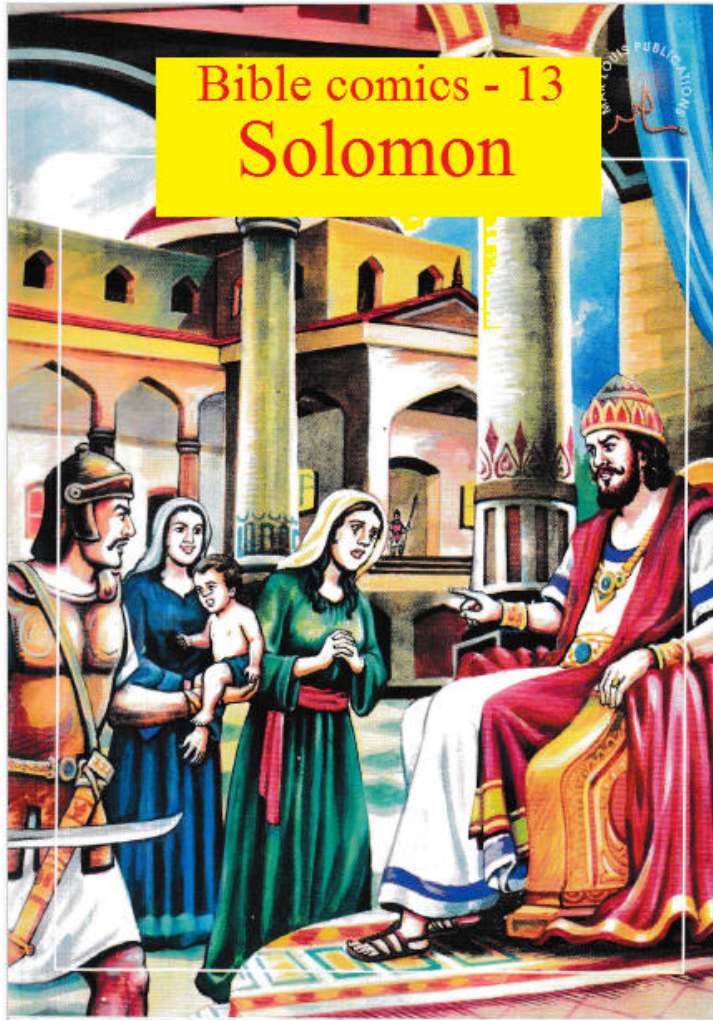


Bible comics - 13
Solomon



Bible comics - 13

Solomon

Script

Rev. Dr. Michael Karimattam

Illustration

Devassy

SOLOMON

The empire built up by King David reached the zenith of its glory during the time of Solomon (B.C. 970 to 931). Solomon was the second son born to David in his favorite wife, Bathsheba. With the help of his mother, Solomon secured his throne.

The Bible depicts Solomon as the wisest king of Israel. Tow Psalms, the books of Proverbs, Qoheleth, Song of Songs, and

Wisdom are attributed to him. Even Jesus refers to Solomon's wisdom (Mt. 6: 29; Lk. 11:31).

Solomon encouraged the growth of arts, sciences, and architecture. One of his greatest achievements was the construction of the Jerusalem Temple. His court was a haven for intellectuals and writers. The copper mines and factories in Ezion-geber was a great source of income for him. He had the monopoly of horse trade. The extensive navy he built up helped him establish a vast network of international trade. Israel became rich and famous.

Through marriage treaties and other political maneuvers Solomon established peace in his territories. Besides, he maintained a powerful army in order to intimidate anybody who would dare attack Israel.

In spite of all these achievements, Solomon caused the fall of Israel. The temples and shrines he built for his pagan wives became hotbeds of idol worship. His extravagance in construction works and the luxurious life style depleted the royal treasury. He imposed heavy taxes on the people of Israel. Most of the

workforce was recruited through slavery. The peace and prosperity that the Bible speaks of, was enjoyed only by the King and his officers—the elite minority. The common people were reduced to abject poverty and utter misery.

It was neither God nor the people but his father that made Solomon King. Thus, a new tradition of succession to the throne became established in Israel, a policy which made the king totally independent, irresponsible, and unaccountable to anybody. This marked the beginning of corruption of authority in Israel.

Misuse of power and wealth hastened the fall of Solomon's empire. Though he had a mighty army, he was not competent to use it. He could not safeguard the lands his father had conquered. Edom and Syria revolted and gained independence. Revolutions were brooding in Israel itself. Prophets sent by Yahweh to oppose idolatry and oppression hastened the process. Thus, Israel under Solomon was a "sleeping volcano". It erupted after his death.

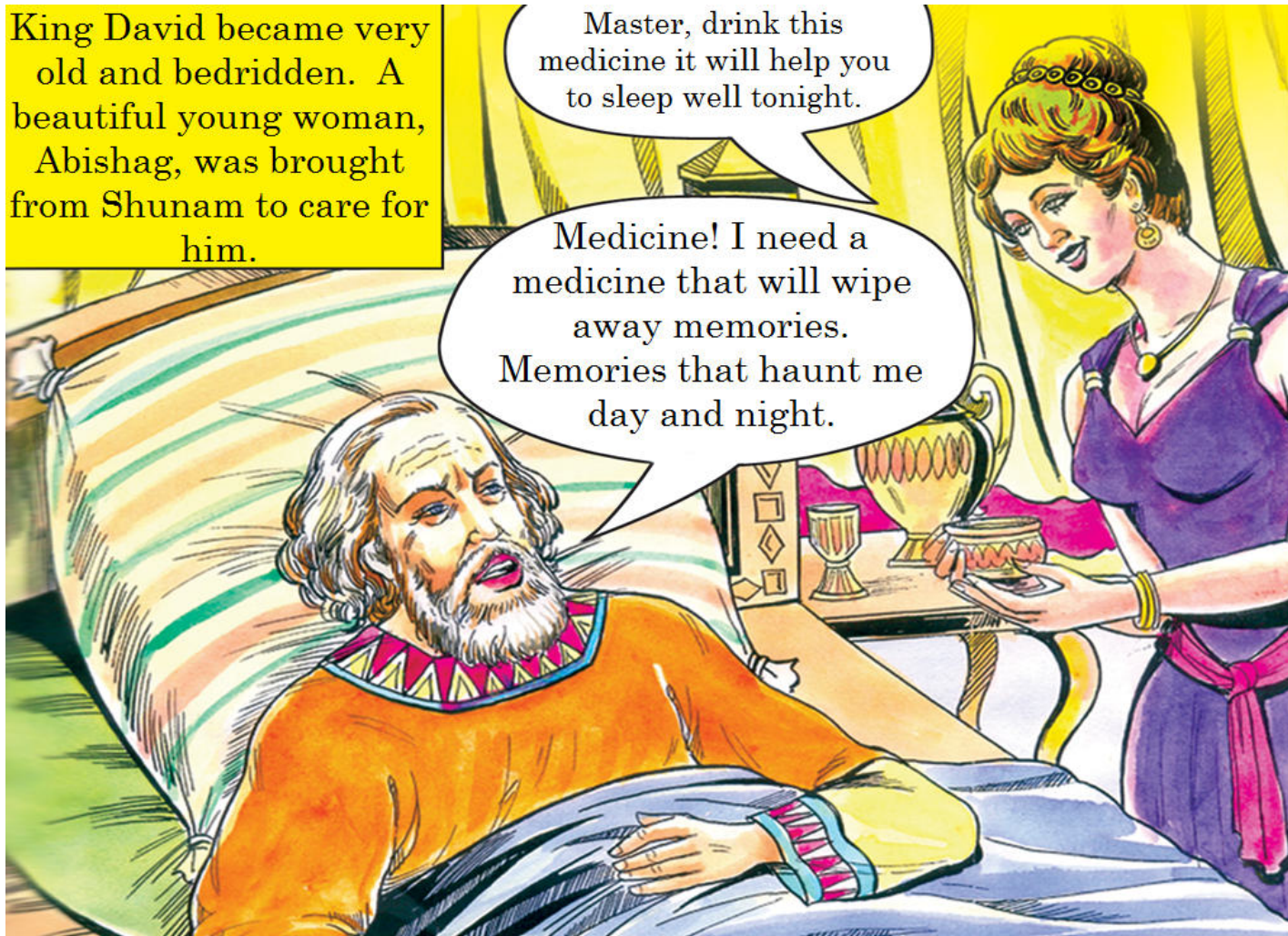
Though Solomon was a wise man, idol worship, luxury and pride caused his downfall.

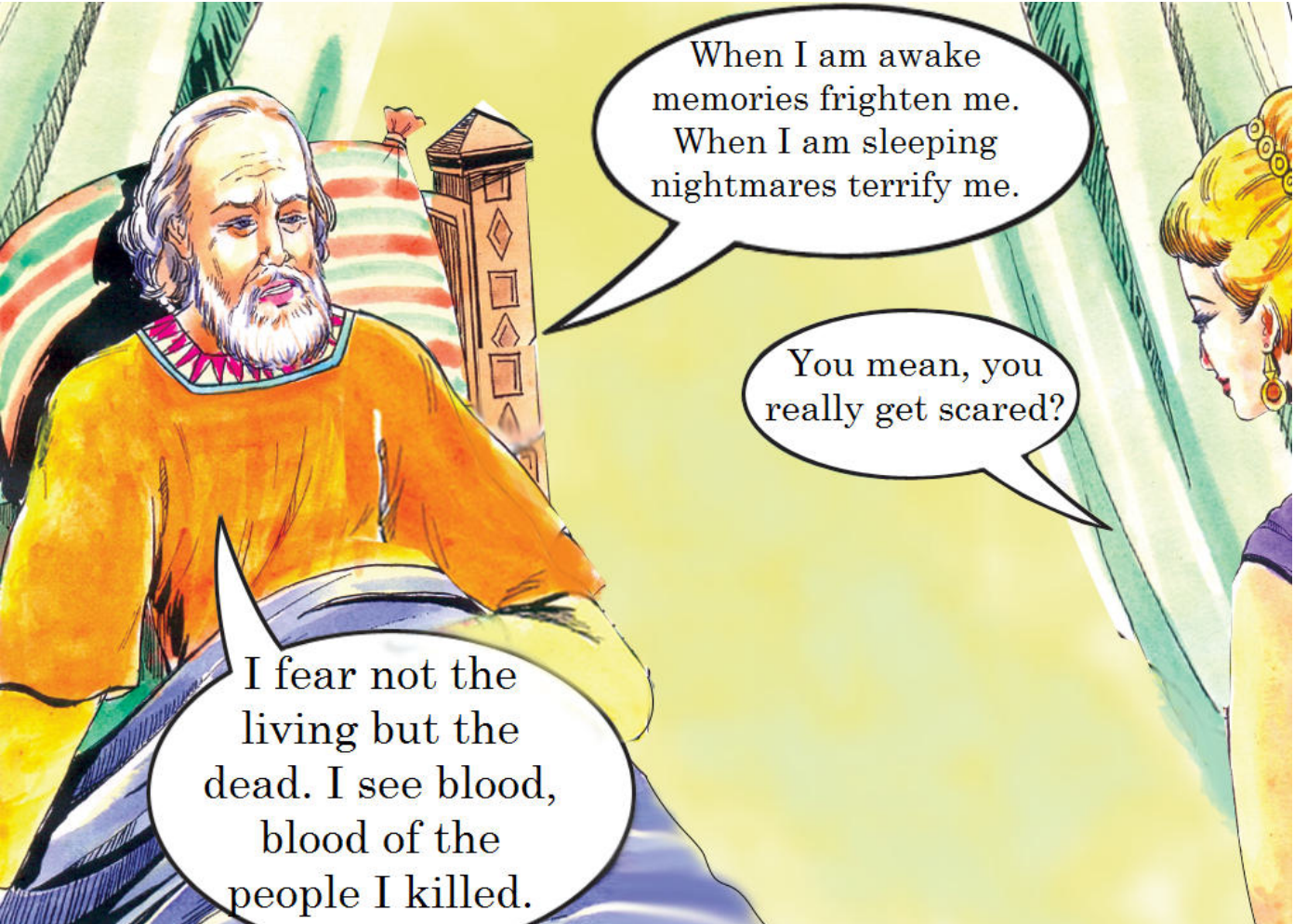
At the end he could not find any meaning in life. “Vanity of vanities, all in vanity” he cried. Solomon is a negative model, an example of worldly wisdom and unaccountable authority that lead to despair and destruction.

King David became very old and bedridden. A beautiful young woman, Abishag, was brought from Shunam to care for him.

Master, drink this medicine it will help you to sleep well tonight.

Medicine! I need a medicine that will wipe away memories. Memories that haunt me day and night.






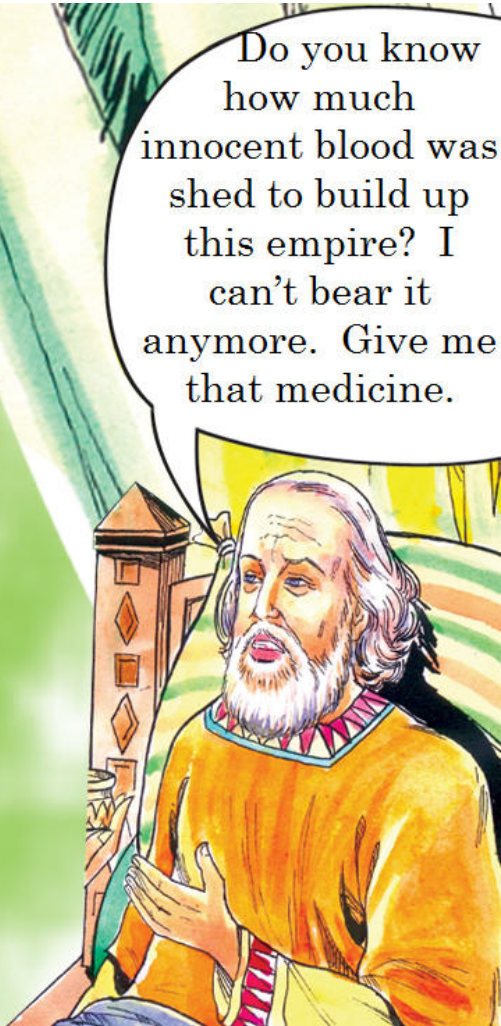
When I am awake
memories frighten me.
When I am sleeping
nightmares terrify me.

You mean, you
really get scared?

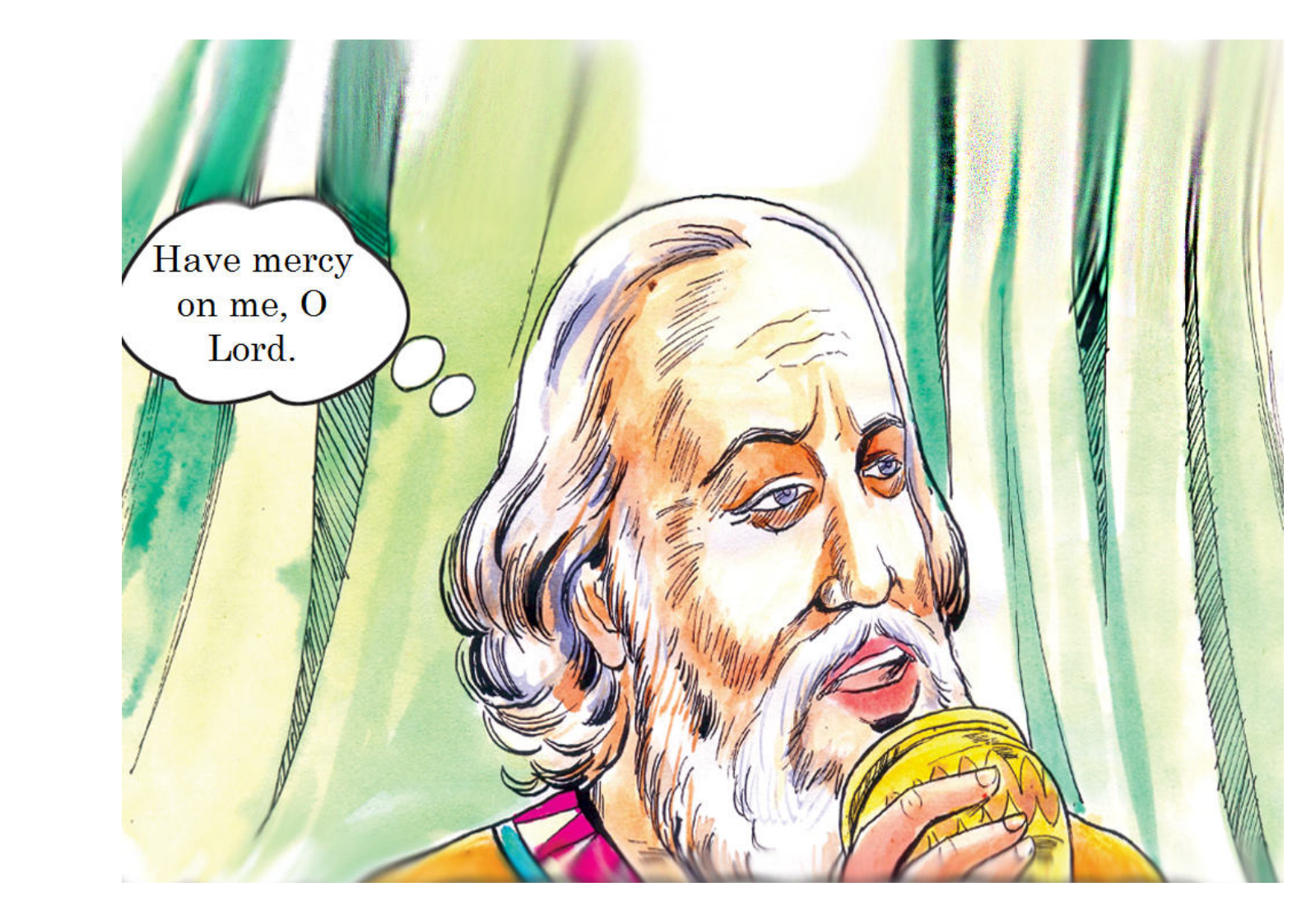
I fear not the
living but the
dead. I see blood,
blood of the
people I killed.



But M'Lord,
they're enemies of
the people of God.



Do you know
how much
innocent blood was
shed to build up
this empire? I
can't bear it
anymore. Give me
that medicine.

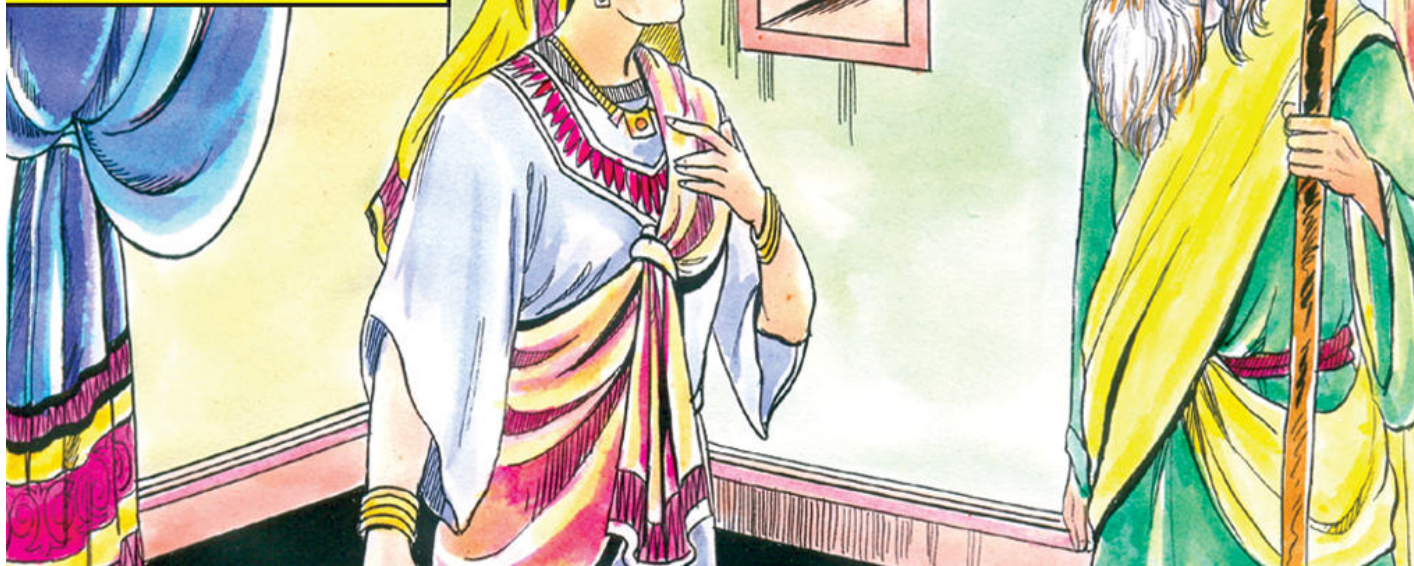


Have mercy
on me, O
Lord.

The aged king could not pay enough attention to the matters of the state. There was political conspiracy among the princes. One day prophet Nathan speaking with Bathsheba.

Haven't you heard that Adonijah is about to proclaim himself king?

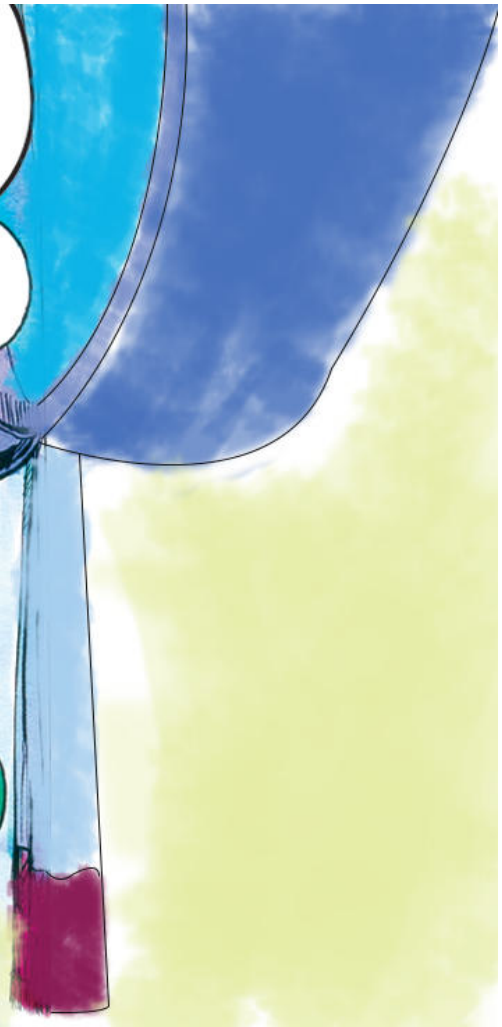
Adoniah? What about the promise the king gave me.



