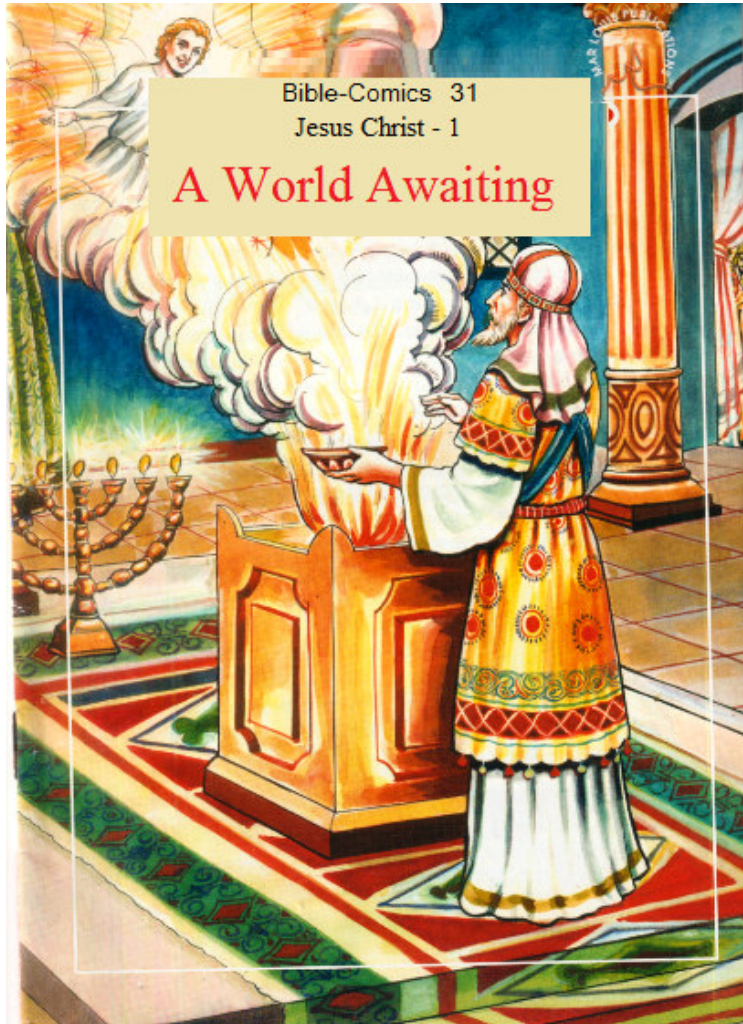


Bible-Comics 31

Jesus Christ - 1

A World Awaiting



BIBEL-COMICS - 31

JESUS CHRIST - 1



A World Awaiting

Text: MICHAEL KARIMATTAM

Illustration: DEVASY ✨ BENNY

A world waiting

We are starting the New Testament of the Bible in Bible Comics. There will be fifteen books in this series that present the person of Jesus Christ. The stories will be based on the four Gospels. In order to situate the life and teaching of Jesus we will draw on other contemporary historical documents as well.

The Gospels are not biographies of Jesus, but proclamations of the Good News that in his person, God has definitively entered into our history. John the evangelist has stated his purpose in writing the gospel. *“These are recorded that you may believe that Jesus is*

Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing this you may have life through His name” (Jn. 20:31). The purpose of the present series is the same as John’s.

Deep within every human being there is the yearning to know the truth, to live, to be happy, to love and to be loved, without end. But these very fundamental aspirations of human nature are denied to us. The mind that seeks the truth is clouded with ignorance and falsehood. The heart that thirsts for love is filled with hatred. Instead of brotherhood there is enmity; instead of sharing there is selfishness. Even with the best of intentions we end up doing evil instead of good. We are burdened with sorrows and fear. As if by an irrevocable

decree, all our aspirations are shattered by the reality of death. We face emptiness and nothingness.

On the one hand there is the evil that human beings purposely commit against each other – greed, exploitation, oppression, hatred and murder. On the other hand there is the evil that falls upon us, of which we have no control – illness, handicaps, natural calamities and death. Thus we are plunged into the depths of sorrow and despair from which rises the cry: “Who will rescue me?” Every religion, in one way or another, expresses the deep conviction that God will answer this cry for liberation. Our story starts with the expectation of various peoples concerning the coming of a divine Redeemer. Then we

turn to the hopes of the Jewish people expressed in their Messianic prophecies.

God did not abandon humanity in its depths of slavery and despair. He sent His only Son in the person Jesus who declared “I am the Way, the Life and the Truth”. In him God revealed himself as Love; in him all our aspirations find their fulfillment. God entered into our world at a particular historical moment, in a particular geographical location. So we focus on the relevant data of Roman and Palestinian history related to the unique event of the coming of the Redeemer.

God redeems mankind not without its collaboration. The angel Gabriel who stands before the

humble maid from Nazareth is the messenger of God awaiting the response of humans. When she replies “Behold the handmaid of the Lord” she becomes the representative of humanity in accepting God’s offer of salvation. Her surrender in faith is a model for us. From each one of us God expects such a response to the proclamation of the Good News.

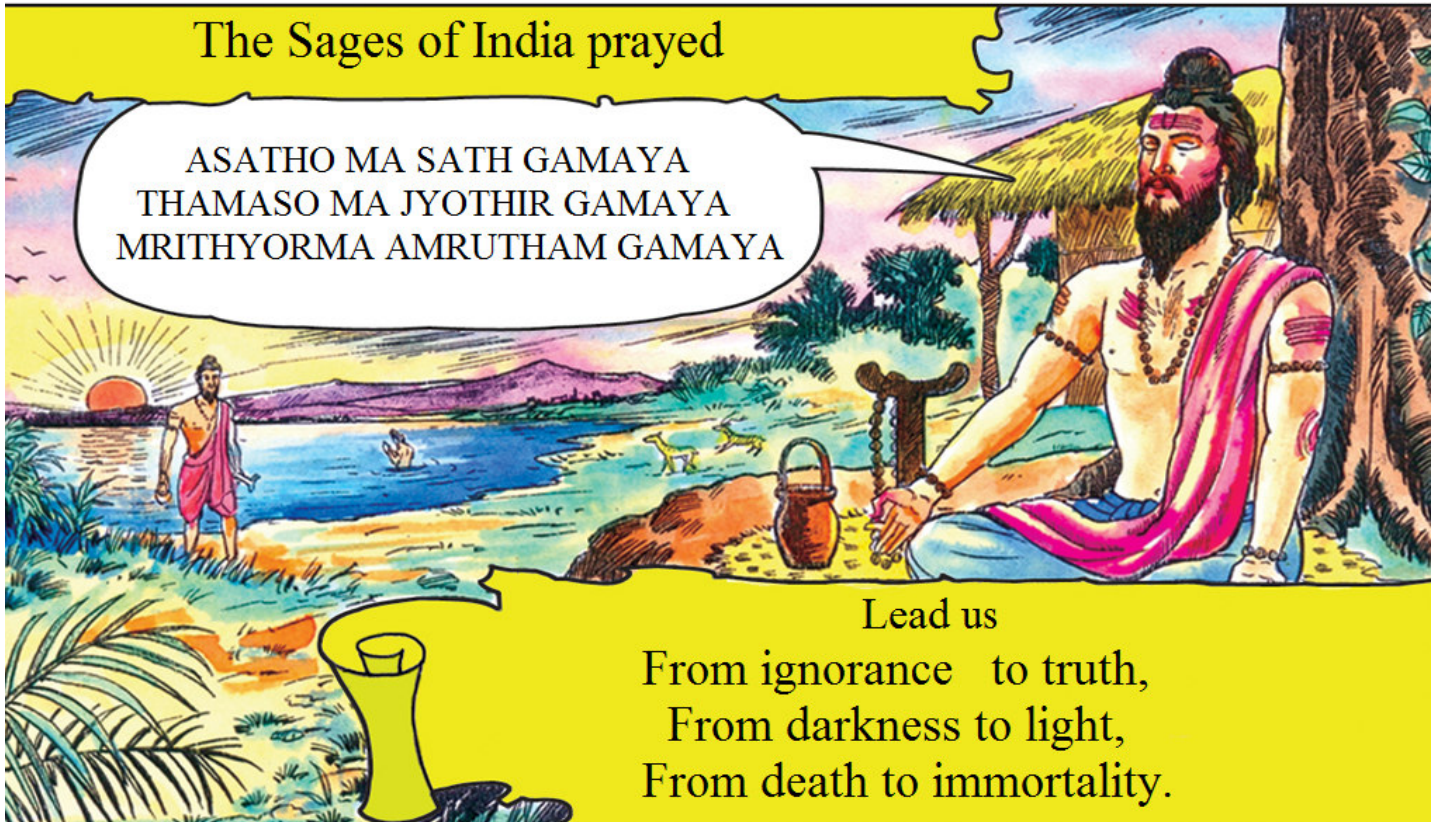
There was a universal expectation of a savior who would liberate humanity from the dominion of evil. The world waited in prayer for His coming.

