

# Parable Time

## Royal Robes

Holidays • Easter

 23 min

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Upon his departure, a gracious king gives his servants beautiful white robes and access to the palace luxuries. He warns them to stay within the untainted palace, lest they stain their clothes and dirty the kingdom. Despite living in paradise, the servants disobey their king in pursuit of something greater, a crown of their own. They return, however, to a life of bondage with the ultimate fear of getting locked in the dungeon. In an effort to save them, the loving king sends his son to rescue the servants. This allegory of redemption reminds us of God's great love for humanity through our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Royal Robes*

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

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<b>NARRATOR</b>	(any)	
<b>KING</b>	(male)	Gracious and kind
<b>PRINCE</b>	(male)	Son of the king
<b>GUARD</b>	(male)	Deceives the servants
<b>SERVANT 1</b>	(male)	Rejects the prince
<b>SERVANT 2</b>	(female)	Rejects the prince
<b>SERVANT 3</b>	(female)	Believes the prince
<b>SOLDIERS (x2)</b>	(male)	

## TIME AND SETTING

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Timeless white palace

**NARRATOR:**

There once was a king, a very good king, a king above kings, who lacked not a thing. His palace was grand, his riches were plenty, his tables were full, he had nothing empty. All the king's servants were dear to his heart, each did their work, and each did their part. He gave them good gifts and plenty of rest. Life in the palace was simply the best. But there came a day that the king had to leave, he called forth his servants and made a decree.

*(KING, SOLDIERS and all SERVANTS enter)*

**KING:**

My dear people, I hope you will find these garments to be a reminder of my deep regards for each of you.

**SERVANT 2:**

Oh, they're beautiful, your majesty!

**SERVANT 3:**

Absolutely breathtaking, my lord!

**SERVANT 1:**

We are not worthy of such great gifts, your highness.

**KING:**

I trust you will take good care of them.

**SERVANT 1:**

We are forever in debt to you, my lord, thank you.

**KING:**

Now, I must journey away from the kingdom for a time, but before I depart I have some instruction.

**SERVANT 1:**

Anything for you, our most gracious king.

**KING:**

As you know, the palace must remain clean. Not a speck or spot of dirt may enter. When I am away, please, help yourselves to anything you'd like. The food, the drinks, the kingdom is yours, but whatever you do, do not step foot outside the palace. Beyond these walls, your white robes will be stained. Anyone who is found with dirt on their clothes, will be banished to the dungeon forever.

**SERVANT 1:**

Your majesty, if I may?

**KING:**

You may.

**SERVANT 1:**

How long will my lord be gone?

**KING:**

I cannot be certain, but I will return soon. Please, keep my instruction dear to your hearts.

**SERVANT 1:**

Certainly, your highness.

**KING:**

I trust my kingdom will be in good hands. Farewell my dear servants. Until my return.

*(King and Soldiers exit)*

**SERVANT 1:**

Safest of travels, my lord.

**NARRATOR:**

And so the king left to a faraway land. The palace was left at his servants' command. Now this was the time when all things were clean, no one was dirty and no one was mean.

**SERVANT 2:**

The whole palace to ourselves, can you believe it?

**SERVANT 3:**

I know! I know! I couldn't believe my ears.

**SERVANT 2:**

Oh the possibilities!

**SERVANT 3:**

All of the luxuries!

**SERVANT 2:**

What did we ever do to deserve this?

**SERVANT 3:**

Just think of the food!

**SERVANT 2:**

The food, yes, the food!

**SERVANT 3:**

Who would ever think we would eat from his table?

**SERVANT 2:**

Mmm. Mm mmm. I only ever dreamed of this.

**SERVANT 3:**

Me too. Me too!

**SERVANT 1:**

Now don't get ahead of yourselves, we still have our duties.

**SERVANT 2:**

Oh come on, the duties can wait.

**SERVANT 3:**

You heard the king, it's all here for us!

**SERVANT 2:**

Take a break, have a drink.

**SERVANT 1:**

What if he's testing us?

**SERVANT 2:**

Don't be ridiculous. The king has been good to us.

**SERVANT 3:**

Just look at these gifts, he trusts us the most.

**SERVANT 2:**

Our king is so generous

**SERVANT 3:**

Our king is so kind.

**SERVANT 1:**

I know. I know. There is nobody like him. I just want to be careful and keep his instruction.

**SERVANT 2:**

Leaving the palace? We would never do that!

