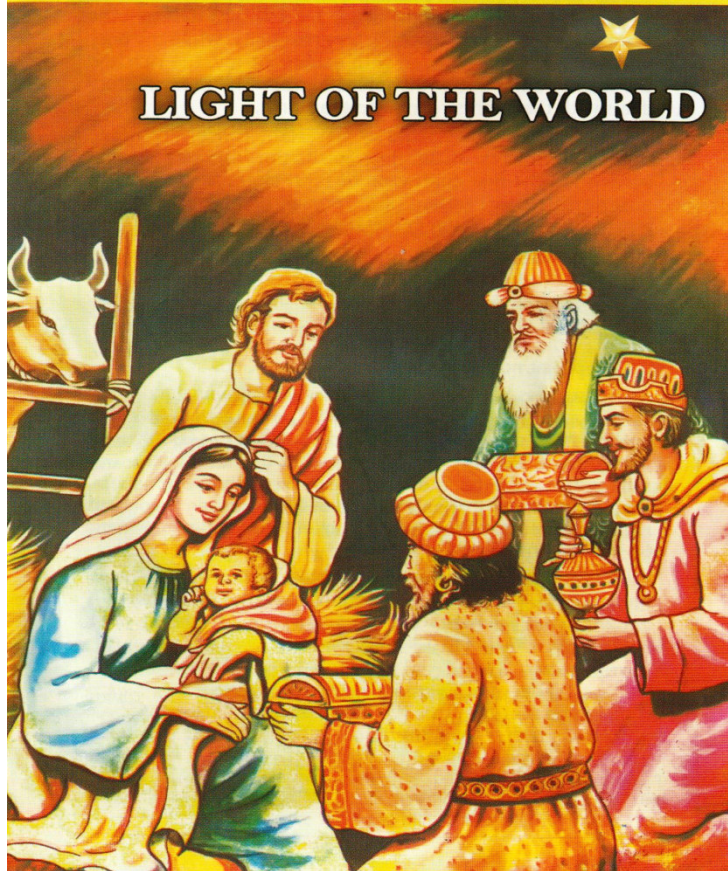


BIBLE COMICS - 32

# JESUS CHRIST - 2

LIGHT OF THE WORLD



BIBLE COMICS-32

Jesus Christ - 2

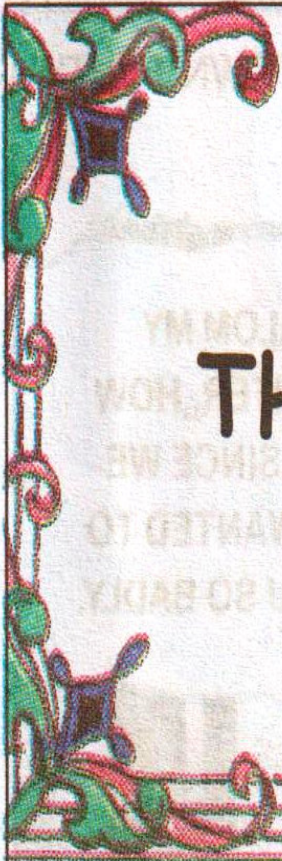
THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

SCRIPT:

DR. MICHAEL KARIMATTAM

ILLUSTRATION:

DEVASY \* BENNY



## LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Jesus Christ is a historical person who was born in Bethlehem during the last years of Herod's rule. His birth, though pre-announced by the prophets of Israel and waited by the entire world, took place in a totally unexpected manner and provoked contradictory reactions. While the poor and the humble were filled with exuberant joy, the rich and the mighty burst out with violent hatred. The present story deals with the events related to that birth.

Mary, the humble maid of Nazareth, conceived him in faith, by the work of the Holy Spirit. Her visit to Elizabeth occasioned the first confession of faith in Jesus as the Lord, giving rise to an exultant joy. Through her hymn of

praise and humble service, Mary proclaimed the Good News of God's entry into our history.

Joseph, to whom Mary was betrothed, was thrown into utter confusion by that inexplicable event, but finally surrendered in faith and thus became the father of the child whom he did not physically generate. Like Abraham of old, he believed that nothing was impossible with God.

Jesus was born in a country that was groaning under the Roman yoke. The greed of the colonial power always invented new methods of exploitation. The census that Caesar Augustus decreed was intended for taxation. But unknowingly he was setting the scene for the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem, the city of David. It is an example of how God carries out His plan in history, fully respecting

human freedom, and bringing good out of the evil that man does with malicious intentions.

Jesus was born in a manger because his parents were denied a room in the inn. But again it was God's plan working out in history. It expresses God's option and indicates the options Jesus would make during his life, namely, the option for the poor.

When the whole world slept in darkness, the divine light entered unnoticed. Only the shepherds who kept watch outside the town were chosen to see the Light of the World and listen to the Good News of the Saviour's birth. They were despised by the Jewish leaders as unclean men. But God chose precisely these poor people. There were many learned priests and scribes in Jerusalem, waiting for

the Messiah but only the old Simeon and Anna recognized him when he entered the temple as the child of a poor couple.

When the gentiles came from far away and worshipped the child as God and Savior, Herod, the king of Israel felt threatened and tried to kill him. The innocent infants were the victims of a monarch who felt insecure of his throne because of a helpless baby lying in a manger. In the outburst of violence we can see the convulsions of the powers of evil that are threatened with destruction by the new born child. In Jesus' journey to Egypt and back, the Exodus experience is re-lived and the hopes concerning the coming of the New Moses are fulfilled.

Mary surrendered herself to the will of God revealed through the angel. In order to visit her kinswoman Elizabeth in Ain-Karim Mary set out with a caravan that was going to Jerusalem.

Look there,  
the Holy city.

How beautiful is the  
house of the Lord.

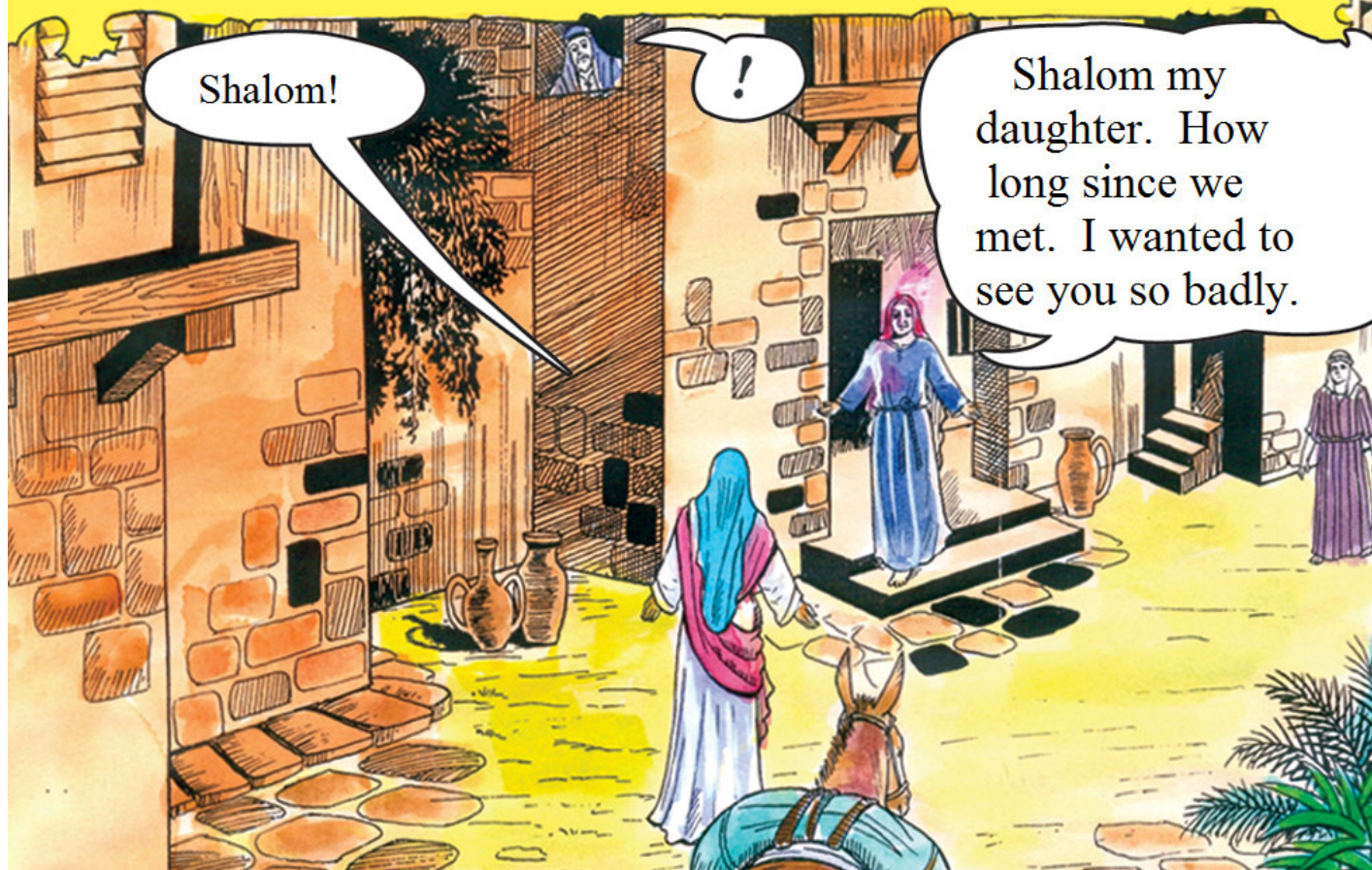
How merciful is  
the Lord who  
looks so kindly  
upon the poor  
maiden!







Mary reached Zechariah's house in Ain-karim, a small town south-west of Jerusalem.



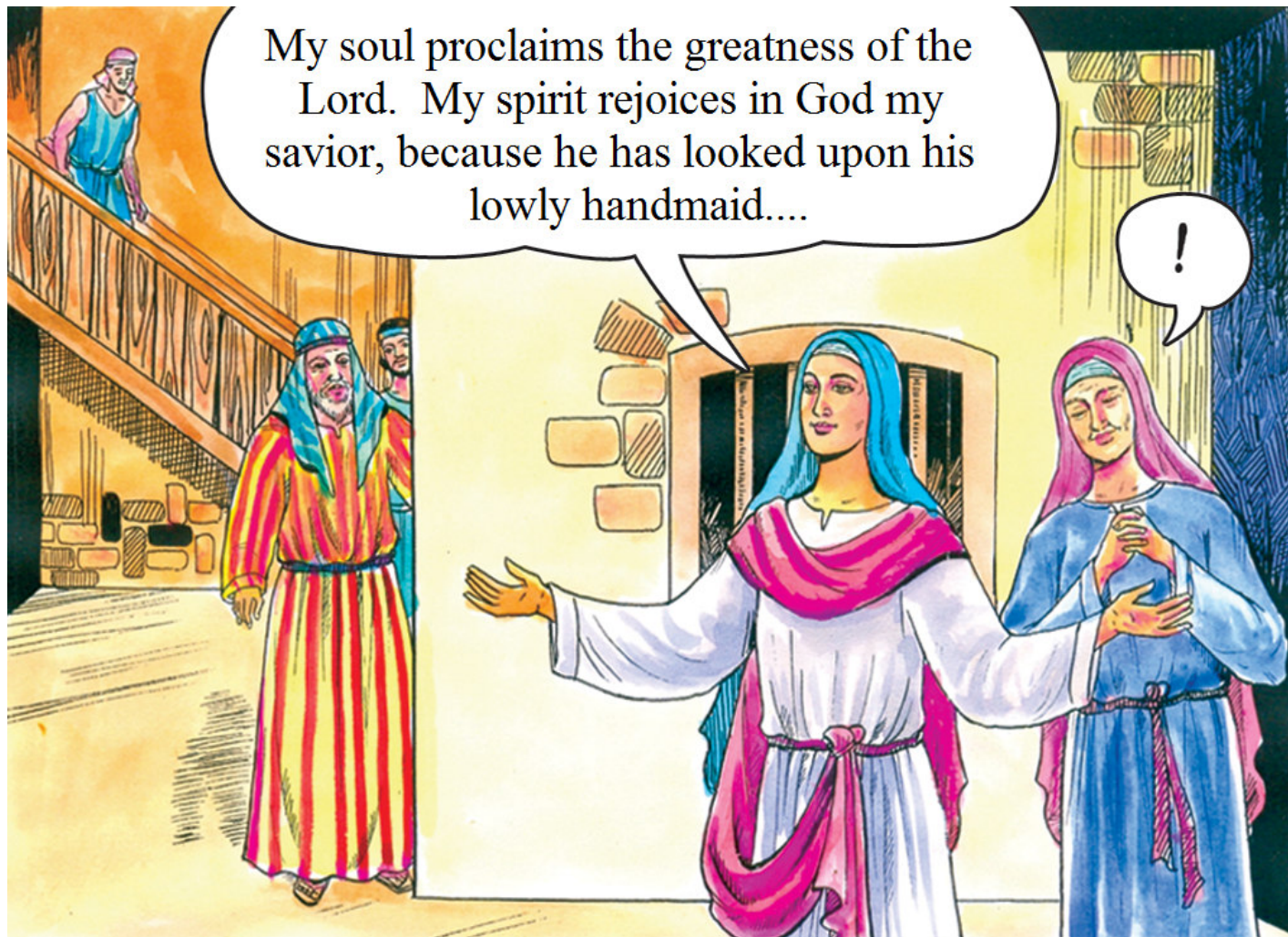
You are blessed for believing the word of God.



I am not worthy to be visited  
by the mother of my Lord!  
Even the child in my womb  
leaped for joy.



My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord. My spirit rejoices in God my savior, because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid....





He filled the hungry  
with good things and  
sent the rich empty  
away....

After the hymn of praise

Mary, come, tell me, how  
are things in Nazareth?

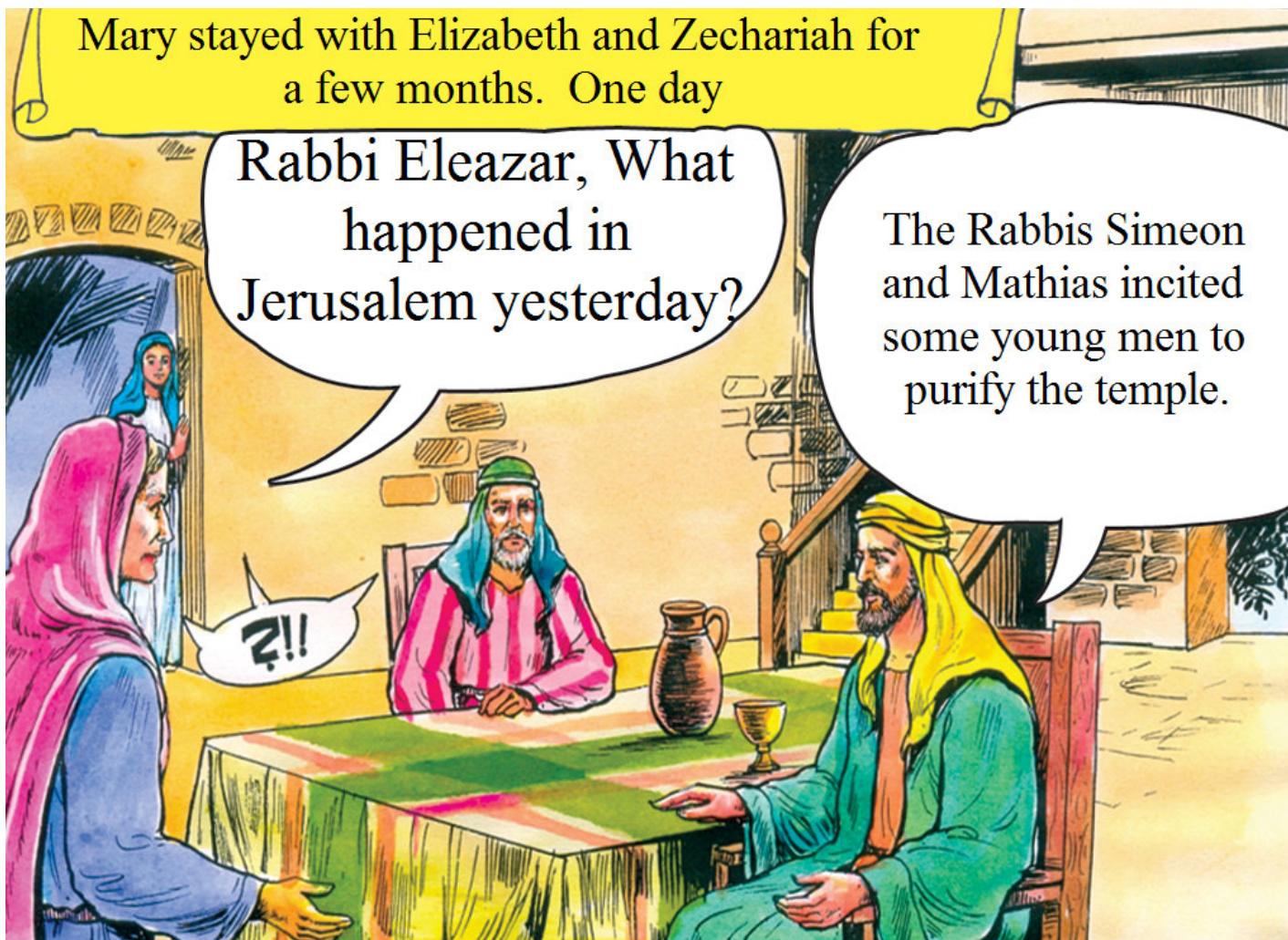


Mary stayed with Elizabeth and Zechariah for a few months. One day

Rabbi Eleazar, What happened in Jerusalem yesterday?

The Rabbis Simeon and Mathias incited some young men to purify the temple.

?!?



Herod had placed a golden eagle in the temple as a votive offering. Some young men pulled it down.

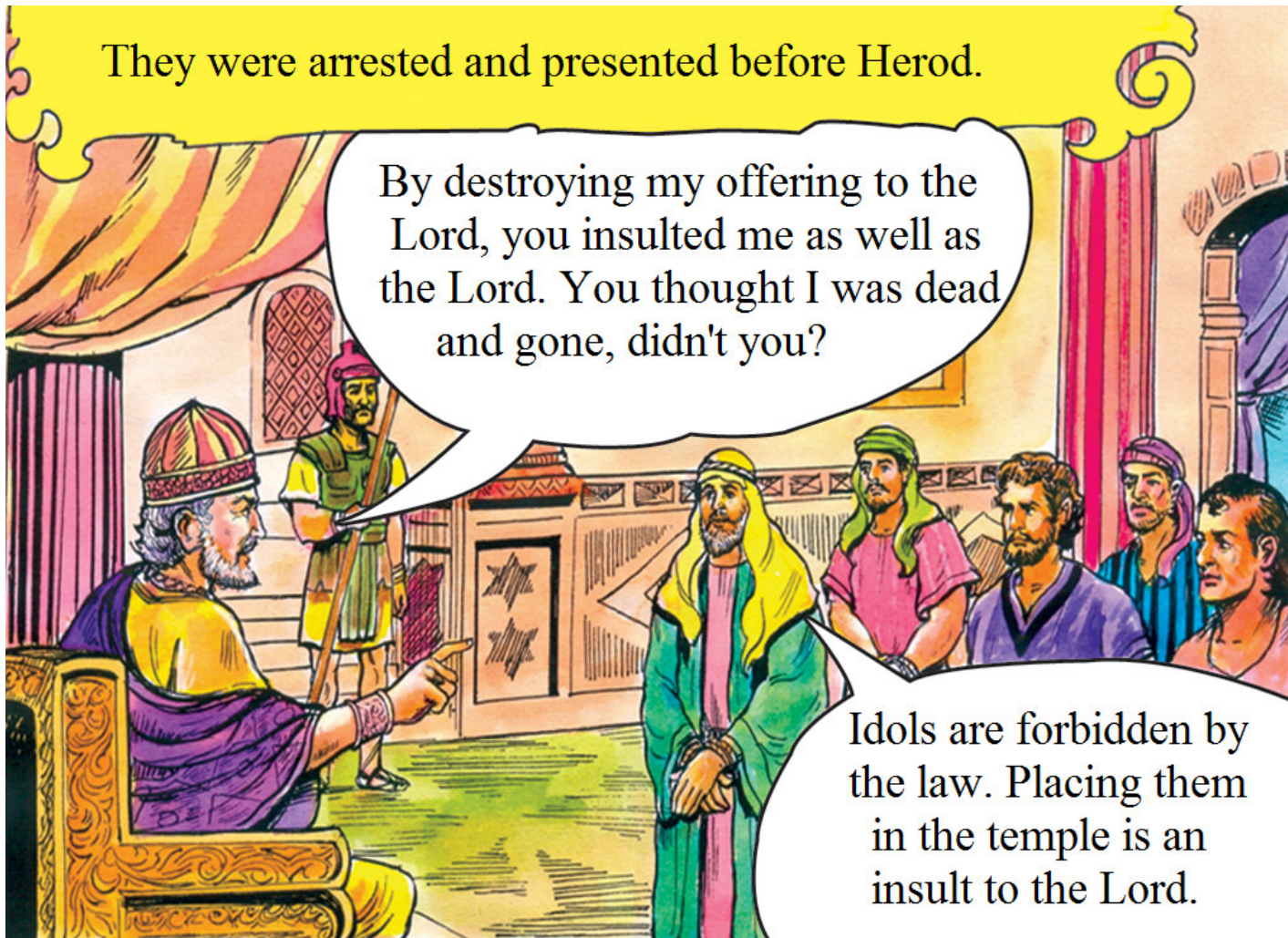




They were arrested and presented before Herod.