The Sages of India prayed

ASATHO MA SATH GAMAYA
THAMASO MA JYOTHIR GAMAYA
MRITHYORMA AMRUTHAM GAMAYA

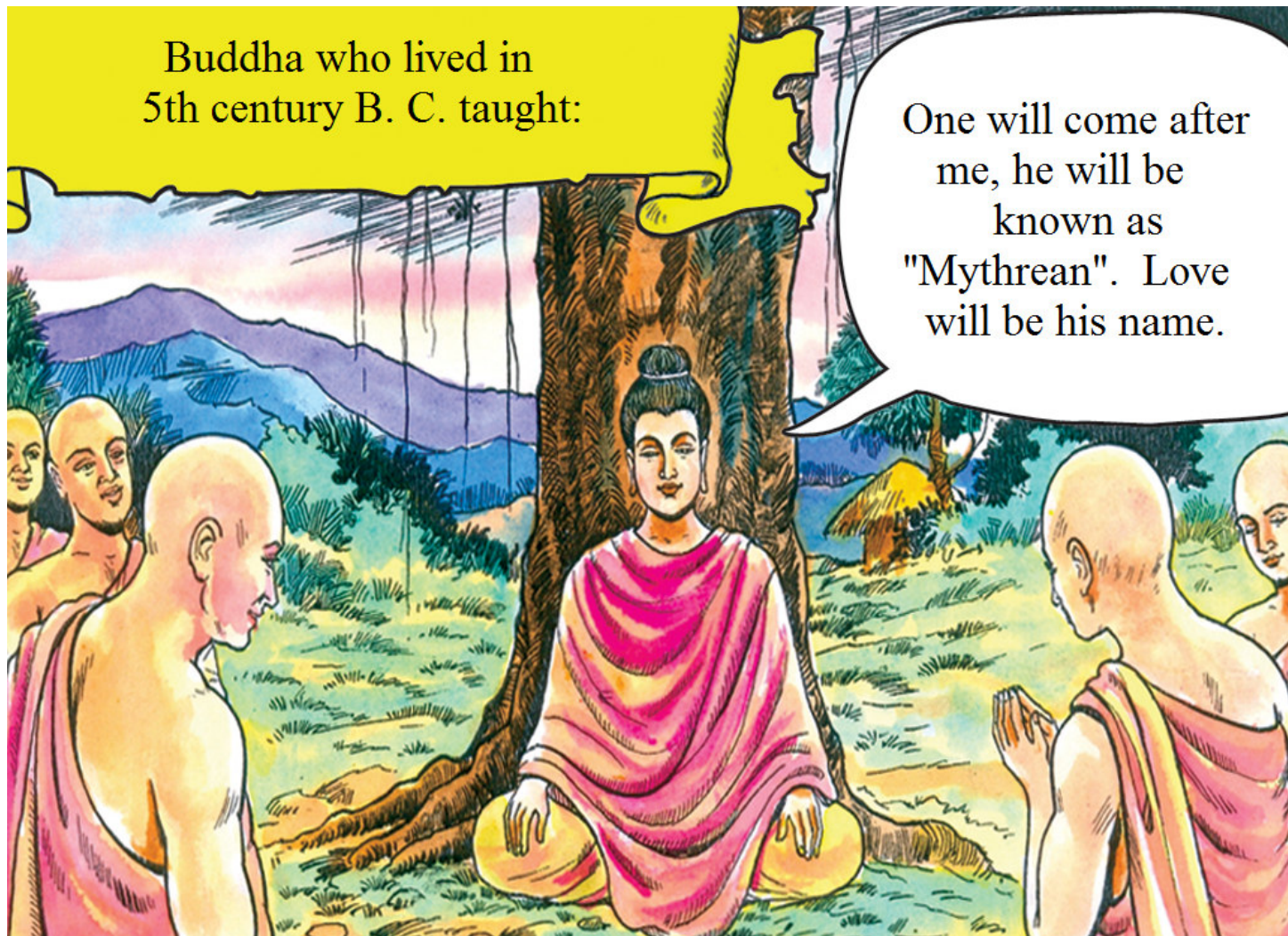
Lead us

From ignorance to truth,
From darkness to light,
From death to immortality.



Buddha who lived in
5th century B. C. taught:

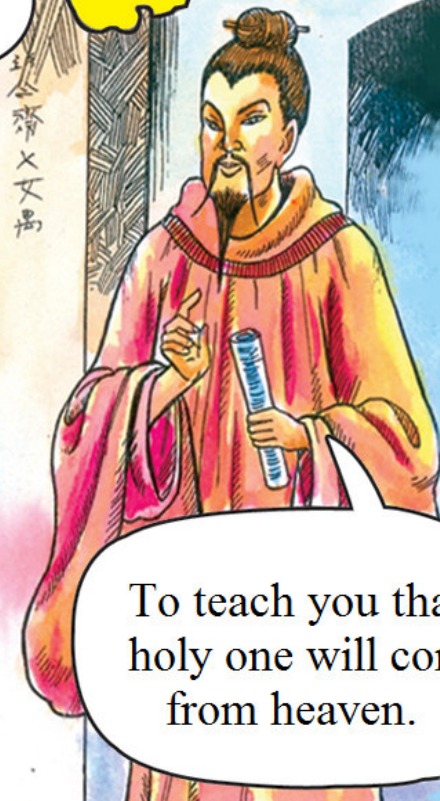
One will come after
me, he will be
known as
"Mythrean". Love
will be his name.



Master, how
can we
overcome
death?

In 5th century B. C., Confucius wrote about
the expectations of the Chinese people:

To teach you that a
holy one will come
from heaven.



孔子
之
教

He will know
everything. He will
have dominion over
heaven and earth.



