

A Tale Of Three Kings

Hi, this is Richard Oliver, and I'd like to tell you a story about three kings.

The king had been anointed by God. He had been very successful. And yet, after a while, success went to his head. He'd started off humble. He'd started off pure. He'd started off trying to do the right thing. But he had, as so many of us do have, successes and when we have those successes the danger is that we start thinking it's us. We forget that God is behind our success. We are nothing. We are only anything particular, anything special, when God uses us. But the king had forgotten this.

He was a jealous king too. He had a young fellow that came along and joined his army. He'd slain this giant Goliath, and although that was wonderful and had given a fantastic victory to Israel, every time he and the king went out it seemed as if this young fellow was doing more than the king. The king grew jealous.

He would also suffer, suffer deep depression. He would sit there, and that young fellow, that same fellow, would come sometimes and play the harp to soothe the king. Now, the king, of course, sat on his throne. And in a fit of pique, a fit of anger, he grabbed his javelin and he hurled the javelin at David. Now, of course, everyone knows what you're to do if someone hurls a javelin at you. You grab it out of the wall, you turn around and you hurl it straight back.

This javelin, of course, had come from the pulpit, I'm sorry, I mean from the throne. And this king was jealous of this young fellow. So, he could see in him a threat. And to get rid of that threat he would do almost anything. As I said, this king was mad.

David was not your average man. He did not tear the javelin out. He did not hurl it back and give as good as he got. He simply ducked and got out of the way.

That king went chasing him. And David fled across the wilderness to the borders of the Dead Sea, to a little cove there, a little break in the rocks where a stream of fresh water came out, En Gedi. He stayed there, and the king heard that David was there and went hunting him, to kill him. Again David avoided him, even when the king was there, able to be got rid of so that David could take over, which was something, of course, the people wanted him to do, he resisted. He wouldn't do it.

Eventually King Saul was killed in battle. And David took over. And David had several sons, and one of them used to stand in the entrance to the city, as to the entrance of the palace I should say. And as people came in to talk with King David this young son would say "Oh look, look, if only I were king I would be able to help you." And bit-by-bit, that young man stole the hearts of the people from David the king. That young man's name was Absalom.

Absalom got to a point in the end where he thought "Hmm, it's time to take over the kingdom". And he made his move.

David was not sure what God's situation was because David knew that only God could decide who would be king, who should be in charge. So David stepped back. He retreated to wait and find out what God's view was of this situation. And then, of course, once he knew, he knew he had to fight Absalom and regain control which is what happened.

Now there are, of course, many other kings, but these three are the ones you'll most often meet. There are those that will hurl javelins from the pulpit. They will be jealous of young men coming up, young men who could take away their kingdom, their church, their livelihood. And then you've got David who will simply try and do God's will. That's the man after God's own heart. And then you'll

have Absaloms, and there's plenty of those. They will stand at the door and they will gradually win over people till they've got enough people to start their own church. These people, and remember Absalom did this for twenty years, they're on the long-term plan.

But remember, of the three kings, only one was accepted by God as being the true king, and that was David.

May God bless you.