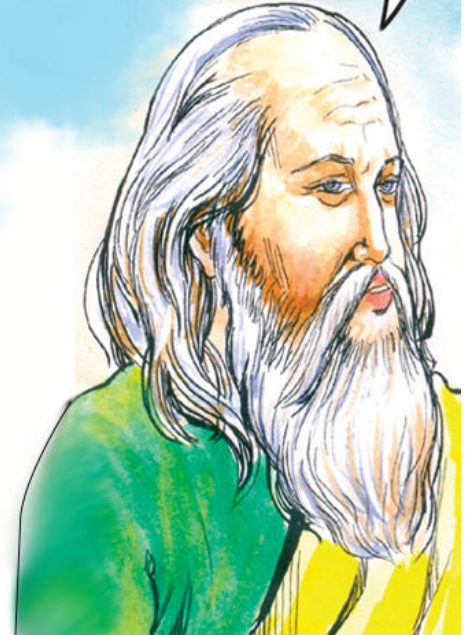
The king has no idea of what is going on. Unless we do something fast, it is not just the throne what we are going to lose.

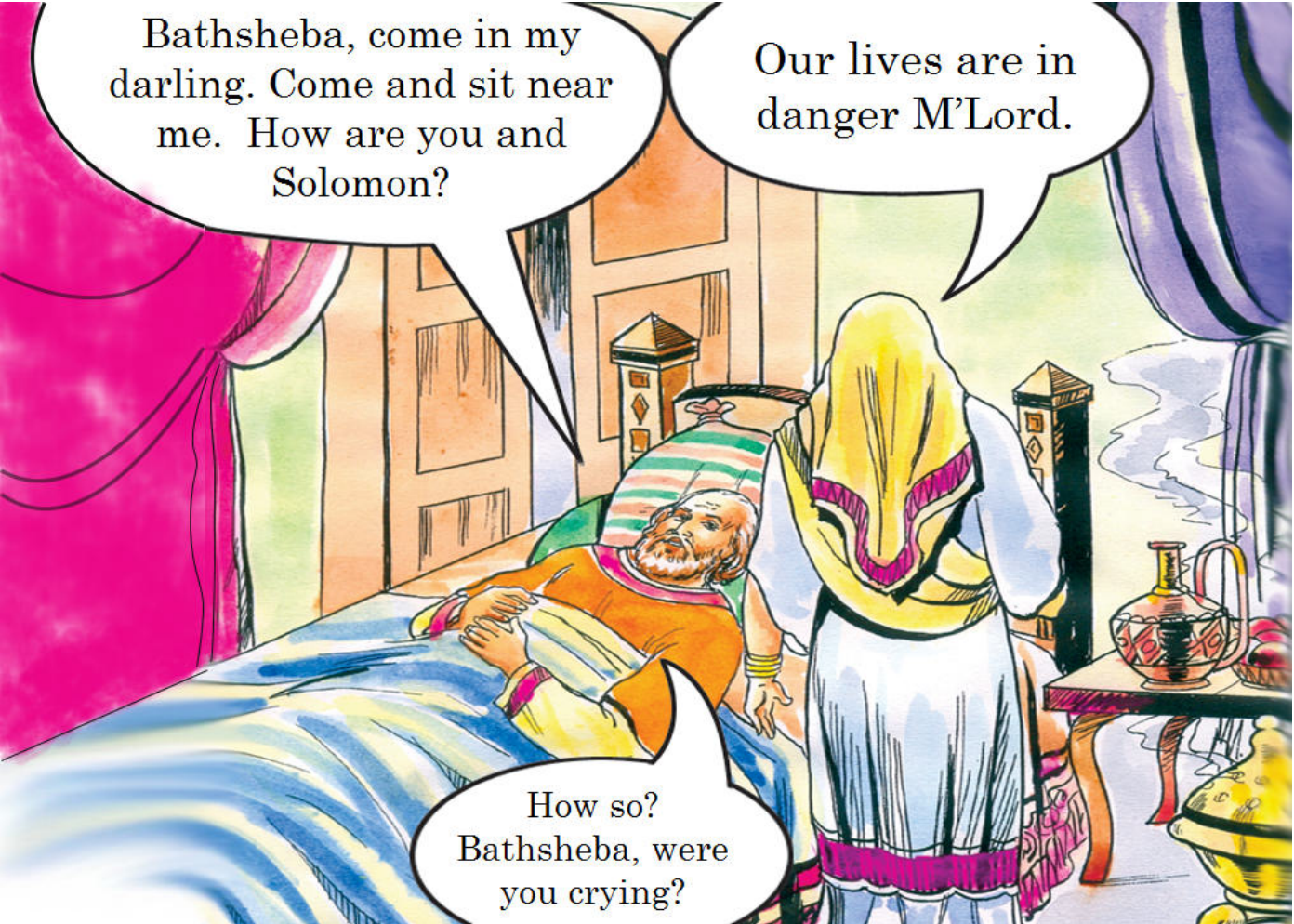
We will be considered traitors. But, what can we do?

!



You must meet the
king immediately.
While you are
speaking, I shall
come in.





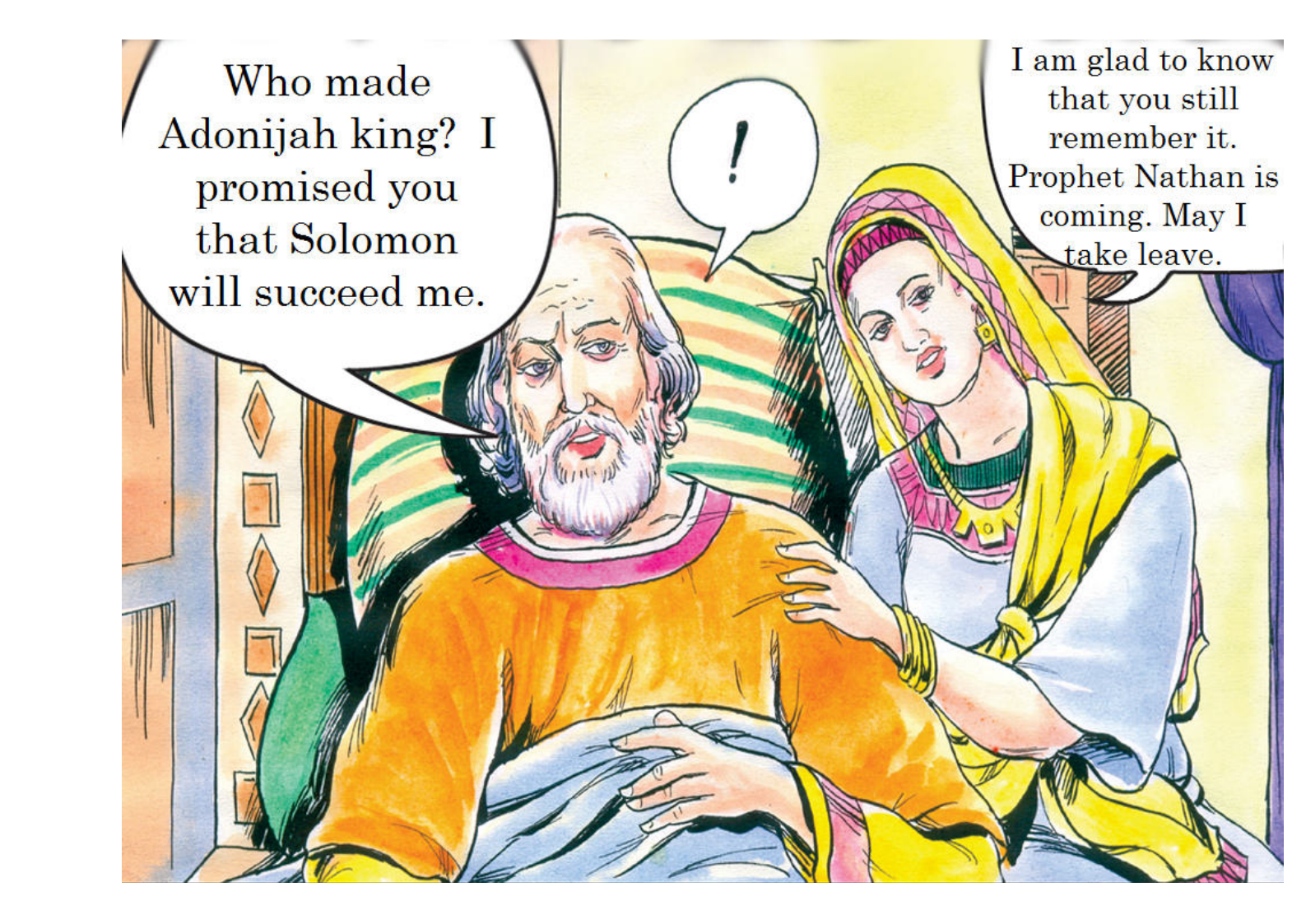
Bathsheba, come in my darling. Come and sit near me. How are you and Solomon?

Our lives are in danger M'Lord.

How so?
Bathsheba, were you crying?

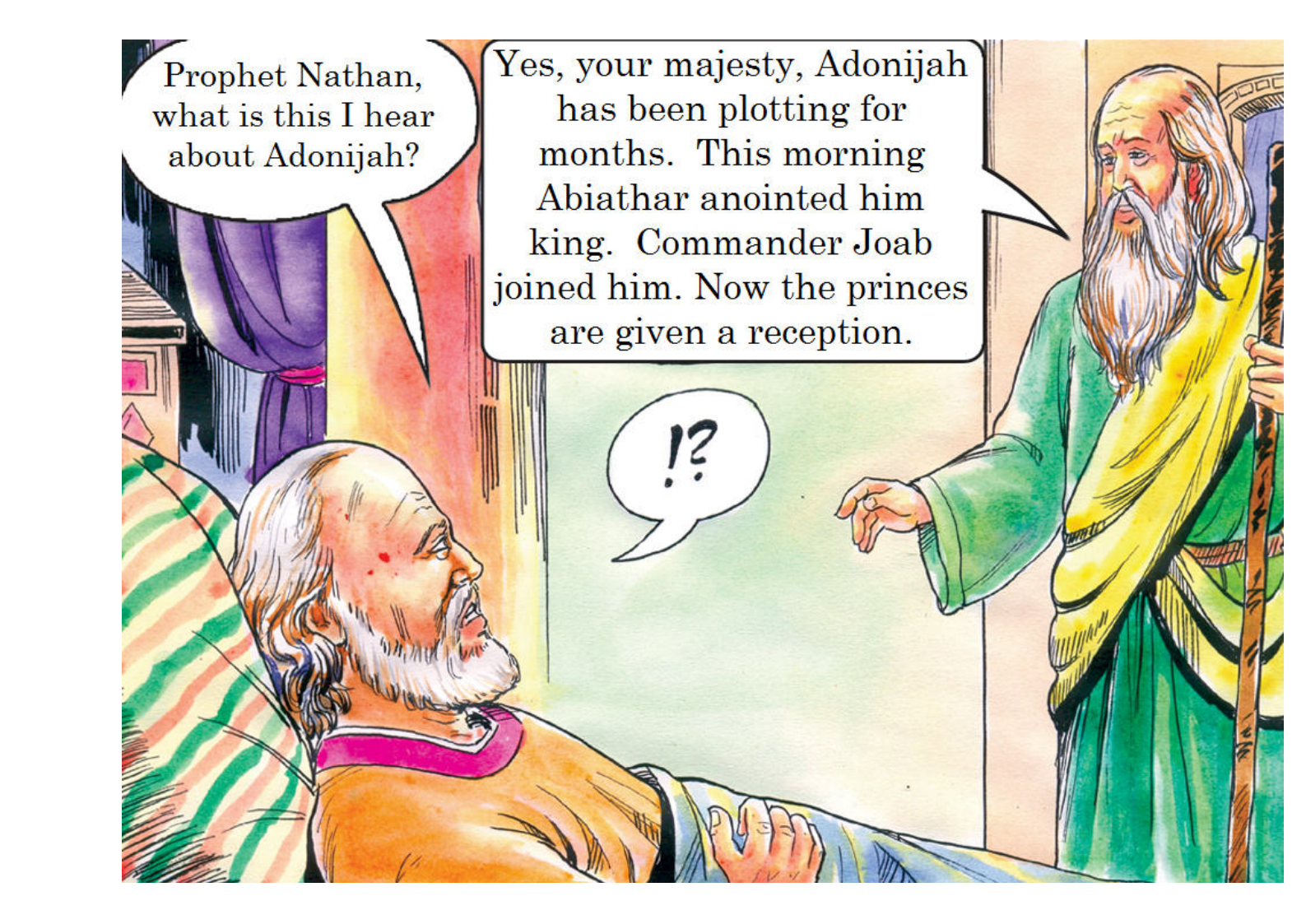
When Adonijah
is king what
else can we do?





Who made Adonijah king? I promised you that Solomon will succeed me.

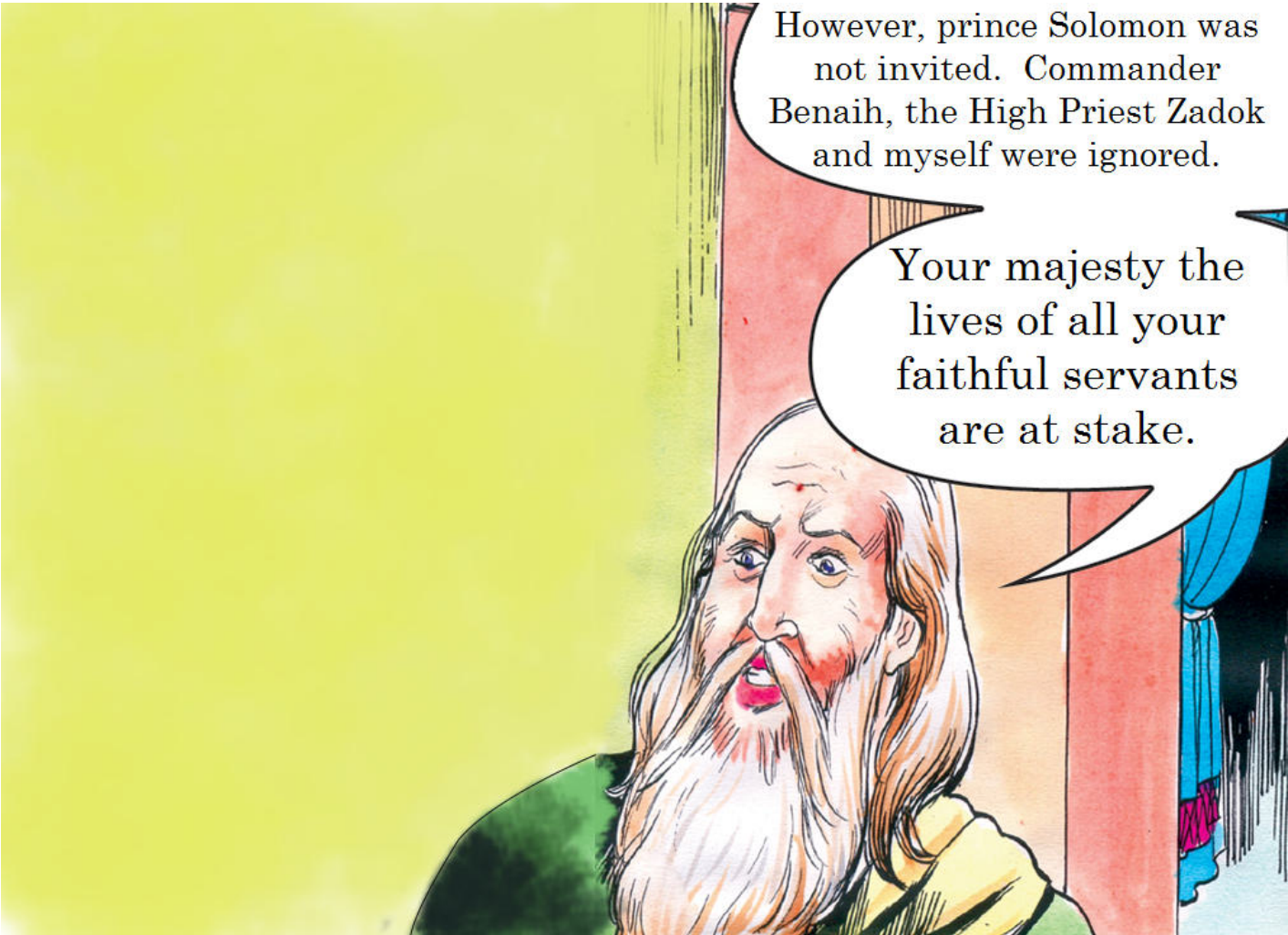
I am glad to know that you still remember it. Prophet Nathan is coming. May I take leave.



Prophet Nathan,
what is this I hear
about Adonijah?

Yes, your majesty, Adonijah
has been plotting for
months. This morning
Abiathar anointed him
king. Commander Joab
joined him. Now the princes
are given a reception.

!?



However, prince Solomon was not invited. Commander Benaih, the High Priest Zadok and myself were ignored.

Your majesty the lives of all your faithful servants are at stake.

No, I won't permit
it. Call Benaiah
and Zadok.





Long live King Solomon.

At king David's command, they anointed Solomon, mounted him on the King's mule and escorted him in procession.

At the same time at Adonijah's place.

What is that noise I hear? It is wailing? Has Father died?

No, it is not crying. It is cheering. There comes Jonathan, the priest's son.

!!



Come Jonathan what is all that commotion we hear.

They proclaimed Solomon king and made him ride the King's mule.

We are doomed!

?!



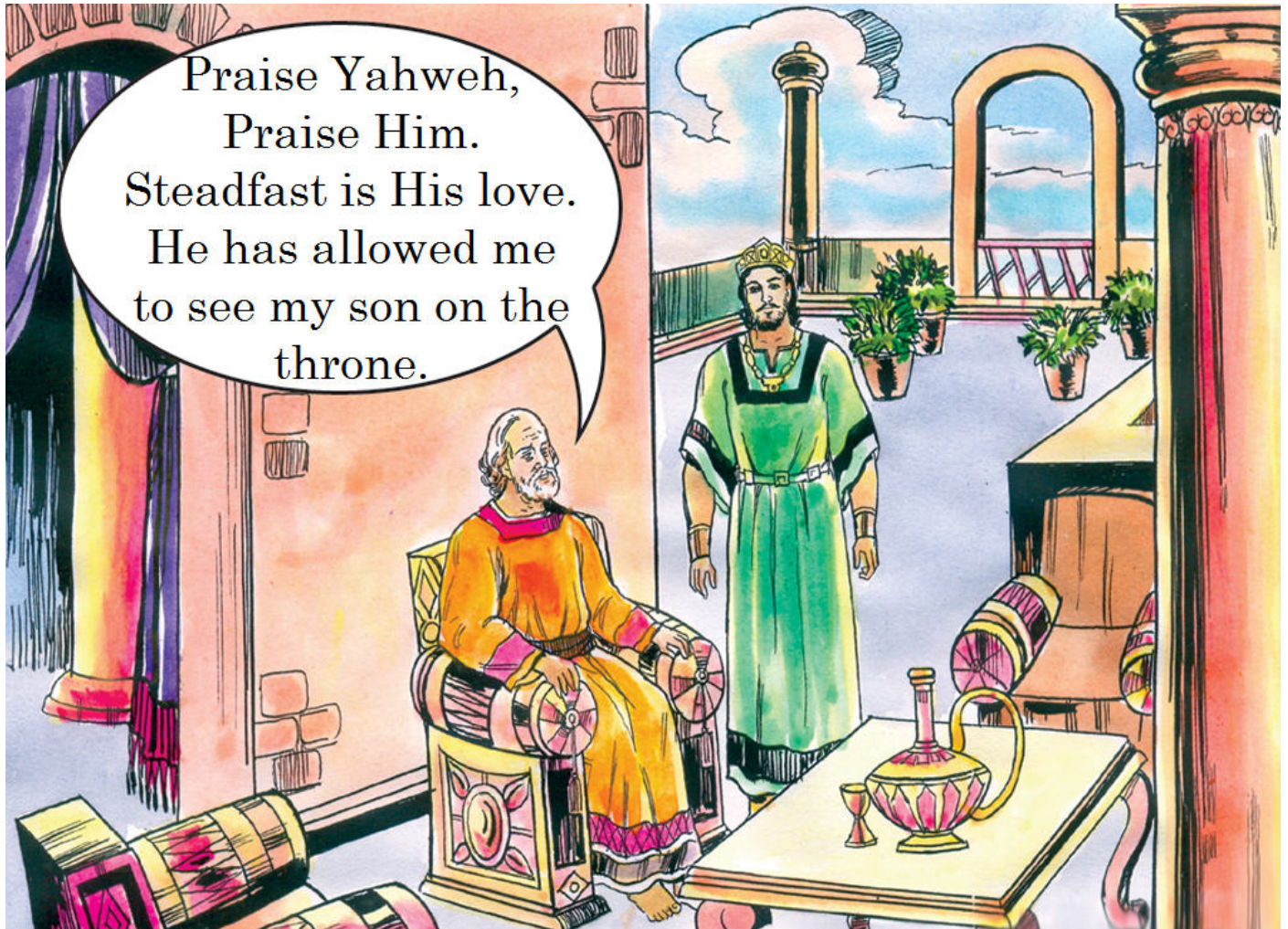
As his gang fled,
Adonijah sought refuge in
the Temple. Hearing this
Solomon said.

Ask Adonijah to
go home. If he is
innocent, nothing
will happen to
him.

!



Praise Yahweh,
Praise Him.
Steadfast is His love.
He has allowed me
to see my son on the
throne.