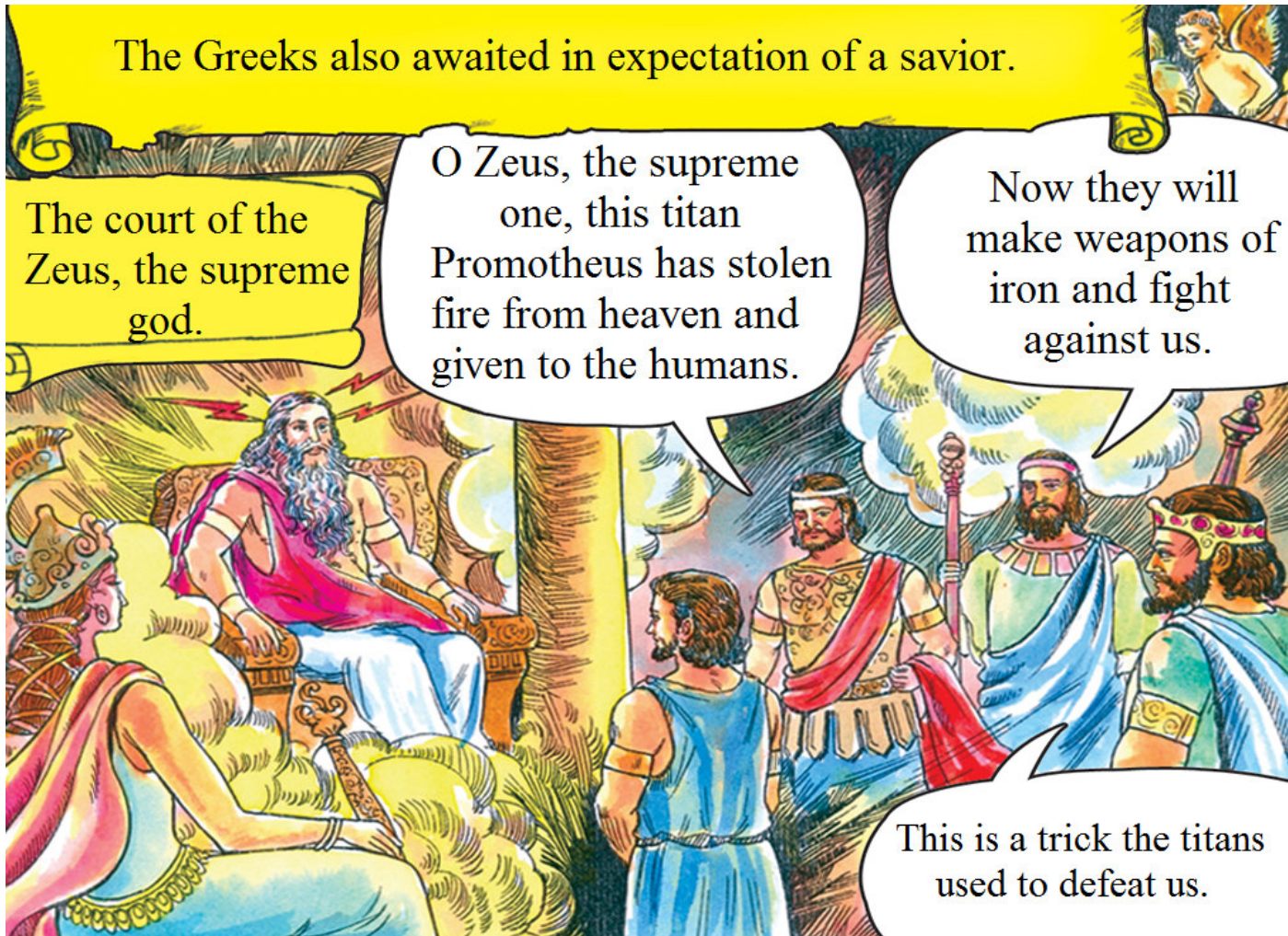
The Greeks also awaited in expectation of a savior.

The court of the Zeus, the supreme god.

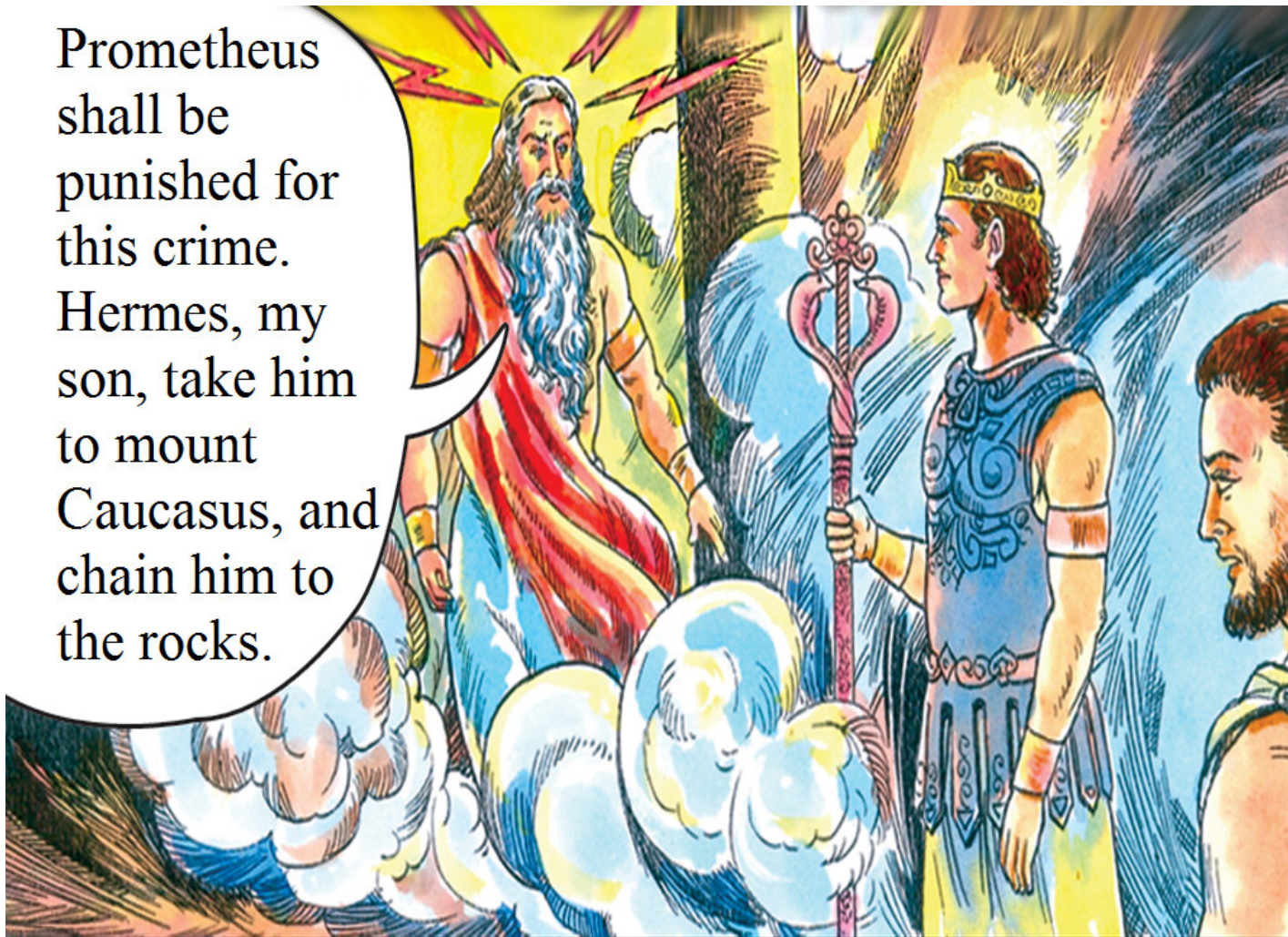
O Zeus, the supreme one, this titan Prometheus has stolen fire from heaven and given to the humans.

Now they will make weapons of iron and fight against us.

This is a trick the titans used to defeat us.

