



Chosen

Ted Dekker

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Think with your heart and prepare to die for you have been chosen.

The land of the Forest Dwellers has been decimated by the Horde under the watchful eye of the vilest of all creatures, Teeleh. Thomas Hunter, supreme commander of the Forest Guard, is forced to lower the recruitment age of his army from 18 to 16. From among thousands, four new recruits are chosen to lead--and perhaps die--for the greater good.

The chosen four are sent on a quest to prove their character, but their mission takes a dramatic turn when they are intercepted, sworn to secrecy, and redirected to a different endgame. Now they must find the seven lost Books of History. Books that have power over the past, present, and future. Books whose words are alive. Books sought by the Dark One that control not only the destiny of their world...but that of ours as well.

Chosen Details

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Author : Ted Dekker

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From Reader Review Chosen for online ebook

Simon Taylor says

I strongly recommend reading the Circle Saga first to get a proper understanding of the setting of Chosen.

Chosen, the first of the Lost Books series, is a midquel set between Black and Red, the first and second instalments of the Circle Saga (read 2006-2007). Hunter is reduced to a supporting role with four new recruits to the Forest Guard – sixteen year olds Johnis, Bilios, Sylvie and Darsal – taking centre stage. On an initiation task, they are accosted by one of the Roush (allegorical angels) and urged to find the seven original books of history.

This is a very poor start when compared to the likes of Black. There is not enough explanation for the unfamiliar and too much for series veterans. Everything is very cliché and perfunctory.

Johnis, the titular chosen one, is rushed from ignorance to acceptance. Soon he is mouthing off to super-villain Teeleh, which undermines the terror of Teeleh, the journey of Johnis and is all quite unconvincing.

The dynamic between the four new recruits is also run of the mill, with nothing in particular resolving the customary tension and resentment between the naturally gifted rising star and the grafters.

In between the real action, Hunter and opposite number Qurong do much pacing which is reminiscent of Circle but utterly lacking in atmosphere. Instead of building tension, these interludes interrupt the action and diminish the characters' roles with inane chatter.

The plot goes nowhere, but does it very quickly with a frustrating pattern of Deus ex machina in Roush form over and over again.

The Roush, though abused by Dekker's plotting, are scene stealers and by far the best characters in Chosen. Their wit and exuberance are a welcome constant and hopefully they will remain regularly recurring with better contexts.

It was also wonderful to have Hunter's first wife making a surprise appearance. Links to Paradise are also evident, and great fun to spot.

A distinctly average opener that belies the talent of Dekker and genius of the original Circle Saga.

Camly Nguyen says

3.5 stars

Plot wise, it's meh, not really much going on for most part of book. We start off with a group of kids being chosen and sent on a mission into retrieve a cactus but some magical bats appear and tell them to find these special books instead. So they go off in the desert to find these books and hope to not get caught by the Horde (bad zombies?). A bit of negotiation and fighting in the end. Bleh. Not very special, but light and somewhat entertaining.

I understand that this was a kids book and therefore Dekker wanted to limit the violence, but come on man, make it a bit more exciting for us! There was not enough blood and fights...I was a little disappointed. I did like the beginning though. It was a special way to integrate Johnis into the book without going to much like "I am the chosen one. I am special". I really liked how Johnis used his wits to convince his group that he was a capable leader and he showed a lot of bravery in his own way without coming off as arrogant.

Nice book for younger audiences.

Melissa Darnold says

So, rereading this book, it really does feel like *How to Train a Dragon*, just without dragons. At least in the beginning of it. Johnis is a wonderfully flawed character that you immediately latch onto. He's our hero in this world and I fully trusted him to take me on this journey of discovery and redemption. I was only a little weary of it because I'd just finished the *Circle Saga* and I don't know if anyone can be better than Thomas Hunter. In any case, Johnis began his journey with his friends and I enjoyed where they went. A great beginning to a story I adore.

♥Kel says

I liked this book, the action and mystery was good. And the romance was okay, i wish Ted Dekker went into more depth of the character's love stories, that would of been great :) But the story line was good.

