

A Tale of Three Kings: A Study in Brokenness / Gene Edwards

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Personal, Professional, and Theological foundations For Ministry
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This book focused on the stories of three men in the Bible, David, Saul, and Absalom. This was an interesting book as it was written somewhat as a play. We get to eavesdrop on their conversations as if we were there in person, yet we are faced with questions to ponder on. These three men were important key figures in the early history of the Israelites. The author gives background on David as a youth in the fields tending to his sheep and writes about King Saul and what his interactions are as well as intentions towards the anointed David. The progression moves forward with King David and his son Absalom. David' life is like a cycle but interspersed are David's responses to his life's problems.

In my worldview, even though this book was short in length, the author brought up important questions to reflect on and apply David's responses to our own lives. We reflect on how God allowed David to be primed, formed, and molded while his times tending his sheep alone formed his character. His thoughts, actions and relationship with God prepared him to become the "man after God's own heart," (Acts 13:22) as well as a mighty warrior not only outwardly but inwardly.

Chapter 15 challenged my view on God's "anointed ones". I thought that God would depose those in authority who would misuse His gifts. Even more, I was surprised that God does not **withdraw** His gifting nor does He stop them from acting or behaving badly like King Saul. The one surety that comes from this is the loss of God's presence, peace and hearing from Him. The lifeline or connection to the Father is severed or filled with static.

I agree with the author's quote, "Prayer for power is the quick and the short way, circumnavigating internal growth."¹ Edwards then states that people pray for power but are unwilling to allow pain and suffering to humble, break and mold. Amazingly, people can be

¹ Gene Edwards, *A Tale of Three Kings: A Study in Brokenness*. (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1992), 41.

entrenched in sin, yet be powerful. This is a personal warning, as I thought it was good to pray for power and to avoid pain. To seek the Lord and allow Him to work internally is the most important pursuit. It does not matter whether I become “king” or not. So I agree with Chapter 15 as it points inwardly to my own misguided pursuits. ***Inward transformation*** is what the Lord wants and needs in me. I did not disagree with anything in this book; however, I would have wanted the author to address David’s handling of Tamar, Amnom, and Absalom.

How this impacts my ministry is in my response to those who would rise up against me in any ministry context. My husband’s first full-time ministry of seven years did not end the way we had hoped. I did not want a church split nor did I want the devil to undo the work of that church. My husband never let me know the full details of what happened but I remember crying and praying, so I can relate to the book stating that David cried.

This book granted me permission to see that David’s crying was not a sign of weakness nor was it shameful. It serves as a reminder of what can happen if bitterness and anger are left to grow. Further, it brought up it was okay not to know what to do. Many times we are impelled and propelled to take action when we should do nothing.

As for the discussion on Absalom in the book, the author wrote in a way that reminds me of the “I will” statements that Lucifer said in the Bible.² It is an important reminder when we have those “I will” statements or hear of them, they are warning signs. Those who behave rebelliously like Absalom want to come and take what is not theirs. When looking through the lens of Joab, David’s commander, David was an ineffective and weak leader. As opposed to Absalom, David never demanded submission but received it as a result of his leadership. However, it is a good point to let God be God and handle the situation as it arises.

² Isaiah 14:13-14 (NIV).

With integrity, I have read this book (circle one):

Thoroughly and Entirely____100%

Quickly but Completely_____%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely_____%

Quickly and NOT Completely_____%

Not at all

Signed: _____Linda Chen_____