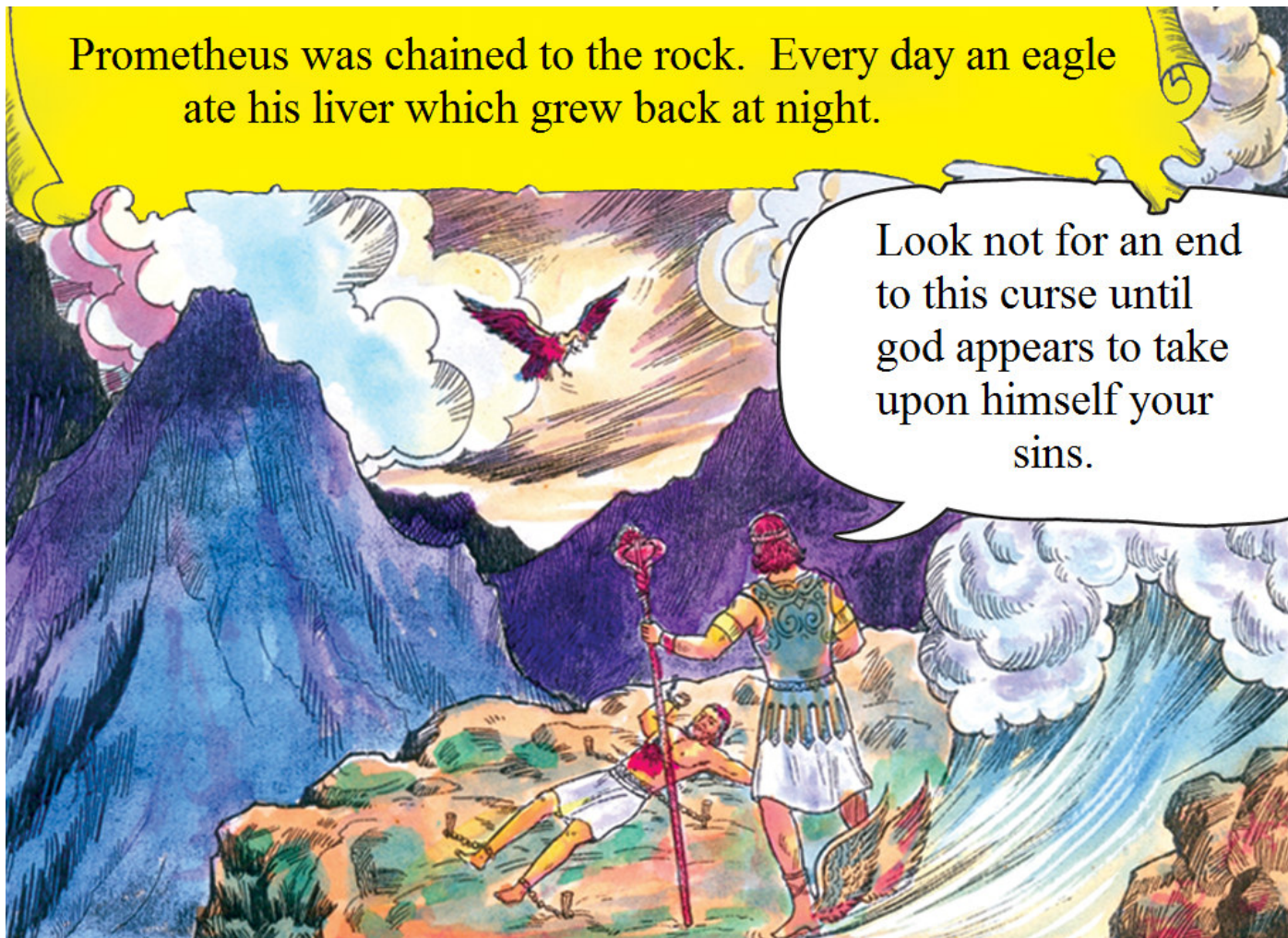


Prometheus shall be punished for this crime. Hermes, my son, take him to mount Caucasus, and chain him to the rocks.



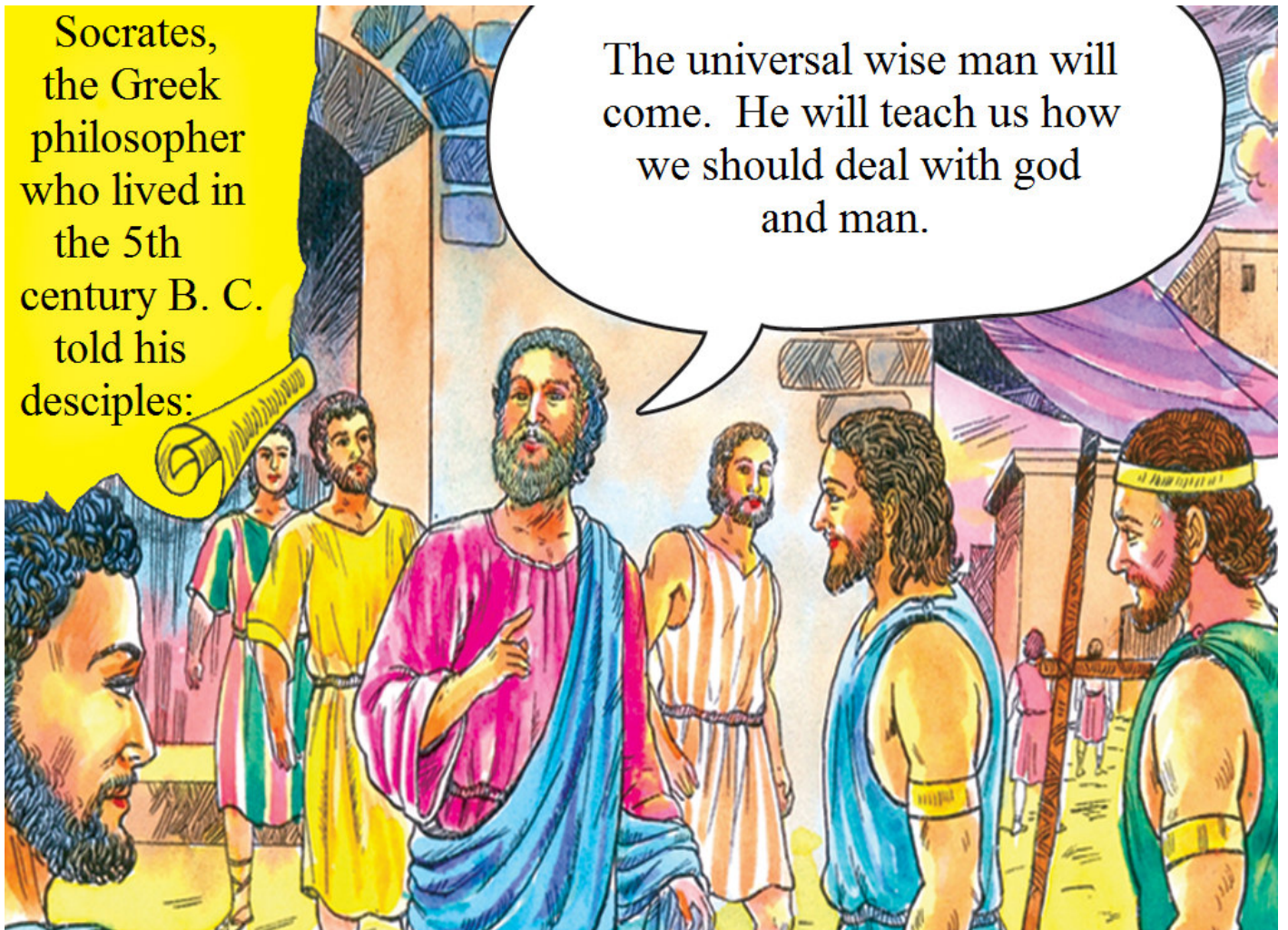
Prometheus was chained to the rock. Every day an eagle ate his liver which grew back at night.