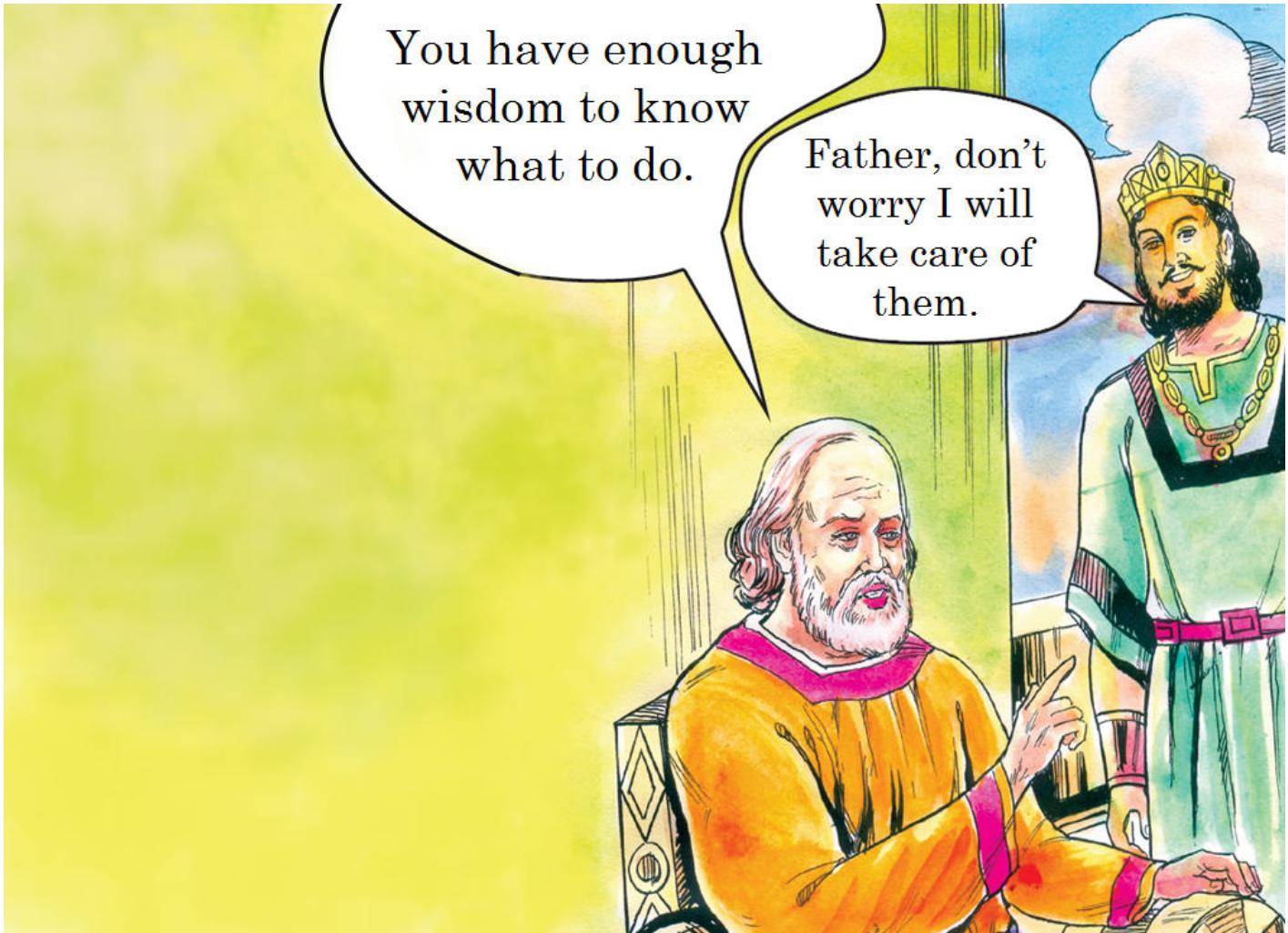


Solomon, you know
who our enemies
are. You will never
be safe with them
around.



You have enough
wisdom to know
what to do.

Father, don't
worry I will
take care of
them.



David died shortly after Solomon's coronation. Two months later.

Oh, Mother!
Please come in.

!

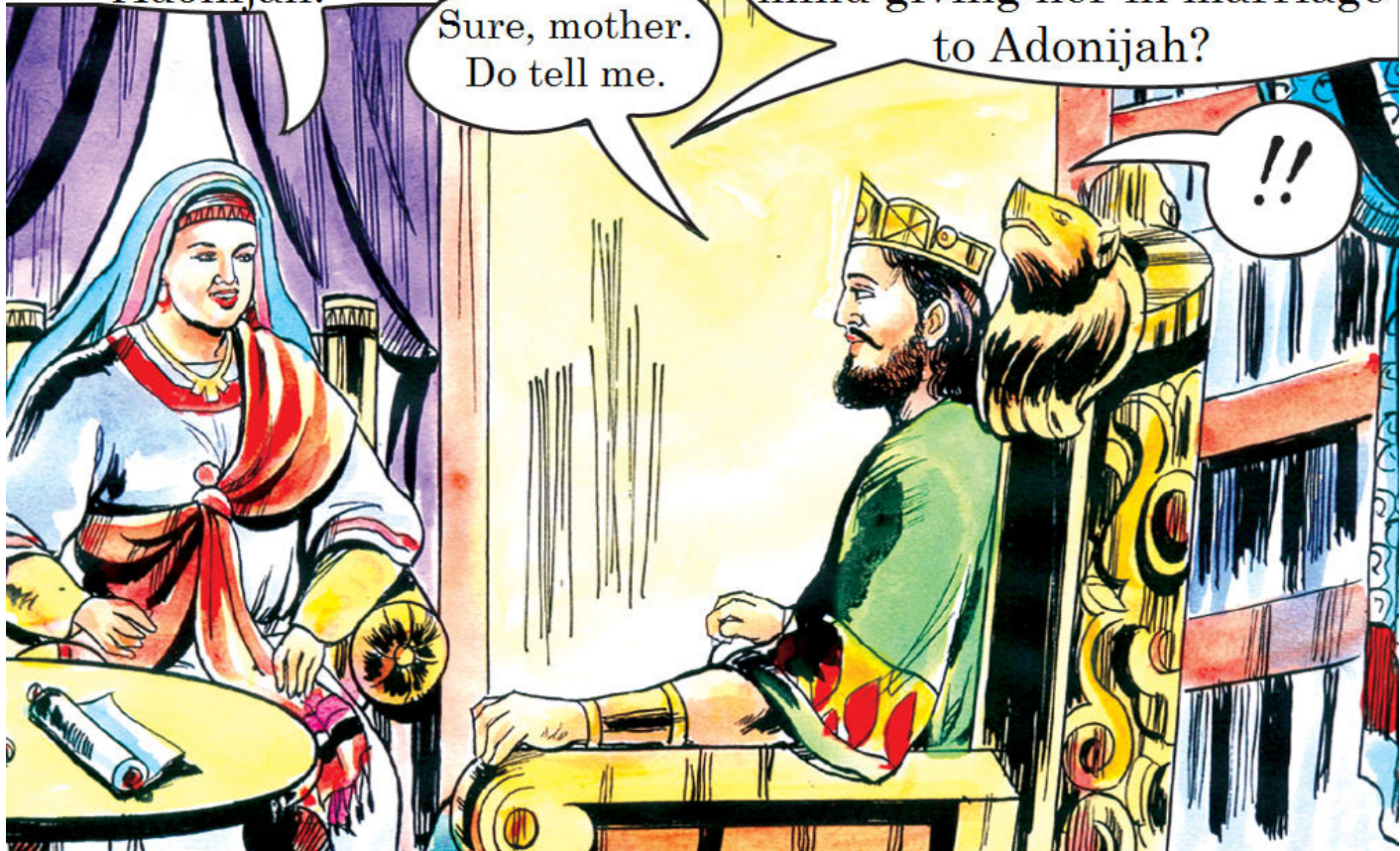


I am here to ask
you a favor for
Adonijah.

Sure, mother.
Do tell me.

You know Abishag, your
Father's maid. Would you
mind giving her in marriage
to Adonijah?

!!

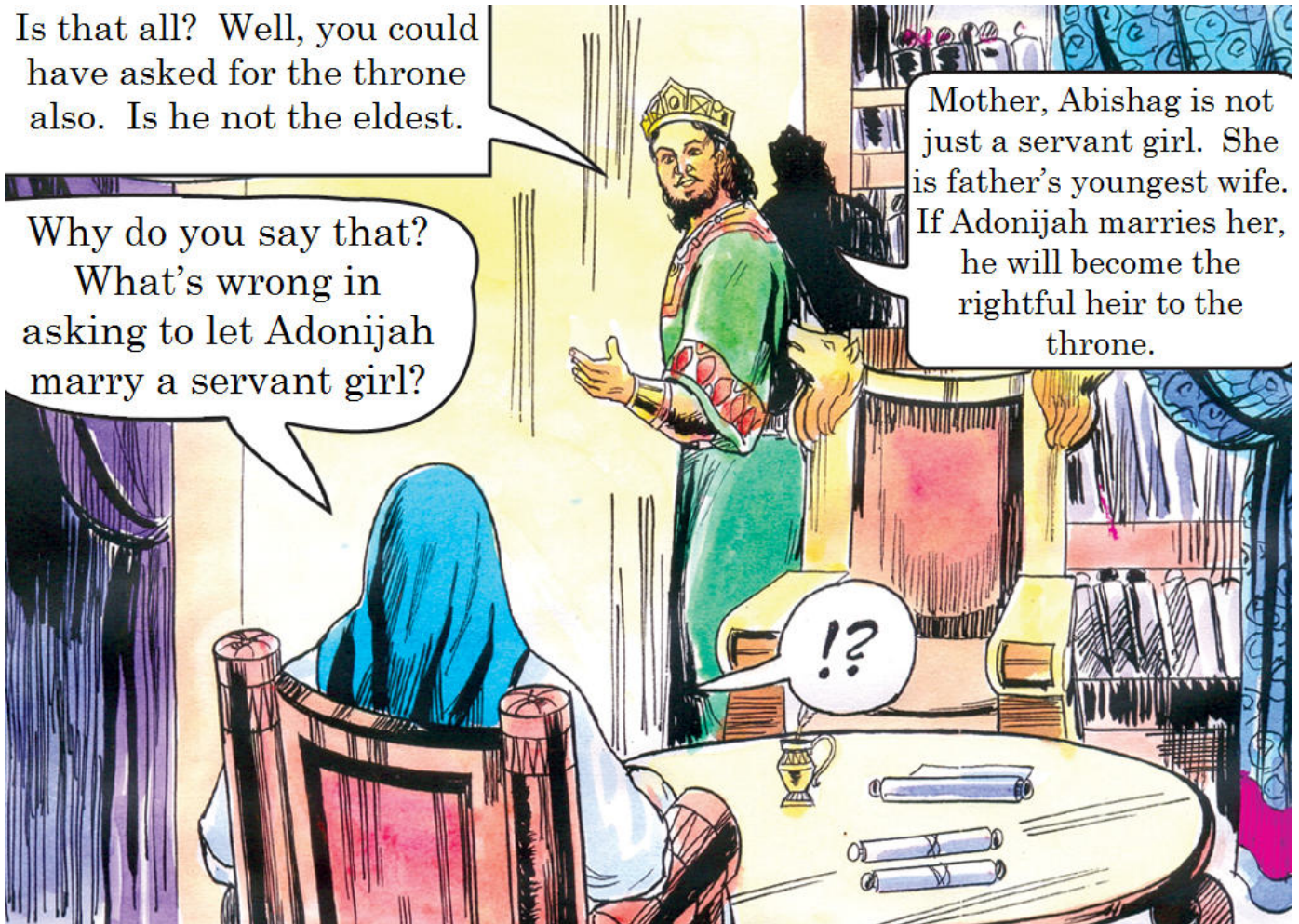


Is that all? Well, you could have asked for the throne also. Is he not the eldest.

Why do you say that?
What's wrong in asking to let Adonijah marry a servant girl?

Mother, Abishag is not just a servant girl. She is father's youngest wife. If Adonijah marries her, he will become the rightful heir to the throne.

!?



Oh dear, I did not know that he had set such a trap for us.

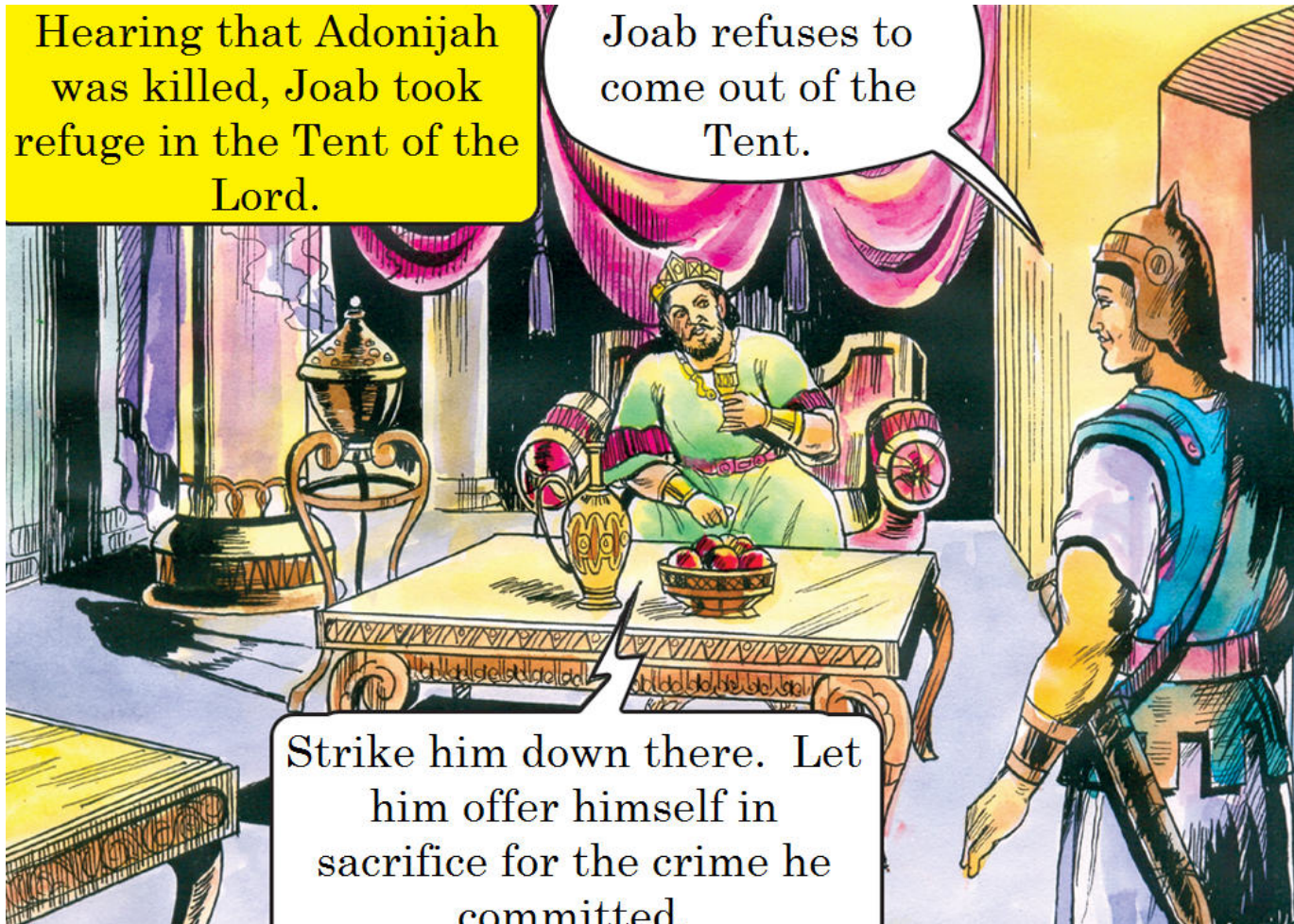
Adonijah, you must die for this. You dug your own grave.



Hearing that Adonijah was killed, Joab took refuge in the Tent of the Lord.

Joab refuses to come out of the Tent.

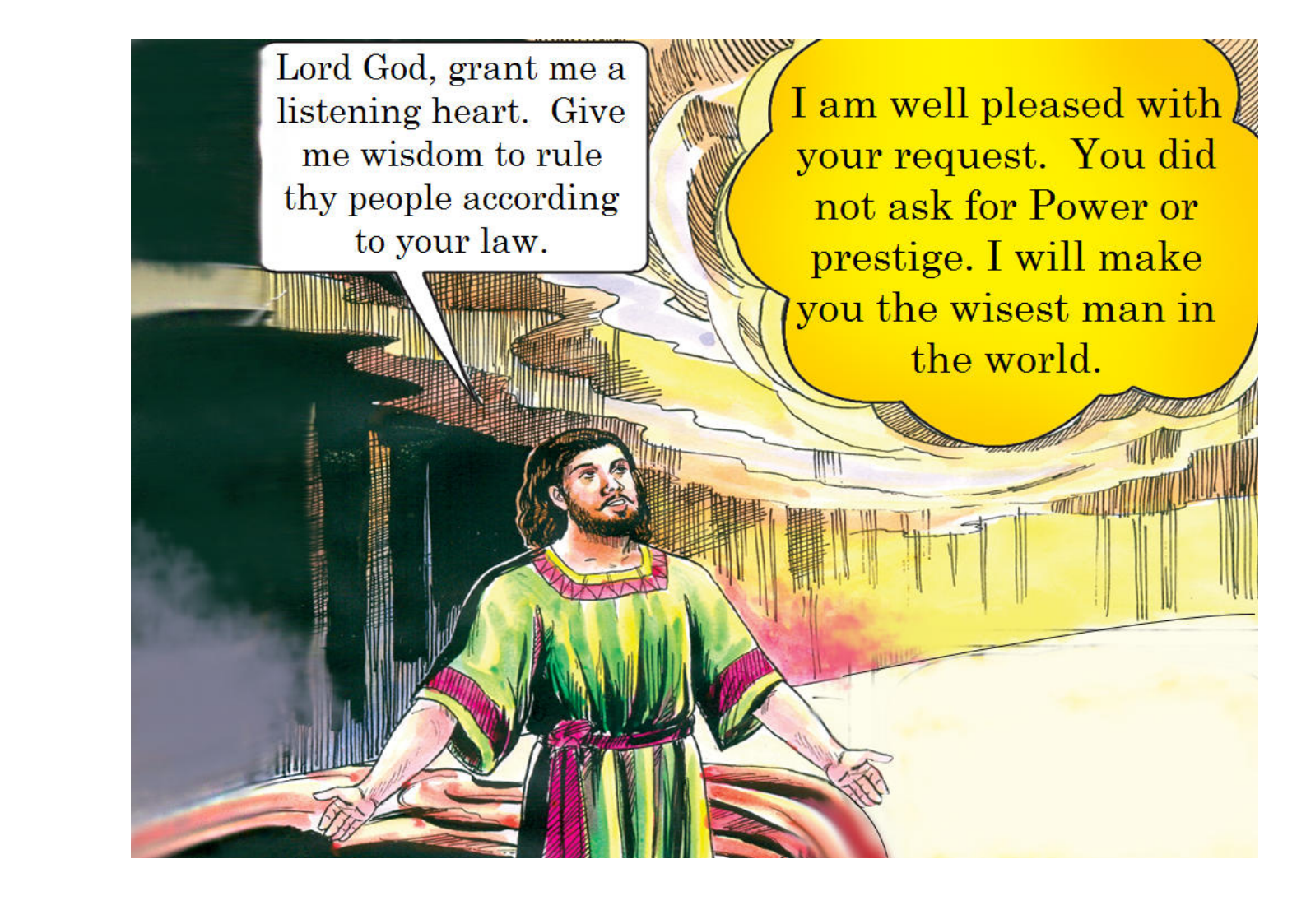
Strike him down there. Let him offer himself in sacrifice for the crime he committed.



Solomon eliminated his enemies one by one. One day he had a dream.

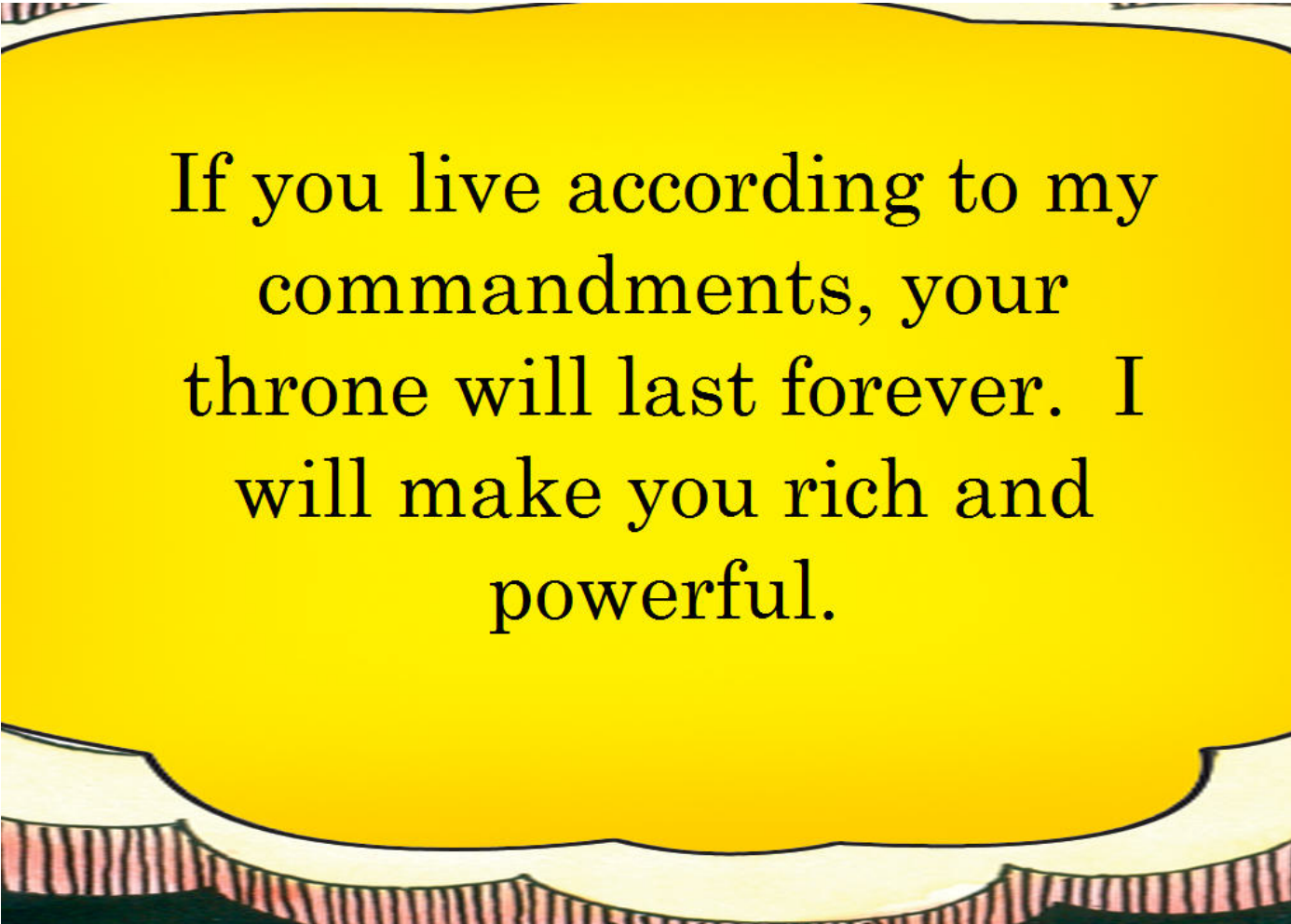
You have found favor with me. You may ask whatever you want.





Lord God, grant me a listening heart. Give me wisdom to rule thy people according to your law.

I am well pleased with your request. You did not ask for Power or prestige. I will make you the wisest man in the world.