Michelle says

This was an amazing story. I read it straight through. Couldn't put it down. It reminded me of the Song Of Albion series written by Stephen Lawhead in the mid 1990s. I loved the premise, the plot, the action, the emotion. It was amazing. And those characters were in perilous situations so often it was downright thrilling. I love it when situations seem hopeless, but then something happens to turn it around. But like life, it's never easy. Love isn't easy, nor is faith, not when the facts tell you all is lost. But if you listen with your heart and choose to not filter everything through your head, you will hear the truth. Awesome, gripping fiction. A bit gory and graphic at times, but certainly no worse than what you see on television. I highly recommend it. Ted Dekker knows how to pull you into a story with the best of them. No wonder he's a NY Times best-selling author. :)

Morgan Folk says

Personal Response:

I thought the book, *Chosen*, by Ted Dekker was an outstanding book. I could relate to the book, because it was a lot like the Hunger Games. The main character was very enthusiastic and it made me really get into the book. Also, I could relate because the main character seemed to fit my personality type. The book really reminded me of *Beowulf* and how there are three monsters.

Plot:

The book all started when Billos, Silvie, Darsal, and Johnis had been sent on a mission to find four Catalina cacti. They started searching, but they figured they weren't going to find them. Johnis had started to call for the cacti. The problem with this whole mission was there was a disease. The disease was where your skin will start to fall off if you do not bathe in the healing water of the lakes. If you do not bathe in these waters your skin will start to crack and you will begin to turn crazy. The disease does not kill you, but if you have the disease you are called a scab. On the way to find the cacti they encounter some creatures. The leader of all of these monsters is Teeleh. Teeleh is like the character Grendel from *Beowulf*. The monster had tried to attack Johnis and his squad, but they had defeated all the characters and tried to go back to camp or home. They ended up getting one of the Catalina cacti. The book left it at this because there are many other books this series. I think in the other books there will be a Catalina cacti in every other book that will be found.

Characterization:

The main character in this book is Johnis. Johnis is your average sixteen year old until he was told by Thomas Hunter that he was going to be a squad leader of the mission through seven forests. Billos is another main character. Billos is the strongest and biggest of the squad and looks to be a good warrior.

Impact of Setting:

The setting took place in a time period of around 4000 A.D. Most of the story took place in a desert that use to be a forest. This was one of the seven forests left and it was called the Dark Forest. The reason for the desert was because, there had been many battles and adventures that had happened in the story and this is where they took place. Another setting was Teeleh's home. Teeleh's home was a major setting also, because that was the mythical creature that had attacked their village at the beginning of the book.

Thematic Connection:

I think the theme of this book would be trust. The reason I think the theme would be trust, because Billos, Silvie, and Darsal had to learn to trust Johnis. Another reason, Johnis had to be able to trust the Roush in what they had to say to him.

Recommendation:

I recommend this book to any high school student or above. The reason I suggest this for high school students and above is there is a lot of mature and gory scenes in the book. I would also recommend this book more for guys because it has a lot of manly and masculine sayings that might offend the girls. This book was a lot like hunger games but instead of a woman having the lead part it is a man. Overall I would say that this was a very good book.

AJ says

I've tried to read this series twice before and always was unable to finish just because other things happened and I forgot about the series. The first time, I got around book four before I dropped off. The second time, I only got to the second. Now that I'm a little older, I thought I'd try once more.

I'm not sure that they're as good as I remember.

I think the main issue is with the characters. Johnis is okay, but I really don't like when characters are magically chosen at birth, never realize it so they grow up to be quiet fellows, then suddenly become

amazing super people once they realize their true destiny. Johnis starts off as a quiet failure, but by the end, he's telling his companions that they'll do whatever he says and courageously confronting the biggest bad guy in their world. Which is fine as long as there's some time for him to change into his new role and grow over time, but he changed pretty much overnight.

His other companions (Darsal, Silvie, and Billos) just got on my nerves. They were always arguing and doing very unwise things for people who are supposed to be "the best" of their age (and who were able to easily defeat four enemy assassins). We are not shown one thing that's endearing or attractive about their character. Even when they realize Johnis is right, they too have the sudden lightbulb of inspiration and are completely changed in a moment.

And I do agree that the constant informing of how beautiful the girls were was kind of annoying. Especially when Johnis and Silvie pretty much fall in love in two days and admit it to each other on day three. I enjoy a little bit of romance mixed into a story, but, again, there needs to be time to grow into it. The constant overnight transformations in character and personality just don't work.