By destroying my offering to the Lord, you insulted me as well as the Lord. You thought I was dead and gone, didn't you?

Idols are forbidden by the law. Placing them in the temple is an insult to the Lord.



In my country what I decide is the law. Guards! Tie them to the trees and burn them alive.



He is mad. Every day he  
invents new methods of  
torture.



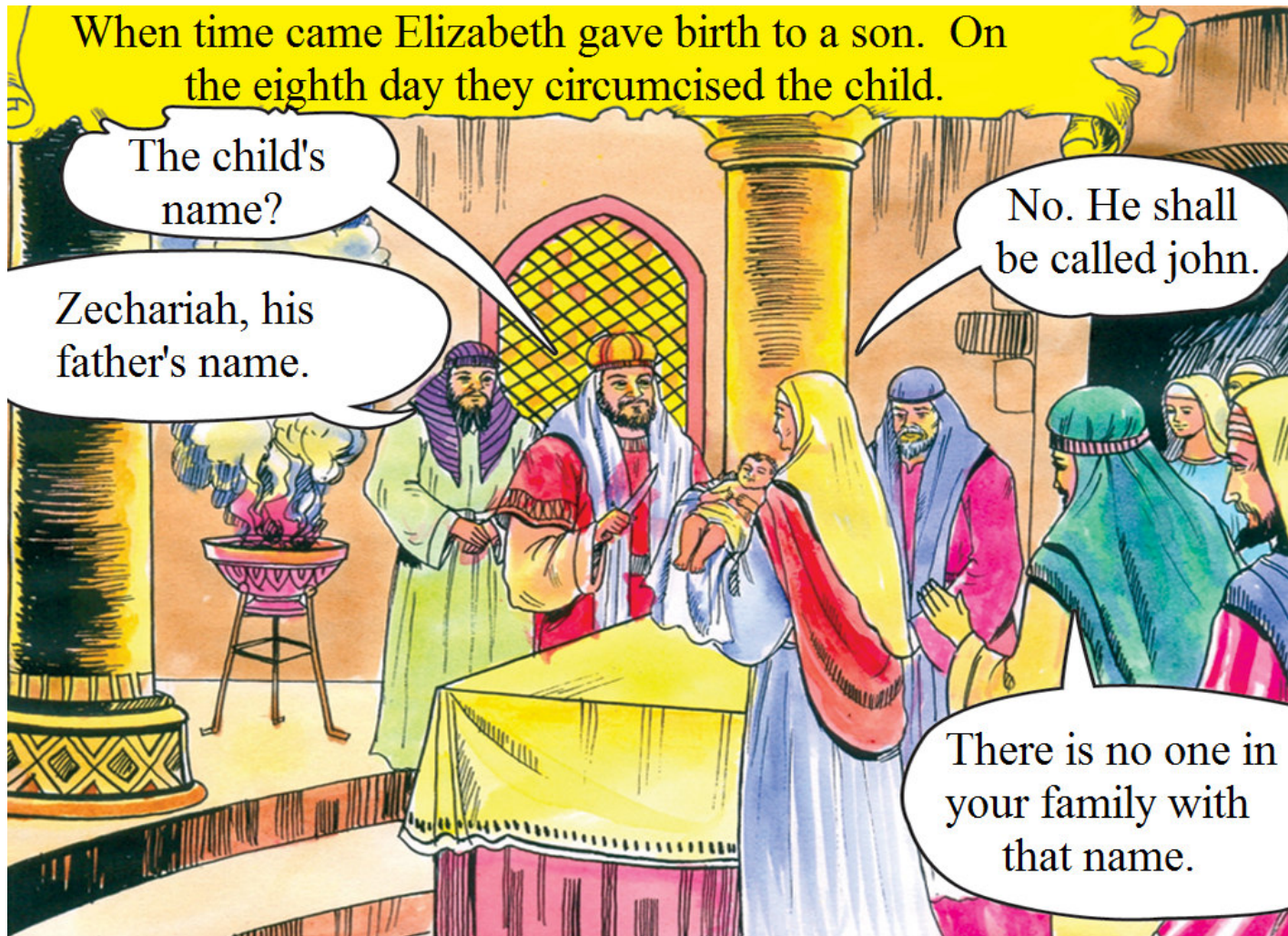
When time came Elizabeth gave birth to a son. On the eighth day they circumcised the child.

The child's name?

Zechariah, his father's name.

No. He shall be called John.

There is no one in your family with that name.



They asked Zechariah



The power of speech returned to Zechariah.

Blessed be the Lord God of  
Israel for he has remembered  
his promise.



You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High. You will go before the Lord to prepare the way for him.

Miracle! Barren woman delivers, the dumb speaks. What will become of this child!



A few days later Mary bids farewell.

Mary, I am so glad you came.  
It was a great help to me.  
Now go in peace, my  
daughter.

I am afraid. Would  
anyone believe me?  
What will Joseph  
do?

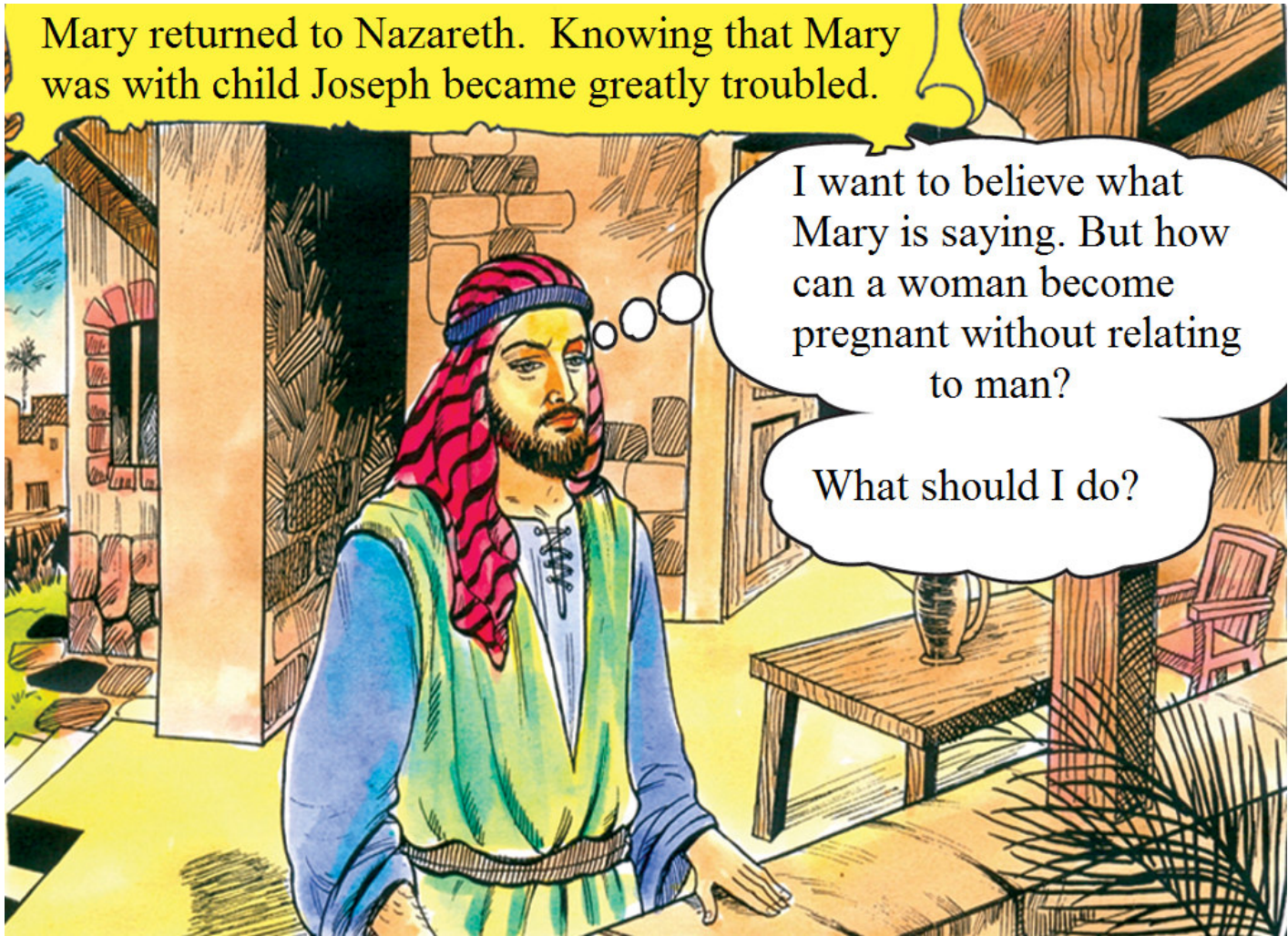




Trust in the Lord. He  
will protect you.



Mary returned to Nazareth. Knowing that Mary was with child Joseph became greatly troubled.



I want to believe what Mary is saying. But how can a woman become pregnant without relating to man?

What should I do?

The law of Moses is clear. If an engaged woman becomes pregnant at her father's house, before marriage the man has the right to divorce her.



He must submit a written declaration to the effect. Then she must be tried in public, and if found guilty, must be stoned to death.



Hand over Mary to be stoned? I can't, but how can I accept her as my wife?



O Lord! You know everything.  
Show me the way.



I can neither accept her nor reject her. I know, I'll leave the town in secret. Mary won't be tried.



Lord, I do not know what else to do. I want no part in this.

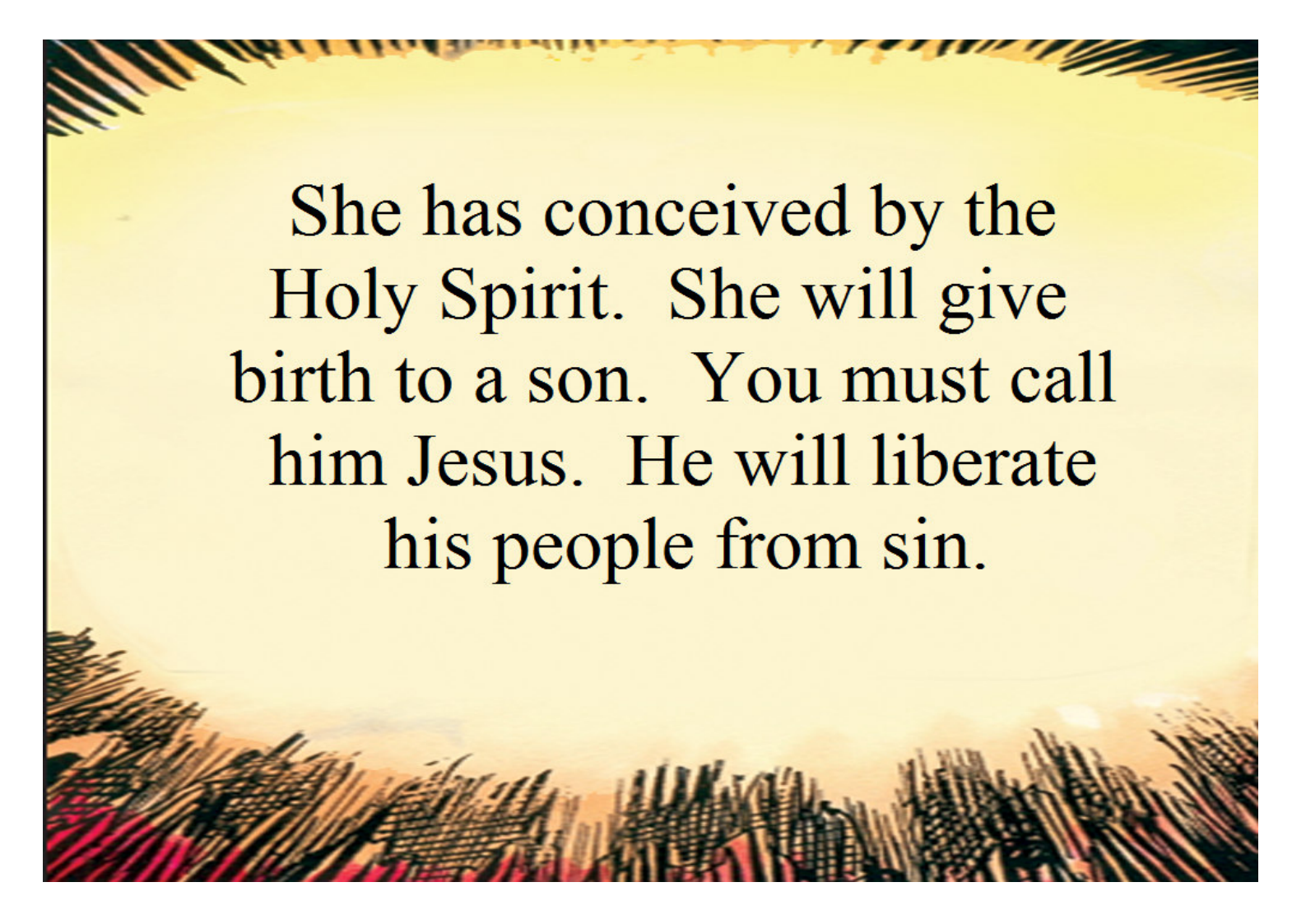




That night God sent his angel to Joseph.

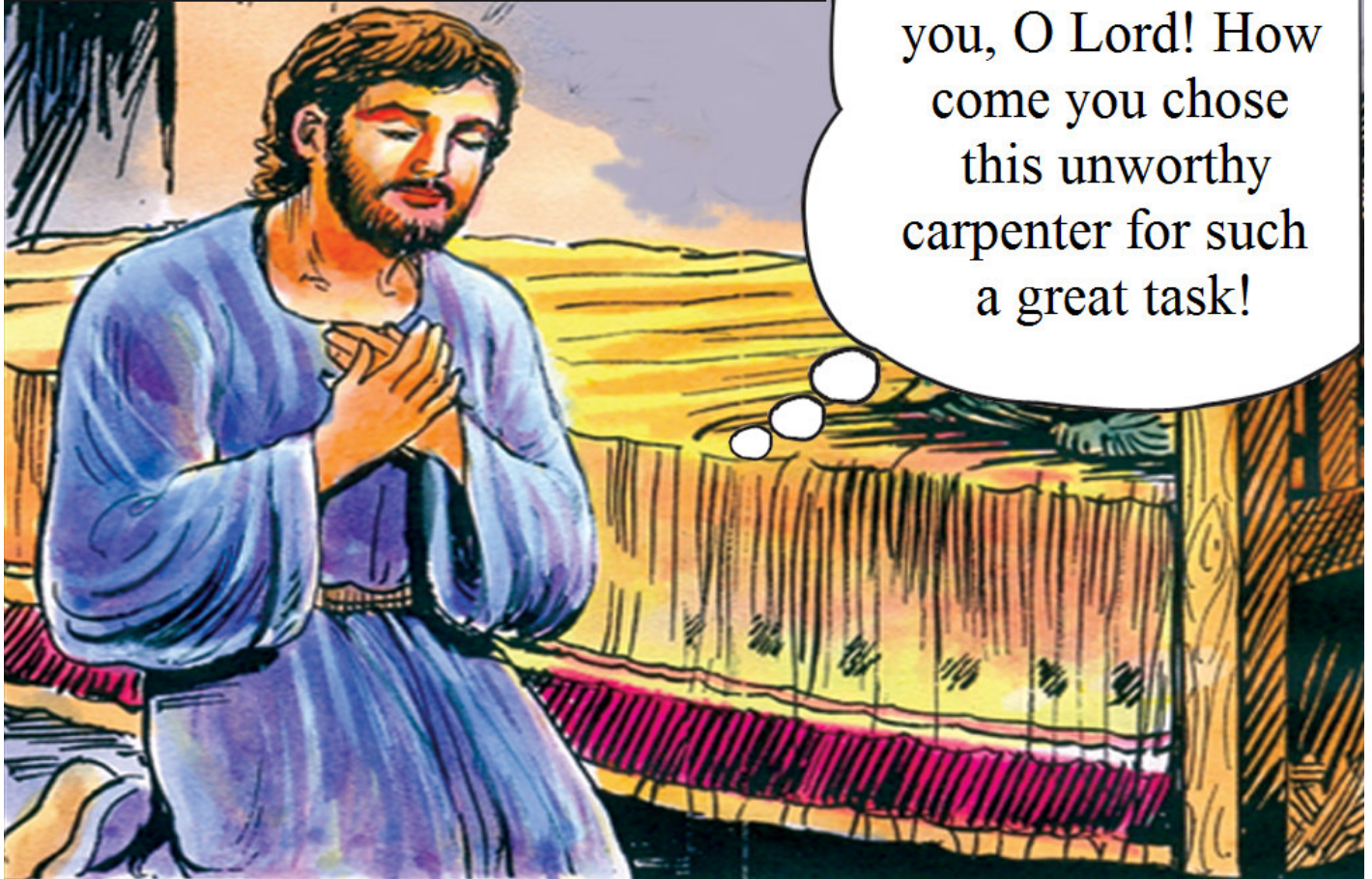
Joseph, Son of David,  
do not be afraid to  
accept Mary as your  
wife.





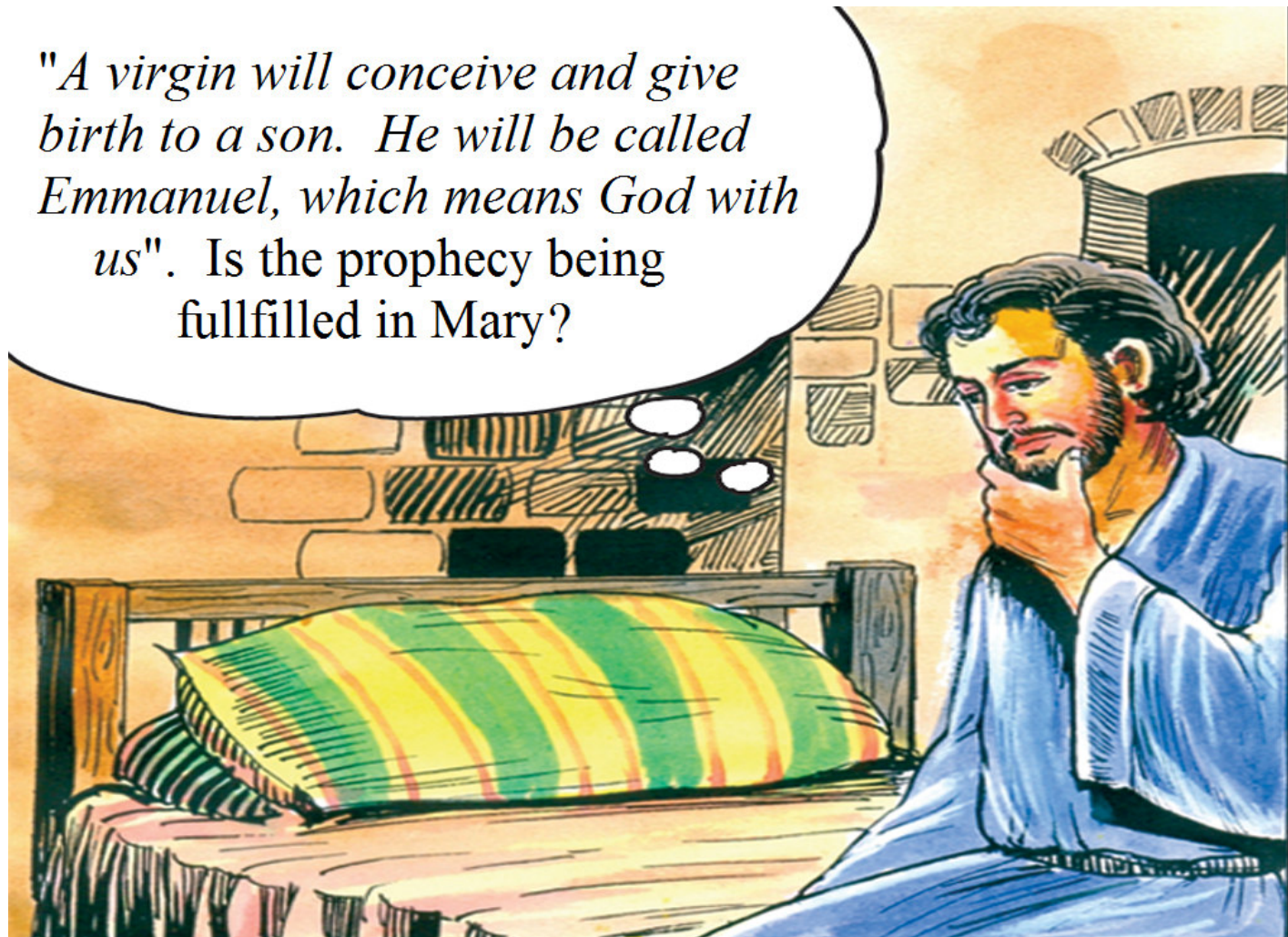
She has conceived by the  
Holy Spirit. She will give  
birth to a son. You must call  
him Jesus. He will liberate  
his people from sin.