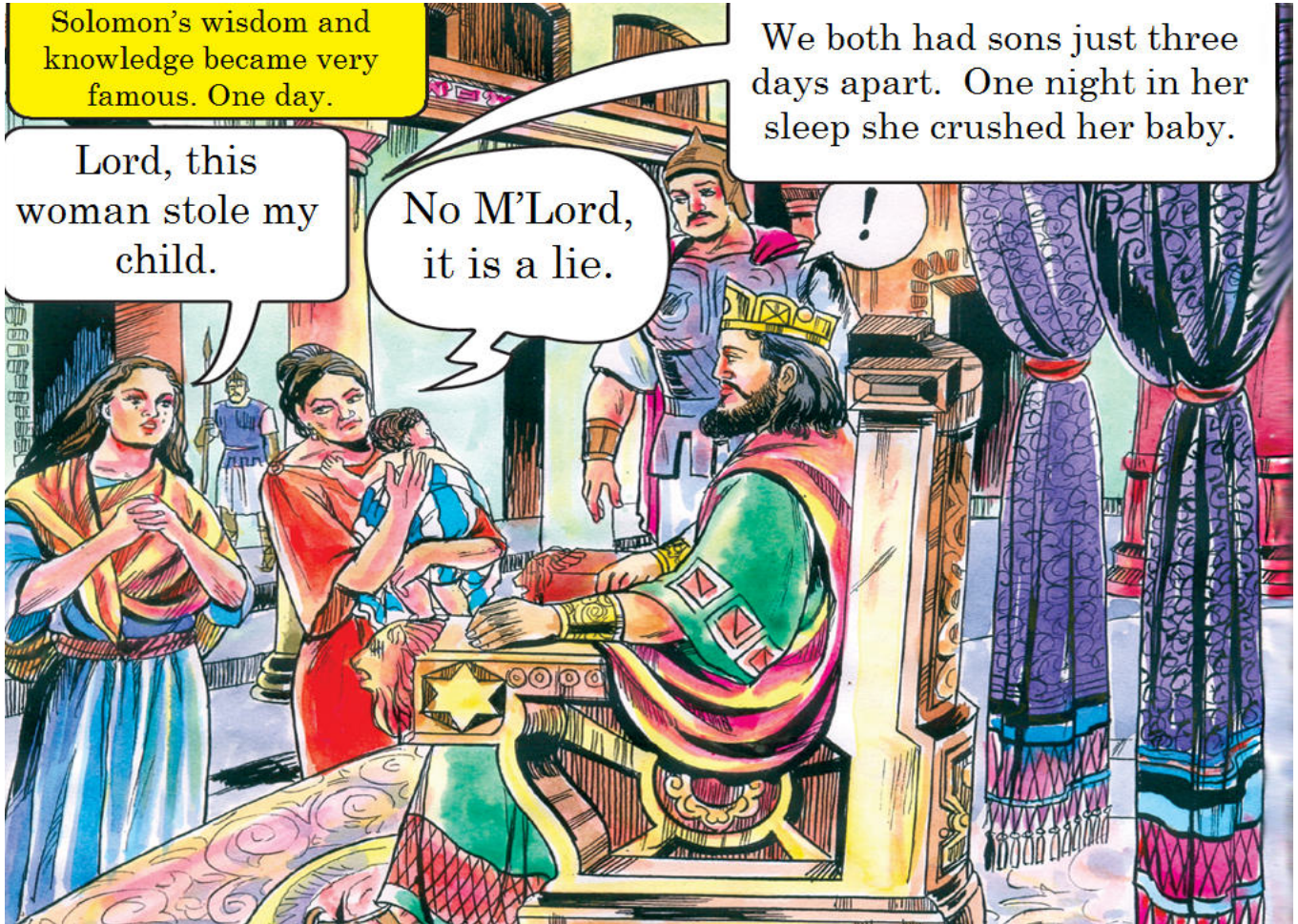
If you live according to my
commandments, your
throne will last forever. I
will make you rich and
powerful.

Solomon's wisdom and knowledge became very famous. One day.

Lord, this woman stole my child.

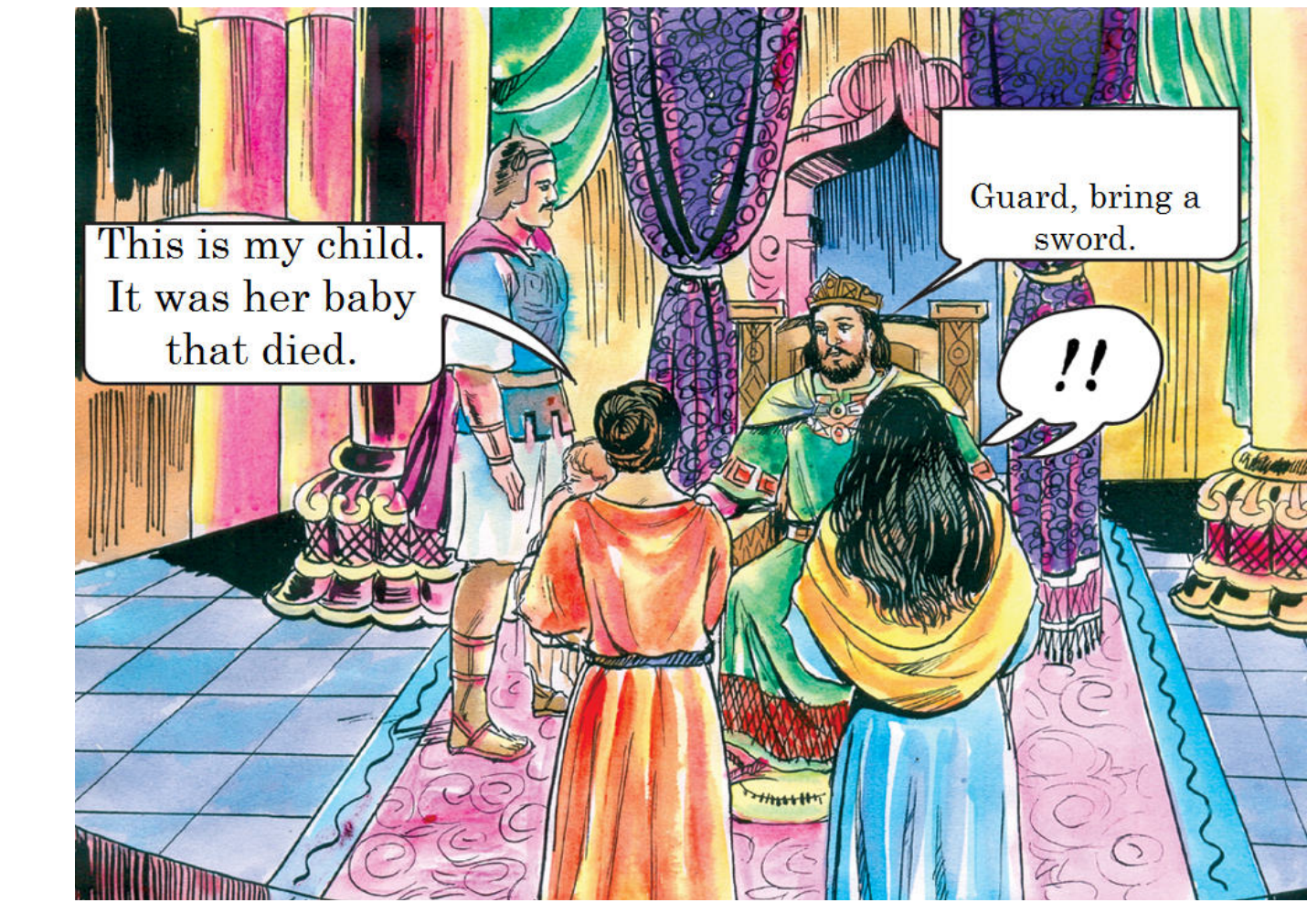
No M'Lord, it is a lie.

We both had sons just three days apart. One night in her sleep she crushed her baby.



When she saw that her child was dead, she took my son. When I woke up in the morning, I saw the dead child by my side. Your majesty let me have my son.

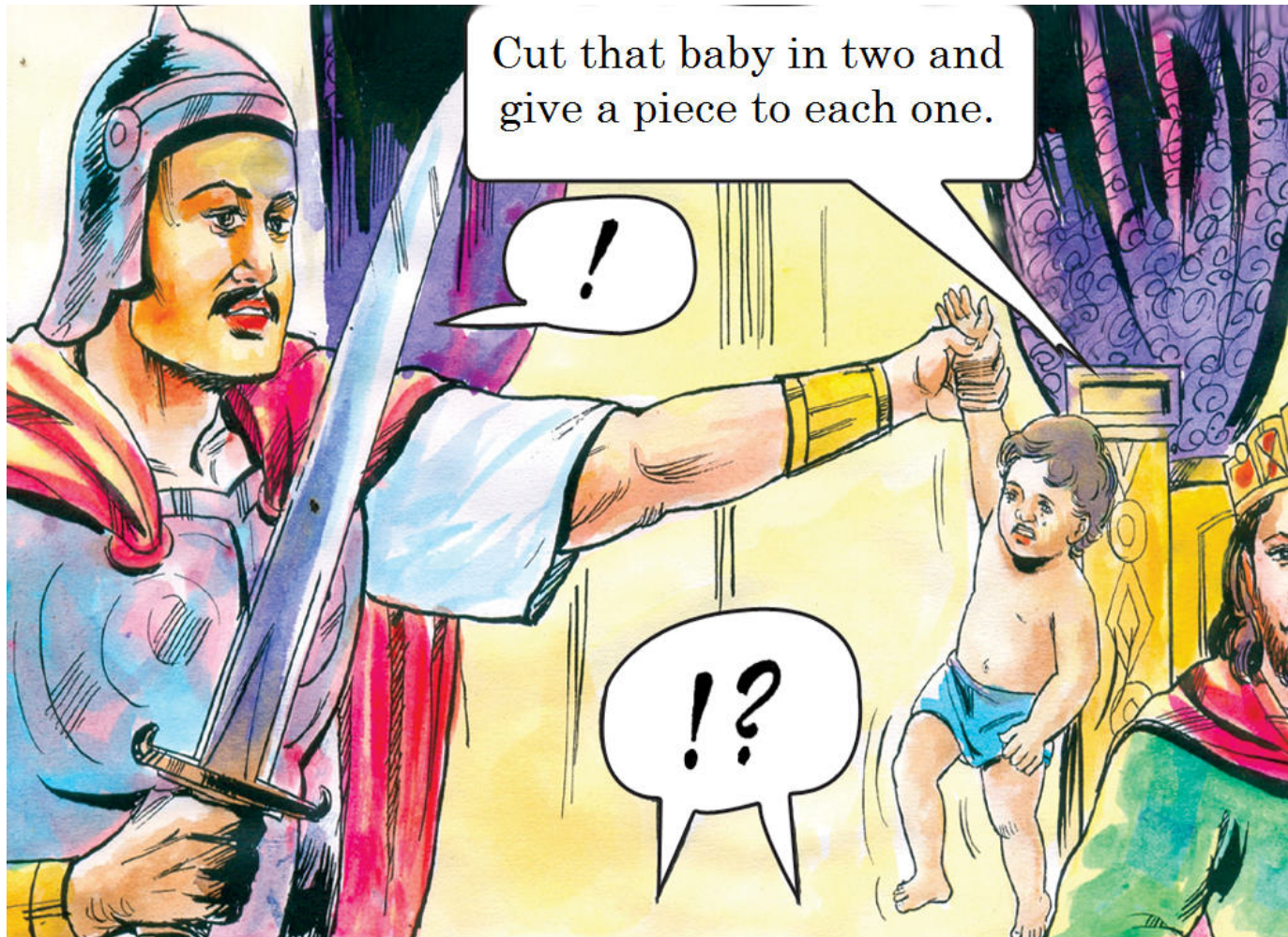




This is my child.
It was her baby
that died.

Guard, bring a
sword.

!!



Cut that baby in two and give a piece to each one.

!

!?

If half, let it be. I won't give her my baby.

Oh no! My Lord, don't kill the child. Let her have him.

!



A mother values the child's life. Give the child to her. Put the other woman in prison.

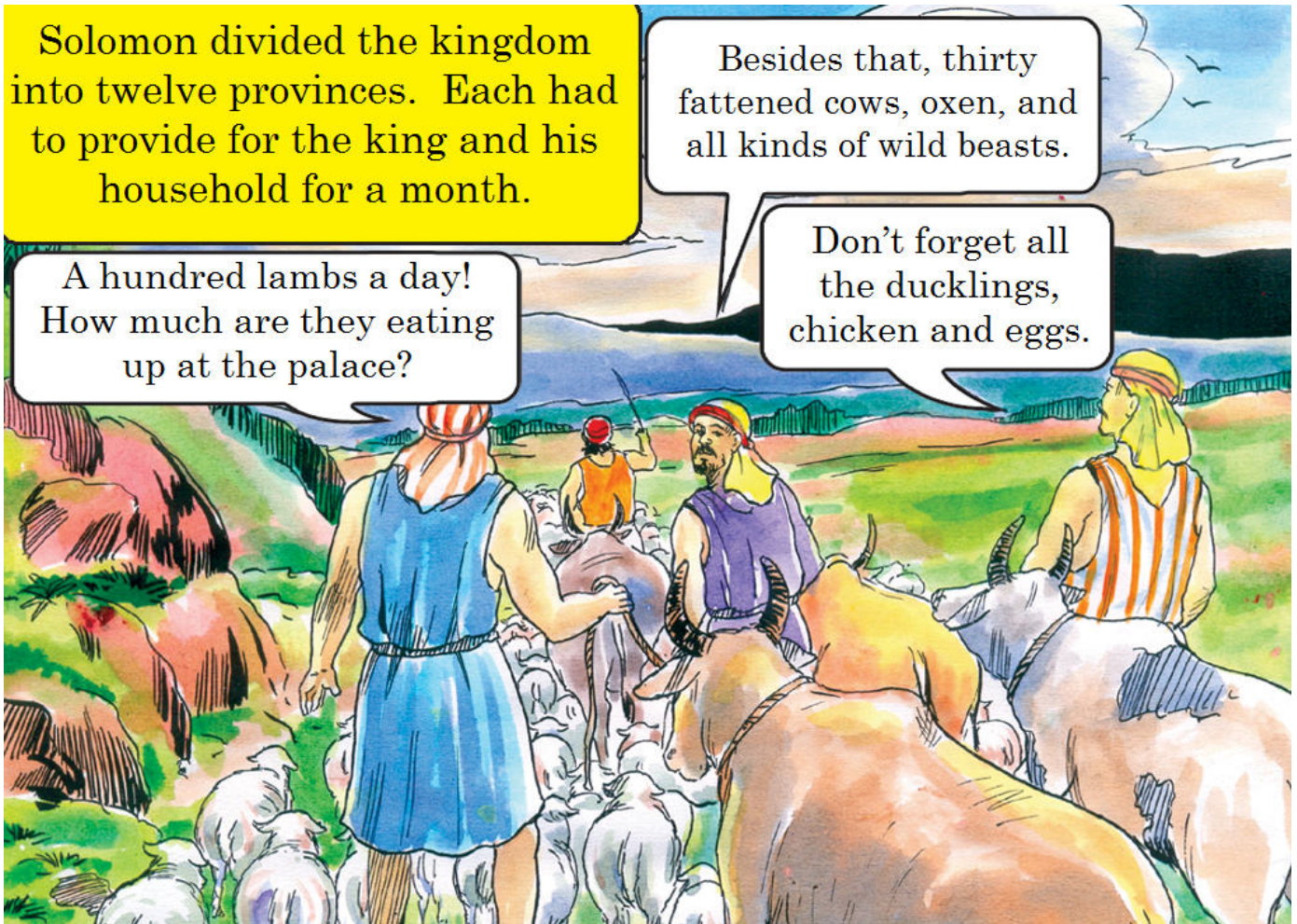


Solomon divided the kingdom into twelve provinces. Each had to provide for the king and his household for a month.

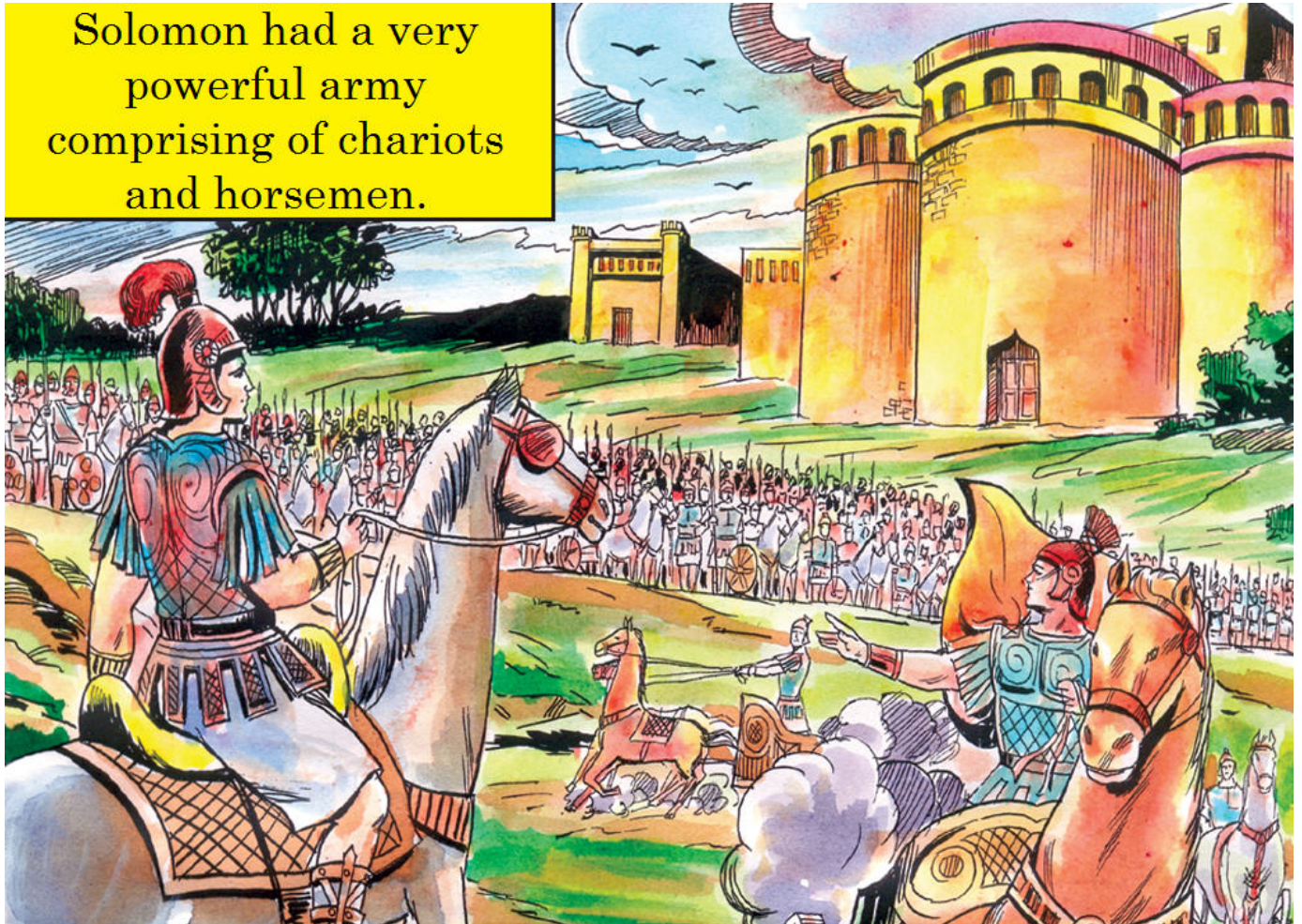
Besides that, thirty fattened cows, oxen, and all kinds of wild beasts.

A hundred lambs a day!
How much are they eating up at the palace?

Don't forget all the ducklings, chicken and eggs.



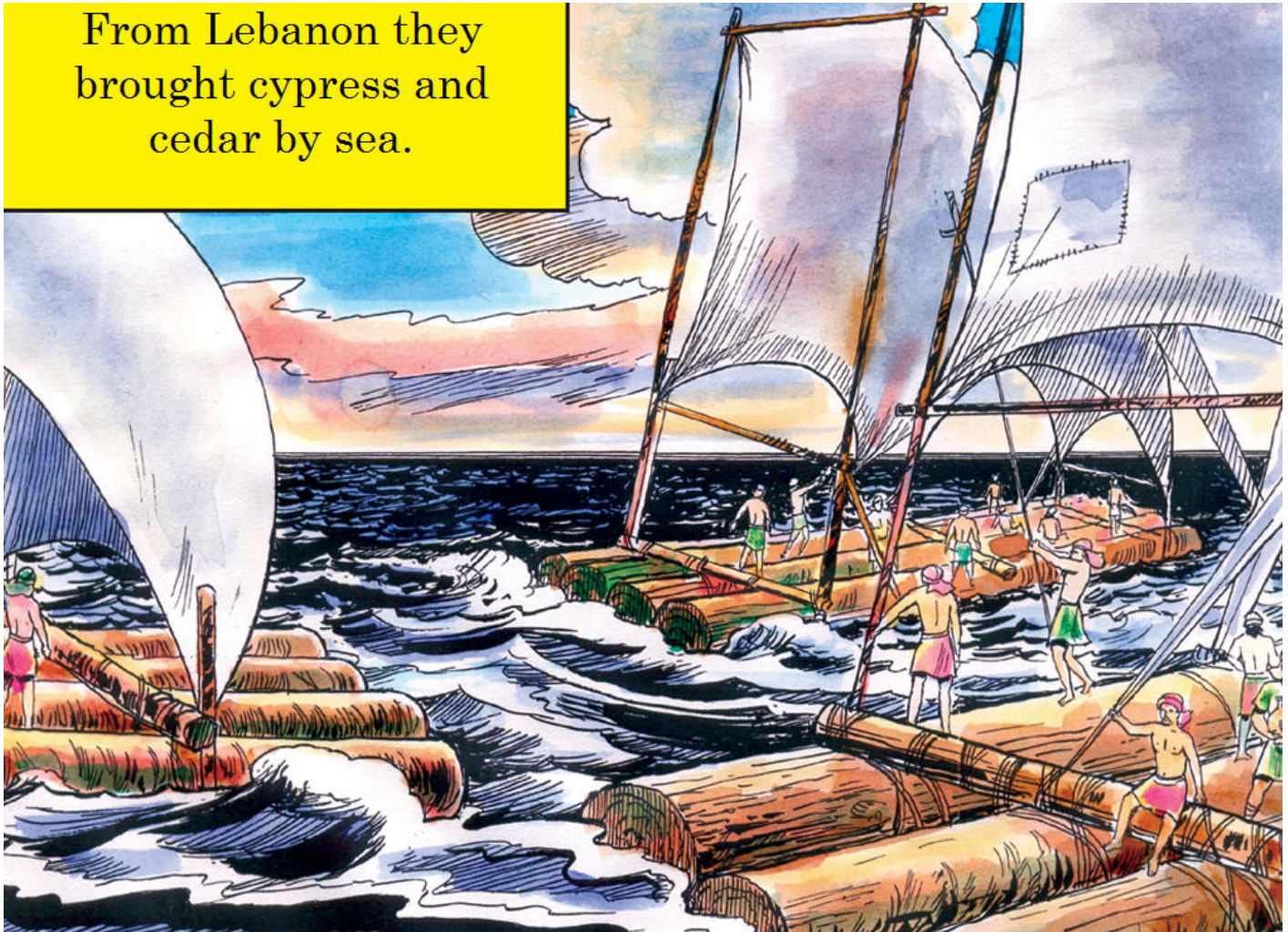
Solomon had a very powerful army comprising of chariots and horsemen.