**SERVANT 3:**

Oh no nooo. Who would even think of such a thing?

**SERVANT 2:**

We have all that we need. What more could we ask for?

**SERVANT 3:**

Now don't be so glum, for heaven's sake. We have a whole palace to ourselves. Enjoy the king's blessings!

**NARRATOR:**

After a moment, the servants agreed: life was just perfect, what more could they need? They cared for the palace and kept the king's orders, their garments were spotless, they stayed within borders. Now, many would say that they had it best. Why, who could complain when being so blessed? But there came a day when all things would change. A servant was cleaning and heard something strange.

*(GUARD enters. Servants 1 and 2 exit)*



**GUARD:**

Young lady.

**SERVANT 3:**

Dear heavens, what was that?

**GUARD:**

Don't be alarmed. I mean you no harm.

**SERVANT 3:**

Where is your voice coming from?

**GUARD:**

I am guard of the dungeon.

**SERVANT 3:**

The dungeon? Far be it from me to go near the dungeon.

**GUARD:**

Please, hear me out.

**SERVANT 3:**

Oh no noo, I cannot. I shouldn't even be down here.

**GUARD:**

Wait. It will only be a minute.

**SERVANT 3:**

I am truly sorry, but I must go.

**GUARD:**

You deserve better!

**SERVANT 3:**

Whatever do you mean?

**GUARD:**

Tell me about the king. Is he good to you?

**SERVANT 3:**

Good? What kind of question is that? Anyone who knows the king, knows he is good. Do you mean to say you don't know the king?

**GUARD:**

I knew the king once. Why, I was his best.

**SERVANT 3:**

Then surely you must know he has a kind, loving heart?

**GUARD:**

Puh. Kind, loving heart. Is that what he is, up there at the top?

**SERVANT 3:**

Well of course, our king has been good and gracious to us.

**GUARD:**

Is that so?

**SERVANT 3:**

Yes, he gave us these gifts and left us in charge.

**GUARD:**

In charge? Is the king gone?

**SERVANT 3:**

Haven't you heard? He's been gone for some time.

**GUARD:**

And about his return?

**SERVANT 3:**

His return is not set, but it shouldn't be long.

**GUARD:**

And the gifts, tell me more about these wonderful robes.

**NARRATOR:**

With no thought at all, she explained their instruction, not knowing it then, it would lead to destruction. Just as she finished, and the guard heard it all, in came the others, in time for the fall.

**SERVANT 1:**

There she is.

**SERVANT 2:**

What are you doing down here? We've been looking all over for you.

**SERVANT 3:**

I, I was..

**GUARD:**

These must be your friends. I do apologize, the blame is all mine.

**SERVANT 1:**

And who might you be?

**GUARD:**

I am guard of the dungeon.

**SERVANT 1:**

I didn't know we had a guard of the dungeon.

**GUARD:**

Well, it sure does get lonely here all by yourself. Your friend was just keeping me company.

**SERVANT 1:**

I'm afraid we best leave now. Come.

**GUARD:**

Now, now. Did the king not permit you to go near the dungeon?

**SERVANT 2:**

Not at all. We may go anywhere we'd like inside the palace.

**GUARD:**

Well then, what's all the hurry?

**SERVANT 1:**

We have things to get done. Now, if you would excuse us.

**SERVANT 2:**

What he's trying to say is...

**SERVANT 1:**

What I'm trying to say is, that we won't be going near the doors of the castle. The further we stay, the better.

**SERVANT 2:**

It's just, the king made it clear to stay inside the palace, we can't afford staining our robes.

**SERVANT 3:**

And if he returns and finds dirt on our clothing, we will be banished to the dungeon forever.

**GUARD:**

Is that what he said? And you believed him?

**SERVANT 1:**

What kind of question is that? Of course we believed him.

**SERVANT 3:**

Our king knows what's best. Our king never lies.

**GUARD:**

Surely you will not be banished to the dungeon for that. Why, the king knows that if you leave the palace, you yourselves will be royalty.

**SERVANT 1:**

That is absurd. The king has been good to us. What more could we need?

**GUARD:**

Your very own kingdom. Your very own crowns. You could be king, and you could be queens.

**SERVANT 1:**

Don't be a fool. There can be no other king than the king himself.

**SERVANT 2:**

Now hold on a minute. He might have a point. Why else would he want us to stay behind doors?

**GUARD:**

The lady is right. What does the king have to hide?