Joseph woke up

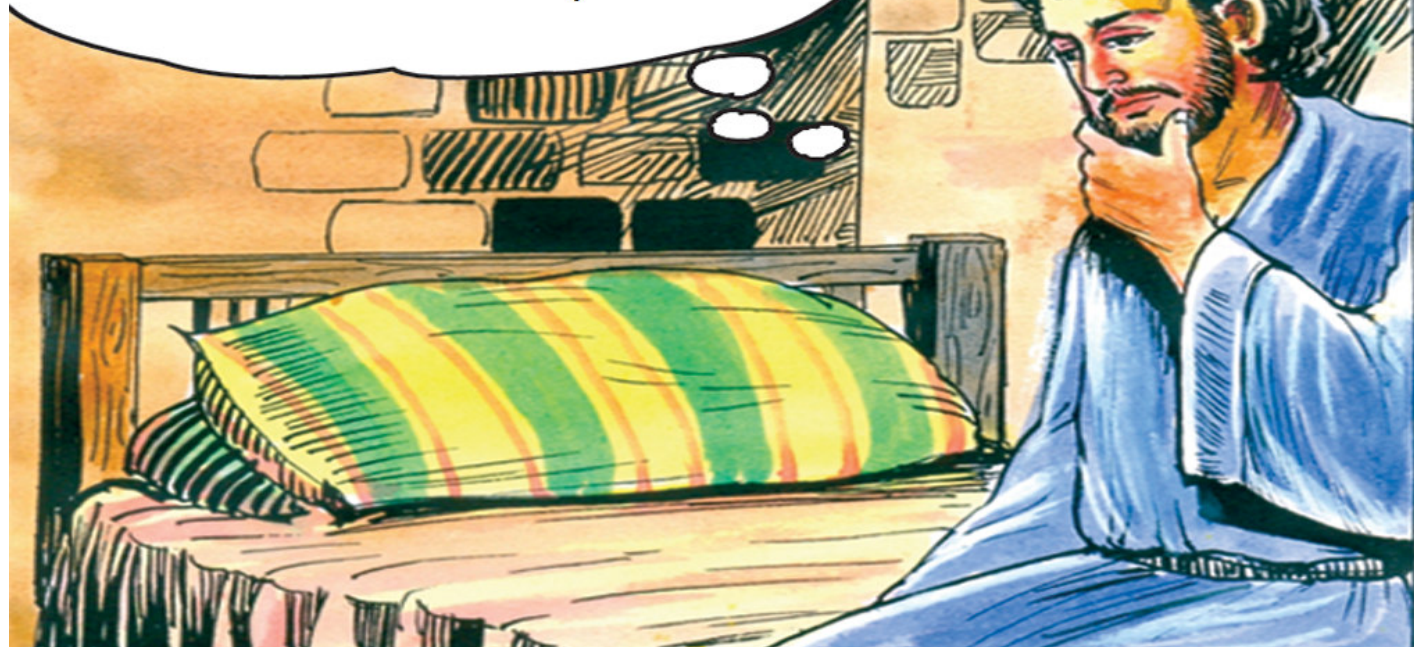


Praise and glory to you, O Lord! How come you chose this unworthy carpenter for such a great task!

*"A virgin will conceive and give birth to a son. He will be called Emmanuel, which means God with us". Is the prophecy being fulfilled in Mary?*



*"A virgin will conceive and give birth to a son. He will be called Emmanuel, which means God with us". Is the prophecy being fulfilled in Mary.*

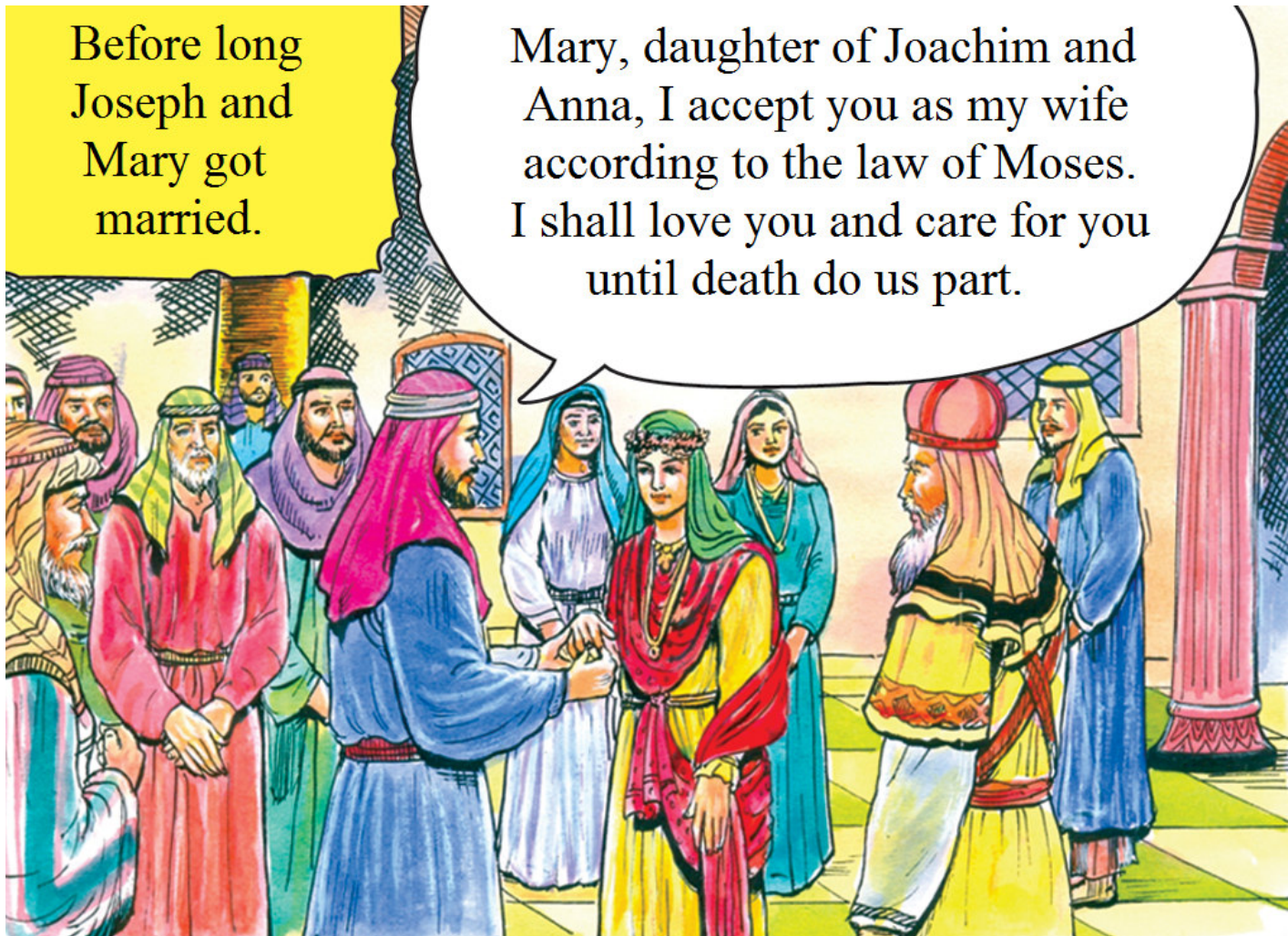


Lord, here is  
your humble  
servant. I  
offer my life  
to you.



Before long  
Joseph and  
Mary got  
married.

Mary, daughter of Joachim and  
Anna, I accept you as my wife  
according to the law of Moses.  
I shall love you and care for you  
until death do us part.



## One day at Joseph's workshop

Joseph, did you hear? The Romans want to count us.

Soldiers are announcing it in every village.

!






They want to find out how strong we are.

No. They are going to impose tax on every head.





We mustn't give in.  
Hezekiah is organizing a revolt.

We all must take up  
arms. Wish the  
Messiah would come to  
lead us in battle!

!

Many are of the opinion that Hezekiah is the Messiah. He has already started fighting against Herod and the Romans.

The prophets didn't say that the Messiah would come with the sword.

Every true Israelite must join him and break the yoke of Rome.

!?



He will be a king of peace. He will  
beat swords into ploughshares and  
spears into sickles.

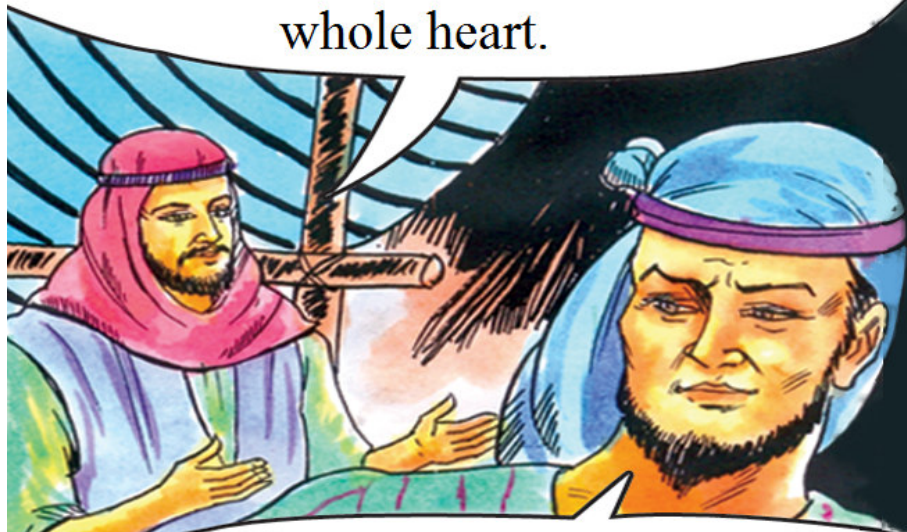
That is a day-dream of the  
cowards. We must turn the  
sickles into spears.

!





What happened to the Maccabees who took up the sword? True freedom is not achieved by the edge of the sword. We must turn to the Lord with our whole heart.

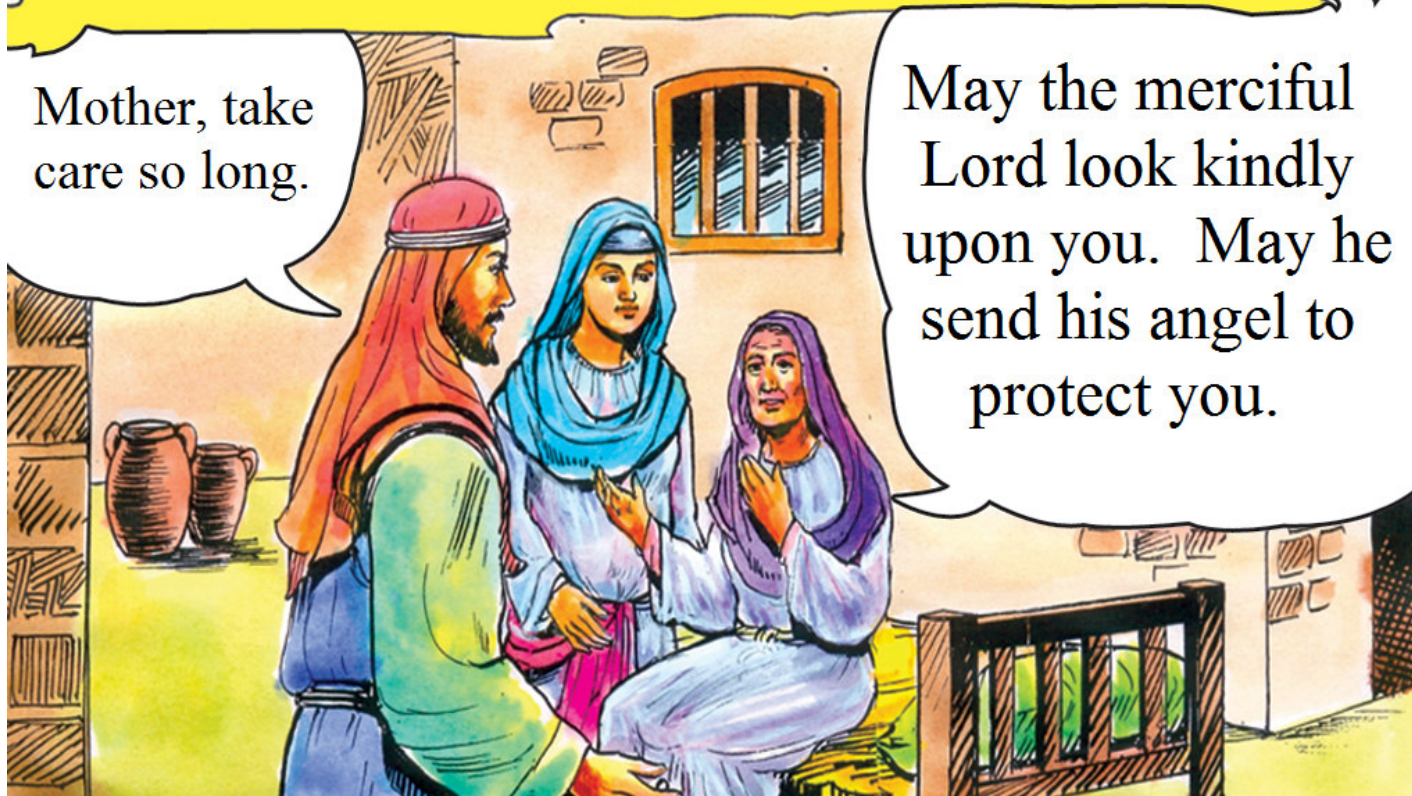


We are taking the sword to prepare the way for the Messiah. You can go on dreaming of conversion.

As demanded by the decree of Caesar Augustus, Joseph decided to go to his home town Bethlehem to register his name. They took of Mary's mother, Anna.

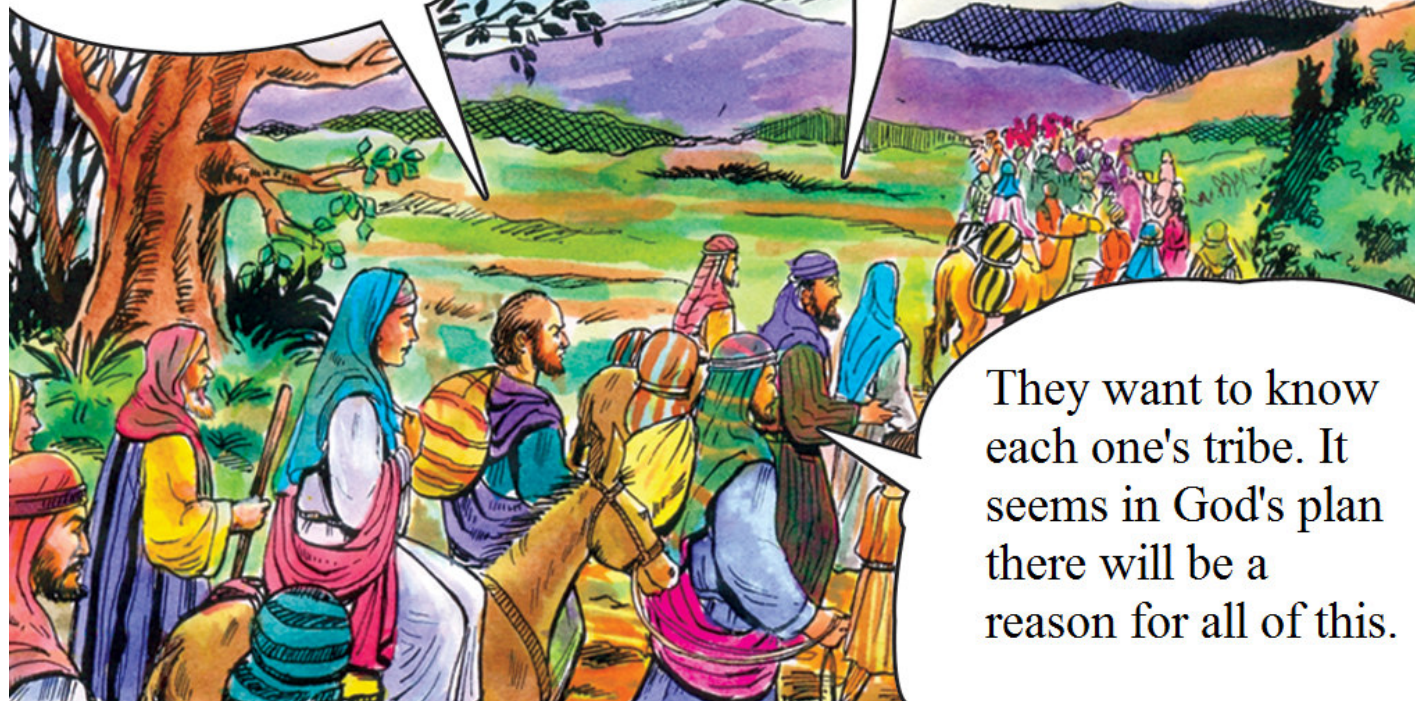
Mother, take care so long.

May the merciful Lord look kindly upon you. May he send his angel to protect you.



This is insulting! The Caesar is forcing tens of thousands of people to wander up and down Palestine.

Why can't he count us in our own places?



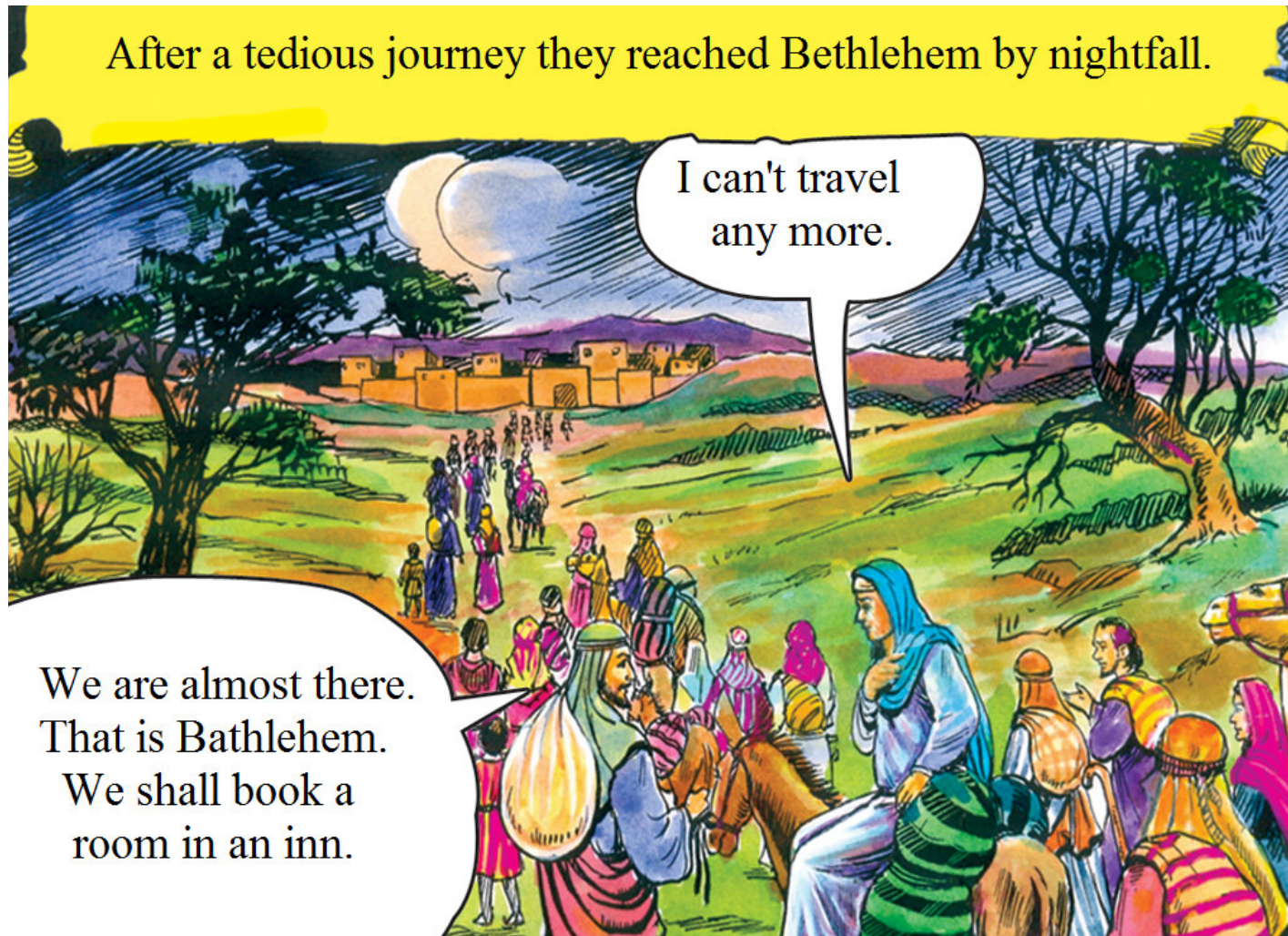
They want to know each one's tribe. It seems in God's plan there will be a reason for all of this.



After a tedious journey they reached Bethlehem by nightfall.