Look not for an end
to this curse until
god appears to take
upon himself your
sins.

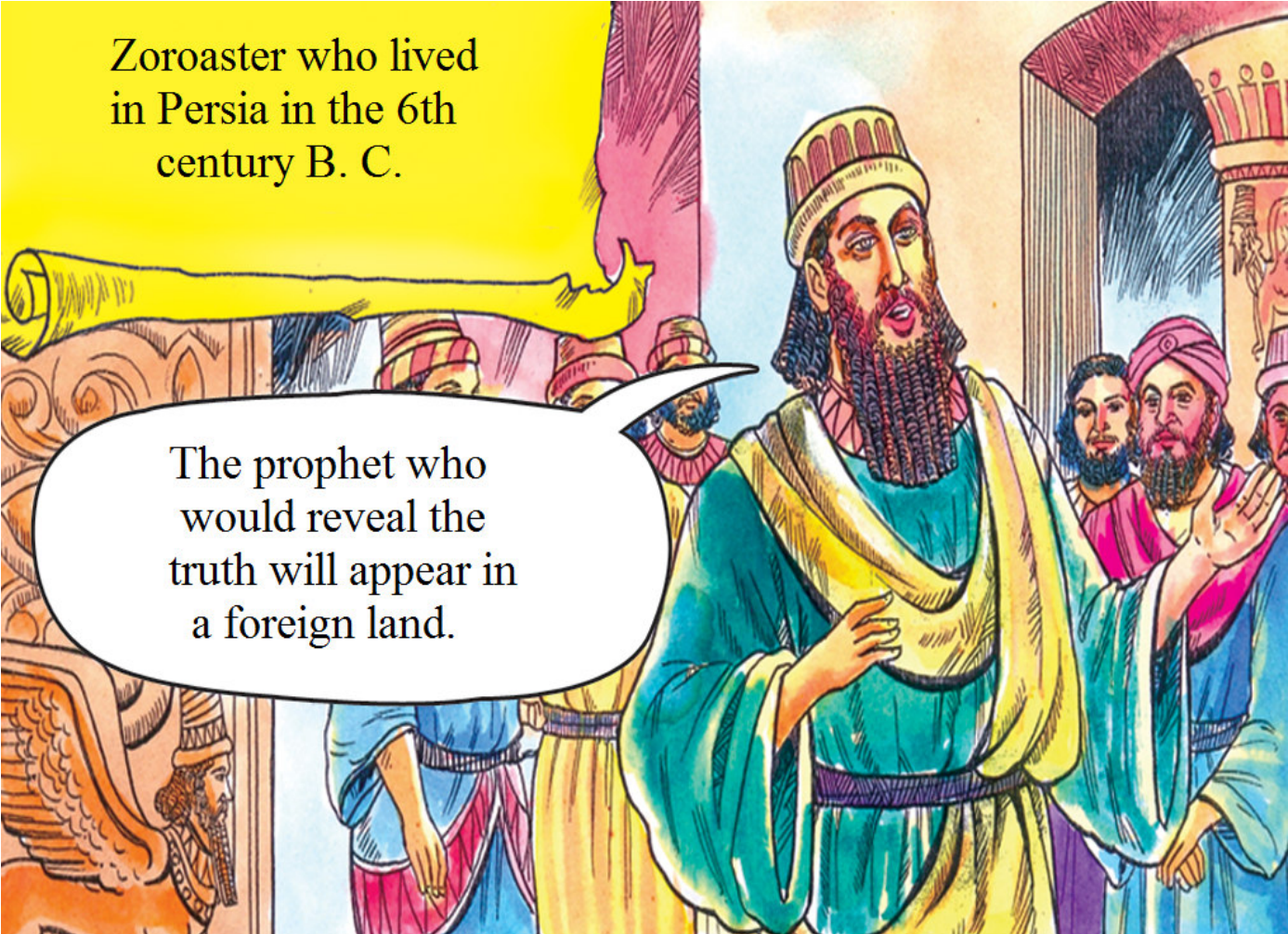


Socrates,
the Greek
philosopher
who lived in
the 5th
century B. C.
told his
disciples:

The universal wise man will
come. He will teach us how
we should deal with god
and man.



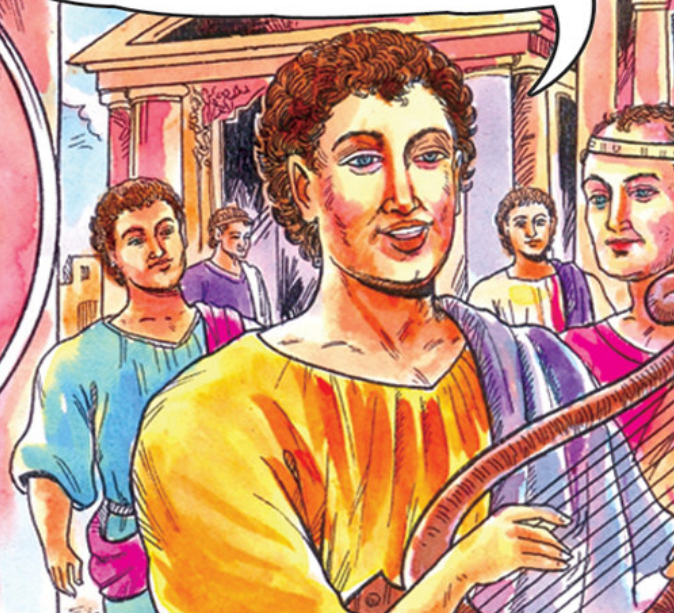
Zoroaster who lived
in Persia in the 6th
century B. C.



The prophet who
would reveal the
truth will appear in
a foreign land.