**SERVANT 3:**

Surely there must be a reason.

**SERVANT 1:**

Whatever the reason, it's for our own good. We do not question our king.

**GUARD:**

Why answer to someone, when you could be royals? You'll make your own choices; you'll make your own laws.

**NARRATOR:**

They thought and they listened to all that he said. It sounded convincing, to be your own head. They soon would forget about all that they had, the pleasures and riches that made them so glad. That was the moment they broke the king's law, they fled from his palace and pride was their flaw.

*(Servants exit)*

**NARRATOR:**

They did not remember how good their king was, the love that he shows them in all that he does. To be their own king, to be their own queen, they dirtied their garments that once were so clean. They didn't know then, when they left their position, that the guard of the dungeon was there on a mission. With evil intent and a heart full of malice, he crowned himself king, king of the palace. When the servants returned with the crowns they desired, they did not expect what their new king required.

**GUARD:**

You will do as I say. You will call me your lord, and whoever rebels, you will die by the sword.

**NARRATOR:**

That's when they realized that they were deceived. Bondage and evil was all they received. Their new king was wicked, he made them work hard. They all lived in fear and worshiped the guard. The dirt only spread and the good things went bad. They missed their old lives and the things that they had.

**SERVANT 2:**

How could we have been so foolish? We're miserable now.

**SERVANT 1:**

It's all your fault. You started to doubt.

**SERVANT 2:**

I wouldn't have doubted if she didn't talk to the guard.

**SERVANT 3:**

He spoke to me first. I was just being nice.

**SERVANT 2:**

Oh, how good it once was, when our king was still here.

**SERVANT 1:**

Now look at us. We're slaves all our years.

**SERVANT 3:**

But our king will return, right?

**SERVANT 1:**

What good does that do? We dirtied our robes.

**SERVANT 2:**

We'll be locked in the dungeon for the rest of our lives.

**SERVANT 3:**

What if, what if we could clean our clothes? There must be a way to get rid of this dirt.

**SERVANT 2:**

You're absolutely brilliant! I don't know why we didn't think of that earlier.

**NARRATOR:**

Their faces lit up, filled with such hope. One ran for water; one ran for soap. They scrubbed and they scrubbed, but it didn't come out. The stains just grew bigger, they started to doubt. They tried and they tried, doing all that they could, but the garments stayed dirty and didn't look good.

**SERVANT 1:**

Uhh it's no use. They only look worse.



**SERVANT 3:**

Maybe a little more? Surely we can fix them.

**SERVANT 1:**

You can scrub all you want. This dirt won't come off.

**SERVANT 2:**

He's right, and there's so little time.

*(Knock at the door)*

**SERVANT 2:**

Dear heavens, that must be him!

**SERVANT 1:**

So soon?

**SERVANT 2:**

We're doomed, we're doomed!

**SERVANT 1:**

Well, don't just stand there. Open the door.

**SERVANT 2:**

Why me? Tell her.

**SERVANT 3:**

Me?

**SERVANT 2:**

You started all this. Go open the door.

**SERVANT 3:**

And risk being killed? No, no, no, no.

**NARRATOR:**

While they were still fighting over which one should go, in came a peasant, who they did not know.

*(PRINCE enters)*

**PRINCE:**

Greetings dear people, I come from afar.

**SERVANT 2:**

Why, that's not the king at all.

**SERVANT 1:**

Now who might you be, and where are you from?

**PRINCE:**

The palace, your robes, what have you done?

**SERVANT 1:**

We'll ask the questions around here, commoner.

**PRINCE:**

You broke the king's law. You dirtied your clothes.

**SERVANT 1:**

Now you better watch yourself, you're cutting it close.

**PRINCE:**

Give up your crowns, and return to your lord. I will forgive you. I'll give you new robes.

**SERVANT 2:**

Forgive us? And just who do you think you are?

**PRINCE:**

I am the prince, heir to the throne.

**SERVANT 1:**

Ha. Ha ha. Did you hear him? The prince?

**SERVANT 2:**

Dressed in these rags? Why, you're worse off than we are.

**SERVANT 1:**

Do you think we are fools that we should believe you?

**SERVANT 3:**

Now, hold on a minute, let's not be rash. If he claims who he is, why won't he prove it?

**SERVANT 1:**

Very well. Show us a sign, a ring or a crown.

**SERVANT 2:**

Where are your guards? Where is your gown?