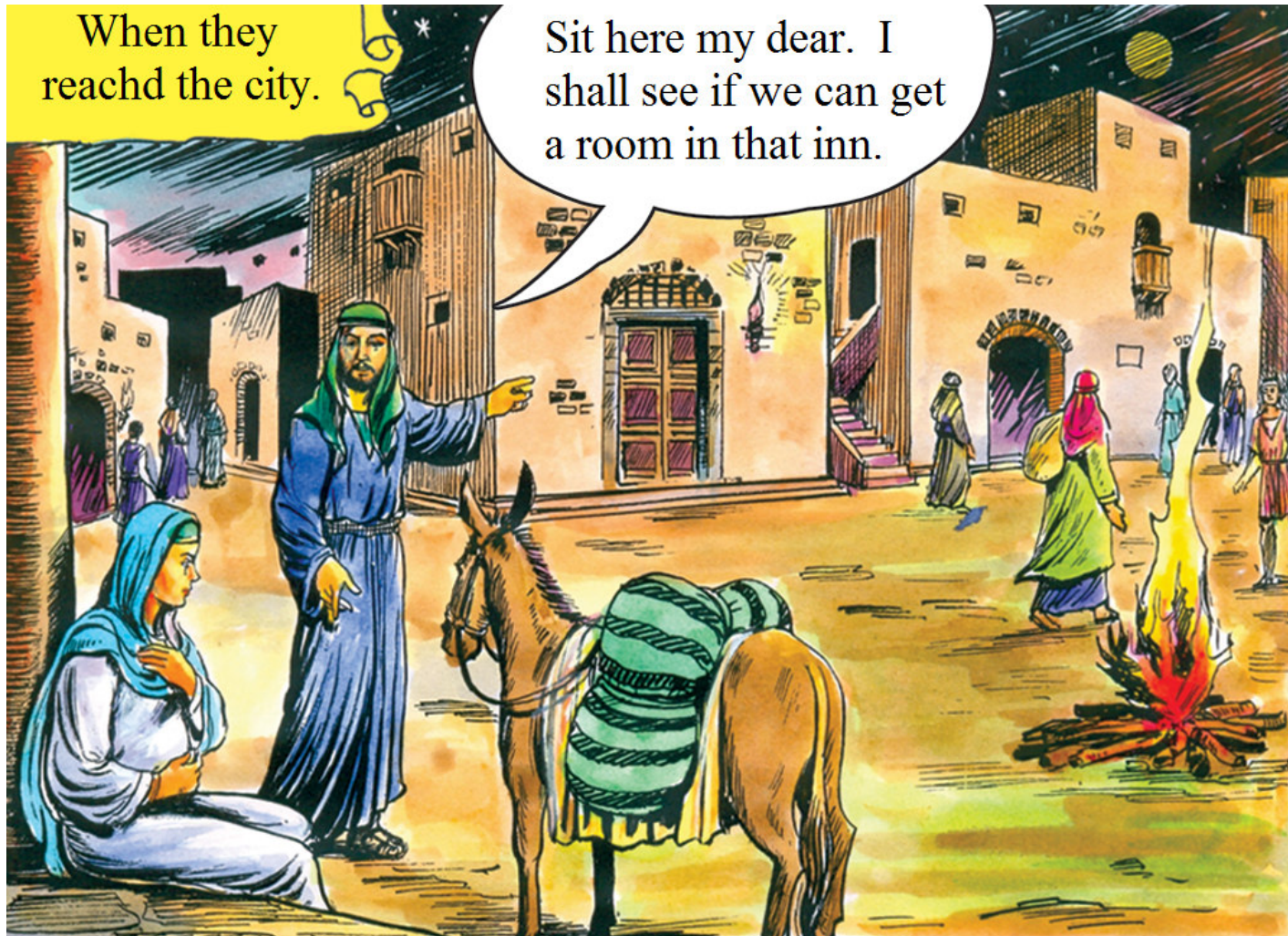
I can't travel  
any more.

We are almost there.  
That is Bathlehem.  
We shall book a  
room in an inn.



When they  
reached the city.

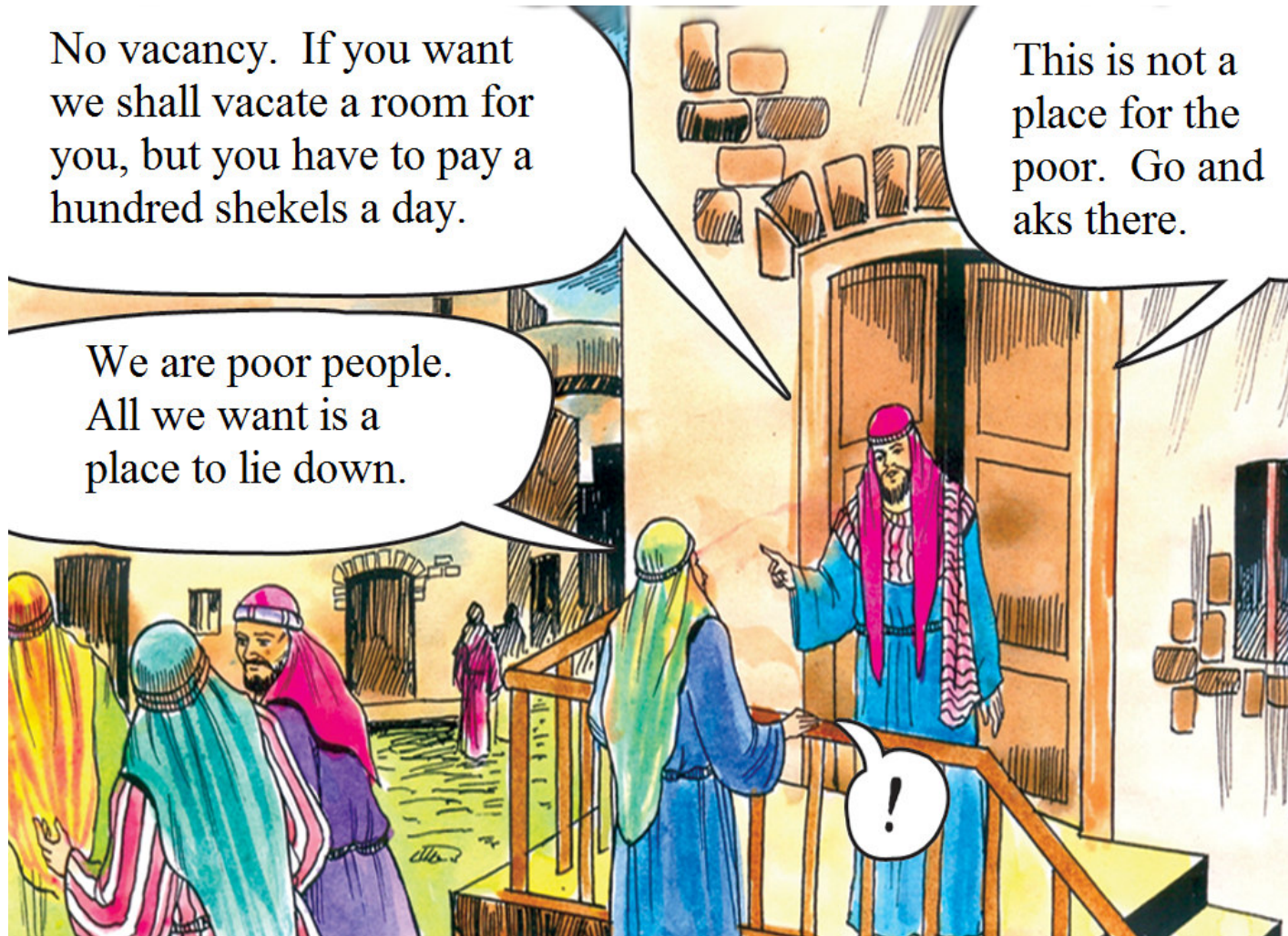
Sit here my dear. I  
shall see if we can get  
a room in that inn.



No vacancy. If you want we shall vacate a room for you, but you have to pay a hundred shekels a day.

This is not a place for the poor. Go and ask there.

We are poor people. All we want is a place to lie down.



## When Joseph was gone

O my God! Who  
will give us a room.  
We have no money.

Lord of the  
universe, is your son  
going to be born on  
the street?

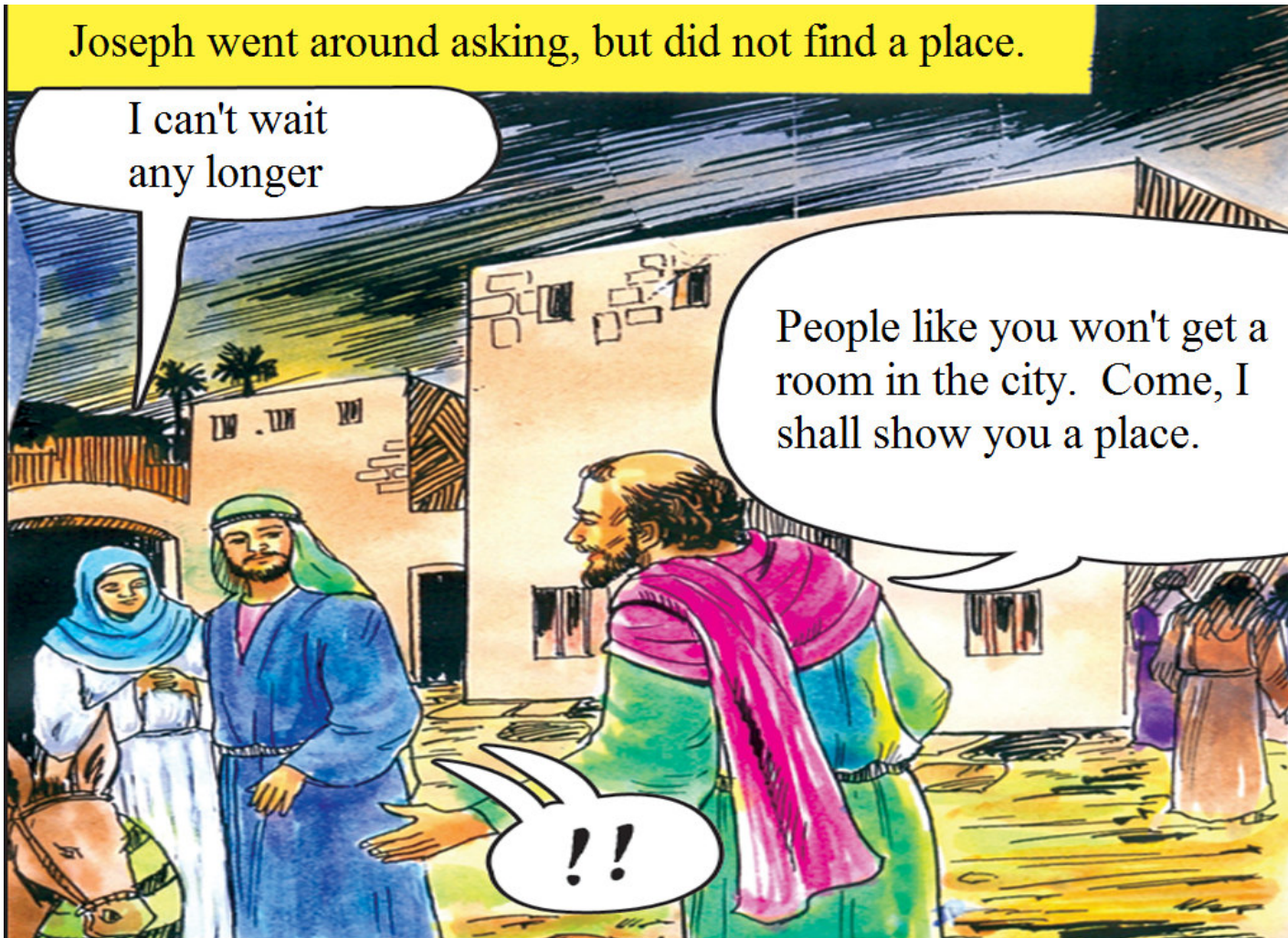


Joseph went around asking, but did not find a place.

I can't wait  
any longer

People like you won't get a  
room in the city. Come, I  
shall show you a place.

!!



He lead them to a spot outside the city.

This is not a house, but a  
cattle shelter, you can use  
a part of it.  
Come on Joseph, let's  
clean it up a little.

May the Lord bless you!  
We shall never forget  
this kindness.



O my Lord, why all of this?  
Who can comprehend your  
plans! May your will be  
done.

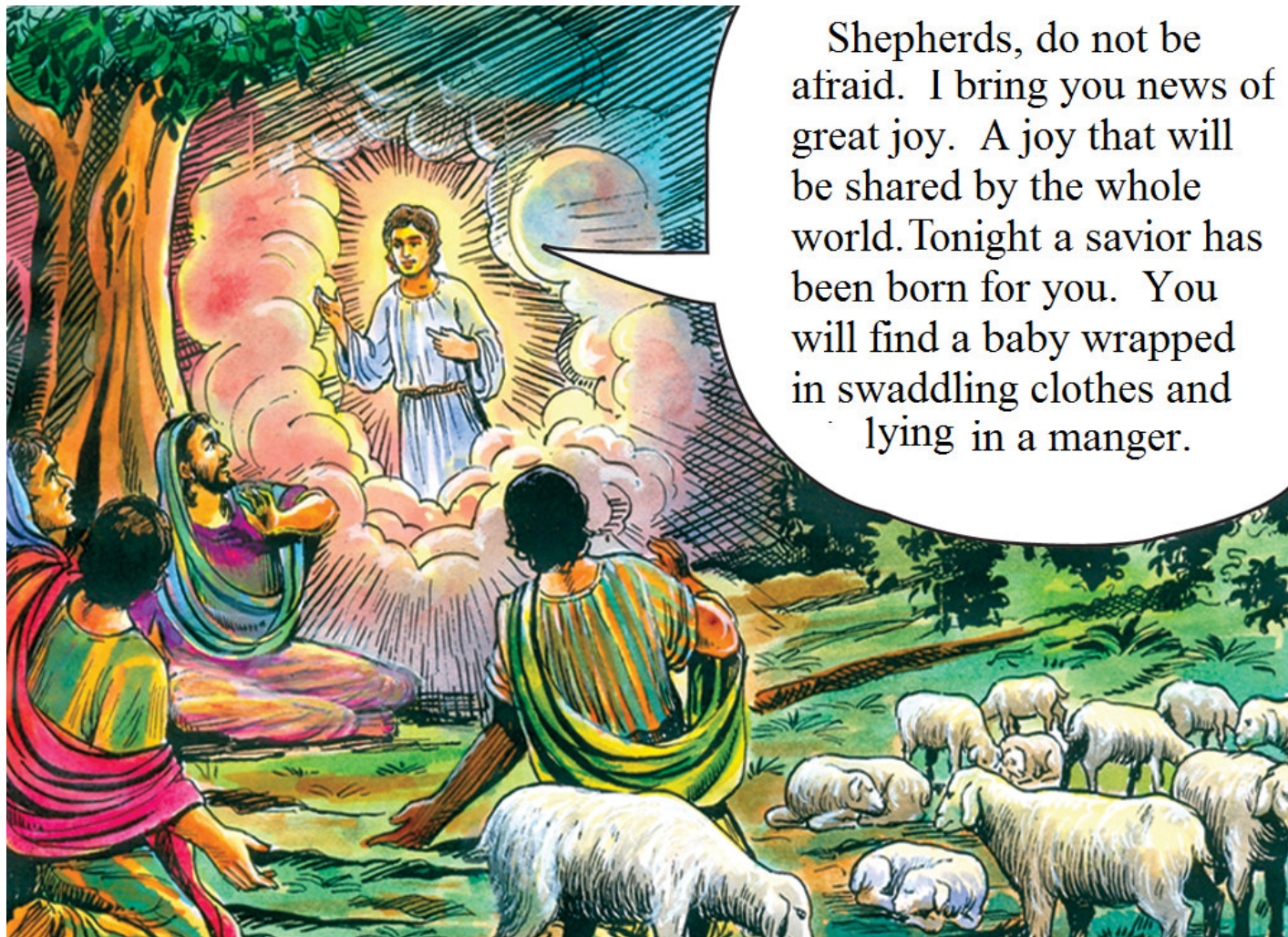


In that area there were some shepherds keeping watch over their sheep.

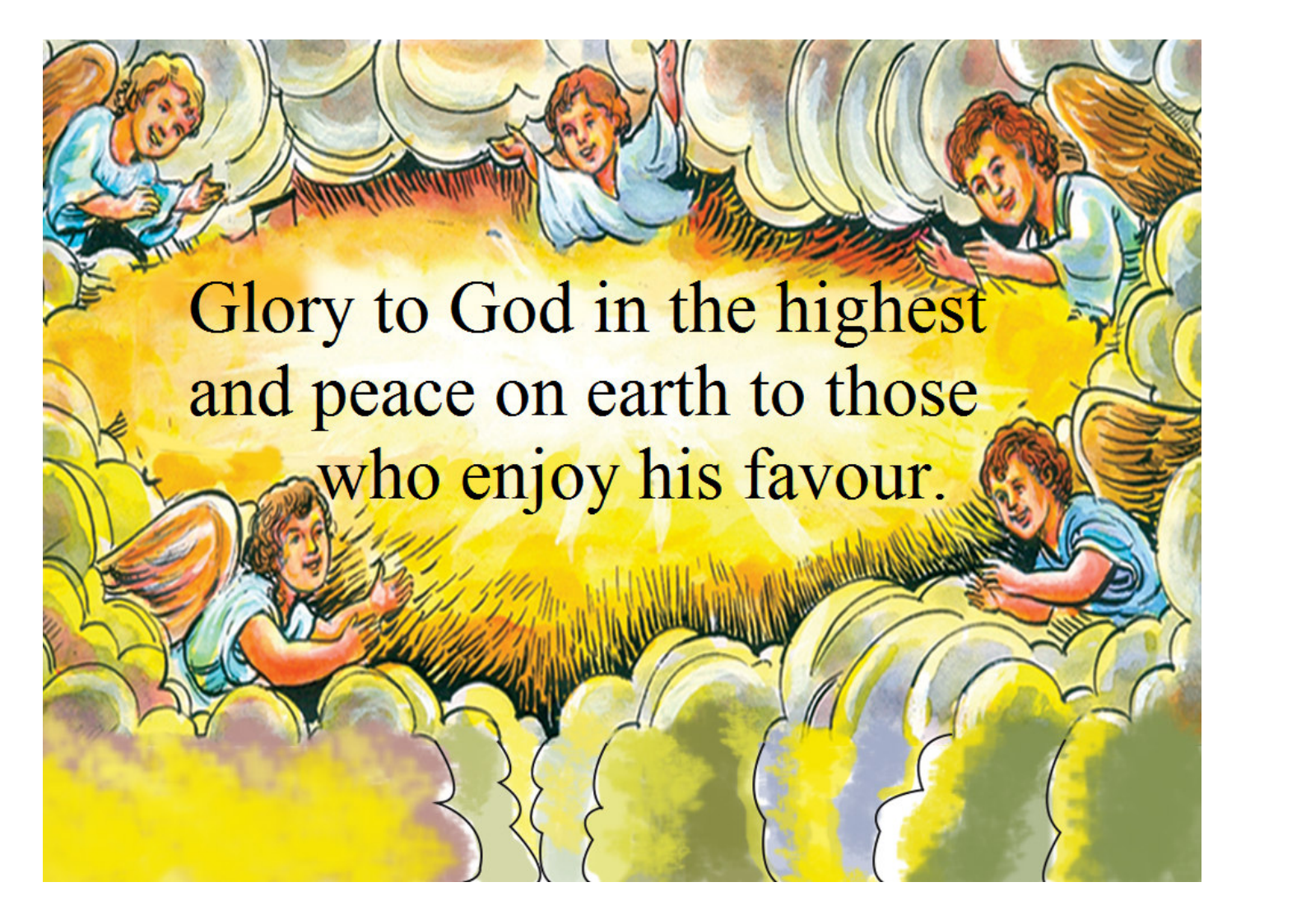
Aye, Jacob, look, what a light. Get up, something is going to happen.







Shepherds, do not be afraid. I bring you news of great joy. A joy that will be shared by the whole world. Tonight a savior has been born for you. You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

An illustration of a heavenly scene with four angels. The angels are depicted with large, feathered wings and are wearing light blue robes. They are positioned around a central, bright yellow and orange light source, possibly representing the sun or a divine presence. The background is filled with soft, white and yellow clouds. The overall atmosphere is one of joy and divine light. The text is centered over the light source.

