

Reading Report

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

Joohee Kim
ATS Online

Personal, Professional, and Theological Foundations For Ministry
SF505
Fall 2020
Professor: Dr. Ronald Walborn and Guest: Dr. Wanda Walborn
November 10, 2020

In *A Tale of Three Kings*, author Gene Edwards illuminates the spiritual importance of inner brokenness of a true leader. Unlike King Saul who is anointed by God and yet is haunted by insecurity, David refuses to retaliate against Saul's death threats against him. In the painful years of fleeing Saul and waiting on God to vindicate him, David's inner person is further transformed. This training enables David to once again refuse to take matters into his own hands when his own son Absalom rebels against him to replace him as the next king. As one of David's warriors reflects on his leadership, "authority from God is not afraid of challengers, makes no defense, and cares not one whit if it must be dethroned. That was the greatness of the Gre...of the true King."¹ David continuously sets his heart to "seek God's will, not His power," and it is this inner position of his heart rather than an outer position of leadership that allows him to remain true to his brokenness and loved by God as the strength of his heart.²

The author seems to repeatedly remind us of two principles about God and us: that "God always knows-- but He does not tell," and that "no man knows his heart."³ Accepting them as truth seems to have kept David humble and in submission to God. I learn from his refusal to respond to his current circumstances one way or another according to his immediate view of people and his surroundings. In Psalm 16:8, David says "I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken." His view of God affected his decisions, even the decisions not to act but to wait. They in turn helped him to form an increasing trust in God and to become a man after God's own heart.

In my relationship with God, I desire the intimacy David shared with God, but I realize that I must be willing to address my inner Absalom. In my false sense of superiority in knowing the right thing to do in a church setting, and in my desire to be the helpful rescuer, I often set out

¹ Gene Edwards, *A Tale of Three Kings: A Study In Brokenness*, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale Publishers, Inc., 48.

² Ibid., 78.

³ Ibid., 77, 88.

to fix and fill whatever I perceive to be a need. I acknowledge that I often see needs selectively, however, based on my limited experience, bias, and belief about what warrants attention. I realize how detrimental this can be in ministry. Feeling overly responsible, I've volunteered to lead a women's group that may not have needed my leadership, and for which I may not have been equipped for yet. Since no one was stepping up while everyone seemed to be voicing the need for a group, I declared myself the solution. When my group did not feel nourished in the end, however, I felt depressed about my inadequacy and began to feel bitter toward the very people whom I sought to serve. Even if the group had been a success, I wonder if I would've deceived myself into thinking that *I* was the rescuer and never reflected on my tendency to take control in the name of doing noble work for God. I seem to struggle with pleasing people more than God, and narrating for God what His will is for myself and others. Waiting on God and his timeline can be uncomfortable and painful, but I desperately need to develop patience before Him, and I think He is teaching that to me through the situations that are difficult to simply remain in.

As a pastor's wife, I also detect an inner Abishai that wants his king to show his prowess, prove himself to his challengers, and give them what they deserve. It's sorrowful that even as I profess Jesus' love and grace as the cornerstone and mission in my life, I so easily turn bitter based on my feelings and short-view of situations or people. I shudder to think that I might be urging my own husband often to learn the ways of Saul or Absalom rather than the way of David, a true leadership through brokenness that honors God. I am grateful for God's leading me to repentance through this book and to appreciate the broken way, and blessed way, into His will.

Bibliography

Edwards, Gene. *A Tale of Three Kings: A Study in Brokenness*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1992.

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

Thoroughly and Entirely _____%

Quickly but Completely _____%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely _____%

Quickly and NOT Completely _____%

Not at all

Signed: Joohee Kim