

THE FOUR WIVES

Once upon a time ... there was a rich King who had 4 wives.

He loved the 4th wife the most and adorned her with rich robes and treated her to the finest of delicacies. He gave her nothing but the best.

He also loved the 3rd wife very much and was always showing her off to neighboring kingdoms. However, he feared that one day she would leave him for another.

He also loved his 2nd wife. She was his confidante and was always kind, considerate and patient with him. Whenever the King faced a problem, he could confide in her to help him get through the difficult times.

The King's 1st 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 and although she loved him deeply, he hardly took notice of her.

One day, the King fell ill and he knew his time was short. He thought of his luxurious life and pondered, "I now have 4 wives with me, but when I die, I'll be all alone.

Thus, he asked the 4th wife, "I have loved you the most, endowed you with the finest clothing and showered great care over you. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"No way!" replied the 4th wife and she walked away without another word.

Her answer cut like a sharp knife right into his heart.

The sad King then asked the 3rd wife, "I have loved you all my life. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?"

"No!" replied the 3rd wife. "Life is too good! When you die, I'm going to re-marry!"

His heart sank and turned cold.

He then asked the 2nd wife, "I have always turned to you for help and you've always been 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 2nd wife.

"At the very most, I can only send you to your grave."

Her answer came like a bolt of thunder 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; she suffered from malnutrition. Greatly grieved, the King said, "I should have taken much better care of you when I had the chance!"

IN TRUTH, WE ALL HAVE 4 "WIVES" IN OUR LIVES:

Our 4th wife is our body. No matter how much time and effort we lavish in making it look good, it will leave us when we die.

Our 3rd wife is our possessions, status and wealth. When we die, it will all go to others.

Our 2nd wife is our family and friends. No matter how much they have been there for us, the furthest they can stay by us is up to the grave.

And our 1st wife is our Soul, often neglected in pursuit of wealth, power and pleasures of the ego. However, our Soul is the only thing that will follow us wherever we go. So, cultivate, strengthen and cherish it now! It is your greatest gift to offer the world.