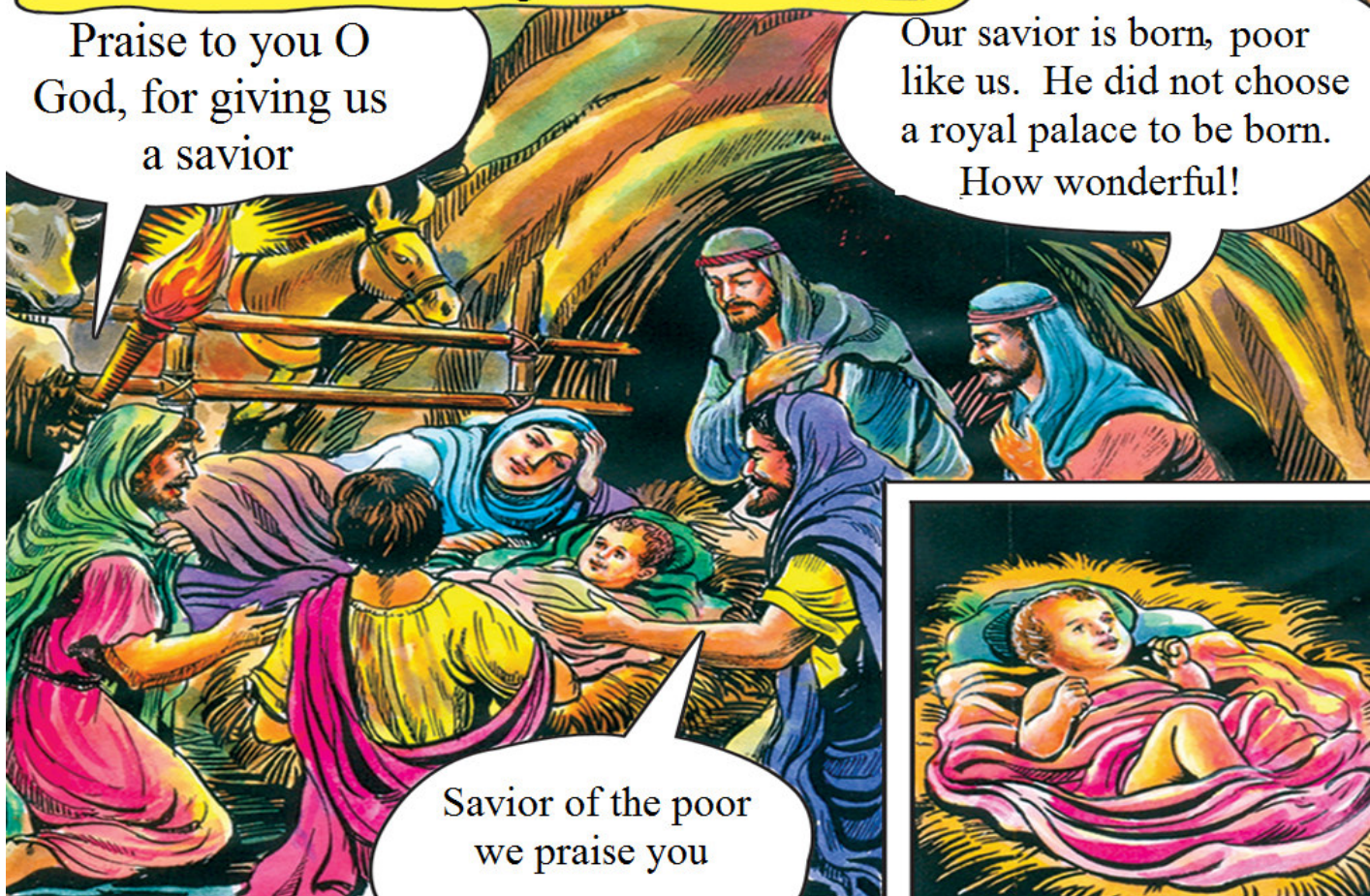
Glory to God in the highest  
and peace on earth to those  
who enjoy his favour.

When the angels disappeared the shepherds went looking for the savior.

Praise to you O  
God, for giving us  
a savior

Our savior is born, poor  
like us. He did not choose  
a royal palace to be born.  
How wonderful!

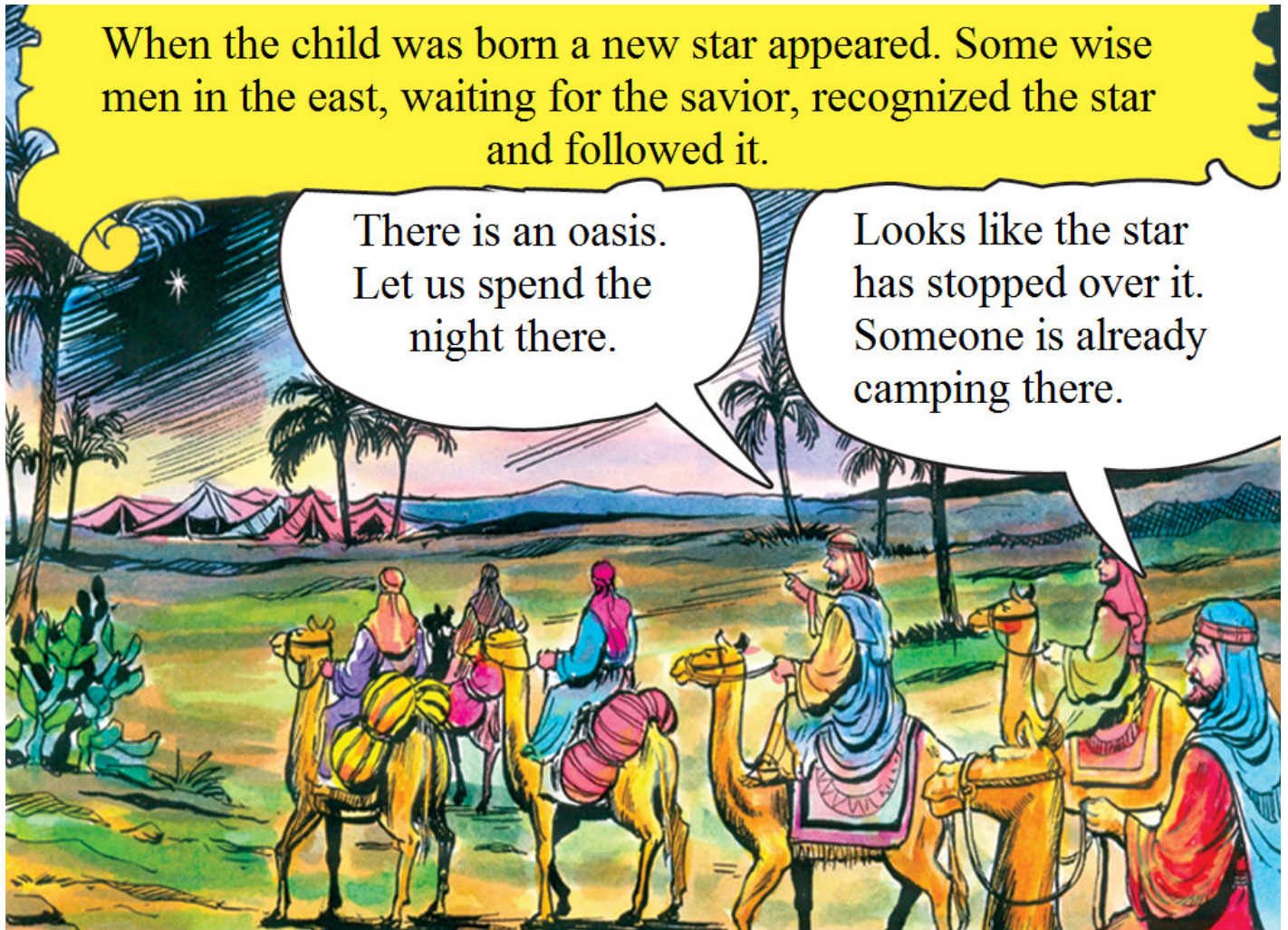
Savior of the poor  
we praise you



When the child was born a new star appeared. Some wise men in the east, waiting for the savior, recognized the star and followed it.

There is an oasis.  
Let us spend the  
night there.

Looks like the star  
has stopped over it.  
Someone is already  
camping there.

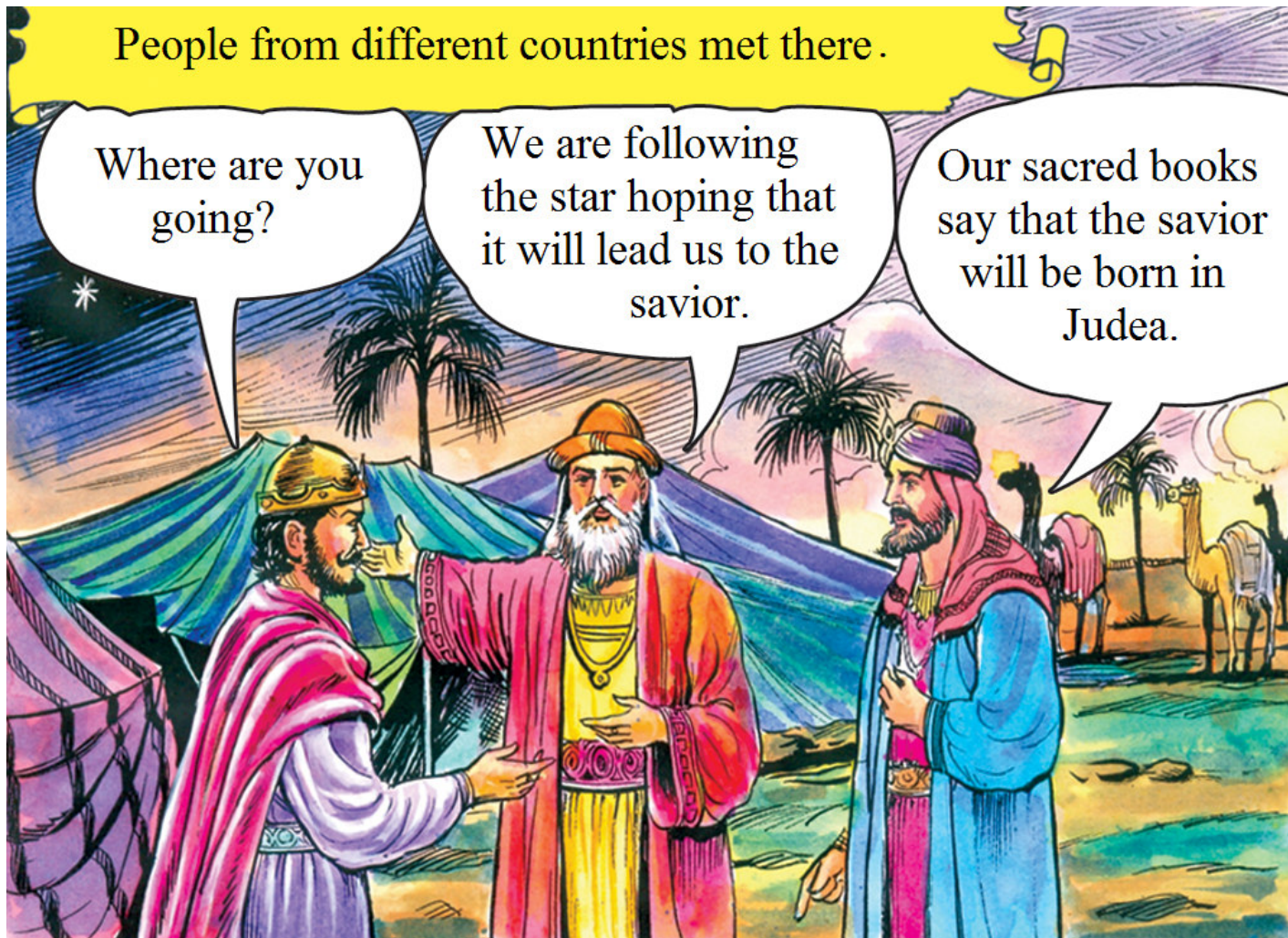


People from different countries met there .

Where are you going?

We are following the star hoping that it will lead us to the savior.

Our sacred books say that the savior will be born in Judea.

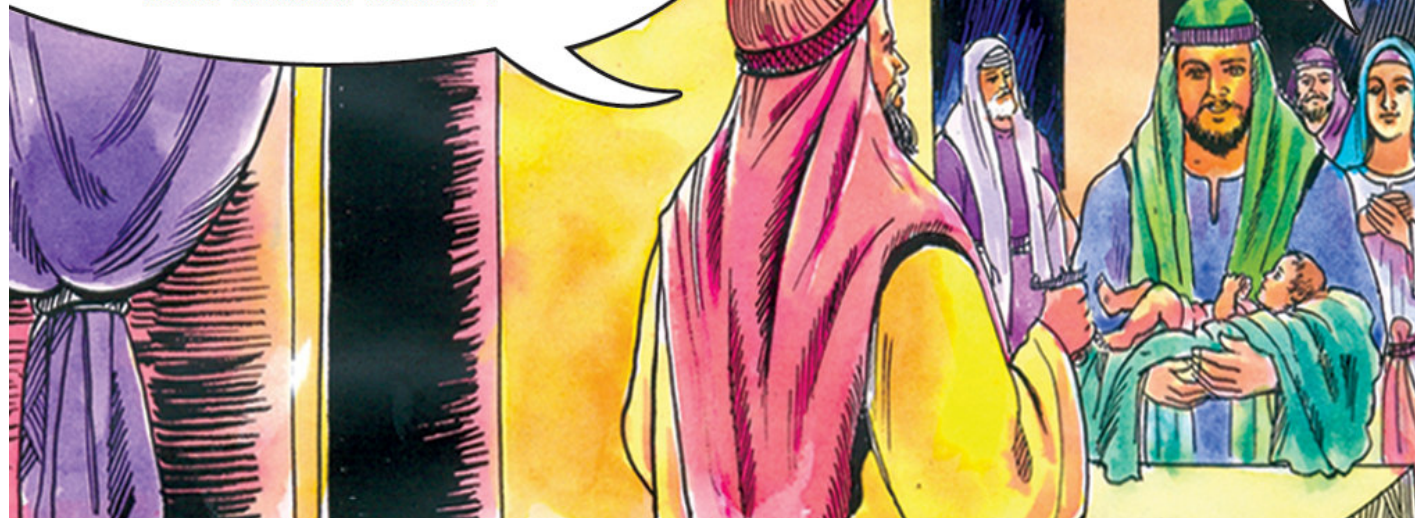


On the eighth day they circumcised the child.

This is the sign in flesh of the covenant the Lord has made with our father Abraham. By this the child becomes an heir to the covenant and a member of the chosen people.  
The child's name?

Jesus shall be his name.

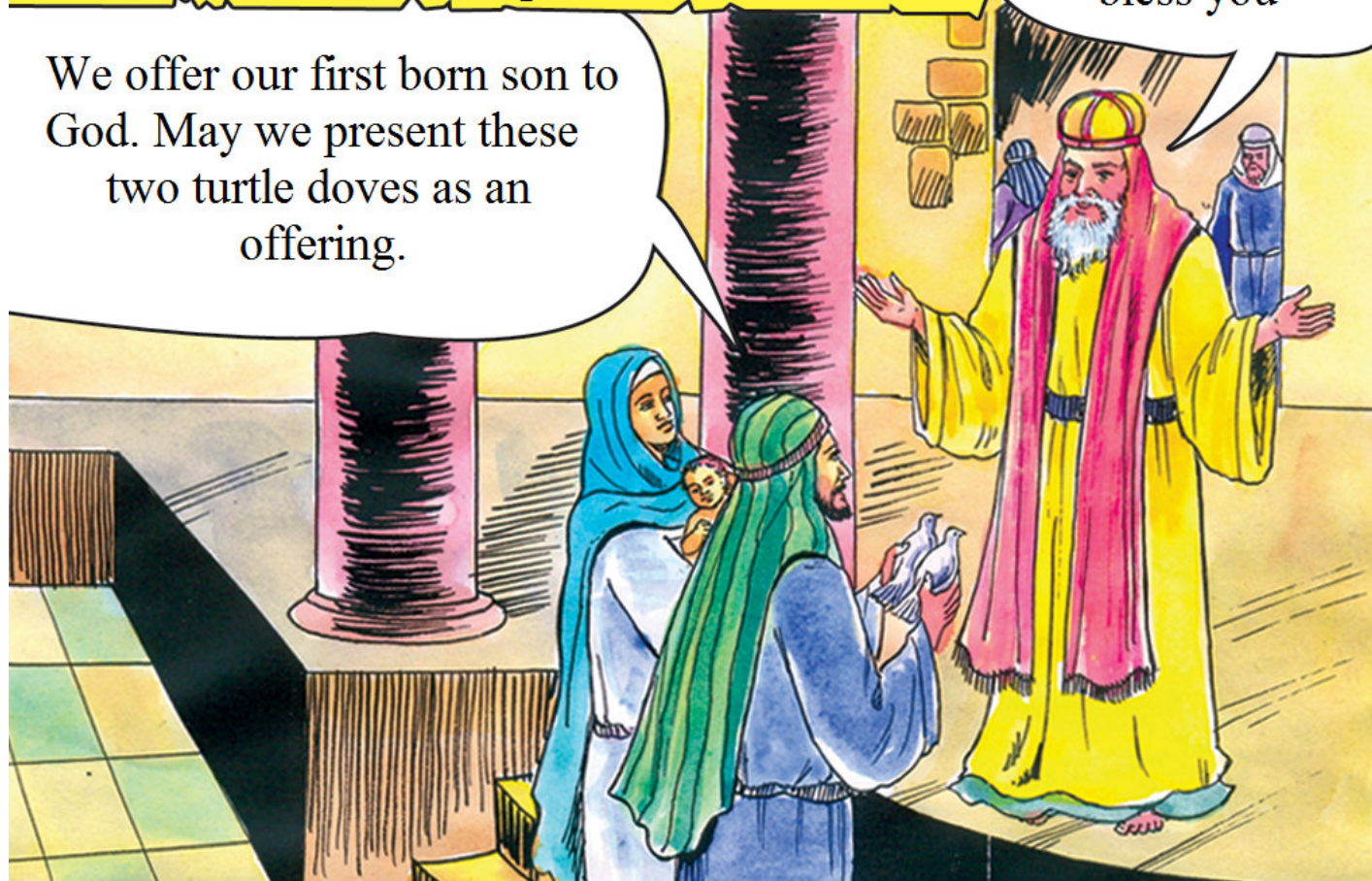
!



On the fortieth day they presented the baby  
in the temple.

May God  
bless you

We offer our first born son to  
God. May we present these  
two turtle doves as an  
offering.



An old man called Simeon took the baby in his hands

Praise to you O Lord for you have allowed me to see the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations.



?!

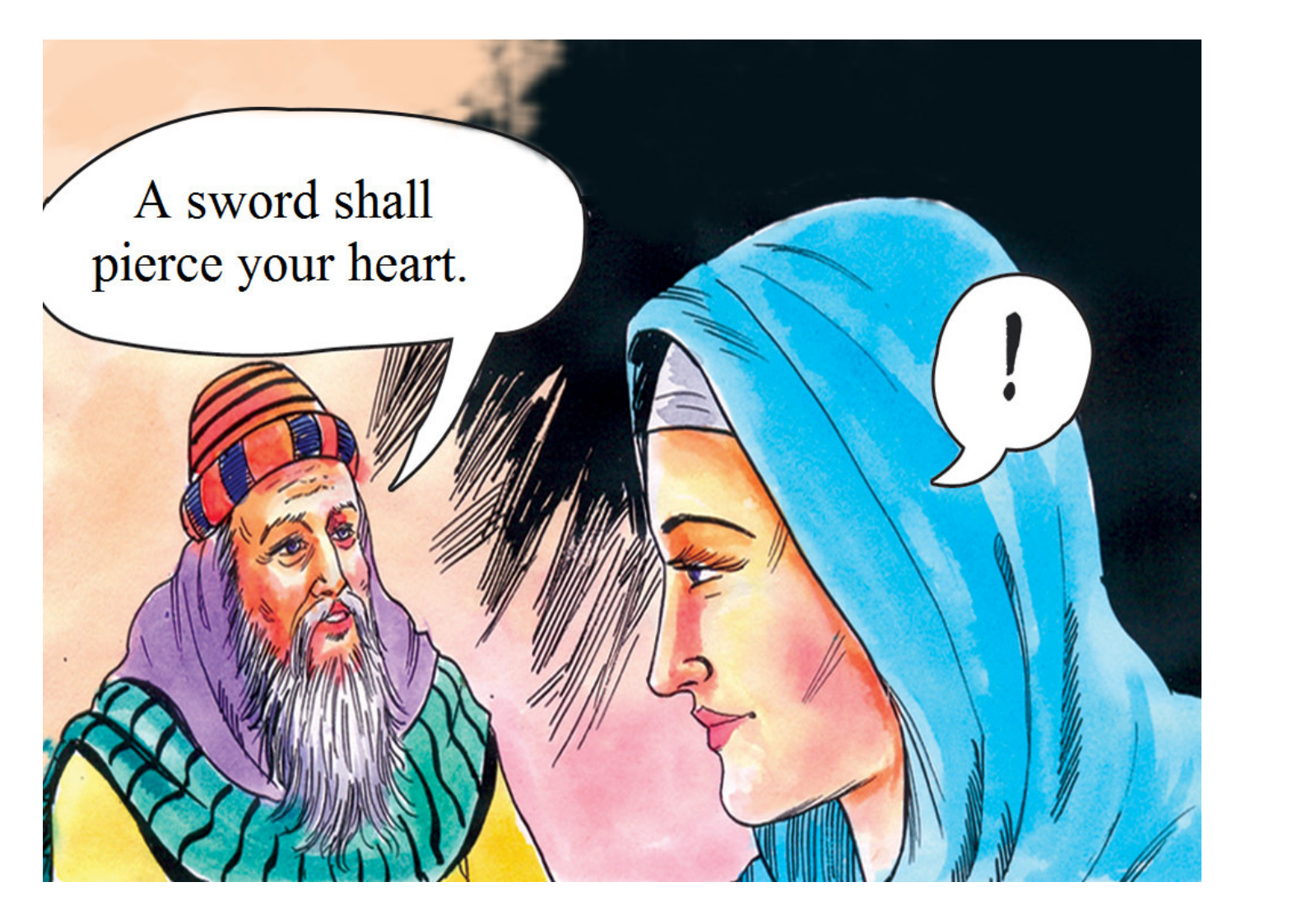
!!