He had a mighty fleet of
hundreds of ships.



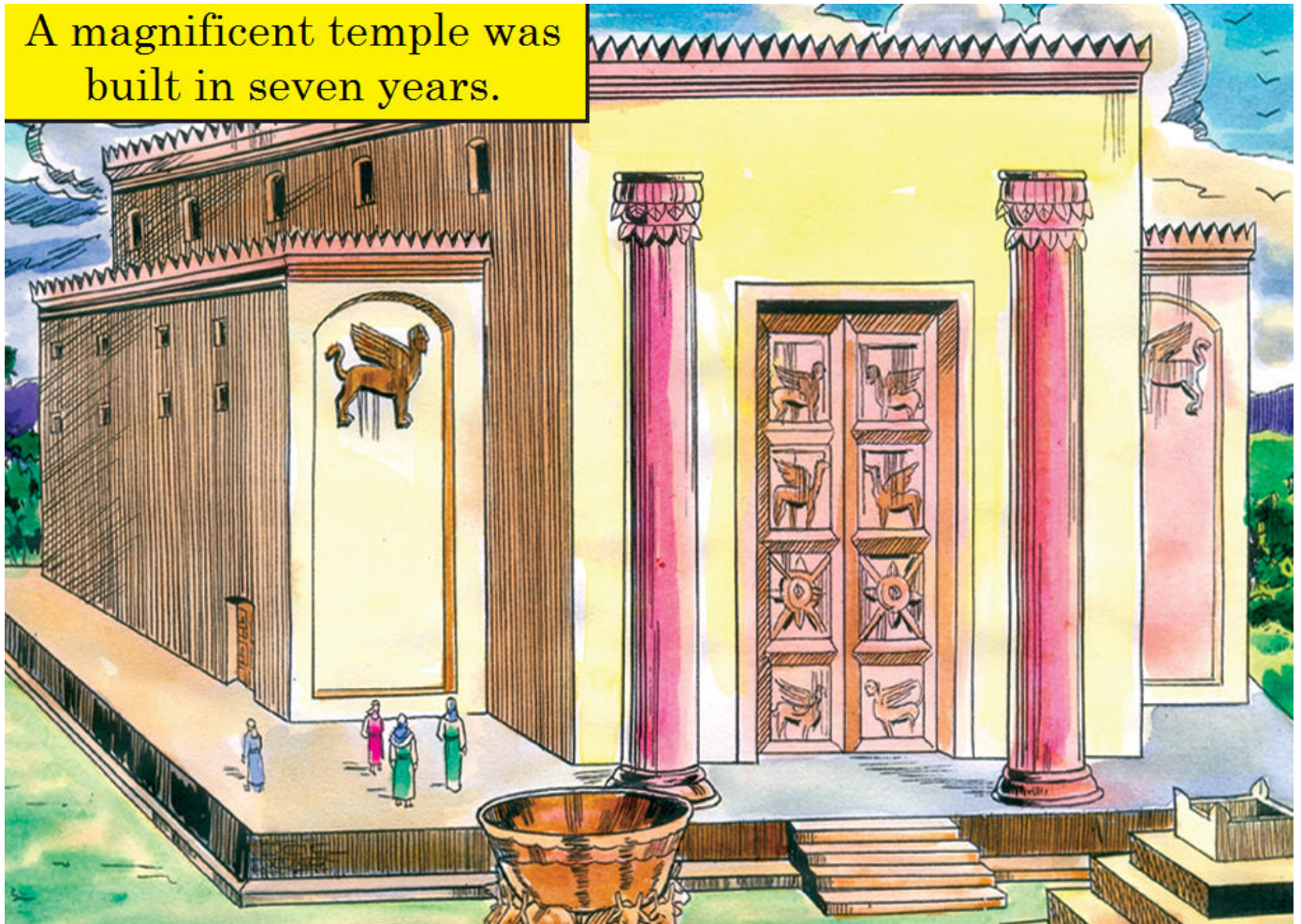
From Lebanon they
brought cypress and
cedar by sea.



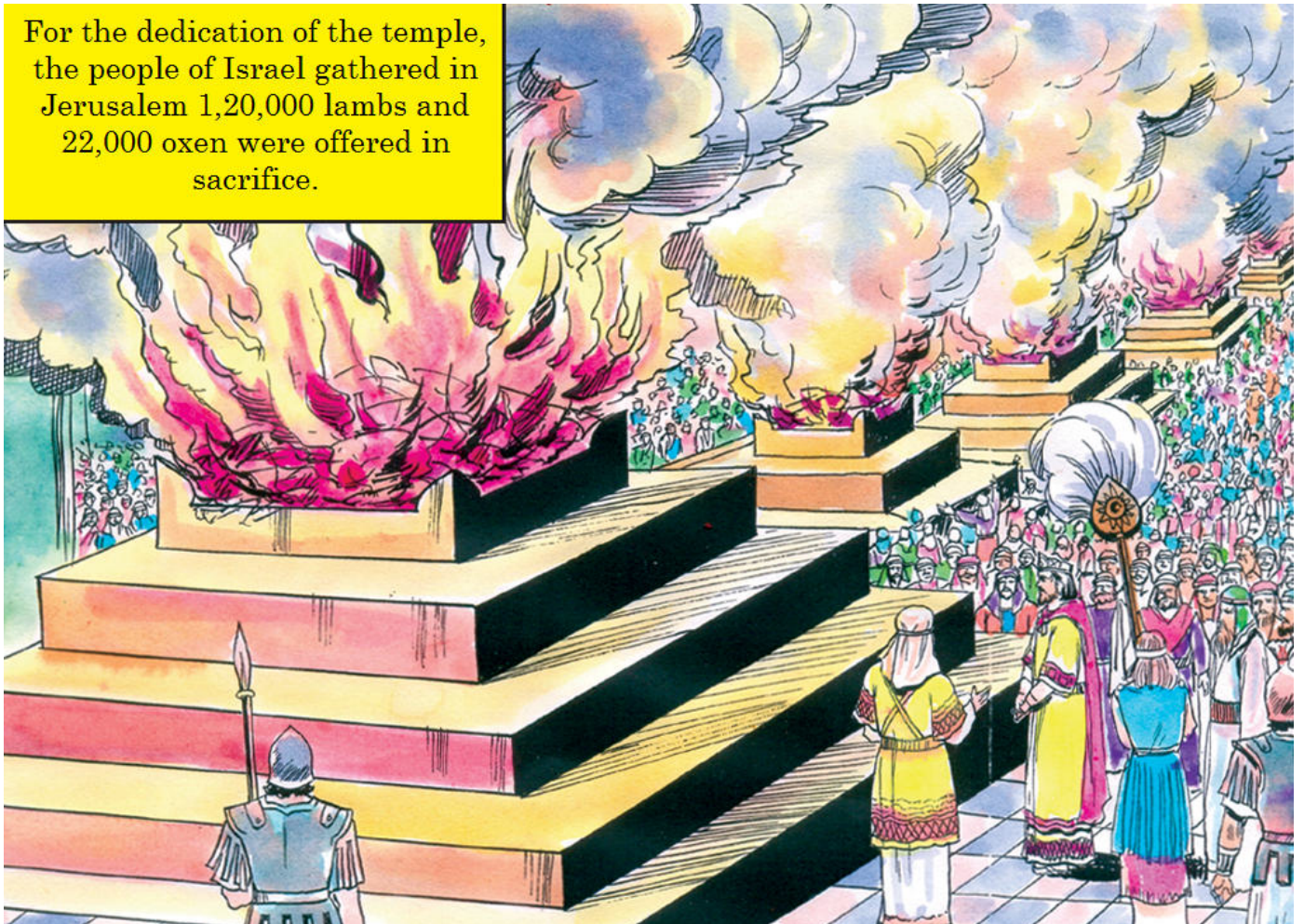


Excellent craftsmen from Tyre supervised the construction.

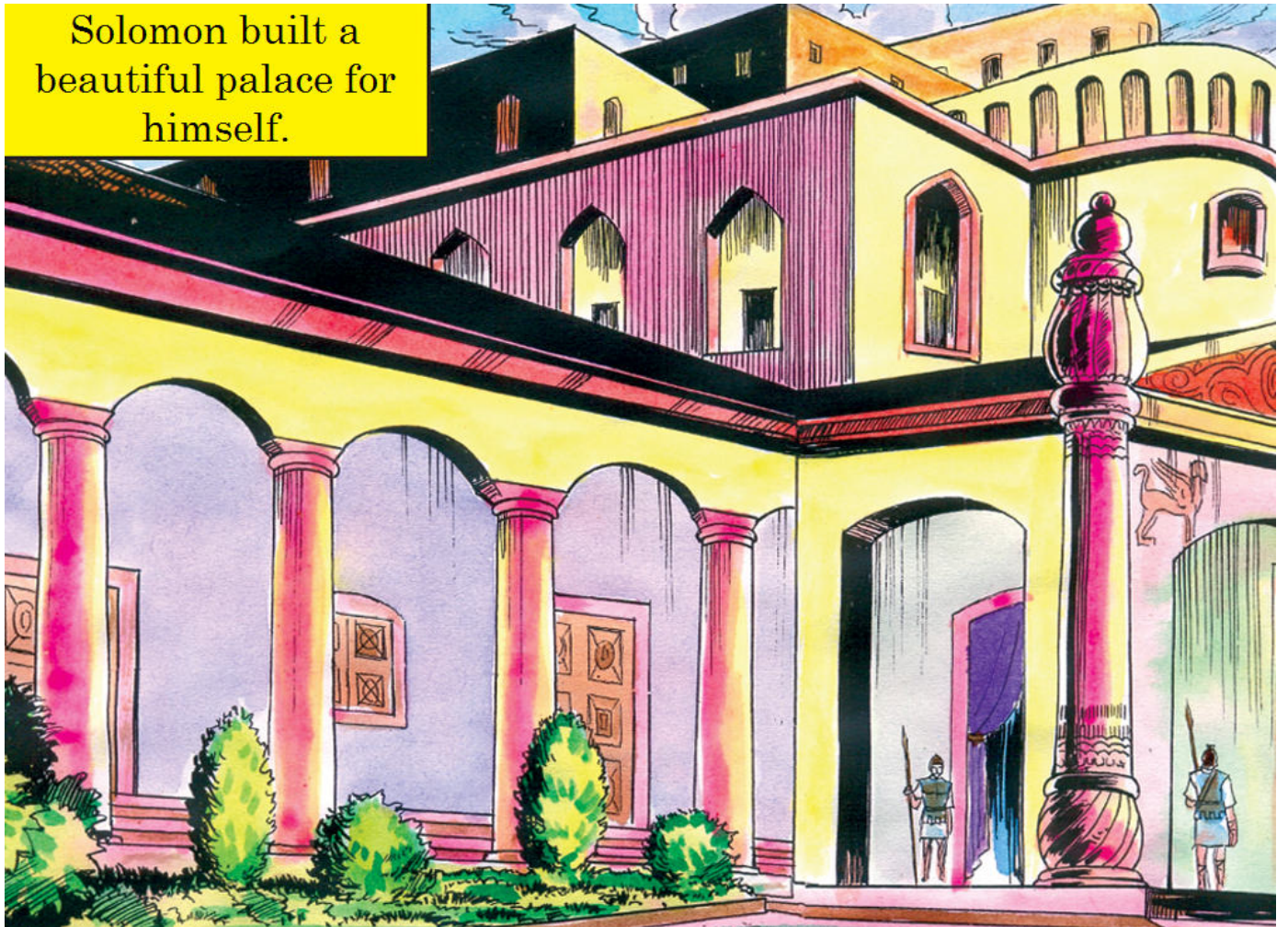
A magnificent temple was built in seven years.



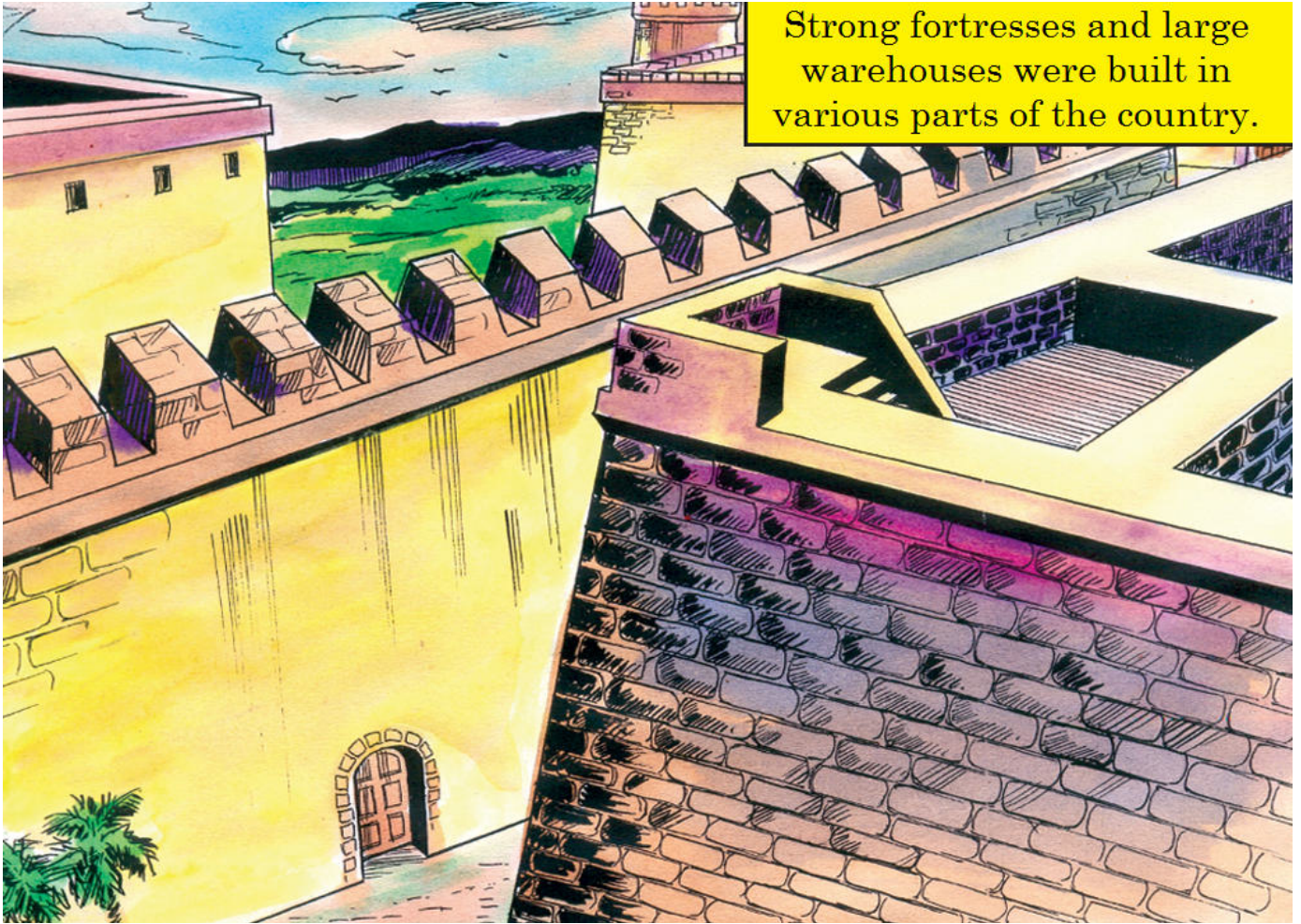
For the dedication of the temple, the people of Israel gathered in Jerusalem 1,20,000 lambs and 22,000 oxen were offered in sacrifice.



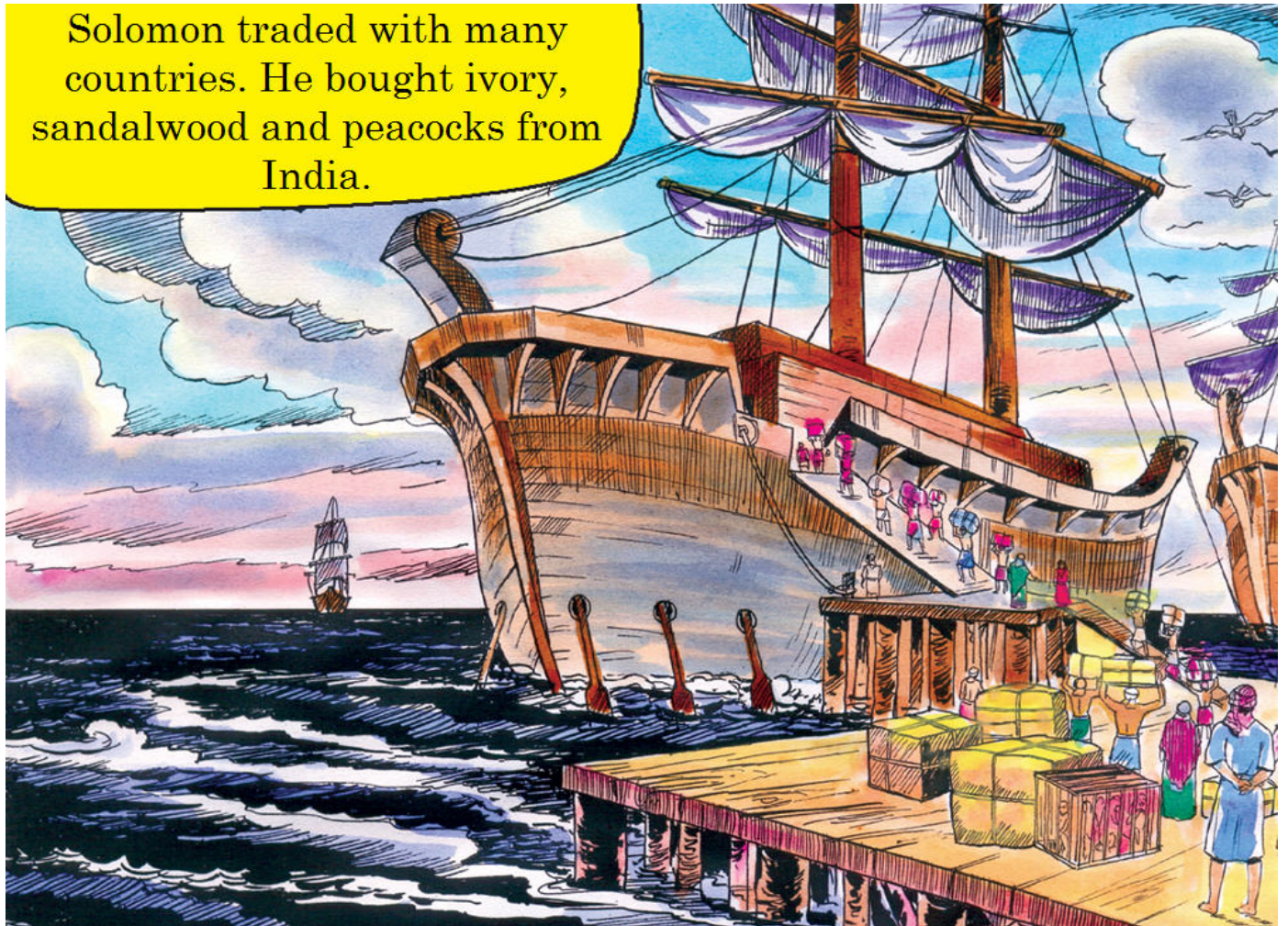
Solomon built a beautiful palace for himself.



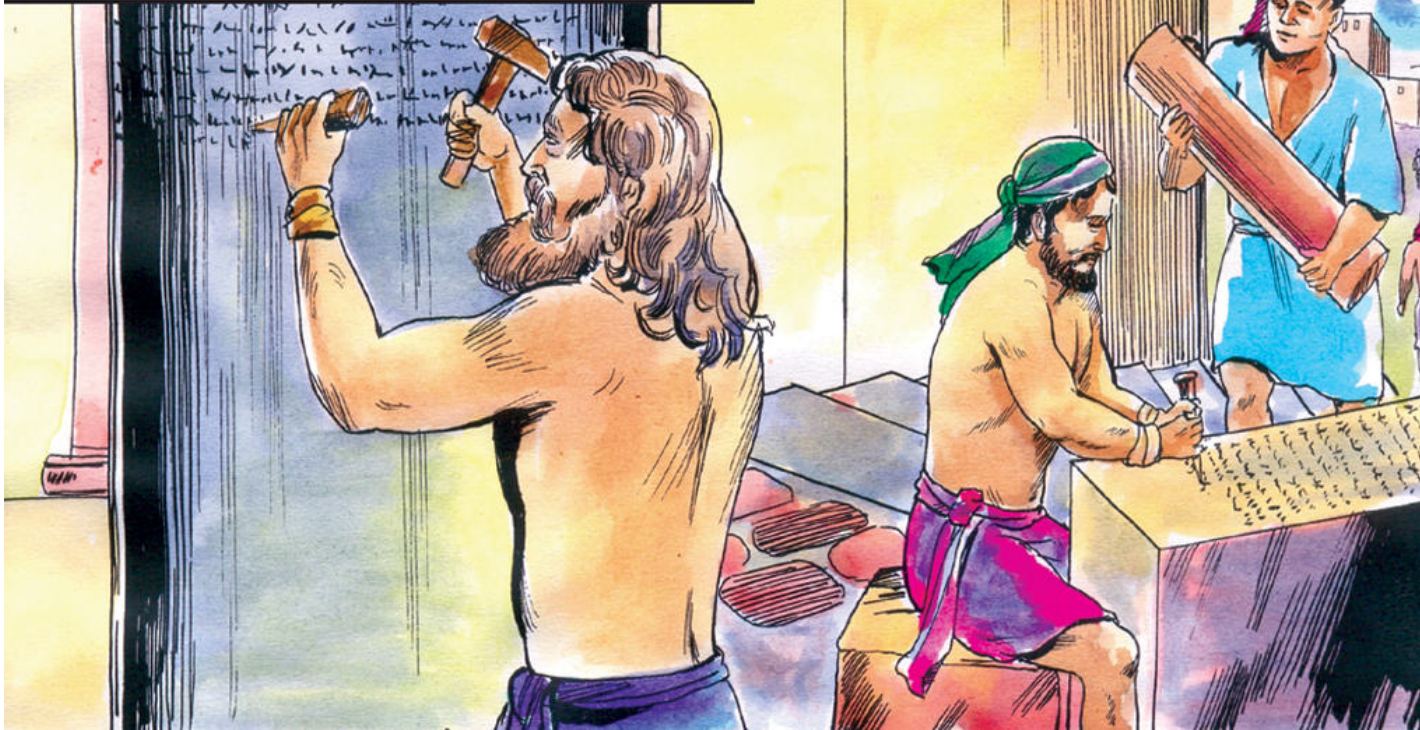
Strong fortresses and large warehouses were built in various parts of the country.