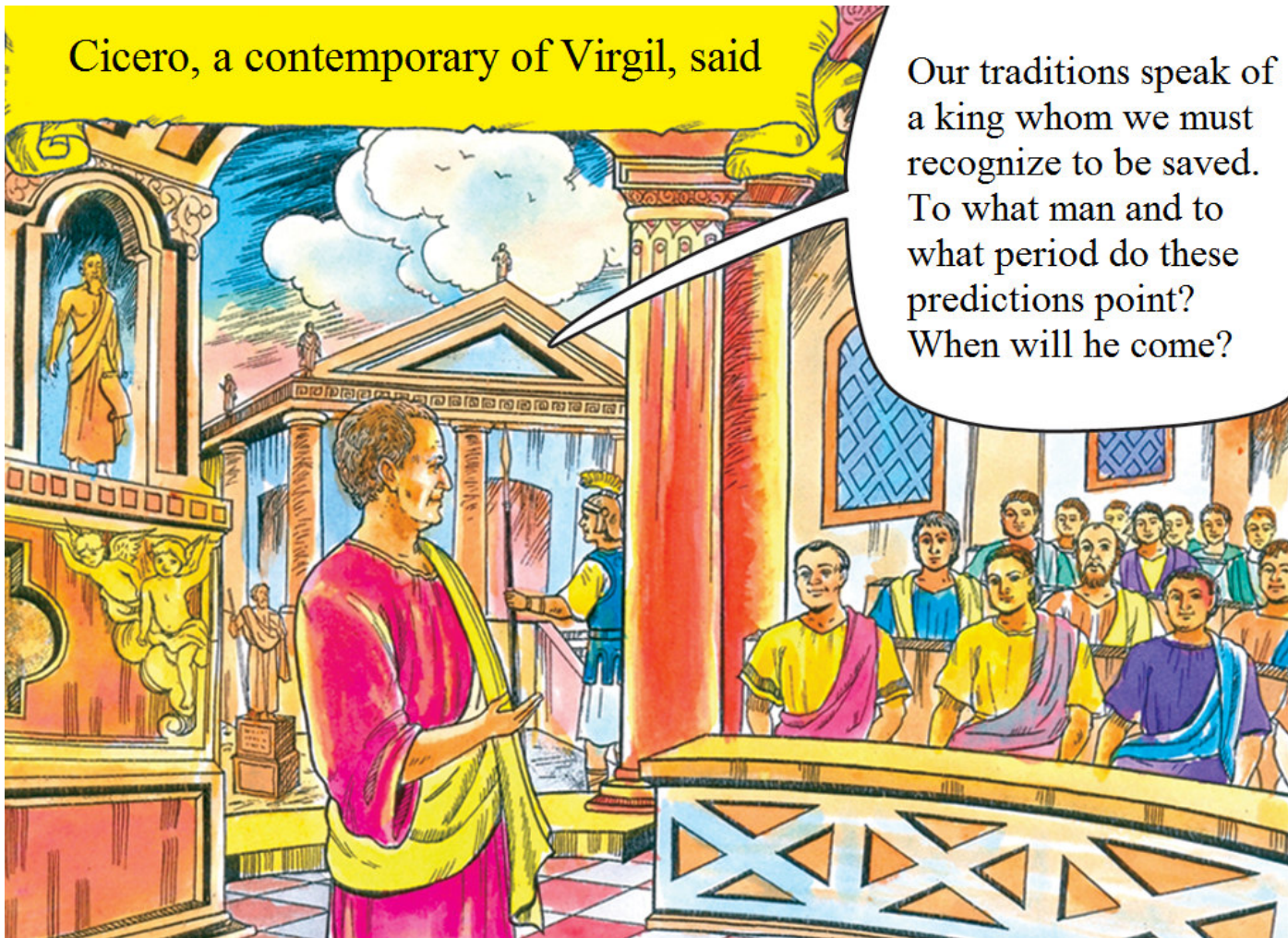
In the first century B. C., Virgil, a Roman poet recalled a tradition that existed in the ancient Rome.

"A chaste woman smiling on her infant boy with whom the iron age would pass away"



Cicero, a contemporary of Virgil, said

Our traditions speak of a king whom we must recognize to be saved. To what man and to what period do these predictions point? When will he come?



Tacitus, a Roman historian who lived in the first century A. D., wrote about a belief that existed among the Romans.

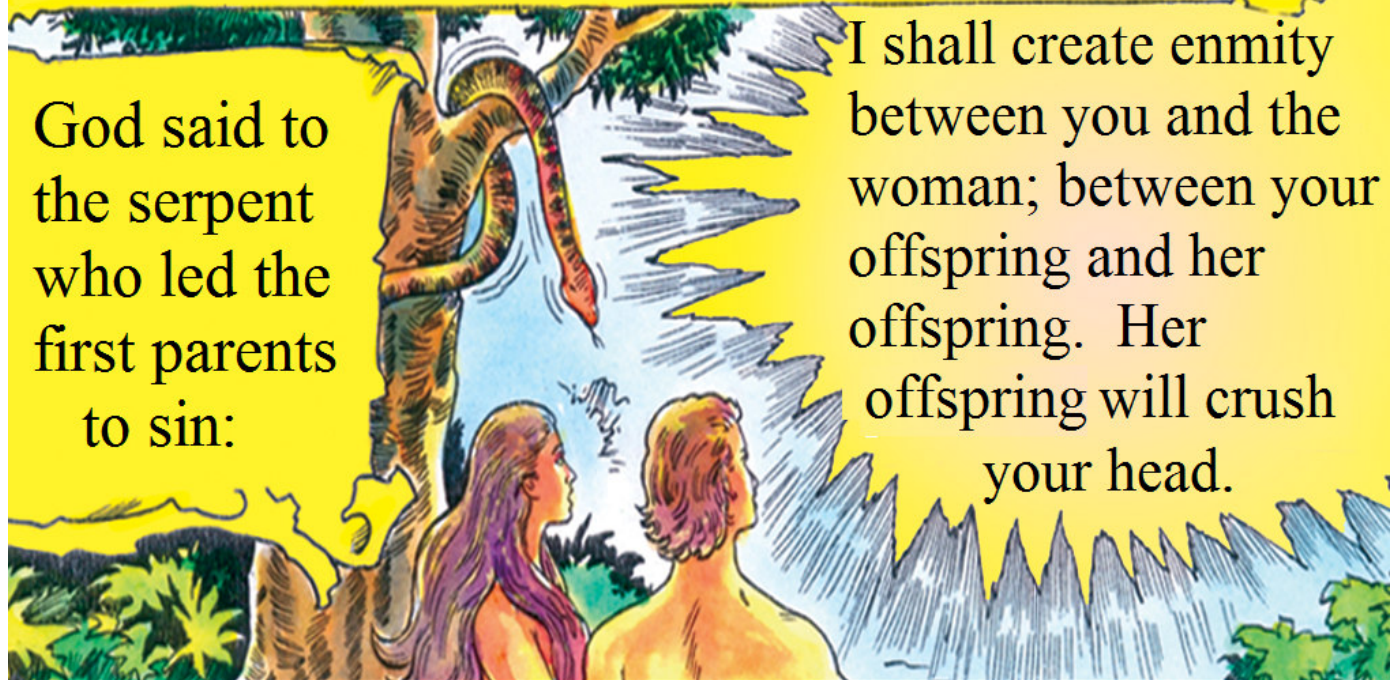


..... the master and
the ruler of the
world will come from
Judea.

The hope in the coming of a savior was most explicit among the people of Israel.

God said to the serpent who led the first parents to sin:

I shall create enmity between you and the woman; between your offspring and her offspring. Her offspring will crush your head.



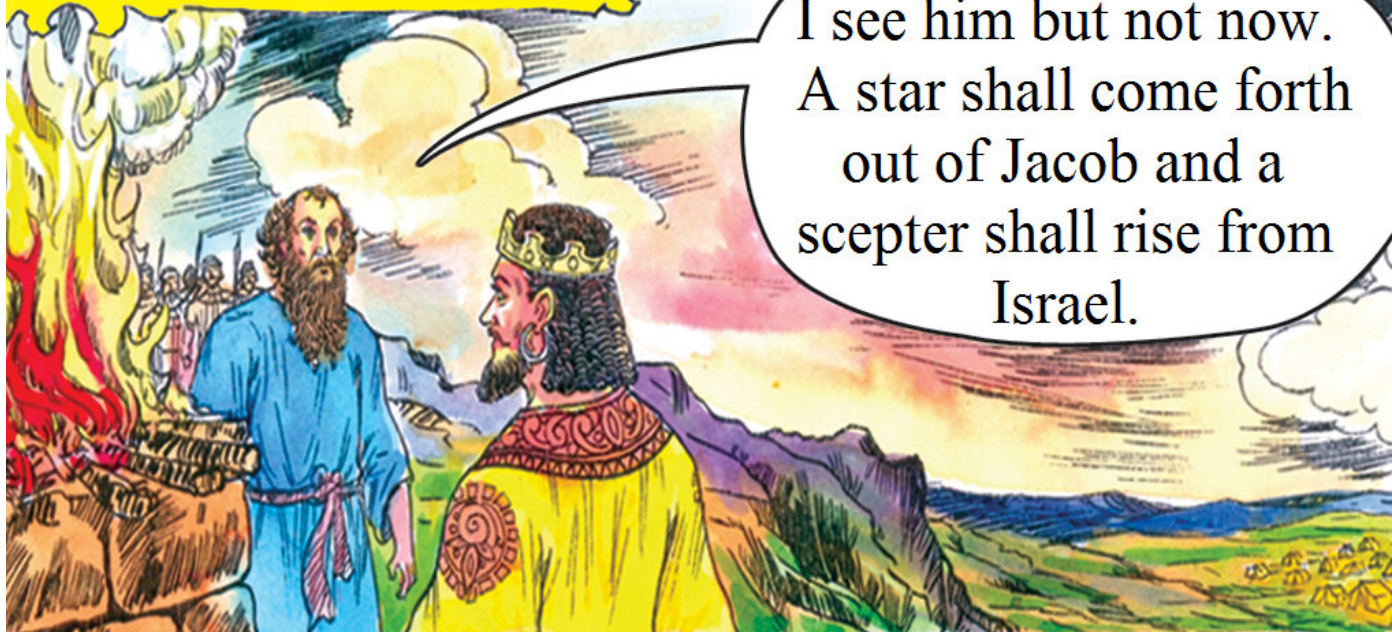
God said to
Abraham
who was
chosen to be
the father of
Israel.