This child is destined for the raise and fall of many in Israel. He will be a sign that is rejected so that the secret thoughts of man may be laid bare.





A sword shall  
pierce your heart.

!

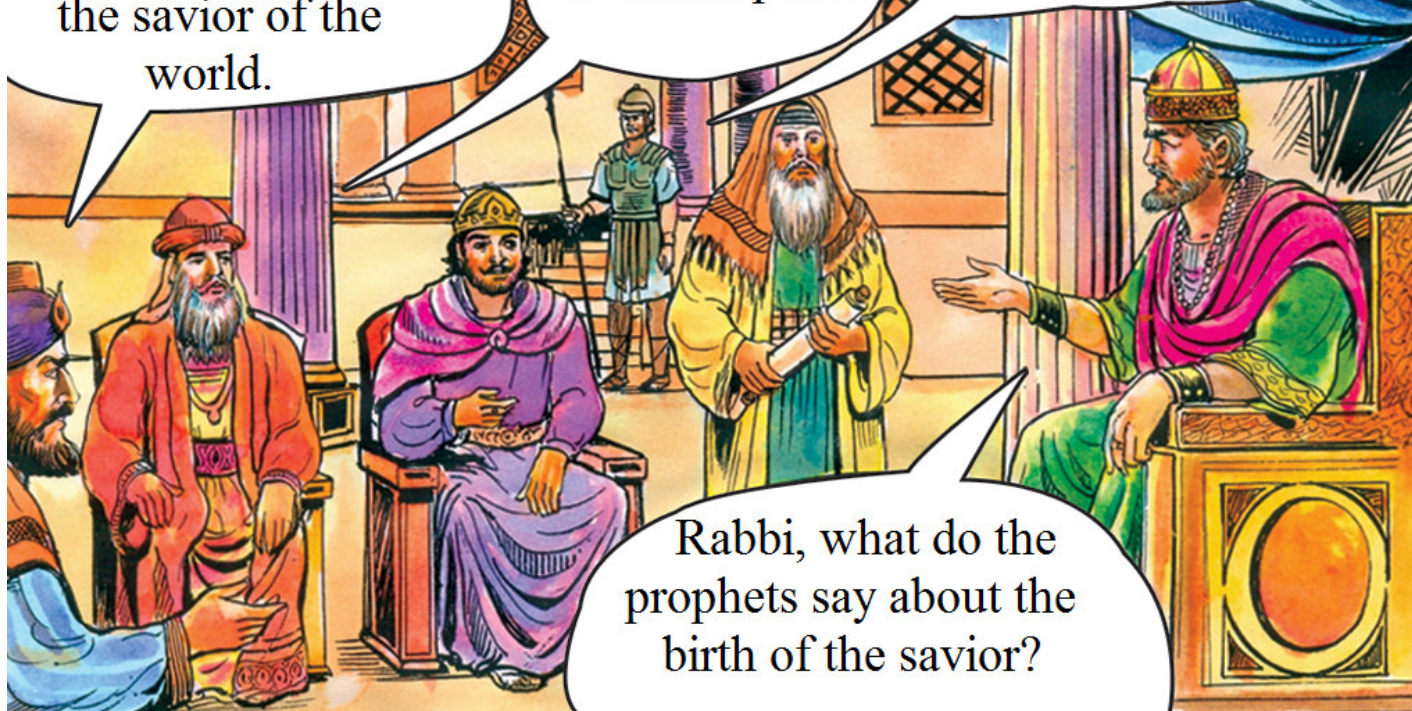
The wise men searching for the savior reached Herod's palace in Jerusalem.

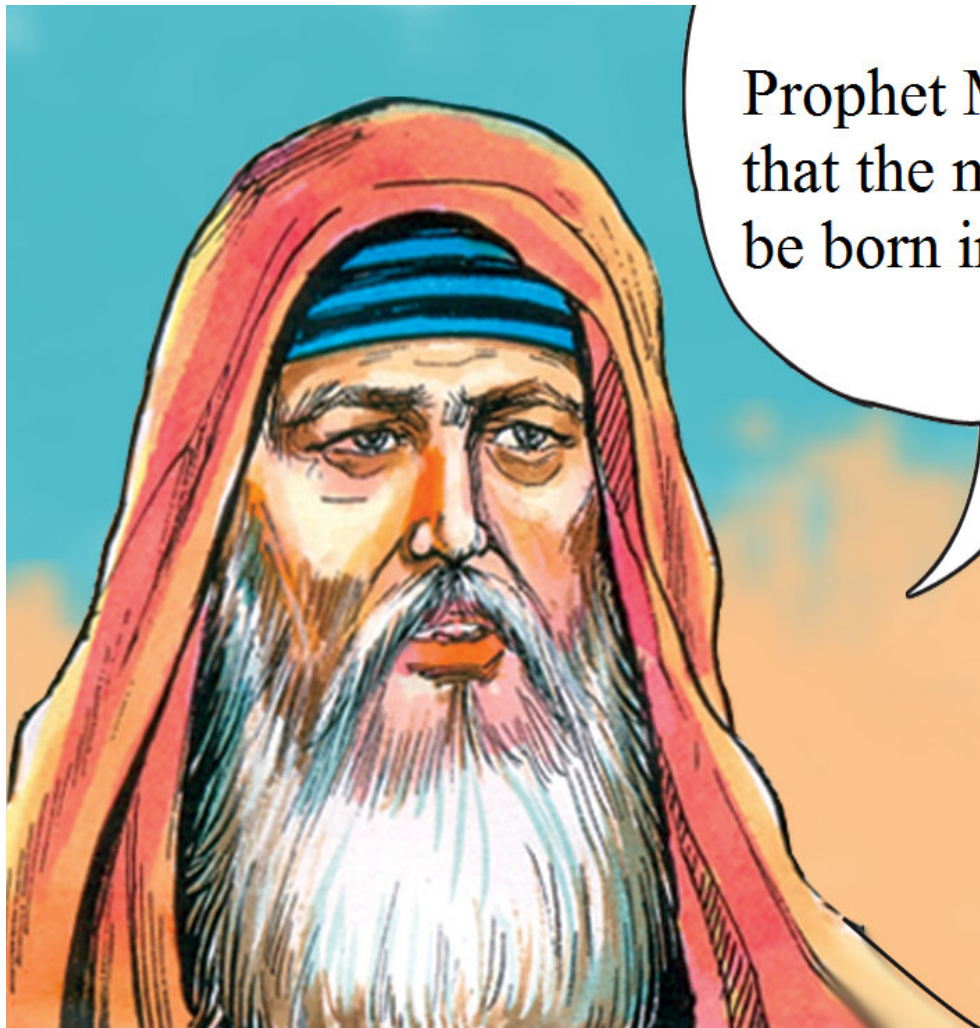
We have come looking for the king of the Jews who is the savior of the world.

Where is the child? we wish to worship him.

His star led us to this place.

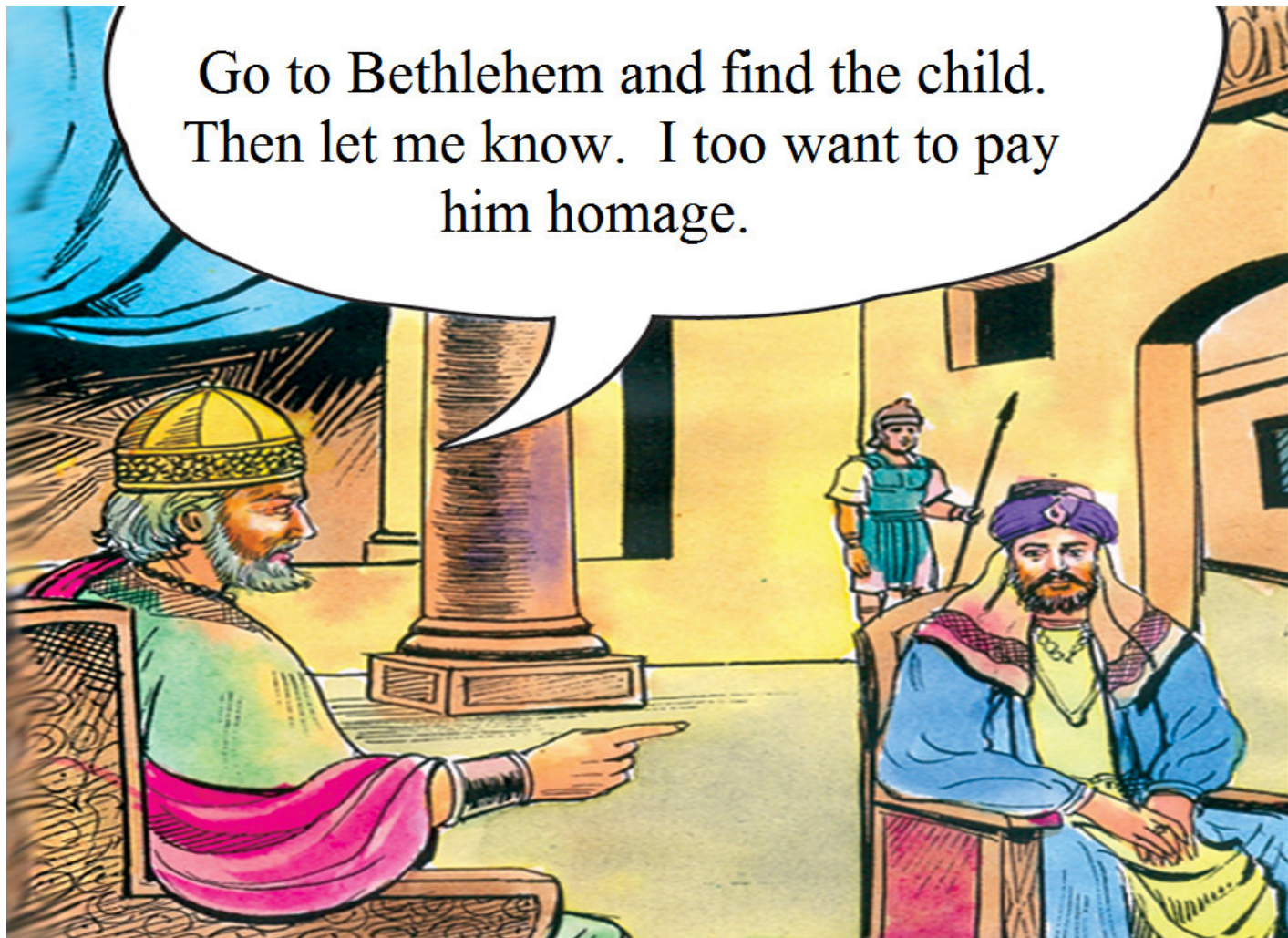
Rabbi, what do the prophets say about the birth of the savior?





Prophet Micah has said  
that the messiah would  
be born in Bethlehem.

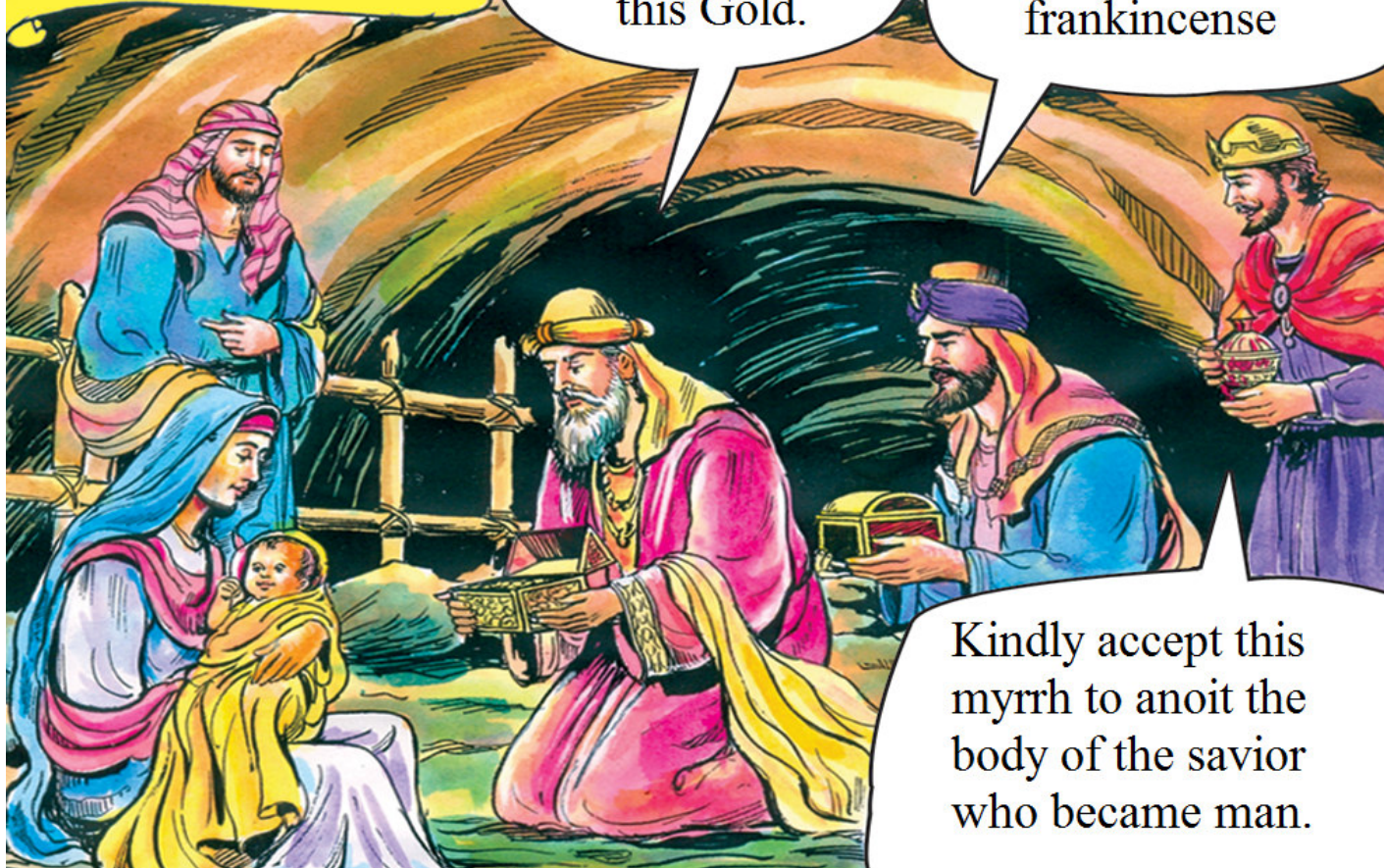
Go to Bethlehem and find the child.  
Then let me know. I too want to pay  
him homage.



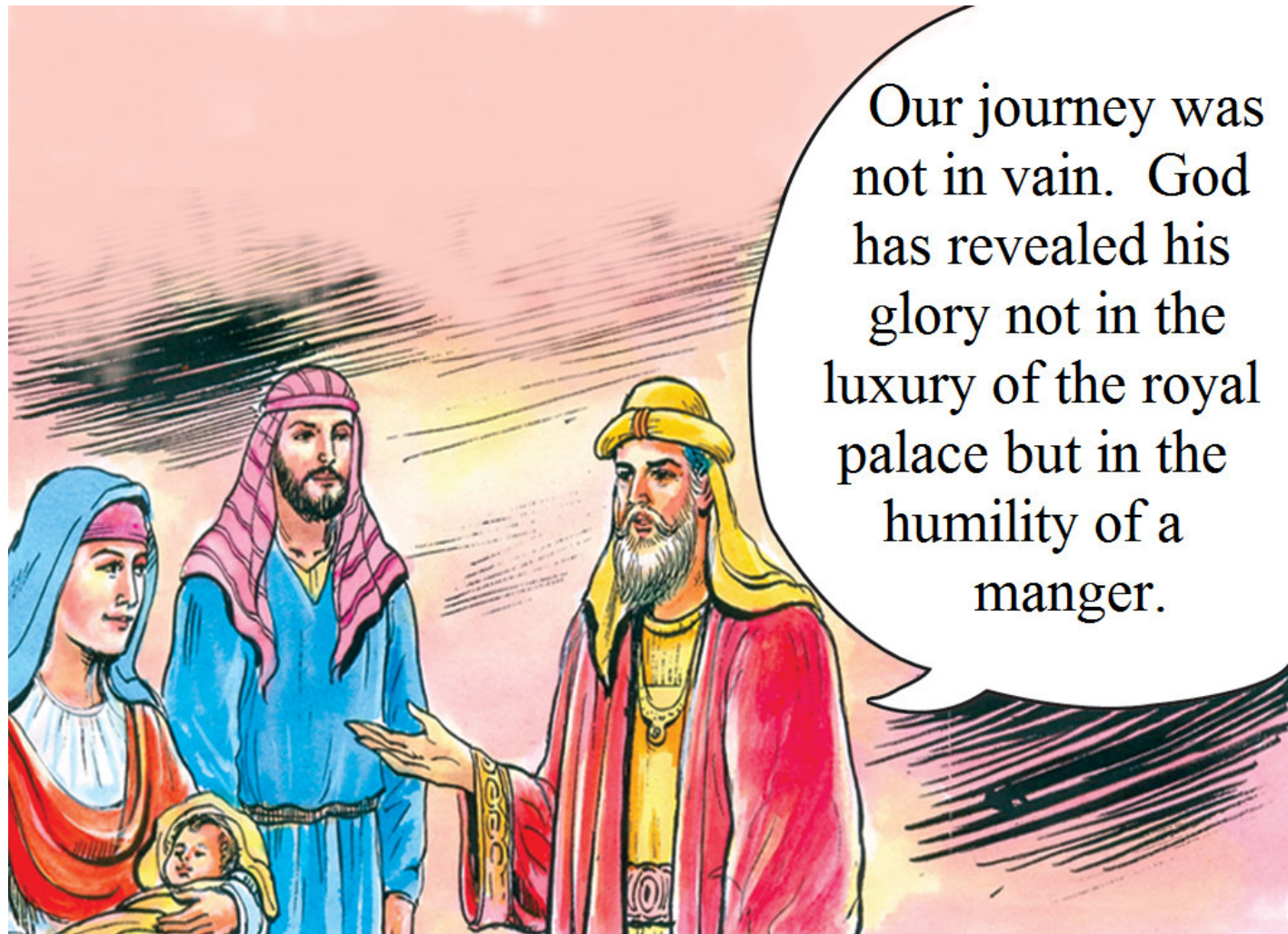
The wise men in  
Bethlehem

To the king  
of kings, I present  
this Gold.

To the eternal high  
priest, I present  
frankincense



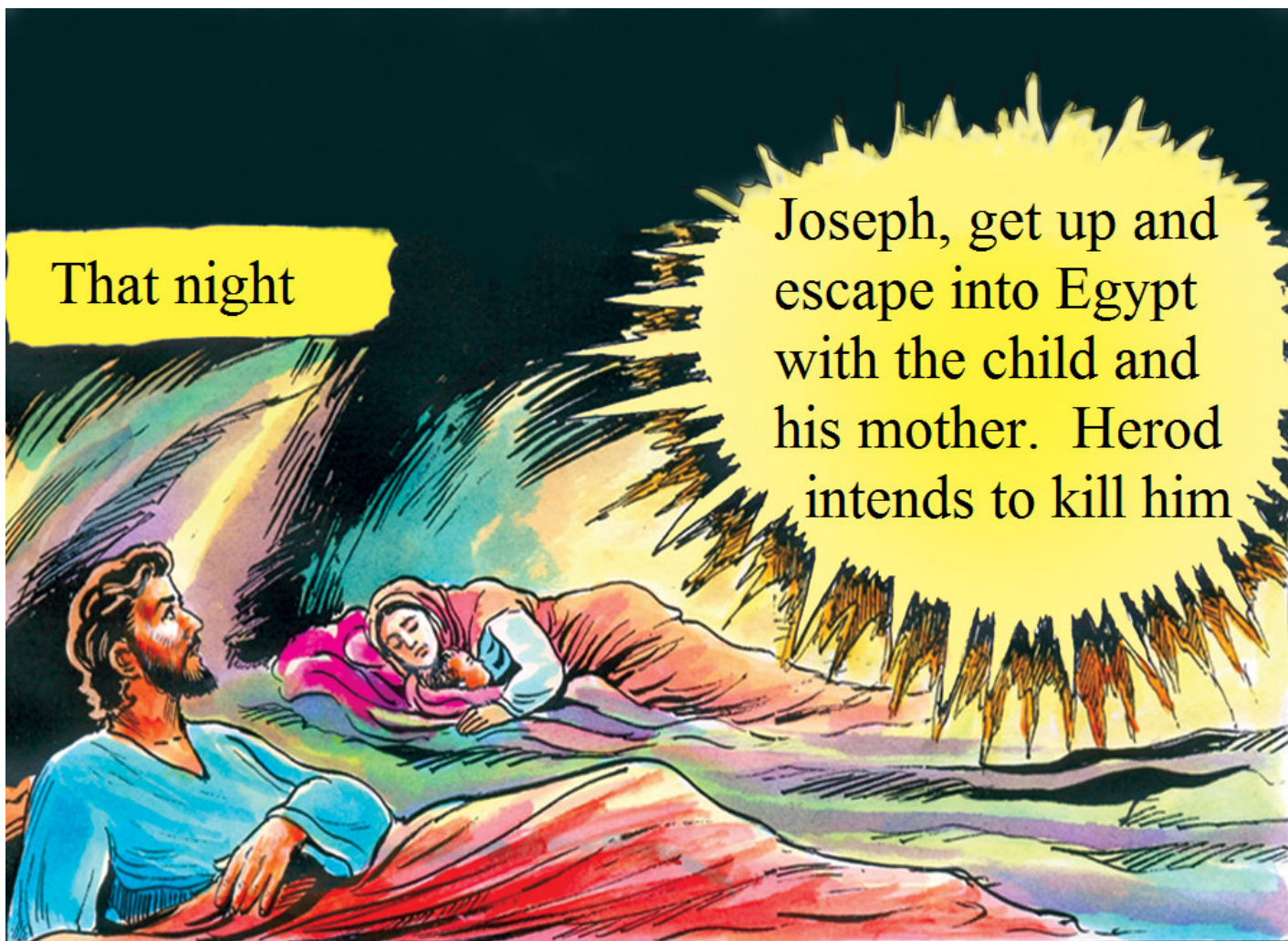
Kindly accept this  
myrrh to anoint the  
body of the savior  
who became man.