The Roush were cute.

The plot was somewhat slow, but it's the first book of a six book series, so I imagine that it's going to be a slow build.

The last thing that kind of annoyed me was the ending. I have a problem when the characters are supposed to lie to their leader about everything that happened. I understand that the Roush told Johnis and the others not to say anything, but I didn't think that seemed very fair. If Thomas is supposed to be the amazing warrior leader that he is, shouldn't he know what's going on?

Swearing: None

Sexual content: None

Violence: None

Religious/spiritual/magical content: The book discusses the religion of the forest people, where they follow Elyon and shun the dark one, Teeleh. The Roush and Shataiki bats are seen as the followers of each. Their religion and the history of Elyon and Teeleh is an integral part of the story.

BGirl says

Wow, I couldn't even finish this. Not because it was boring or anything, it just was terribly written. Ugh, just terrible. It jumped all over the place, there was really no background to the story. Just bad. My policy is if it's still bad and I'm a fourth of the way through, ditch it. That's what I did. Why waste my time on something I know isn't going to get any better? Advice to the author, no ones going to finish a book with a bad beginning.

P. says

The writing is clumsy (such as "The question is whether or not you've lost the few peanuts contained in that container above your shoulders" p. 109, and "he knew he would die if he let those finger/claws touch him" p. 144). I get annoyed when writers take a lot of time writing out endless bickering dialogue but can't be bothered to write out the non-bickering dialogue and instead put a summarizing paragraph in place of it. The kids in the cohort were much stupider than they needed to be considering that they have been tested to be cream of the crop in the villages, which causes more bickering and therefore unneeded tedium.

The plot is pretty exciting, though, so it's not like I wouldn't recommend it to a kid to read. But I might recommend other things before this.

And I'm keeping in mind that I read this when I had a migraine, so it may have made me crankier.

Jennifer says

This was kind of dreadful. Geeky but smart teenager Johnis is made leader of the new group of Forest Guard in a community where water is life and the desert holds the Horde - a group of diseased peoples whose desire is to destroy the forest dwellers and make them like themselves. Johnis goes on a quest across the desert with his reluctant fellow teens and start a quest for a number of books that will control the world. But they have to find them before the Dark One does. Fuzzy angels and evil bats. That about says it all. Not a favorite. I didn't engage with the world or the characters.

Daniel says

In my opinion this book was incredible. If you are a fan of fantasy type novels such as the Percy Jackson books, this would be up your alley, minus the Greek and Roman gods. It is a cool twist of good versus evil. The main gist is that a group of kids are chosen to find a set of books and go through severe circumstances on their way to retrieving the first. I highly recommend this book, especially if you are into good versus evil with a twist.

Amanda says

Well...it was not exceptionally written in as much as the words and sentences were very simpleton and there was no figurative language or devices or even phrases, catches, not even a sentence that stood out. Was it written for a younger age audience? I think it was in the teen section, but the combination of fantasy characters, shallow depth level involved (as far as romance or emotion - other than action), and pedestrian choreography of the sentences made it seem more directed toward lower age levels. The information and background to this new land and its customs was also not gracefully presented all the time. It seemed as though the author came to something, and then realized he had to explain what was about to happen so put in a little tidbit about something that happened years ago. The book was actually not unlike riding a donkey/mule up or down a canyon; stops, pauses, uncertainty, but enough edge, adventure, and cleverness to keep you glued to the saddle. All the same, the compelling plot with a quest and tests of soul plodded me

along to the end, which, I guess as Ted Dekker is known for, had a kind of twist that makes me want to order the next one from the library... So, all in all, not terrible, not great, I suppose interesting. However, if you like completely different fantasy lands that include large fuzzy bats fighting each other, "A dark one", a land taken somewhat from Lord of the Rings, frustration with a pigheaded character, and you have a youthful mind...I'd say this book is for you.

Chloe Stone says

I read this overnight in one sitting, and it was amazing. It was short but it really packed a punch. I think I'm going to marathon the series. But I also read in an ad in the back that this is what happened in the middle of a series, in between the first and second book? I might read that series afterword. I picked this entire series up at Mercy House in a box set for a dollar, which was amazing. If you live in Harrisonburg, VA I suggest you go to Mercy House, because you can buy an entire big crate of books there for \$5. It's amazing. I know this is really rambling like all my reviews, but it's really early in the morning and I'm really high on coffee right now so.... Might not be the best review. Bye!