Through
your
descendant,
I shall bless
all the
nations of
the earth.



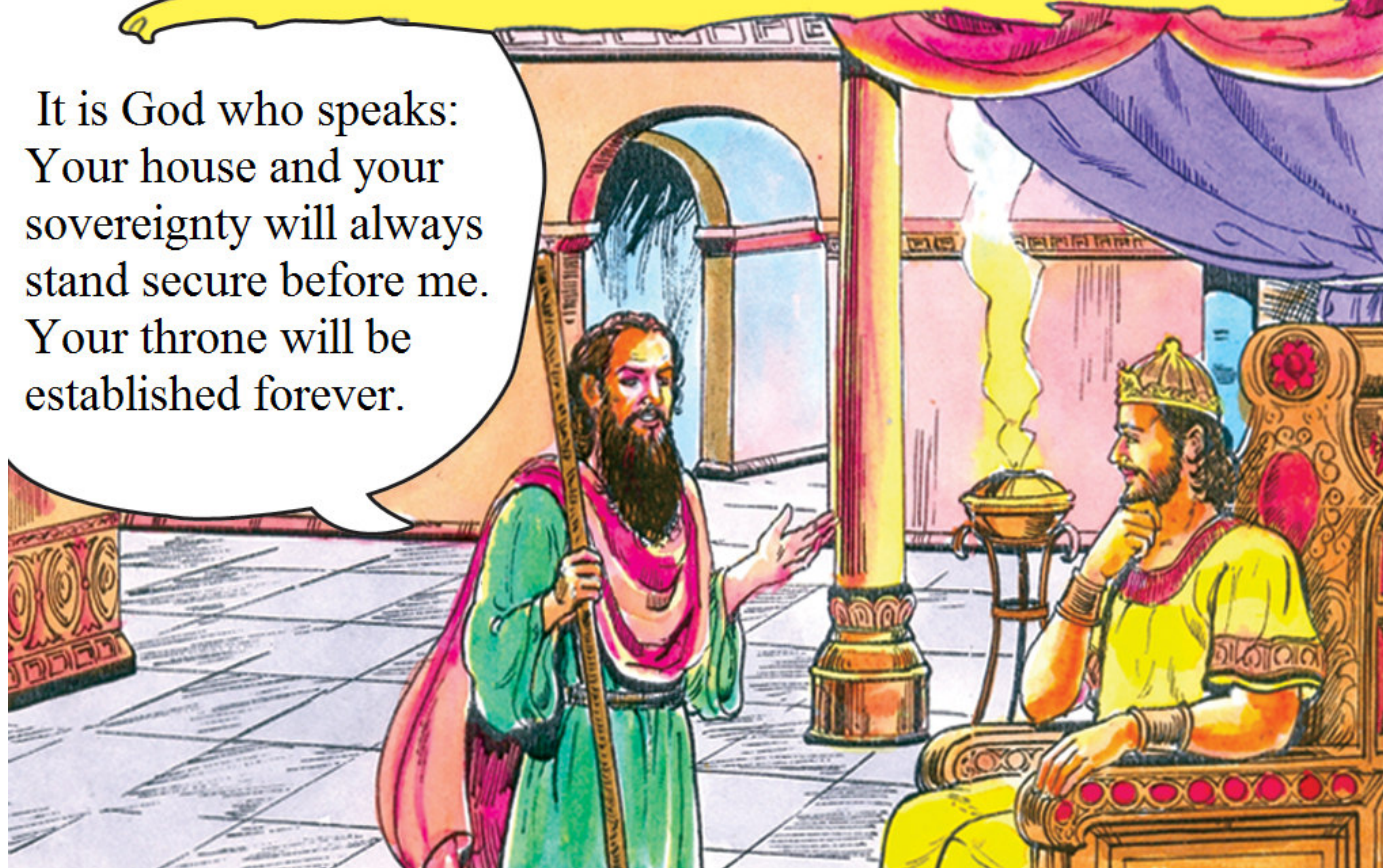
This promise was repeated through the prophets. The king of Moab invited Balaam to curse the Israelites who came out of Egypt and passed through the desert.

I see him but not now.
A star shall come forth
out of Jacob and a
scepter shall rise from
Israel.



In the 10th century B. C. Nathan said to king David:

It is God who speaks:
Your house and your
sovereignty will always
stand secure before me.
Your throne will be
established forever.



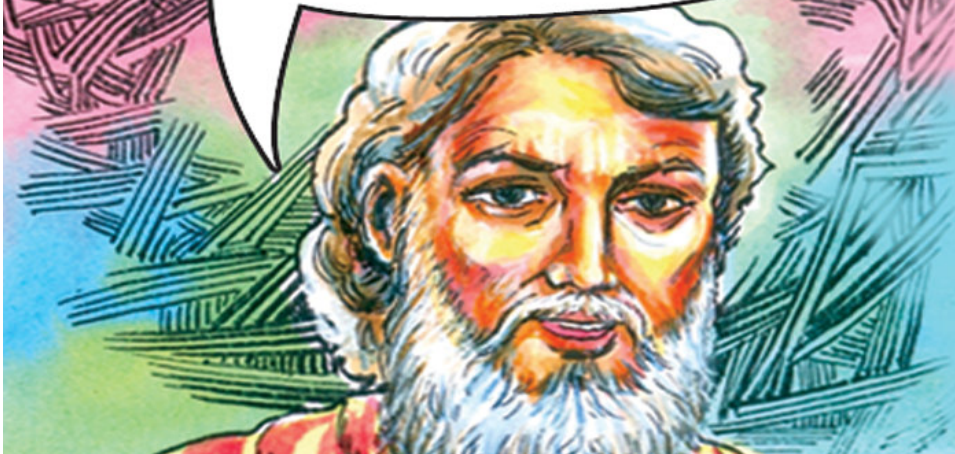
Eight century B. C., prophet Micah of Jerusalem said:

The one who is to rule Israel
shall be born in Bethlehem. He
has no beginning.



