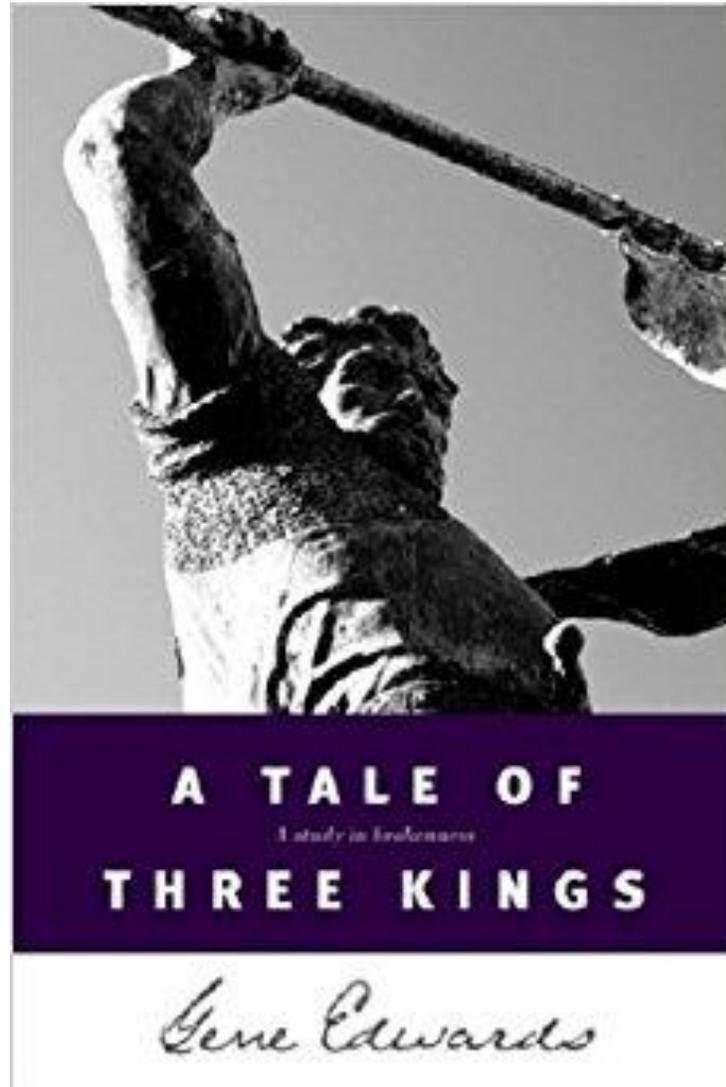


Throwing (and avoiding) spears

Lessons learned from the lives of King Saul, King David and King Absalom

***A Tale of Three Kings* – Gene Edwards**



1 Samuel 18:5-12

- ⁵ Whatever mission Saul sent him on, David was so successful that Saul gave him a high rank in the army. This pleased all the troops, and Saul's officers as well.
- ⁶ When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with timbrels and lyres. ⁷ As they danced, they sang:
 - "Saul has slain his thousands,
and David his tens of thousands."

- ⁸ Saul was very angry; this refrain displeased him greatly. “They have credited David with tens of thousands,” he thought, “but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?” ⁹ And from that time on Saul kept a close eye on David.
- ¹⁰ The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand ¹¹ and he hurled it, saying to himself, “I’ll pin David to the wall.” But David eluded him twice.
- ¹² Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had departed from Saul.

1 Samuel 24 – Cave at En gedi

- **24** ^[a]After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, “David is in the Desert of En Gedi.” ² So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Craggs of the Wild Goats.
- ³ He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave.⁴ The men said, “This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said^[b] to you, ‘I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.’” Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul’s robe.

- ⁵ Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. ⁶ He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD’s anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the LORD.”
- ⁷ With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.
- ⁸ Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, “My lord the king!” When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the

- ground...¹⁰ This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the LORD's anointed.'
- ¹¹ See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. See that there is nothing in my hand to indicate that I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion.

2 Samuel 15:1-12 - Absalom's Conspiracy

- **15** In the course of time, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and with fifty men to run ahead of him. ² He would get up early and stand by the side of the road leading to the city gate. Whenever anyone came with a complaint to be placed before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him, “What town are you from?” He would answer, “Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.” ³ Then Absalom would say to him, “Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you.” ⁴ And Absalom would add, “If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice.”