Tilmer Jr. says

Ted Dekker is one of "those" authors. By "those" I mean he falls into that category where people either really love his work or they can't stand it. I have to say I am a fan. I like Dekker. I think he writes compelling fiction that refuses to let go of your mind until you get to the end of the story. That very feature is why I give this work four stars rather than five. It's a great story. You won't want to put it down. The trouble is that the universe of which this volume is a part is vast. You will finish Chosen and you will have more questions and answers. That's OK because all of the answers are buried in the other "Lost Books" and/or the Circle Trilogy. It's a lot to take in.

Dekker is a brilliant man. He must be in order to keep a universe this complex in order. Characters and motifs are masterfully woven in and out of the books with skill that few writers could even approach.

So then - what gives with the one star penalty?

Well, even though I enjoy a good trilogy or other multi-volume trek through fiction, I think it just boils down to taste. If it's not Tolkien or Lewis, four stars is as much as I can dole out for part of a series. Don't get me wrong. This is a good story. Thomas Hunter, the mainstay of the series, appears as the leader of the Forest Dwellers. He is not the primary character in this story, but his presence is strongly felt. The Horde are so real you can almost smell them. Teeleh and the rest of the Shataiki are at their usual terrifying best. Peril is palpable. Characters are well formed and two familiar Roush bring welcome comic relief along with prophetic insight.

This is a well-written, fast moving book. It's not to be missed by fans of the series. Just beware. You might get hooked and fill up your reading list for the next year or so with the rest of the series.

Darin Mcgrane says

I recently read this book over the summer and i thought it was very intresting. its about a world so close to ours, but still not in our time. Elyon is like the supreme ruler in the sky and his most beutiful creature that he created was called telleh (he let it go to his head) This book is about the four chosen ones that, out of all of

the forest dwellers, are pick by Elyon to save the world from telleh and the dark one. This book is the first of a series that is awesome and turns from a routine run to a prolonged, fun, and mystic journey to find the lost books.

OpenBookSociety.com says

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Krystal

At first glance Chosen reminded me of J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings or Christopher Paolini's Inheritance Cycle, but I was sorely mistaken.

Chosen, the first in The Lost Books series, spans the fifteen year gap between the Circle Trilogy's Black and Red books. Whether you have or haven't read the Circle Trilogy doesn't matter though because The Lost Books stand alone as intriguing tales of good versus evil.

Dekker throws us into a world much like our own, but at the same time very different where 13 years ago a terrible evil wreaked havoc on the followers of Elyon. The evil shows itself in the form of a scaly disease that covers the flesh, turning people into the Horde and decimating the lush and colorful forests. All that's left is seven small forests surrounding lakes where the people of Elyon bathe daily to rid themselves of the disease.

While the story mainly follows the four teenagers, Dekker frequently plays with point of view in this new tale. He manages to create memorable characters, a visually beautiful landscape, subtle hints, foreshadowing, and clever twists that kept me interested for all 260 pages. A rather short book in comparison to the others out there right now, but worth every word.

Some criticize Dekker's cheesy dialogue and call the characters underdeveloped, but still find they are unable to put the books down due to his ability to tell a fascinating tale. The majority of people, on the other hand, praise him for the amazing world he has created.

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/te...>

Samantha Boyette says

So apparently I was very confused reading this book, because I thought it was a sequel to the Land of Elyon books by Patrick Carman. Apparently Elyon is a well known name for God, who knew? All the same, this book was pretty good.

The book follows four teenagers as they quest to prove that they are worthy of being new leaders of the forest guard against evil beings known as the horde. Yes, the four of them are very stereotypical as many people have said, with the main character being the smart, quiet guy who is stronger than everyone realizes. Yes he is chosen as the one in all the land who can save the land. Yes, yes, yes. Here's the thing, there's a reason people use that sort of plot SO much, because if it's done right it makes for an awesome story.