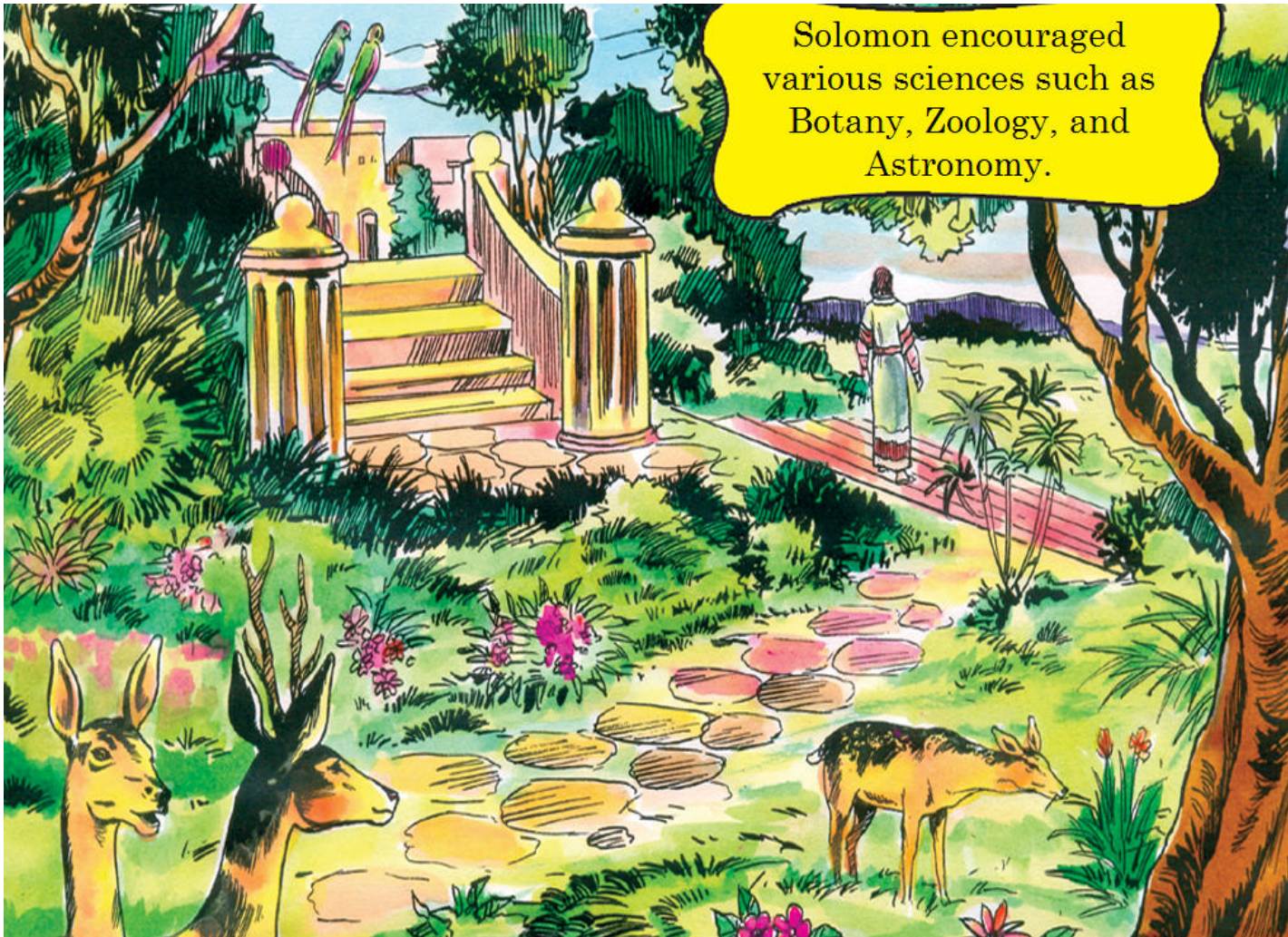
Solomon traded with many countries. He bought ivory, sandalwood and peacocks from India.



Solomon encouraged writers.
They began to write the history
of Israel. Thus, the Yahwist
source, part of the Pentateuch
was formed.



Solomon encouraged various sciences such as Botany, Zoology, and Astronomy.



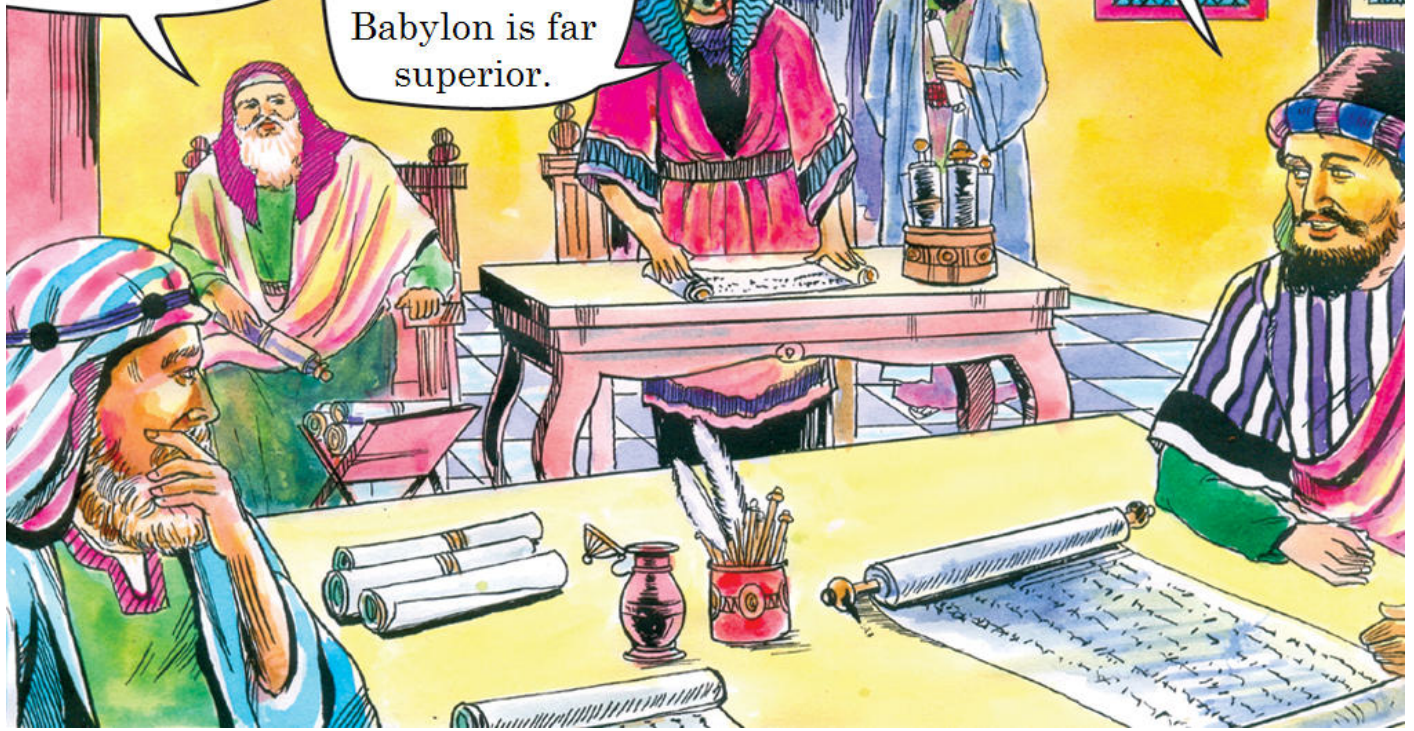
He founded schools of Politics and law.
Scholars from various lands lived at his court.
A discussion among the scholars of law.

What are all these, when
compared to the law of
Yahweh given to us
through Moses!

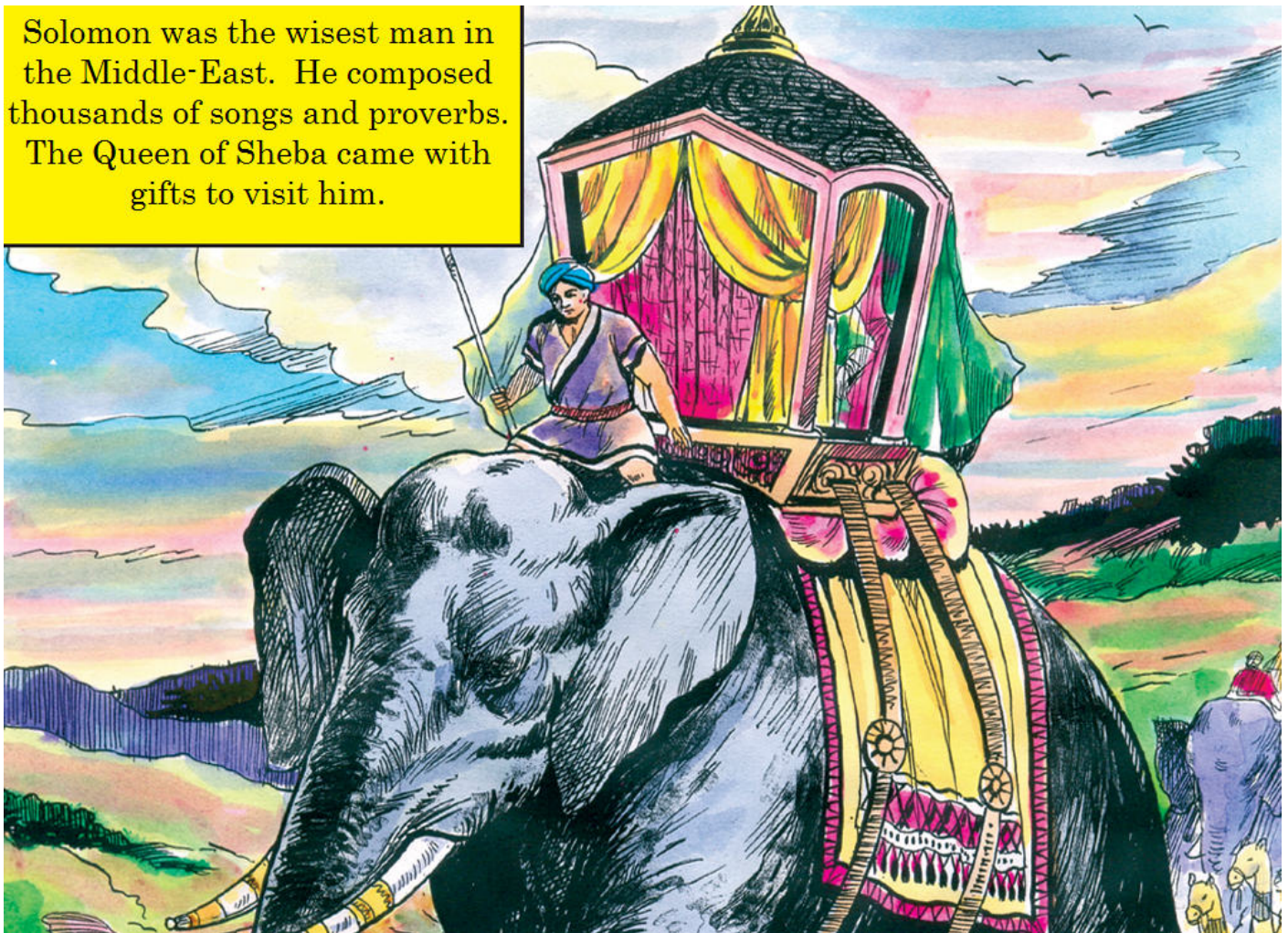
According to the law
of Aminophes, the
Pharaoh...

In this matter,
the law of
Hamurabi of
Babylon is far
superior.

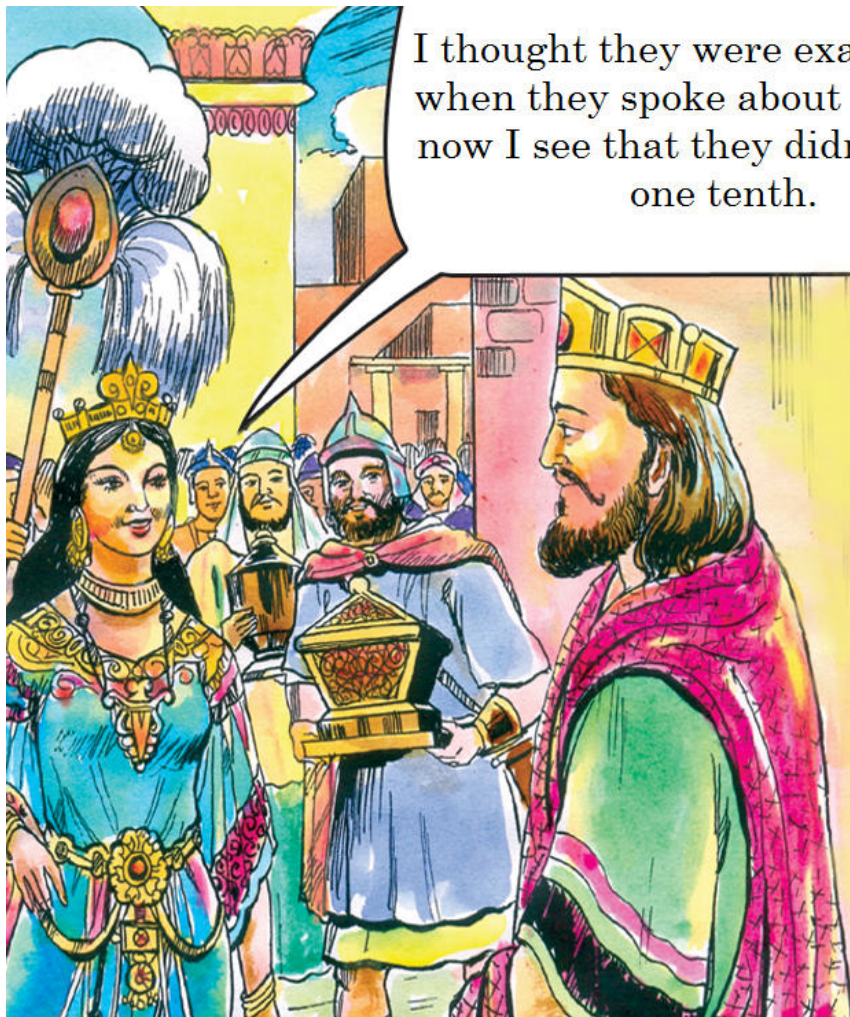
!



Solomon was the wisest man in the Middle-East. He composed thousands of songs and proverbs. The Queen of Sheba came with gifts to visit him.



I thought they were exaggerating when they spoke about you. But, now I see that they didn't tell me one tenth.



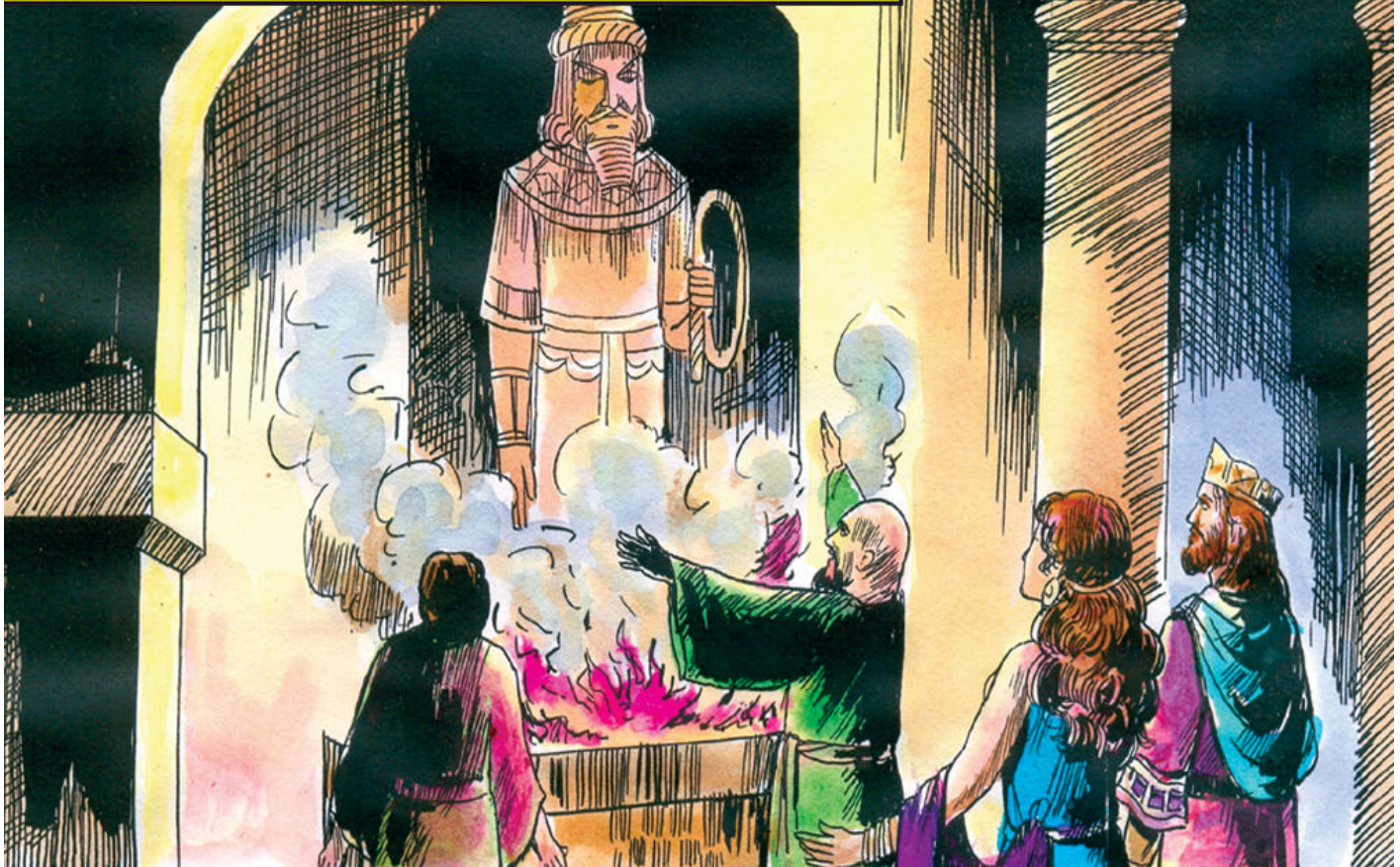
Solomon signed treaties of peace with neighboring kings and accepted their daughters in marriage. The marriage with Pharaoh's daughter.

As a wedding gift I give you Gaza and Gezer territories of Egypt.

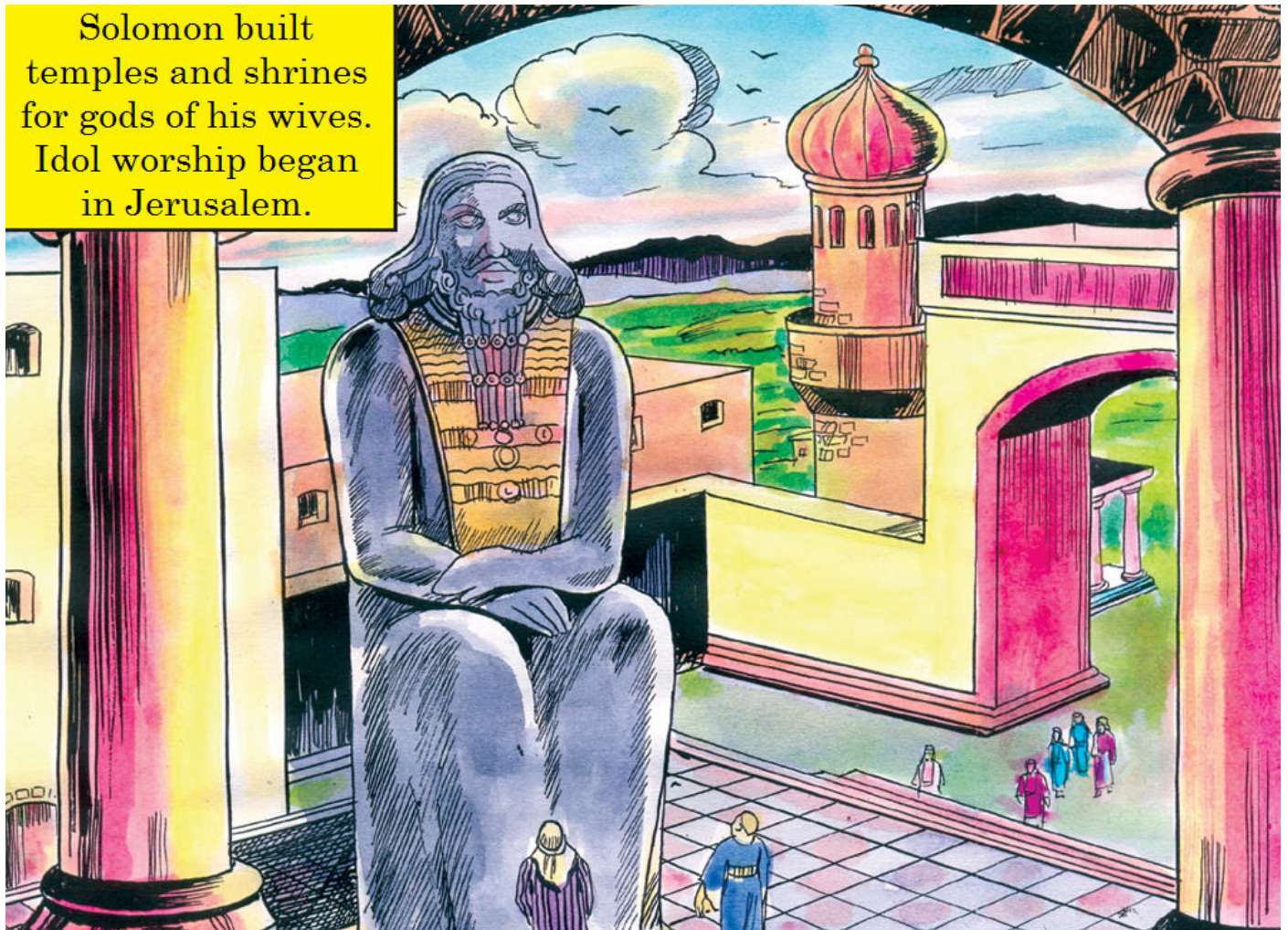
Our friendship and kinship will last forever.