Our journey was not in vain. God has revealed his glory not in the luxury of the royal palace but in the humility of a manger.

That night

Joseph, get up and  
escape into Egypt  
with the child and  
his mother. Herod  
intends to kill him

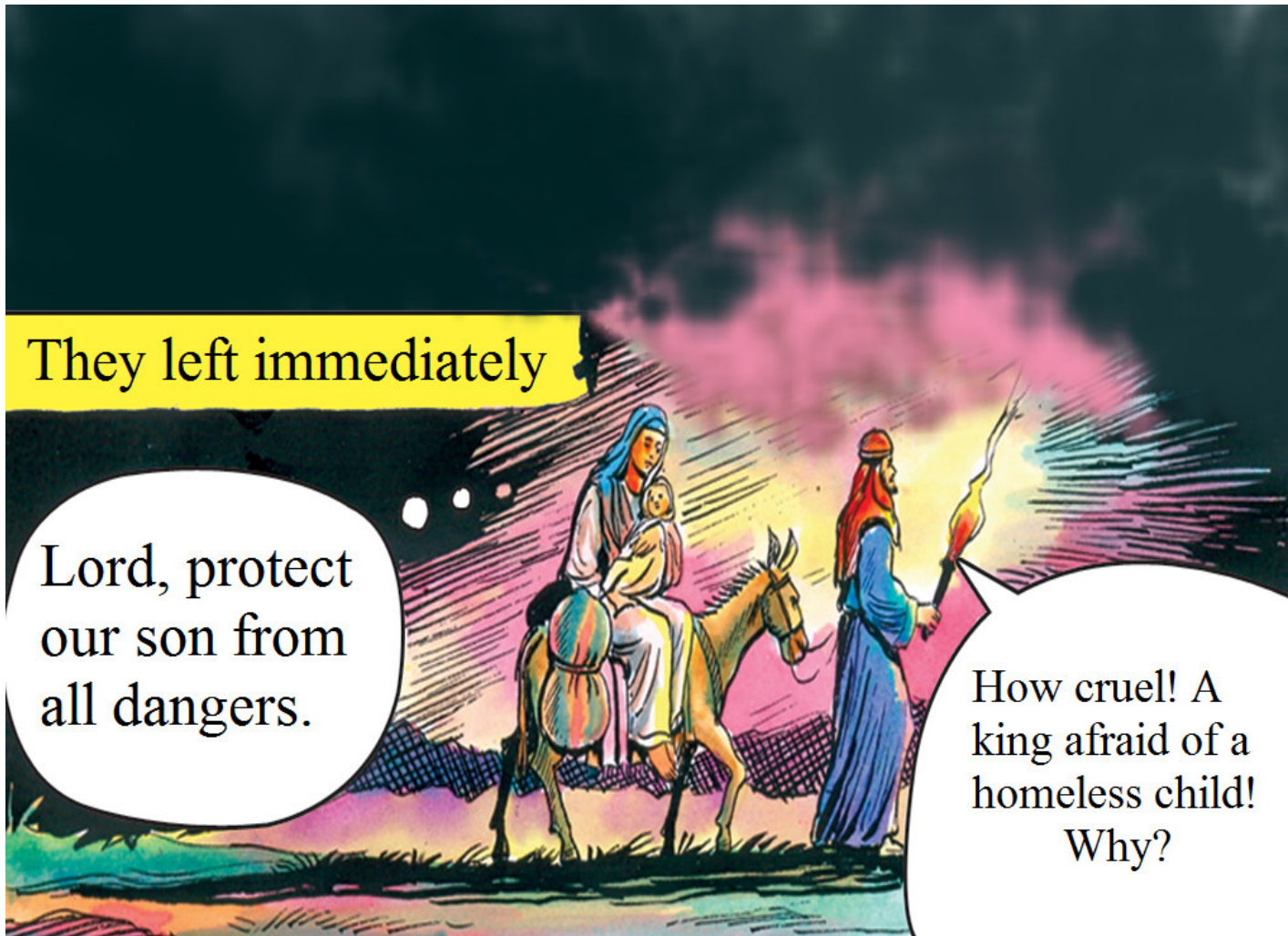




They left immediately

Lord, protect  
our son from  
all dangers.

How cruel! A  
king afraid of a  
homeless child!  
Why?



After a long journey they reached Egypt.

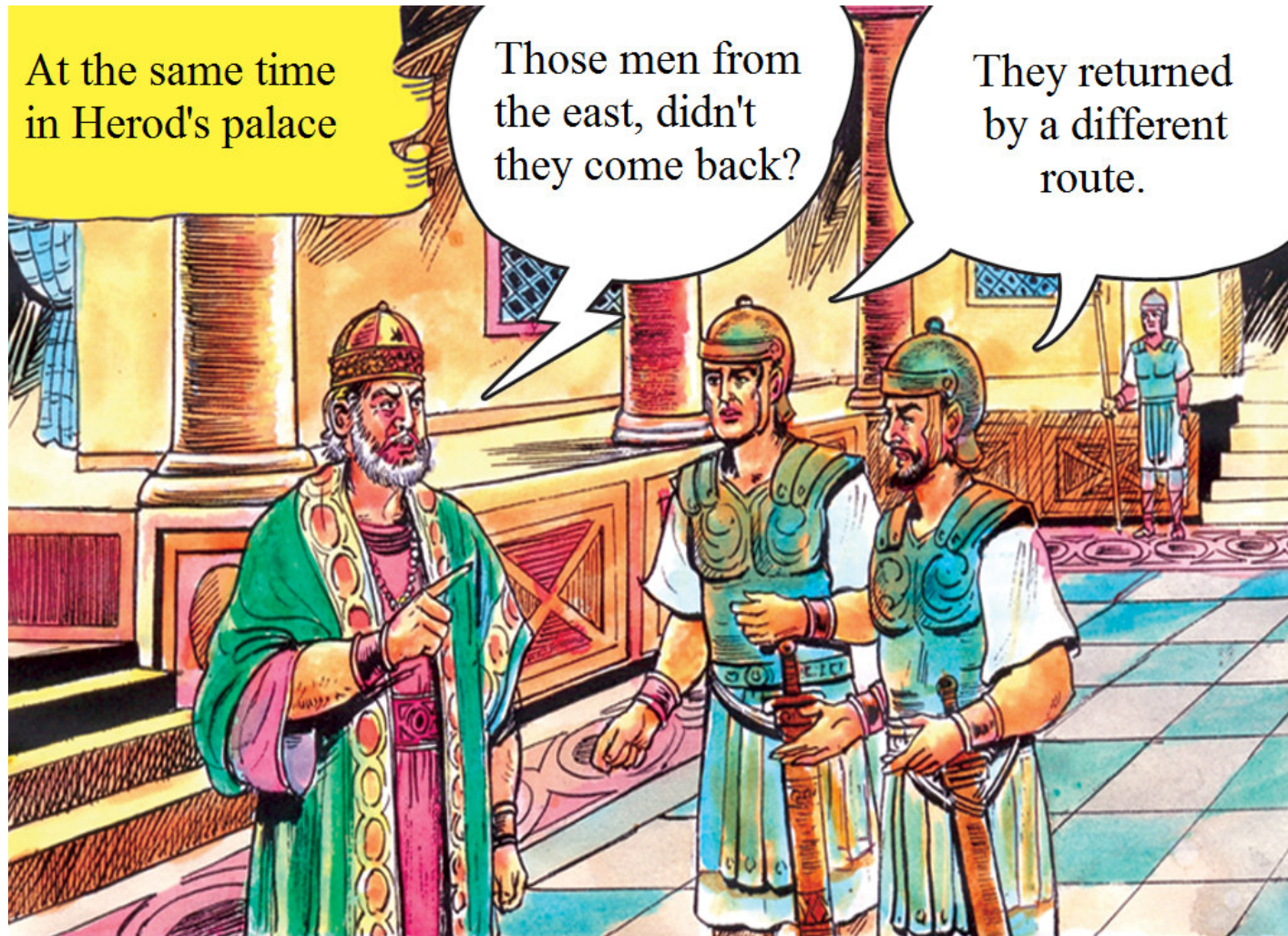


Shall we stay in this village?

At the same time  
in Herod's palace

Those men from  
the east, didn't  
they come back?

They returned  
by a different  
route.



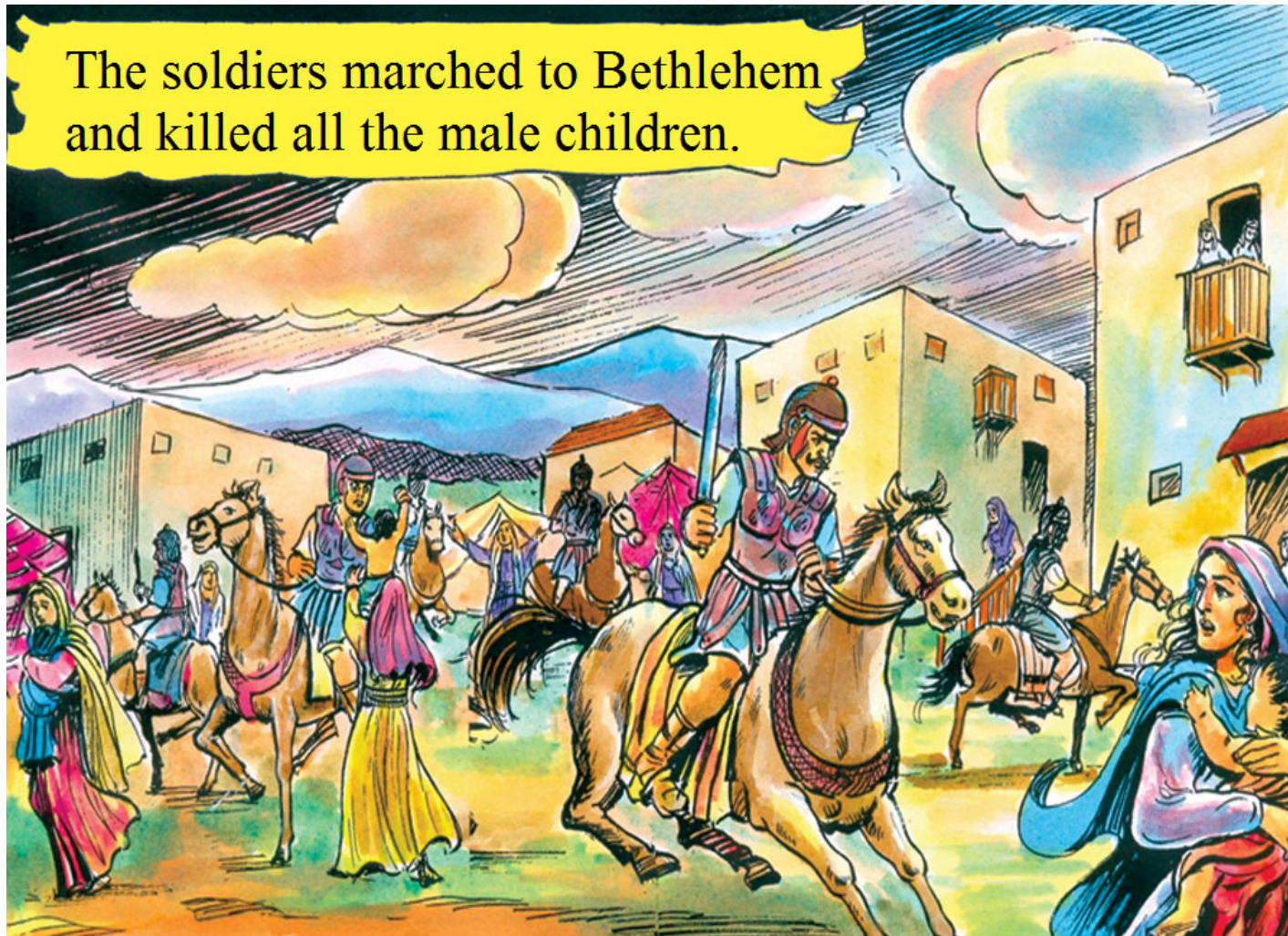
So it is more difficult to to find our new king. Well, kill all the male children below the age of two, in and around Bethlehem.



I will not tolerate another king in my kingdom, be it be messiah, or even God himself. Go, go to Bethlehem and kill all of them. He must not escape.



The soldiers marched to Bethlehem  
and killed all the male children.



Don't kill my baby



Thus the prophecy of Jeremiah, "*a voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loudly lamenting ... because they are no more*" was fulfilled.



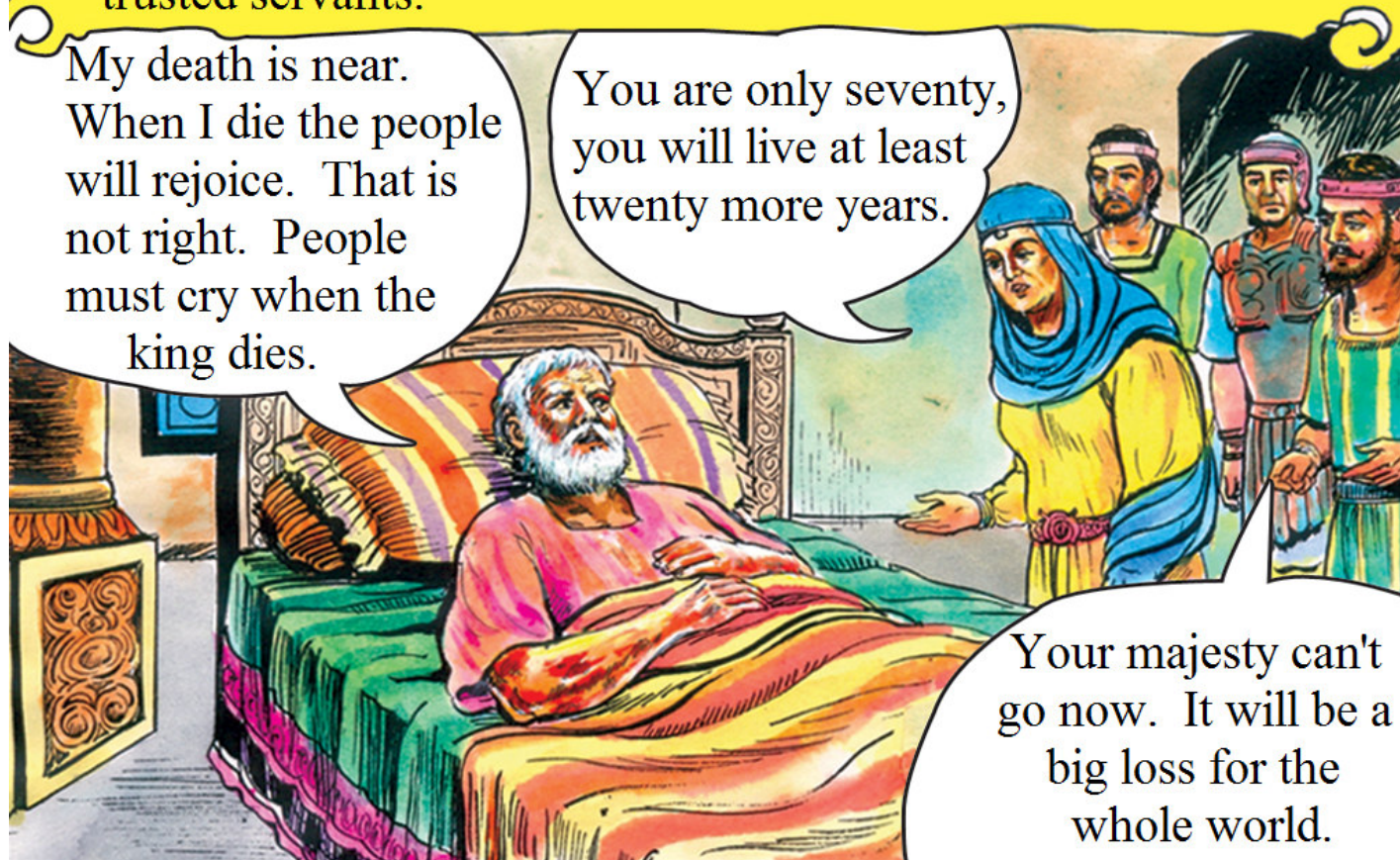


Shortly after, Herod became mortally ill. His body was filled with festering sores. He called his sister Salomi and a few trusted servants.

My death is near. When I die the people will rejoice. That is not right. People must cry when the king dies.

You are only seventy, you will live at least twenty more years.

Your majesty can't go now. It will be a big loss for the whole world.



I have imprisoned four hundred nobles.  
As soon as I die, kill them all.

?!



Only then you must  
announce my death. Then  
the whole country will cry.  
Hearing that my soul  
will rejoice.





A few days later in Egypt

Joseph, go back to  
the land of Israel.  
those who sought to  
kill the child are  
dead.



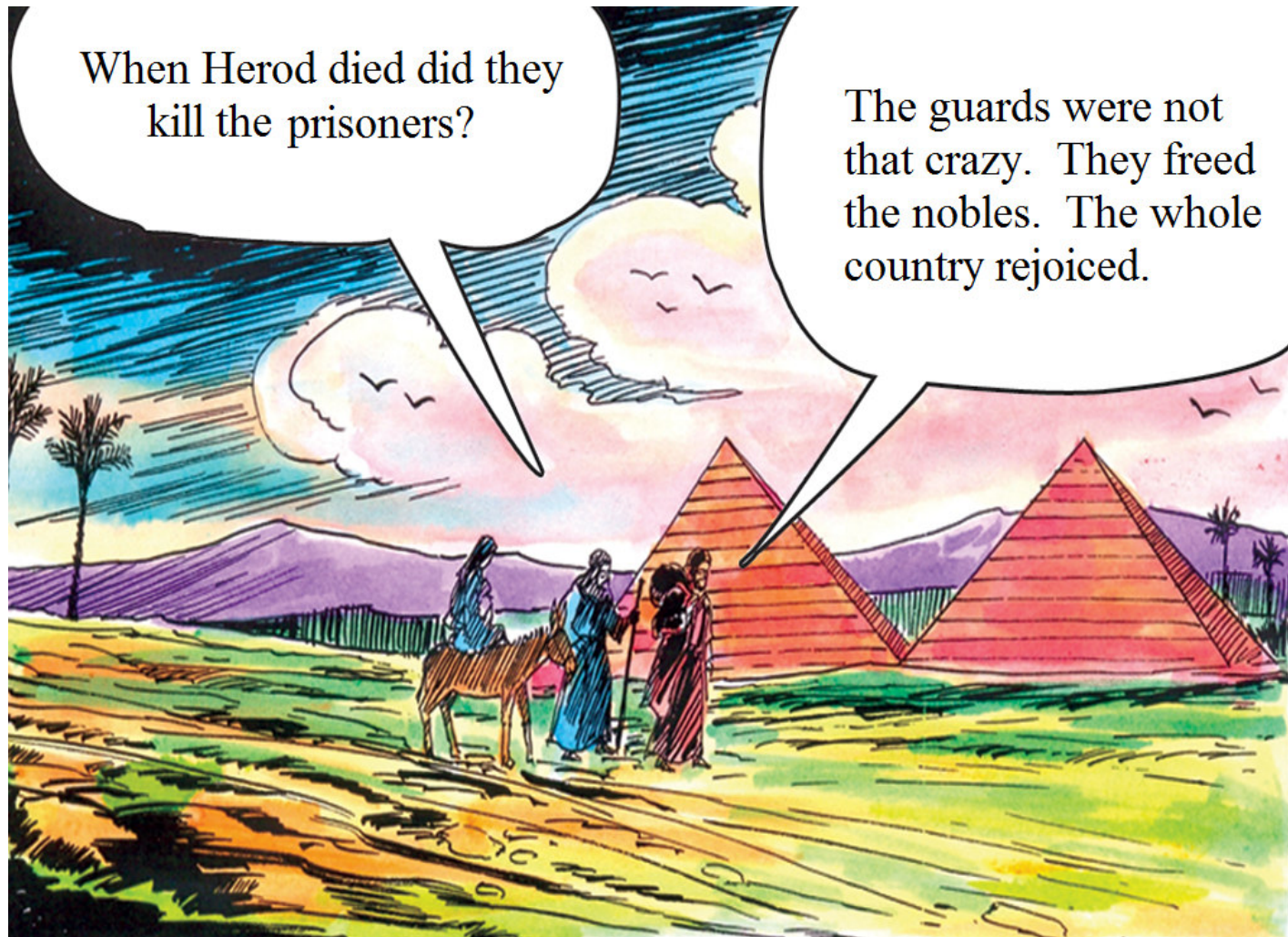
Next day

Now that Herod is dead, we can return to Nazareth in peace.

