Dispelling hopelessness by rejustification of a cause, explaining plans to redeem it, and restoring morale, they were, in Hanson's view, contrarians who naturally irritated political interests with their repudiations of preceding failures of strategy. Ingratitude was usually these generals' reward; after their rescue operations, most were shunted aside. Students of military leadership will be intrigued by Hanson's astute set of cases. --Gilbert Taylor

Other Books

Telepon Pertama dari Surga (The First Phone Call from Heaven), "Bagaimana seandainya akhir bukanlah akhir?" Suatu pagi di Coldwater, Michigan, telepon-telepon mulai berdering. Para peneleponnya berkata mereka menelepon dari surga. Mukjizatkah ini? Atau olok-olok

kejam? Ketika berita ini menyebar, banyak orang mulai berdatangan ke Coldwater untuk ikut membuktikan. Pada saat yang sama, Sully Hardings, pilot yang telah kehilangan nama baiknya, baru bebas dari penjara dan mendapati kota tempat tinggalnya sedang mengalami "demam mukjizat." Bahkan anaknya yang masih kecil membawa-bawa ponsel mainan karena berharap ditelepon ibunya dari surga. Ketika telepon-telepon ini makin sering terjadi, dan bukti adanya kehidupan di alam baka mulai terkuak, kota itu--dan dunia--mulai berubah. Hanya Sully yang tidak percaya. Baginya, tidak ada apa-apa lagi setelah dunia yang penuh kesedihan ini. Dan dia bertekad untuk membuktikannya, bagi anaknya dan bagi dirinya sendiri. Dalam The First Phone Call from Heaven, Mitch Albom bertutur dengan fasih tentang kisah cinta, sejarah, dan keyakinan; suatu misteri mendebarkan dan perenungan tentang kekuatan hubungan antarmanusia.

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