- ⁵ Also, whenever anyone approached him to bow down before him, Absalom would reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him.⁶ Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and *so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel.*
- ⁷ At the end of four^[a] years, Absalom said to the king, “Let me go to Hebron and fulfill a vow I made to the LORD. ⁸ While your servant was living at Geshur in Aram, I made this vow: ‘If the LORD takes me back to Jerusalem, I will worship the LORD in Hebron.^[b]’”
- ⁹ The king said to him, “Go in peace.” So he went to Hebron.
- ¹⁰ Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’”

David's lessons about Throwing spears (and avoiding them):

- Saul was a bad king, Absolam a youthful Saul...In my youth I was no Absolam and in my old age I shall not be a Saul
- In my old age I intend to be David still, even if it costs me a throne, a kingdom, and perhaps my own head
- I shall not learn the ways of either Saul or Absolam
- I desire His will more than the position of leadership
- The Saul's of this world can never see a David, they only see Absolam. The Absolam's of this world can never see a David, they can only see Saul

Personal Lessons

- David was prepared to allow God to have His way in David's life through Saul and Absalom
- **“Circumstances were not meant to be hiding places from God but meeting places with God”**
- Saul – Ps 142
- Absalom – Ps 3
- These were not simply opportunities for God to prove David's character but for David to prove God's character - Ps 27

Psalm 142

A *maskil* of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer.

- ¹ I cry aloud to the LORD;
I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy.
- ² I pour out before him my complaint;
before him I tell my trouble.
- ³ When my spirit grows faint within me,
it is you who watch over my way.
In the path where I walk
people have hidden a snare for me.
- ⁴ Look and see, there is no one at my right hand;
no one is concerned for me.
I have no refuge;
no one cares for my life.

- ⁵ I cry to you, LORD;
I say, “You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living.”
- ⁶ Listen to my cry,
for I am in desperate need;
rescue me from those who pursue me,
for they are too strong for me.
- ⁷ Set me free from my prison,
that I may praise your name.
Then the righteous will gather about me
because of your goodness to me.

Psalm 3

A psalm of David. When he fled from his son Absalom.

- ¹ LORD, how many are my foes!
How many rise up against me!
- ² Many are saying of me,
“God will not deliver him.”
- ³ But you, LORD, are a shield around me,
my glory, the One who lifts my head high.
- ⁴ I call out to the LORD,
and he answers me from his holy mountain.
- ⁵ I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.

- ⁶ I will not fear though tens of thousands
assail me on every side.
- ⁷ Arise, LORD!
Deliver me, my God!
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;
break the teeth of the wicked.
- ⁸ From the LORD comes deliverance.
May your blessing be on your people.

Psalm 27

- ¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation—
whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life—
of whom shall I be afraid?
- ² When the wicked advance against me
to devour me,
it is my enemies and my foes
who will stumble and fall.
- ³ Though an army besiege me,
my heart will not fear;
though war break out against me,
even then I will be confident.

- One thing I ask from the LORD,
this only do I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the LORD
and to seek him in his temple.
⁵ For in the day of trouble
he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent
and set me high upon a rock.

- Then my head will be exalted
above the enemies who surround me;
at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make music to the LORD.
- ⁷ Hear my voice when I call, LORD;
be merciful to me and answer me.
⁸ My heart says of you, “Seek his face!”
Your face, LORD, I will seek.
⁹ Do not hide your face from me,
do not turn your servant away in anger;
you have been my helper.
Do not reject me or forsake me,
God my Savior.

- ¹⁰ Though my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will receive me.
- ¹¹ Teach me your way, LORD;
lead me in a straight path
because of my oppressors.
- ¹² Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,
for false witnesses rise up against me,
spouting malicious accusations.

- ¹³ I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.
- ¹⁴ Wait for the LORD;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD.

Reflections

- How do we react when we feel our leadership is threatening or we feel insecure?
- How have we responded to leadership in the past?
- Have we learnt the lessons that God wanted for us?
- ***“What does this world need? Gifted men outwardly empowered? Or broken men, inwardly transformed?” (p. 41)***