Finally a nightmare is over.  
Thank God.

When Herod died did they  
kill the prisoners?

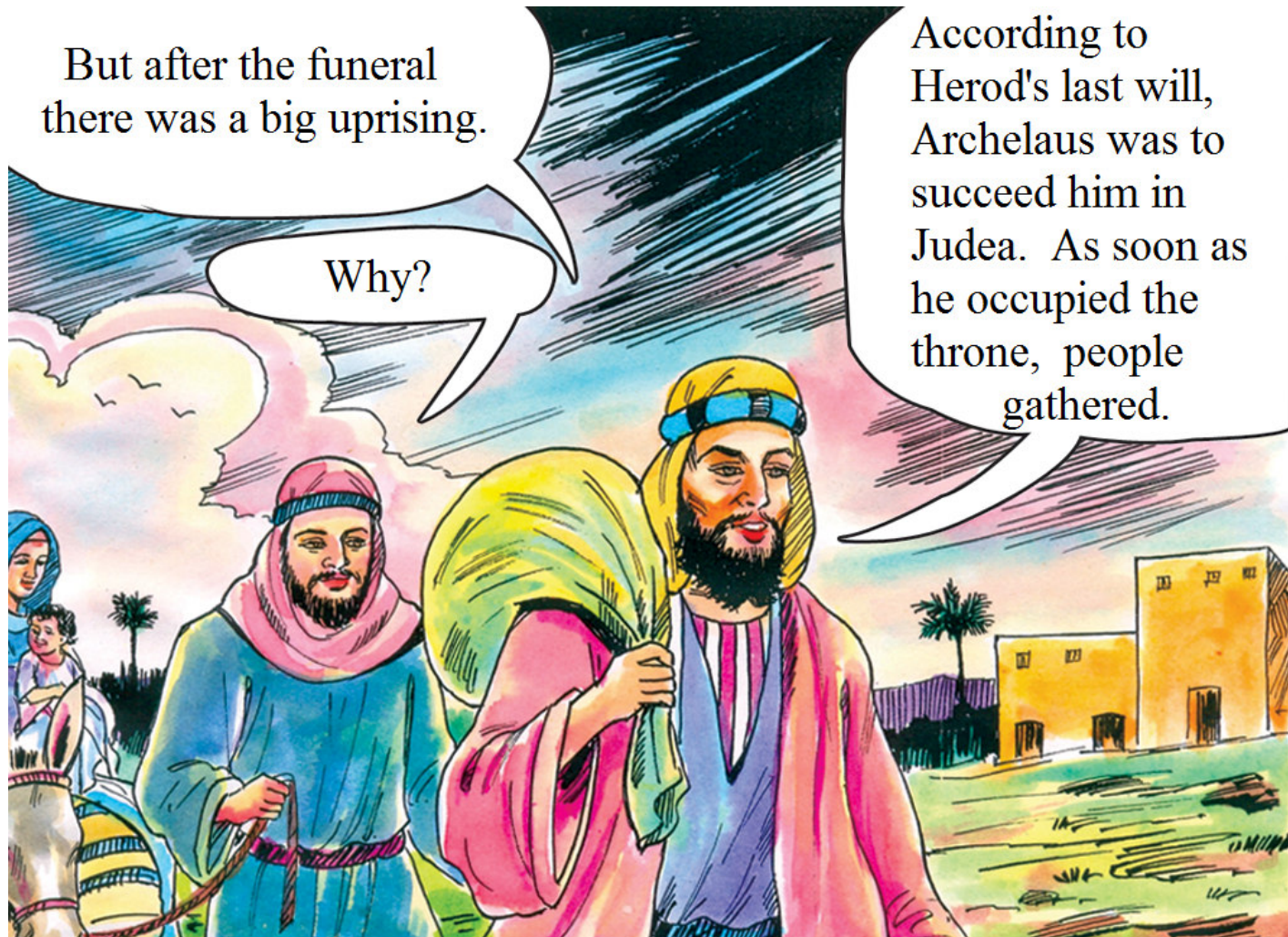
The guards were not  
that crazy. They freed  
the nobles. The whole  
country rejoiced.



But after the funeral  
there was a big uprising.

Why?

According to  
Herod's last will,  
Archelaus was to  
succeed him in  
Judea. As soon as  
he occupied the  
throne, people  
gathered.

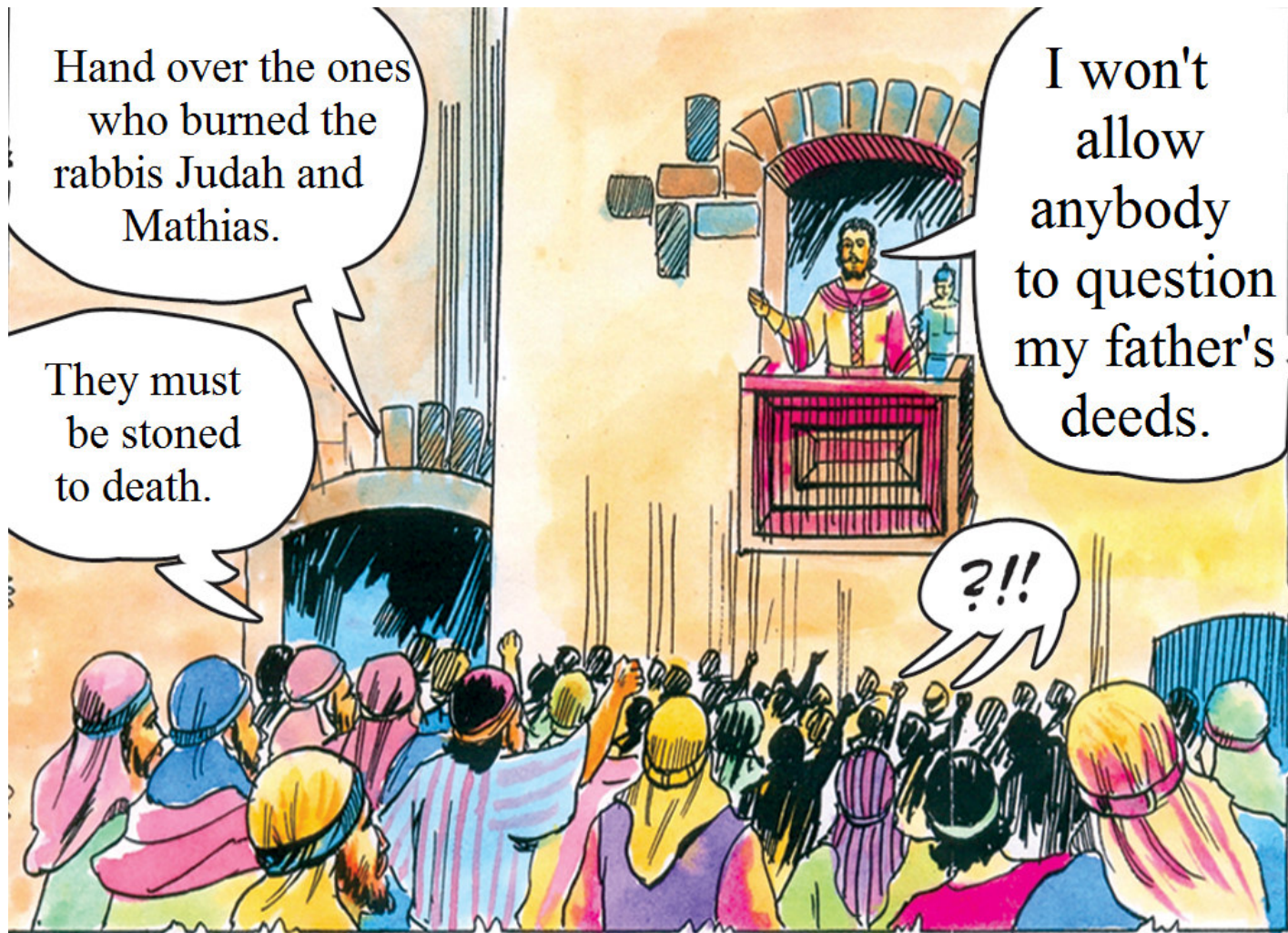


Hand over the ones  
who burned the  
rabbi Judah and  
Mathias.

They must  
be stoned  
to death.

I won't  
allow  
anybody  
to question  
my father's  
deeds.

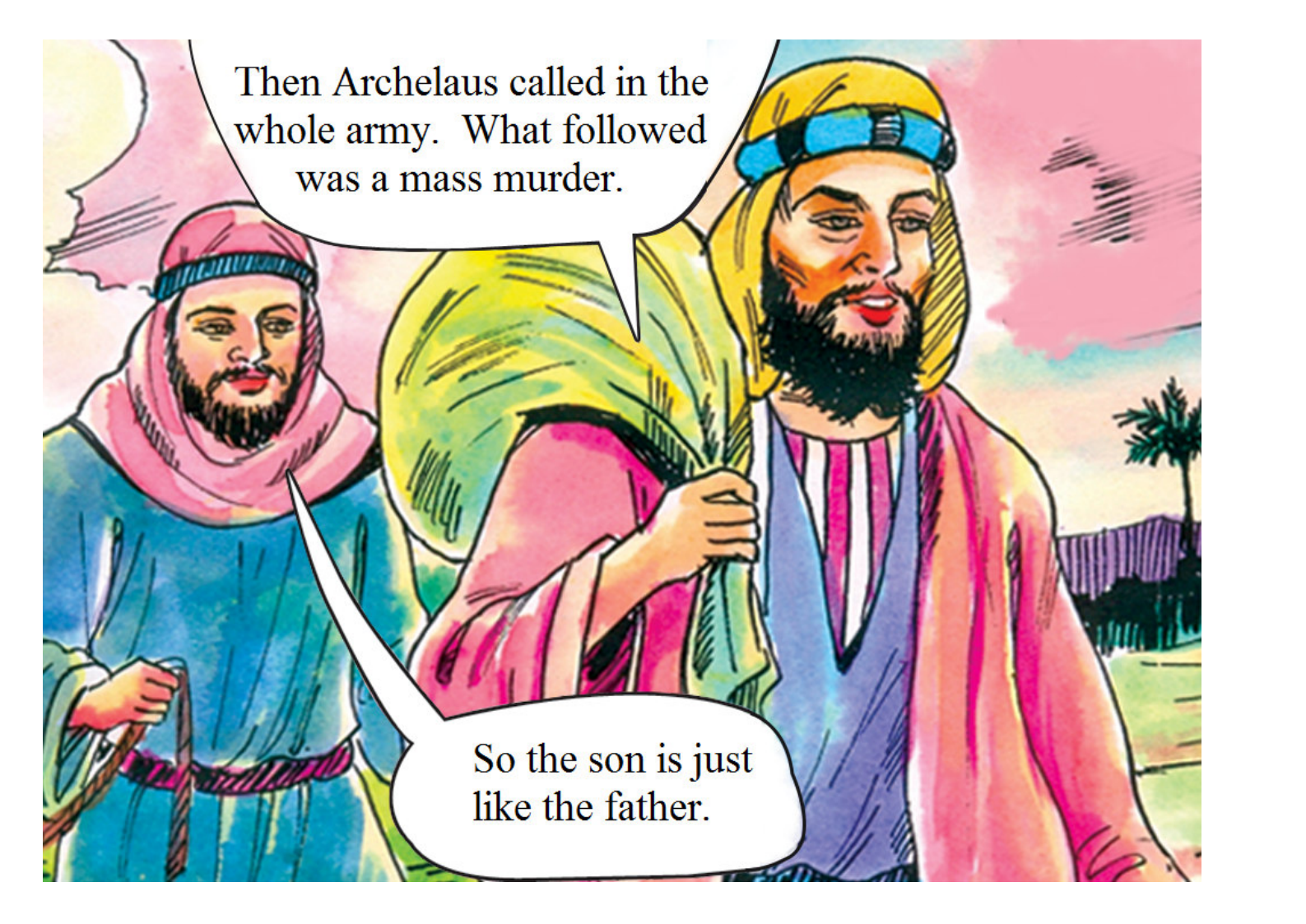
?!!






The next day a huge crowd surrounded the palace. Archelaus dispatched a contingent of soldiers to disperse the crowd. But they could not.





Then Archelaus called in the whole army. What followed was a mass murder.

So the son is just like the father.



Now he is gone to Rome to  
get the testament of Herod  
approved, wonder what will  
happen next.

Some day all this will  
end. Jerusalem will  
become a city of peace.

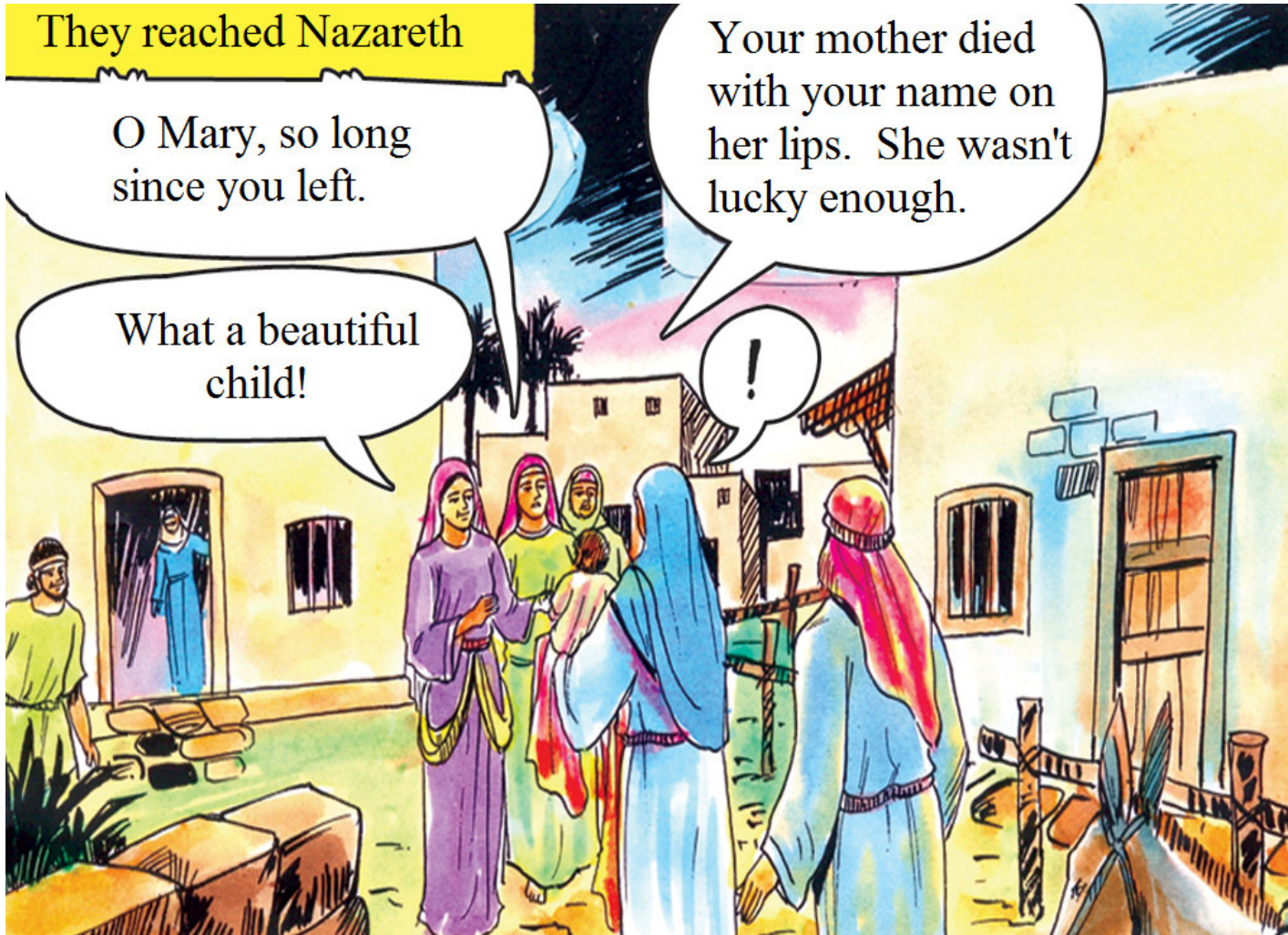
They reached Nazareth


O Mary, so long since you left.

What a beautiful child!

Your mother died with your name on her lips. She wasn't lucky enough.

!





We never  
thought that we  
would see you  
all again.

We are  
happy and  
greatful  
for being  
able to  
come  
back.

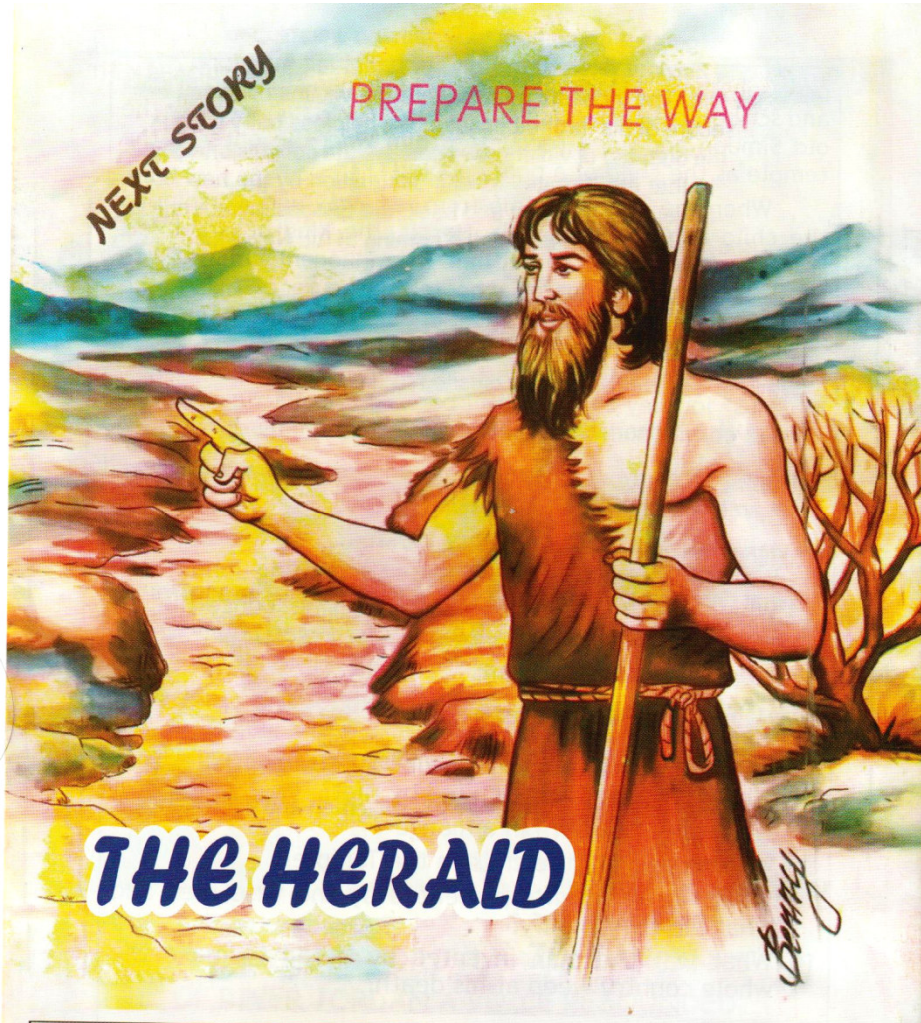
# Questions

1. Why did Elizabeth call Mary blessed?
2. What was Zechariah's prophecy concerning John?
3. What did the Law of Moses prescribe concerning a woman who became pregnant before marriage?
4. Why did Joseph decide to leave Mary in secret?
5. What did the angel tell Joseph about the child Mary conceived?
6. Why did Caesar Augustus order a census in Palestine? Which prophecy was fulfilled by that?
7. Why was Jesus born in a manger?
8. Who recognized the child in the Temple?
9. What were the gifts presented by the wise men and what did they signify?
10. What was the way invented by Herod to make the whole country weep at his death?

Memorize: **My eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations.**

NEXT STORY

PREPARE THE WAY



**THE HERALD**

*Benny*