**PRINCE:**

That I don't have. I left it behind.

**SERVANT 1:**

You see, he's a phony. What did I say?

**PRINCE:**

But I know my father and the love that he has. I have come to restore you, to bring you all back.

**SERVANT 2:**

And just how exactly do you plan to do that?

**PRINCE:**

You just have to trust me. Surrender your crowns.

**SERVANT 1:**

You're a scam and a cheat.

**SERVANT 2:**

No son of the king.

**SERVANT 1:**

He'll get us all killed.

**SERVANT 2:**

We won't have a thing.

**PRINCE:**

Please, hear me out. I can set you all free.

**SERVANT 1:**

We've heard enough. It's time that you leave.

**SERVANT 2:**

I say we take him back to the guard.

**SERVANT 3:**

Now why would we do that? He's done us no harm.

**SERVANT 1:**

Don't be deceived.

**SERVANT 2:**

Don't fall for his trap.

**SERVANT 3:**

But to me he sounds genuine, he said nothing wrong. Sir, if you mean it, I'll give up my crown.

**PRINCE:**

I can promise you now that when I return, I'll give you new clothing and a seat by my throne.

**SERVANT 3:**

Then please, my good lord, please take my crown. I trust you'll remember and forgive all my wrong.

**SERVANT 1:**

He won't be returning. He'll be locked behind bars.

**SERVANT 2:**

Away with this fool. Let's go to the guard!

**SERVANT 3:**

Please, no, he doesn't deserve it! He came here to help us, to make a way out.

**NARRATOR:**

Like a sheep to the slaughter they took him away. He did not resist. He had nothing to say. He was brought to the guard and tossed to the floor. There he was mocked like never before. When he saw who it was, the guard had a plan. Why, this was the prince, he was not just a man. If the prince was locked up, no one would know, and the guard could stay king and still run the show.

**GUARD:**

I've heard enough. Get rid of this man! Away to the dungeon as fast as you can.

**NARRATOR:**

What did he do? What law did he break? His clothes were not dirty, he made no mistake. The prince did no wrong for the price that he paid, but his love for the people still did not fade. The guard was so pleased, he thought he had won, but the work of the prince was yet to be done.

*(Prince exits unnoticed. Dungeon left open)*

**NARRATOR:**

So early one morning, on the third day, the dungeon was open. The prince got away! Now, you might wonder, how did he get free? Well he was the prince, and the prince had the key.

**SERVANT 3:**

He's gone! He's gone! I knew all along.

**SERVANT 1:**

What are you saying?

**SERVANT 2:**

What do you mean?

**SERVANT 3:**

The man you locked up, he's no longer there.

**SERVANT 1:**

How can that be?

**SERVANT 2:**

Did you set him free?

**SERVANT 3:**

Now how would I do that? I don't have the key.

**SERVANT 1:**

I don't believe it. There must be a reason.

**SERVANT 3:**

He was the prince. That's all there is to it.

**NARRATOR:**

Afraid of the judgment that they would receive, they went back and forth, but did not believe. Now all of a sudden, when no one expected, in came the king, the one they rejected.

*(King and Soldiers enter)*

**NARRATOR:**

They fell on their faces, ashamed of their wrong, for their king had returned, being gone for so long.

**KING:**

My servants, my people, what have you done? You had all you needed. Why did you run?

**NARRATOR:**

His servants were speechless. They had no excuse. The time had now come to pay all their dues.

**KING:**

Lock them away! Out of my sight! The garments I gave them are no longer white. Start with the one who defiled my palace, he sits on my throne with a heart full of malice.

**NARRATOR:**

Everyone trembled. They were filled with such fear. There was nowhere to run, the judgment was clear. The guard of the dungeon was taken up first, for being so evil, for being the worst. Next were the ones that the king trusted most, the servants he loved of whom he would boast. At that very moment, in came the prince. There was nobody like him and nobody since. He was dressed in his robes that glistened so bright, they were perfectly clean, they were perfectly white. He came to his father and told him to wait, and what he did next was something so great.

**PRINCE:**

Arise my good servant, you gave up your crown, and just as I promised I brought you a gown.



**NARRATOR:**

He gave her new clothes, clothes that were clean. He gave her a crown, and made her the queen. But the rest of the servants that had not believed, were banished away, where forever they grieved. The prince and his bride, who now were together, reigned in their kingdom forever and ever.

*(End scene)*