The gentile princes brought their idols and priests with them to Jerusalem.



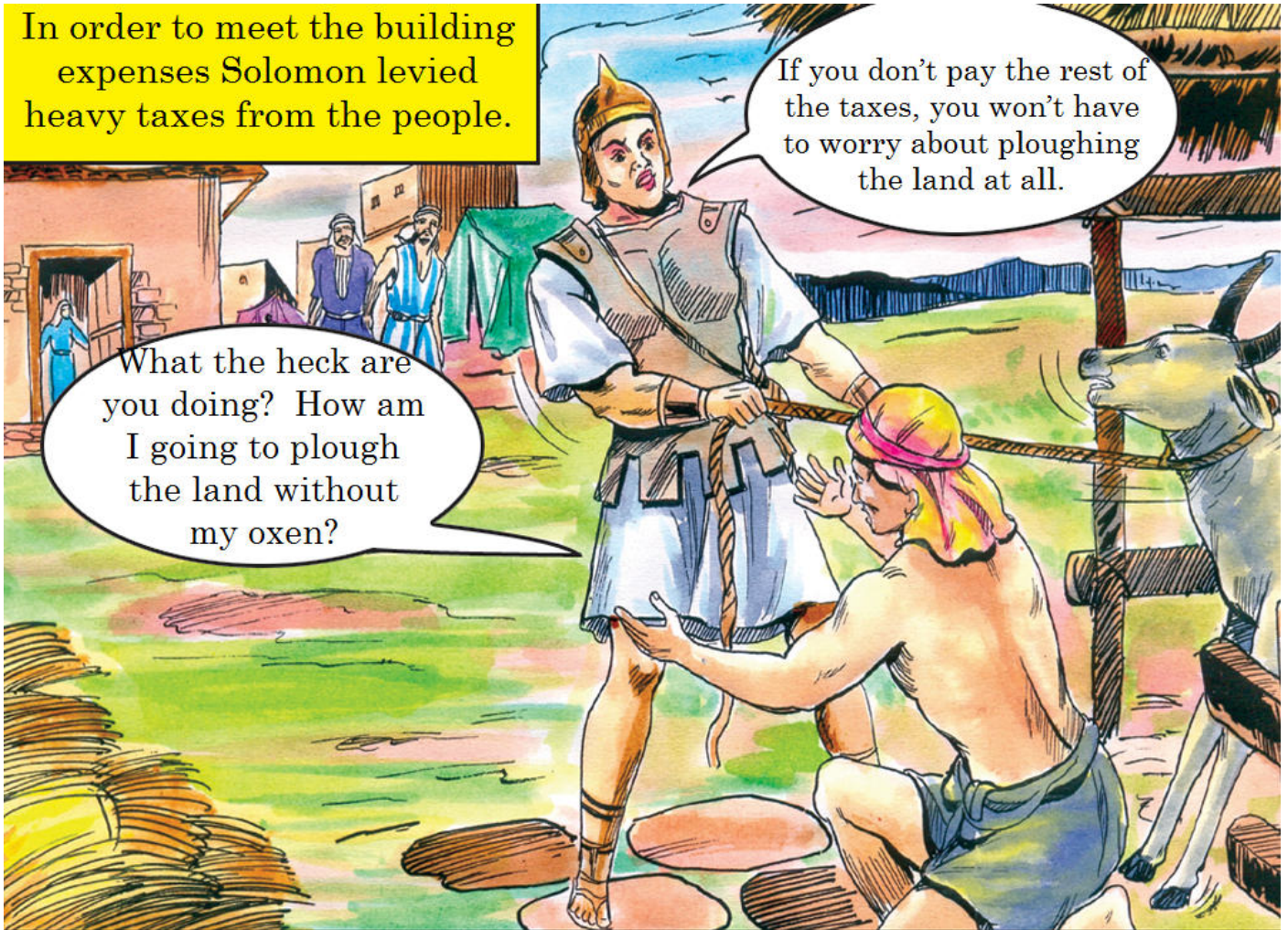
Solomon built
temples and shrines
for gods of his wives.
Idol worship began
in Jerusalem.



In order to meet the building expenses Solomon levied heavy taxes from the people.

If you don't pay the rest of the taxes, you won't have to worry about ploughing the land at all.

What the heck are you doing? How am I going to plough the land without my oxen?



Hundreds of thousands of foreigners as well as Israelites were forced into slavery.

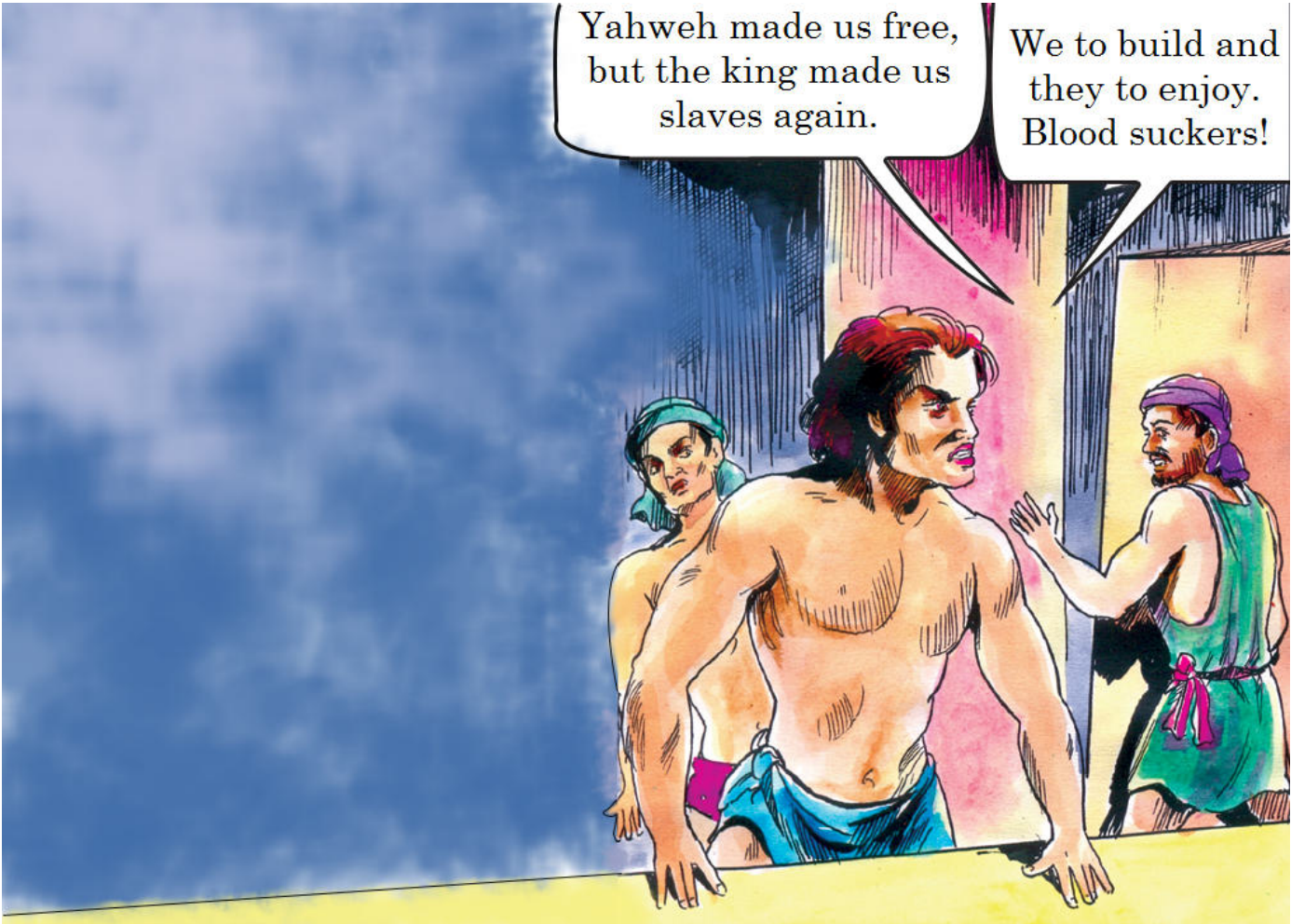
Hm! Pull, idiot.

This is terrible.



Yahweh made us free,
but the king made us
slaves again.

We to build and
they to enjoy.
Blood suckers!



Hush if the task
master hears you'll
lose your head.

Who cares?

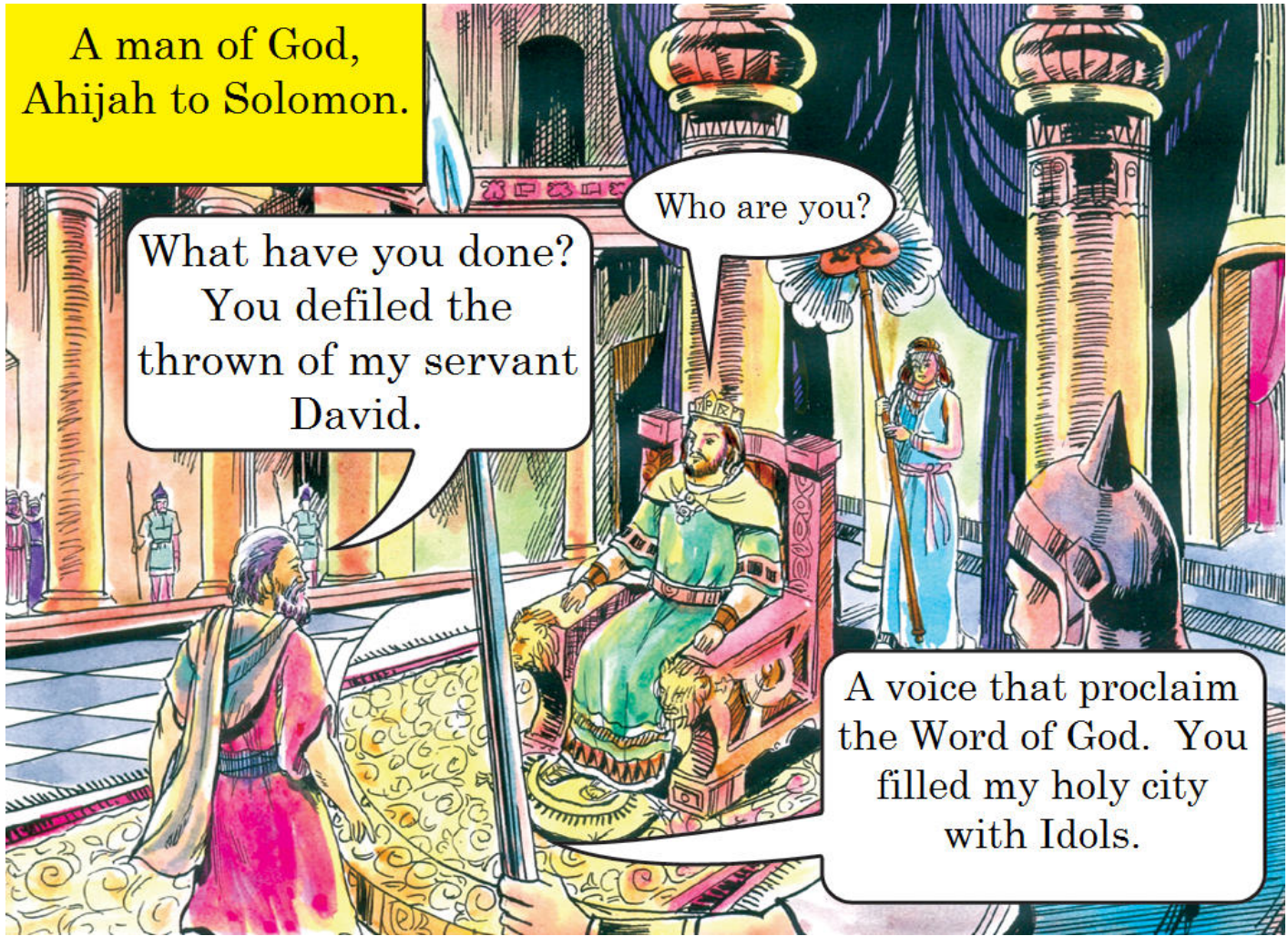


A man of God,
Ahijah to Solomon.

What have you done?
You defiled the
thrown of my servant
David.

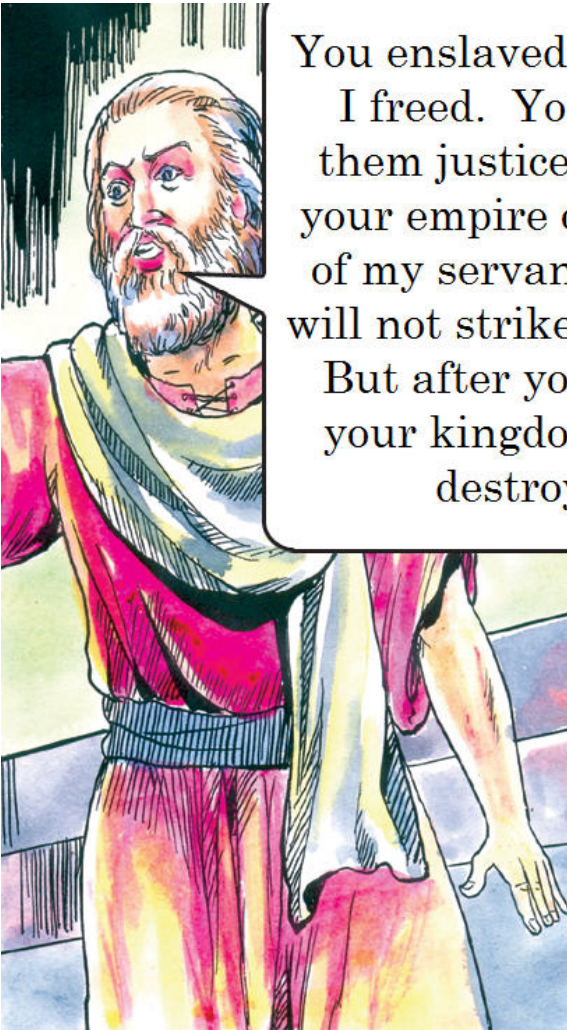
Who are you?

A voice that proclaim
the Word of God. You
filled my holy city
with Idols.



Didn't I build a beautiful Temple for Yahweh? What is wrong in building a few shrines for my wives to worship?



A man with a long, grey beard and a red and yellow robe is shown from the chest up. He is looking towards the right with a serious expression. The background is a bright, hazy sky with a blue and red gradient. The man's robe has a yellow sash or shawl draped over his shoulders. The text is contained within a white speech bubble that overlaps the man's face and the background.

You enslaved the people
I freed. You denied
them justice. I detest
your empire on account
of my servant David. I
will not strike you down.
But after your death,
your kingdom will be
destroyed.

After the prophet left

Who cares what happens after my death!



I live only once and
I am going to enjoy
it to the end.



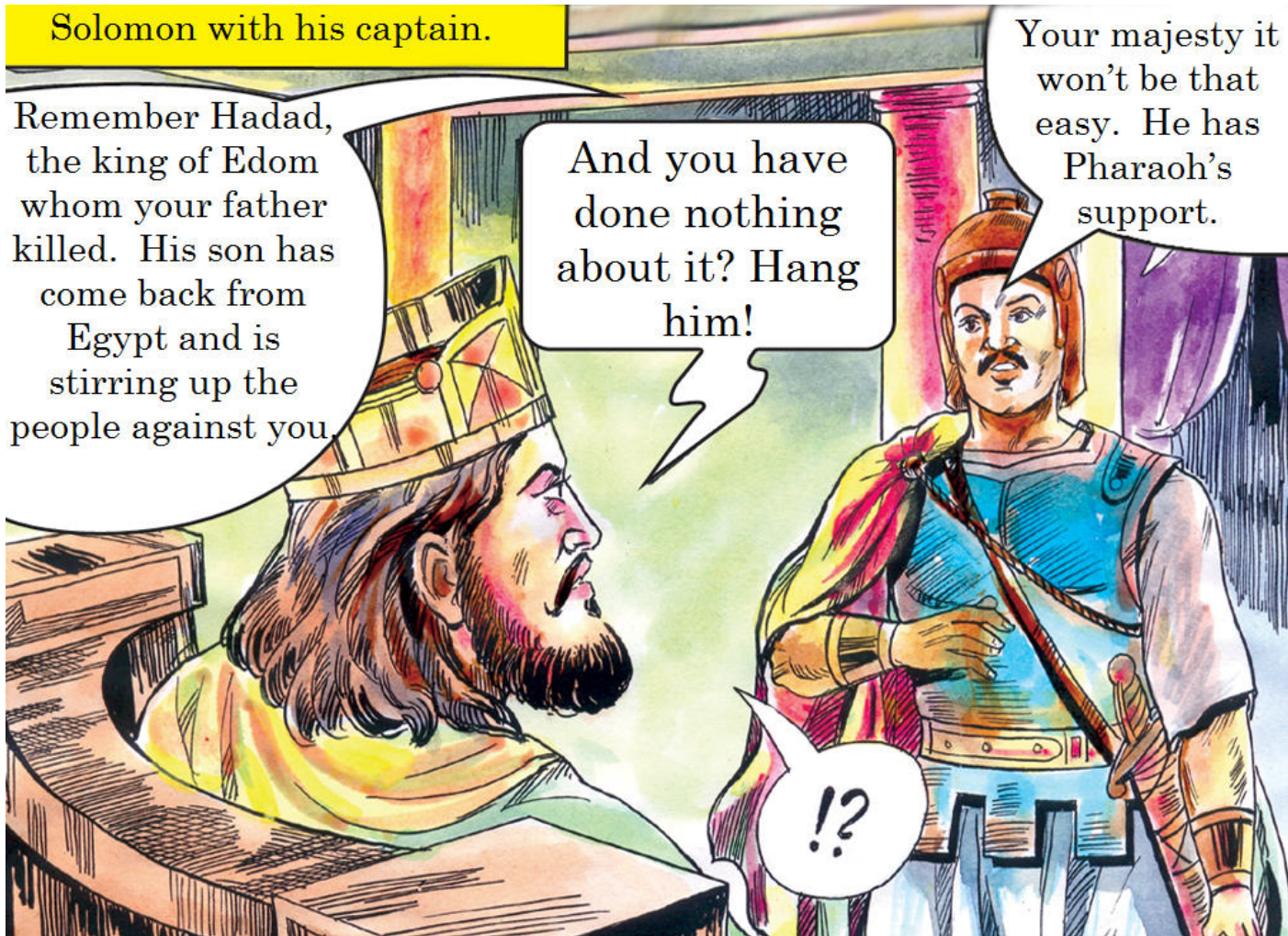
Solomon with his captain.

Remember Hadad, the king of Edom whom your father killed. His son has come back from Egypt and is stirring up the people against you.

And you have done nothing about it? Hang him!

Your majesty it won't be that easy. He has Pharaoh's support.

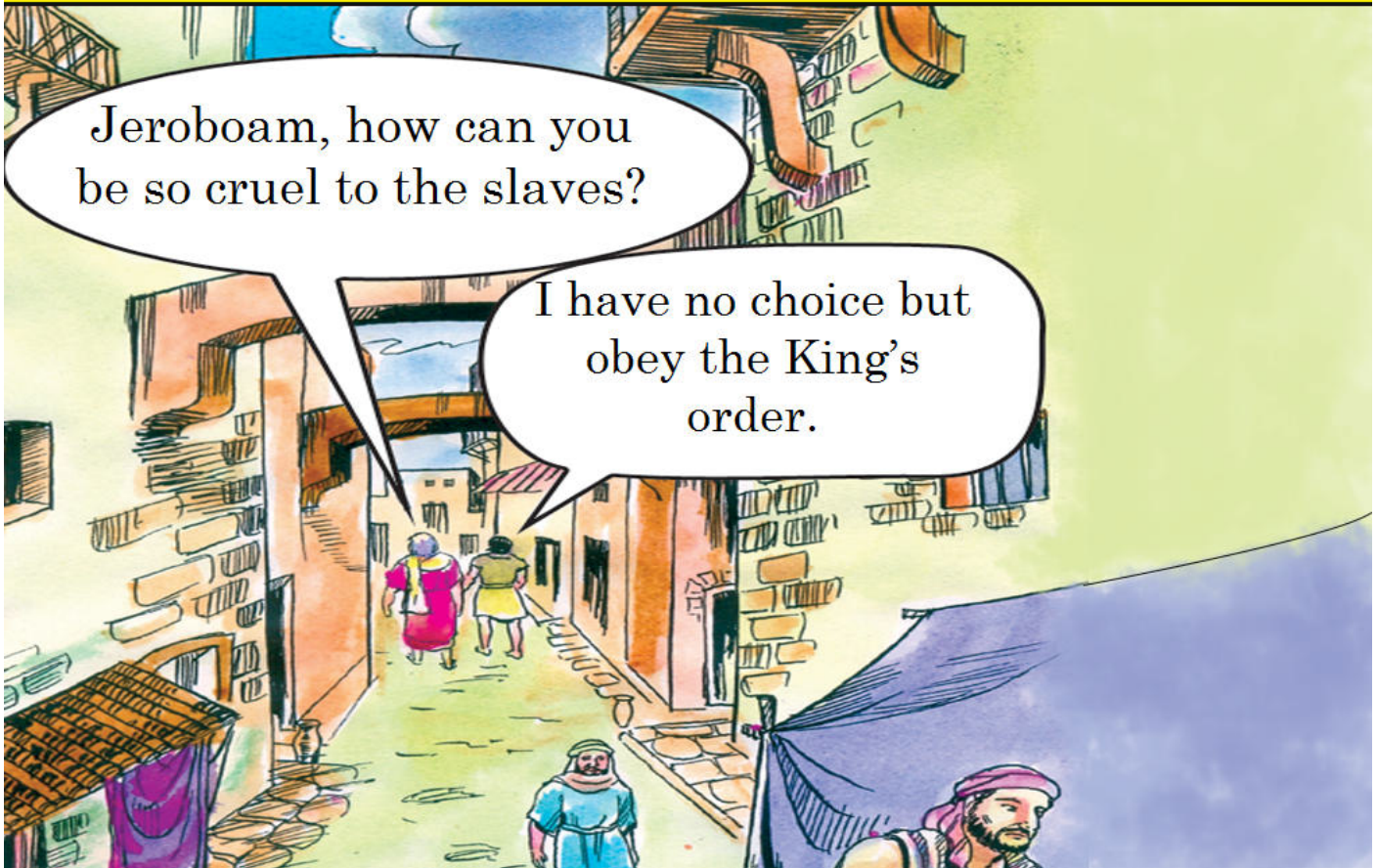
!?




