

## The Parable of a King's Four Wives and his Mother (A Lesson for Mother's Day) - MabuhayRadio

Written by Rewritten by Bobby Reyes

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Once upon a time there was a rich King who had four wives. And of course, his mother.

He loved the fourth wife the most and adorned her with rich robes and treated her to the finest delicacies. He gave her nothing but the best.

He also loved his third wife very much and was always showing her off to neighboring kingdoms. However, he feared that one day she would leave him for another man or monarch.

He also loved his second wife. She was his confidant and was always kind, considerate and patient with him. Whenever the King faced a problem, he could confide in her and she would help him get through the difficult times.

The King's first wife was a very-loyal partner and had made great contributions in maintaining his wealth and kingdom. However, he did not love the first wife. Although she loved him deeply, he hardly ever noticed her.

One day the King fell ill and he knew his time was short. He thought of his luxurious life and wondered, "I now have four wives with me, but when I die, I'll be all alone."

Thus, he asked the fourth wife, "I have loved you the most, endowed you with the finest clothing and showered great care over you. Now that I am dying, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"No way!" replied the fourth wife and she walked away without another word. Her answer cut like a sharp knife right into his heart.

The sad King then asked his third wife, "I have loved you all my life. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"No!" she replied. "Life is too good! When you die, I am going to remarry!" The King's heart sank and turned cold.

He then asked the second wife, "I have always turned to you for help and you've always been

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there for me. When I die will you follow me and keep me company?"

"I'm sorry, I can't help you out this time!" replied the second wife. "At the very most, I can send you to your grave." Her answer came like a bolt of lightning and the King was devastated.

Then a voice called out: "I'll leave with you and follow you no matter where you go."

The King looked up, and there was his first wife. She was so skinny as she suffered from malnutrition and neglect. Greatly grieved, the King said, "I should have taken better care of you when I had the chance!"

But then if the King in this story becomes like King Herod, who was punished by God for all his evil ways, perhaps even the first wife will not be at his death bed. As what supposedly happened in the sad story of King Herod, whose body was racked by numerous lesions and boils with worms crawling from the inside of the wounds. Everybody in King Herod's court, including his many wives and harem deserted him. At the very end, there was supposedly only the mother of King Herod who remained at his death bed, nursing him and cleaning his body of maggots and worms. As the idiom goes, "only a mother can love" at the very end an evil man like King Herod.

In reality, all persons have four proverbial spouses in their lives. And of course the person's mother.

The fourth spouse is our body. No matter how much time and effort was lavish in making it look good, it will leave us when we die.

Our third spouse is the sum total of our possessions, status and wealth. When we die, they will all go to others.

Our second spouse is our family and friends. No matter how much they been there for us, the furthest they can stay by us is accompany our remains only up to the grave.

But the first spouse is like our Soul. Often our soul (and Mom) are neglected in pursuit of wealth, power and pleasures of the world. However, our Soul is the only thing left in us wherever we go to the Great Beyond. So cultivate, strengthen and cherish it now because our soul will follow us to the next life and stay with ourselves throughout eternity. And of course we must cherish our Mom, for she may be the only woman who is left in the room as we are about to close our eyes for the last time in our respective death beds. # # #

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(This parable was rewritten from an article sent by Johnny Chua of Walnut, California. He is the president of the Filipino-American Chamber of Commerce of San Gabriel Valley. The original article did not contain the King Herod portion.)

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