I can ignore the overused cliches in this book because the overarching story was good. I wanted to know

who the horde were, and I wanted to know if the young soldiers were going to make it. The whole thing was pretty darn exciting if you ask me. Now, maybe if I had read the series for adults that this is based on, I wouldn't have felt that way.

My main complaint would be the fact that this is marketed as a YA novel, while it reads much more like a middle grade novel. That's fine, it's still a good book. The other complaint is using Alucard as the name of one of the bad guys. People, this is so overused. We get it, Dracula was evil and you can spell his name backwards.

Overall though, this struck me much like the Land of Elyon series did. They both feel like contemporary Narnia books where it is clear that the author has some very strong Christian beliefs, but I really don't care about that because the story itself is engaging and exciting.

Taylor says

Well, where do I start? I'll start with the good things. The book was easy to understand and descriptive enough. Mostly I just loved the little white bat things, because I found them amusing.

But there is a list of bad things I found in this book. Firstly, the plot was ridiculously slow, and I found myself only reading it when there wasn't anything else to do. When you read the description of this book, you expect a violent, action-packed story. Well in this I was dissatisfied with the lack of excitement. I wasn't very impressed with many of the characters either. I can count three right now, and there are many more than three characters in that book.

If I were to recommend this novel to somebody then I would recommend it to anyone who wants to waste time on something they can be dissatisfied by.

Becky B says

I read a LOT of YA fiction since I'm a school media center specialist (fancy name for librarian) and I feel like it's a sad statement about the quality of Christian YA available out there that this book has gotten such good reviews. Measuring it next to all YA available out there, this book would be in the low middle of quality, but measured against other Christian YA, it is sadly towards the top. We need more Christian YA that is not just good for Christians, but good quality literature in general. :(

The setting is an alternate universe that has been plagued by some sort of disease so that most of the planet is desert (did anyone else just think *Dune*?) but there are 7 springs of water surrounded by seven forests where people remain. The water has some sort of healing/sustaining property such that people need to bathe in it daily or they succumb to this desert disease that turns them into Scabs. (Think dry, crusty, Bubbles from LOTR --sorry, that's Lord of the Rings). The Scabs detest the people and think they're repulsive and vice versa so of course they are at war.

At first I thought this was going to turn into a Ranger's Apprentice-type book because it starts off and they are having a vicious, armed game of "football" that allows minor injuries (such as broken bones and flesh wounds) to decide which teenagers will be joining the army. The four young main characters encounter some

interesting developments (can't tell what in case you read it) and end up out in the desert on a quest for The Books of History. There are some minor allegories/allusions going on in the story, but most are subtle enough you appreciate Dekker's craftiness and creativity. Some are more blatantly obvious, like Michal and Gabil are two white bat-like creatures called Roush who help the kids and there are evil black bat-like creatures too. They are supposedly things of legend; it turns out they exist, but only those with eyes to see them know they exist. I think most of you have probably figured out that allusion.

Was it the most amazing story I've ever read? No.

Will I need to read the next to read the next book. Yes. There was only one minor plot development resolved (ok, so it was life threatening and pretty important, but in the grand scheme of things still minor), and lots of other things left hanging. Thus the need for 5 more books. Oh, and Ted Dekker leaves this nice little note for you at the end of the book that if you want to know where the mysterious leader of the people, Thomas, came from and why the people on the planet only remember the past 13 years you have to read a parallel series of books: *Black*, *Red* and *White*. Grr. So that means I now have 5 more books in The Lost Books series to read and 3 more books in the parallel series to read. I'll let you know if it is worth getting sucked into this black hole or not after the next book.

Note: Now that I've read pretty much the whole series, no, it isn't worth getting sucked into the black hole. Yes, Dekker has some good creativity going, the plot had great potential, but the execution fell far too short. I'm so fed up with Dekker's writing for teens I can't stomach the idea of reading any of the adult books right now. I know, he probably writes really well for adults, but I've still got a bad taste in my mouth from books 2-4 & the end of 6.

Max says

I liked this book because it was funny, suspenseful, and full of action. In this book Johnis and three others go on a quest to find the Lost books of history which can change history. Their quest leads them to lairs and out into the desert. The story is set in a world that is like our own but not like it. There are seven forests and the rest of the world is supposedly desert. The four Chosen Ones try to figure out if it is actually desert or if there is something more.