God sent Ahijah to Jeroboam, the task master of Solomon.

Jeroboam, how can you be so cruel to the slaves?

I have no choice but obey the King's order.





If you were the king
what would you do?

First of all, I'll
give freedom
to the slaves.

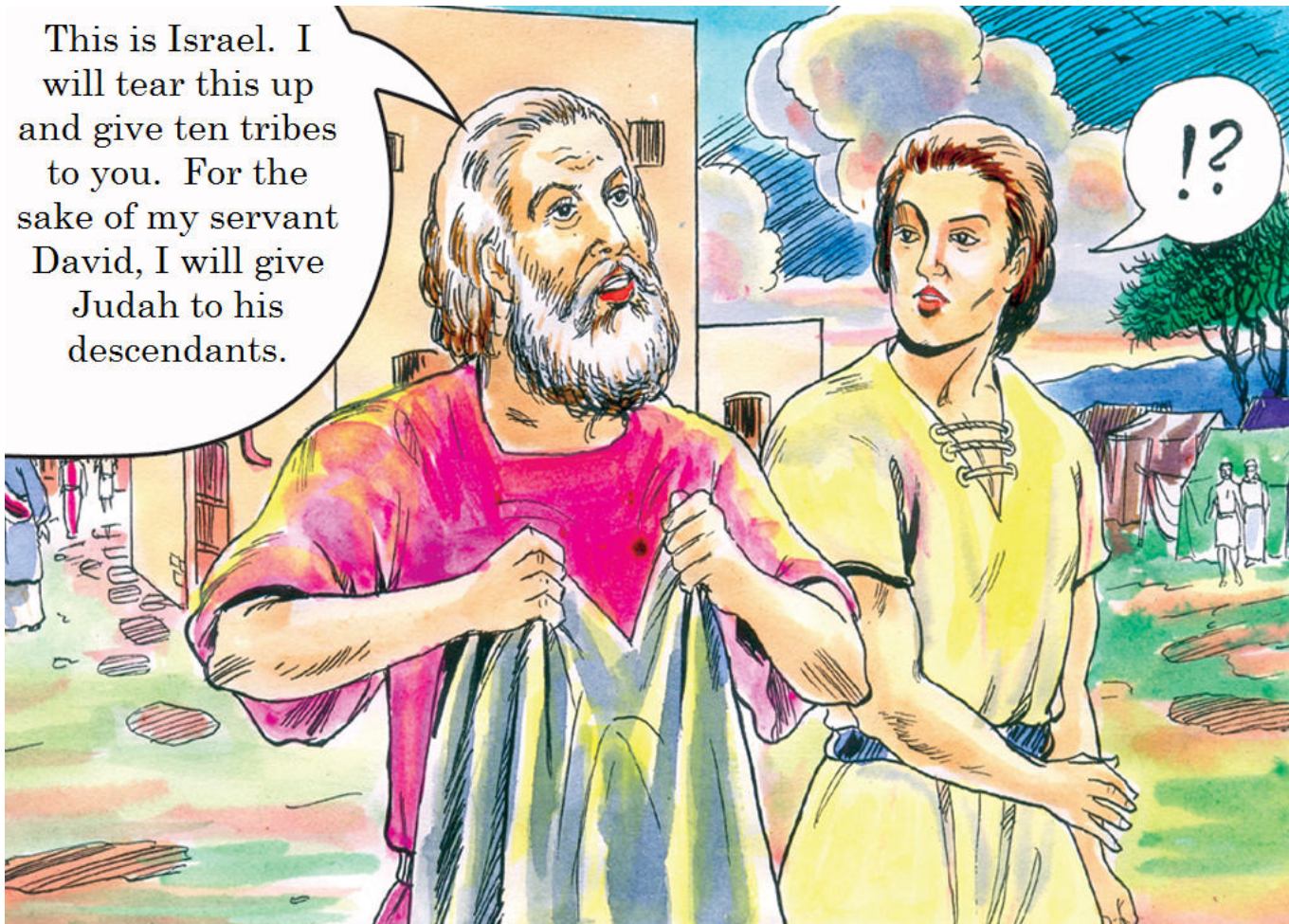
!

Don't forget
what you just
said.

What are you
saying?



This is Israel. I will tear this up and give ten tribes to you. For the sake of my servant David, I will give Judah to his descendants.

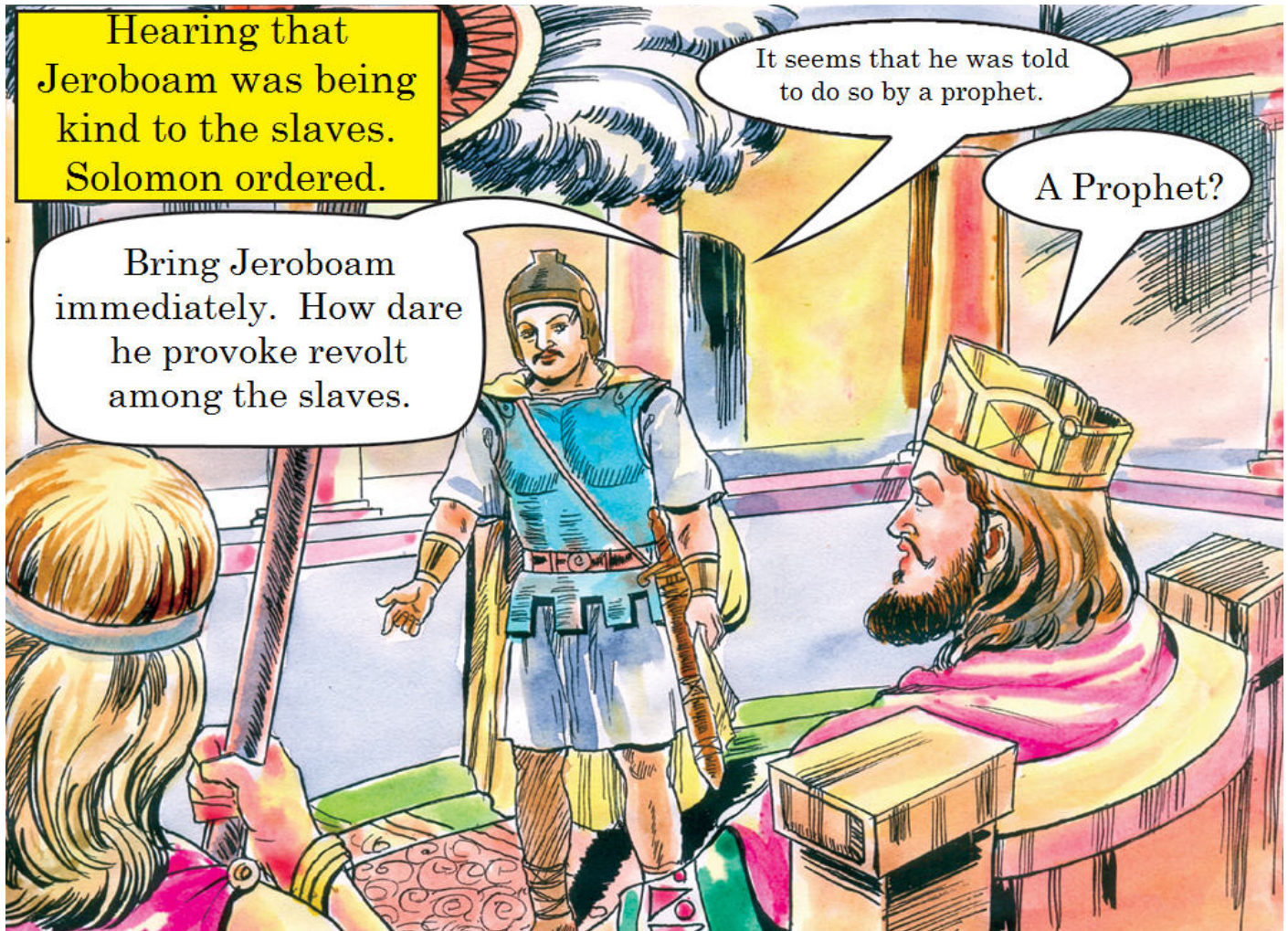


Hearing that
Jeroboam was being
kind to the slaves.
Solomon ordered.

Bring Jeroboam
immediately. How dare
he provoke revolt
among the slaves.

It seems that he was told
to do so by a prophet.

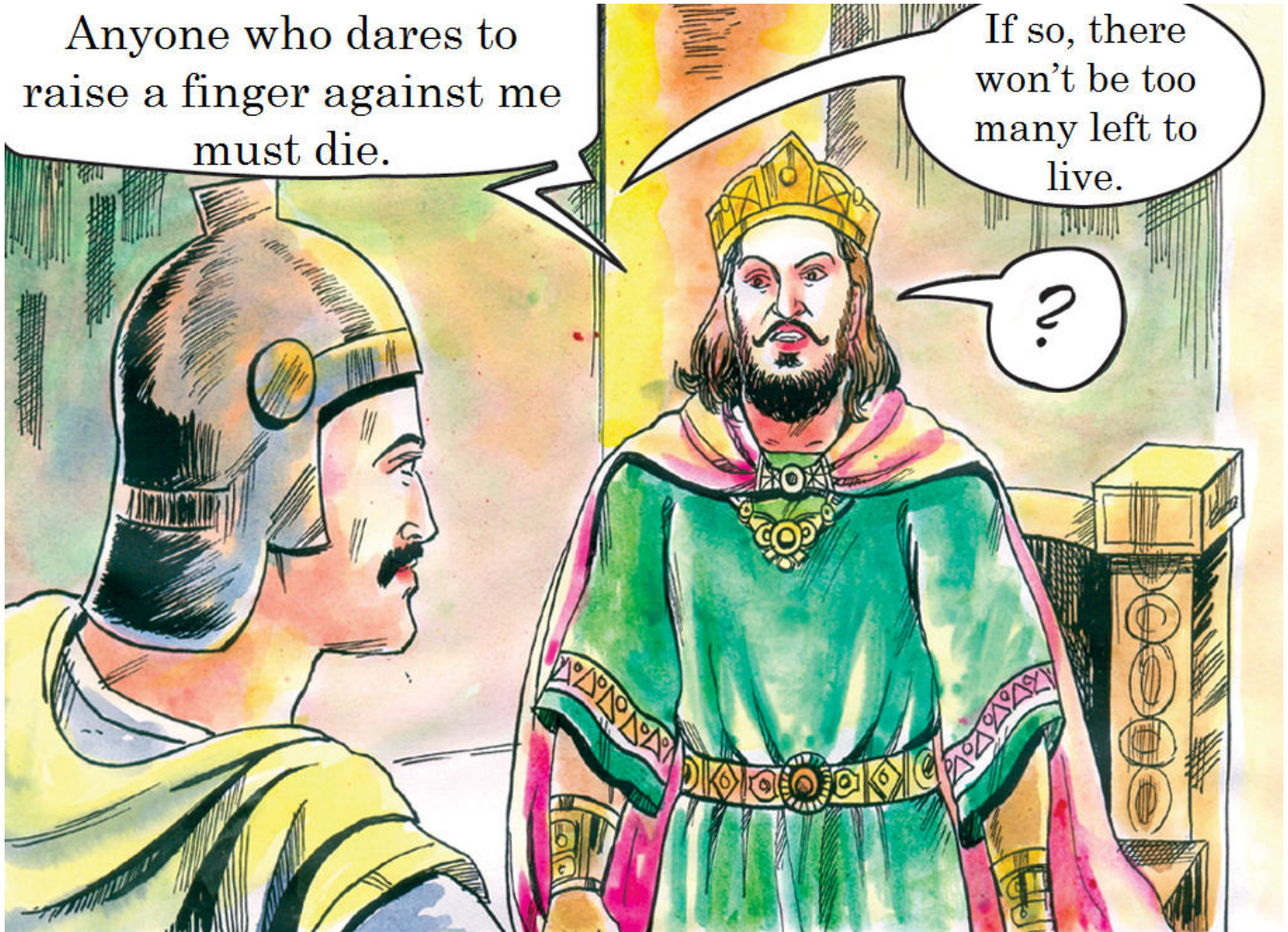
A Prophet?



Anyone who dares to raise a finger against me must die.

If so, there won't be too many left to live.

?



What do
you
mean?

People are dissatisfied.
Even among the soldiers
we have opposition. Only
Judah can be trusted now.

!?



Every opposition
must be crushed. I
won't tolerate any
rebellion.



Fearing the king, Jeroboam fled to Egypt. He stayed there until Solomon died. As years passed opposition increased. Solomon adopted severe measures to suppress the rebellion.

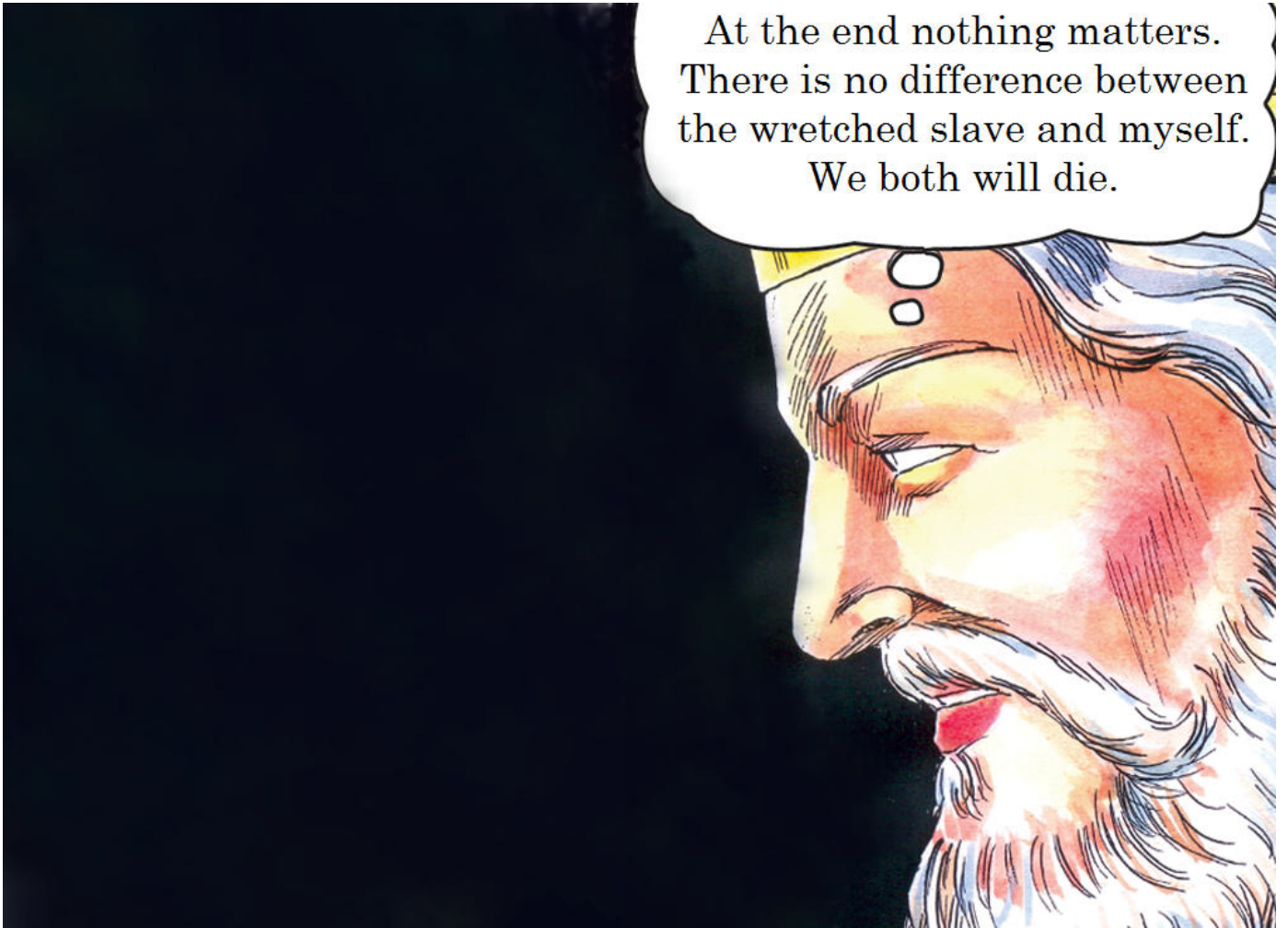
Is it true that my empire is about to collapse? If so, what have I gained? What good was my rule?



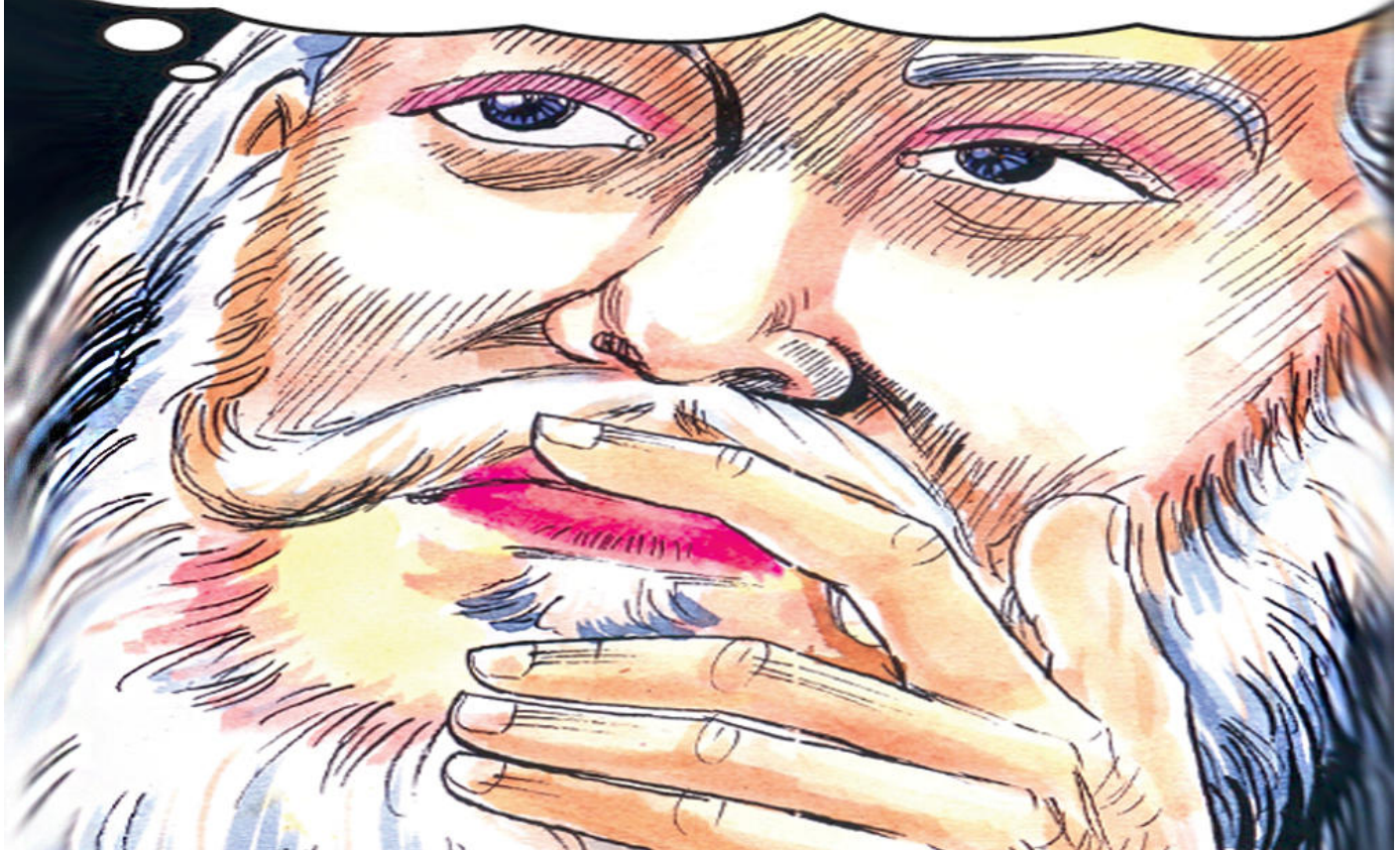
Forget the empire. What did I earn with my life? Palaces, feasts, thousands of beautiful women. Everything I wished I got. Still...



At the end nothing matters.
There is no difference between
the wretched slave and myself.
We both will die.



How fast we pass through this life? I was able to stop all my enemies. But who can stop death?



Vanity of vanities. All is vanity.
A life that ends in death has no
meaning. Oh! God what if I have
to give an account of my life?



The pleasure of this life will
pass away like a flash. I
thought I was wise. But in
reality, I was an utter fool
because I forgot the Lord.
Who'll forgive me now?



At the age of seventy, Solomon died. He ruled Israel for forty years. His son, Rehoboam succeeded him. He was crueller and oppressive than his father but did not possess Solomon's political wisdom. All the tribes of Israel except Judah revolted against him as their king. So, Solomon's empire was split into two.

Israel in the North and Judah in the south. Idolatry and oppression of the weak continued to increase. The people in despair cried out to Yahweh to renounce oppression, to pronounce his judgment and to call the whole nation to conversion. Equipped with the Word of God, they came. The Prophets.

Next Story

Elijah

Questions

1. How did Solomon become king?
2. What happened to Bathsheba's first child.
3. Why did Solomon kill Adonijah?
4. State the blessing Solomon requested from Yahweh.
5. List the Bible parts attributed to Solomon.
6. Write an example that demonstrate Solomon's wisdom?
7. Why did Solomon divide Israel into twelve provinces?
8. Why did people become discontent with Solomon's rule?
9. Name the Prophet who instigated the revolution against Solomon.
10. What were the causes of Solomon's down fall?

THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN COMICS

1. Cain and Abel
2. Abraham
3. Jacob
4. Joseph
5. Moses
6. Joshua
7. Samson
8. Ruth
9. Samuel
10. Saul
11. David
12. King David
13. Solomon
14. Elijah
15. Amos
16. Hosea
17. Micah

18. Isaiah
19. Jeremiah
20. Ezekiel
21. Zechariah
22. Jonah
23. Job
24. Tobit
25. Daniel
26. Susanna
27. Esther
28. Judith
29. Maccabeus
30. The Maccabees
31. A World Awaiting
32. Light of the world
33. The Herald
34. The Prophet
35. The Liberator

36. The One to come
37. The Lord of the Universe
38. Son of God
39. The Son of Man
40. In the shadow of the cross
41. The Way
42. Son of David
43. Bread of Life
44. The Redeemer
45. With us forever
46. Tongues of fire
47. Baptism in blood
48. The chosen vessel
49. Libation
50. Come, Lord Jesus
51. Woman