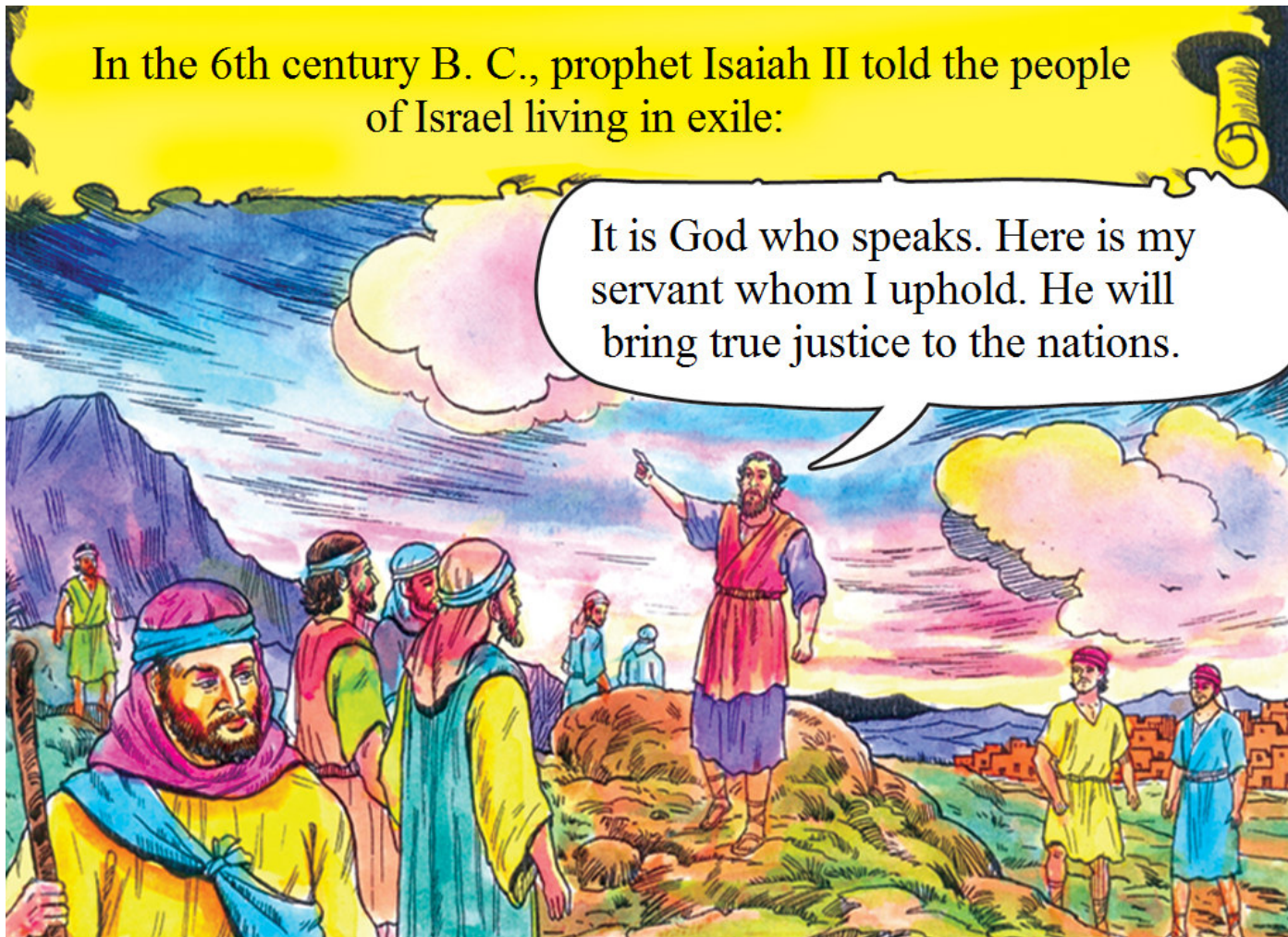
Prophet Isaiah, a contemporary of Micah said:

A maiden will give birth to a son whom she will call "Emmanuel" which means "God with us", he will establish peace on earth.



In the 6th century B. C., prophet Isaiah II told the people of Israel living in exile:

It is God who speaks. Here is my servant whom I uphold. He will bring true justice to the nations.



He was despised
and we took no
account of him. It
was our suffering
that he bore.



He was pierced and crushed
for our sins.....and through his
wounds we are healed.



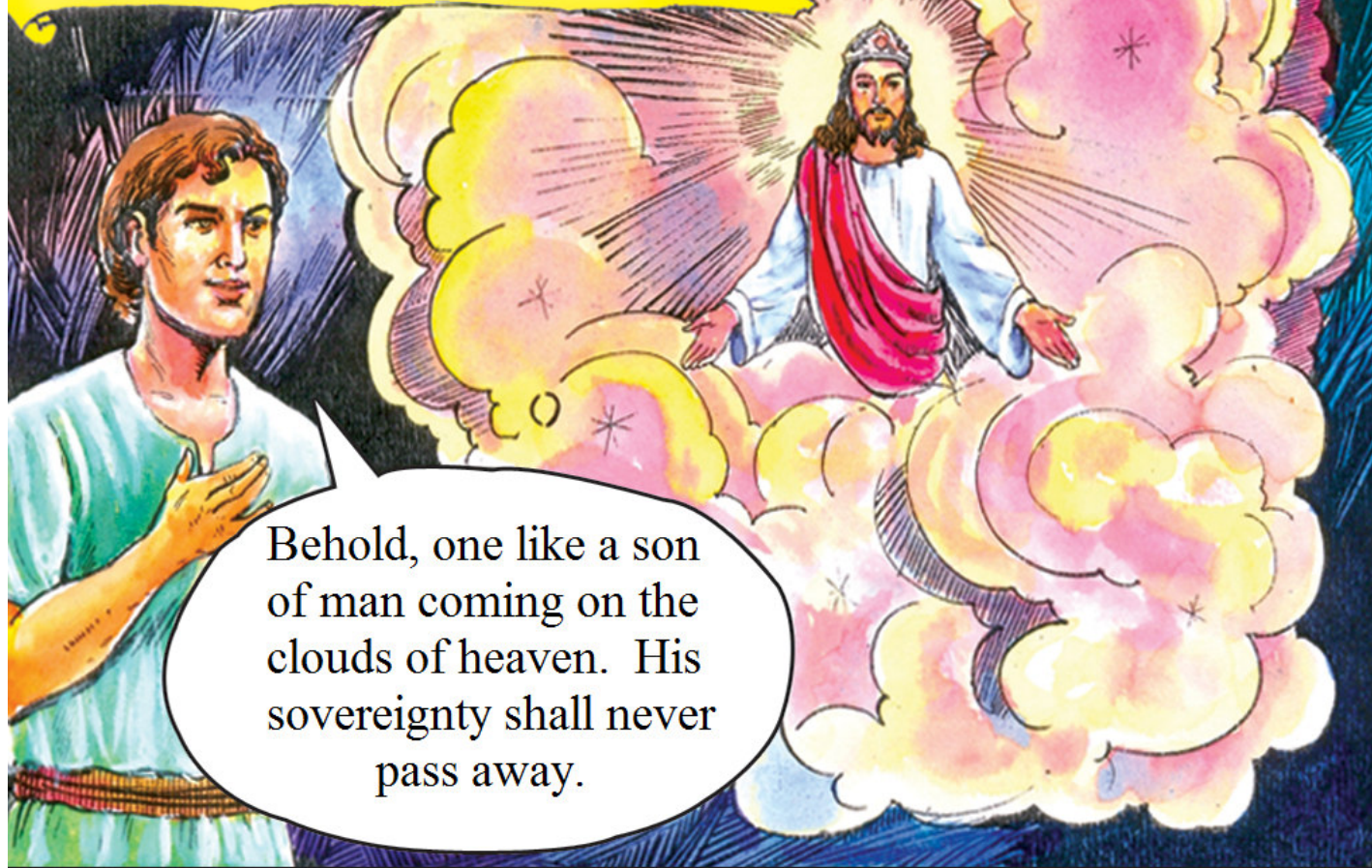
The prophet Zechariah told the Israelites who returned from exile.

Rejoice, O daughter of Jerusalem, see your king comes to you.

He is victorious, he is triumphant, and he comes riding on a donkey.



Prophet Daniel in
second century B. C.



Behold, one like a son
of man coming on the
clouds of heaven. His
sovereignty shall never
pass away.

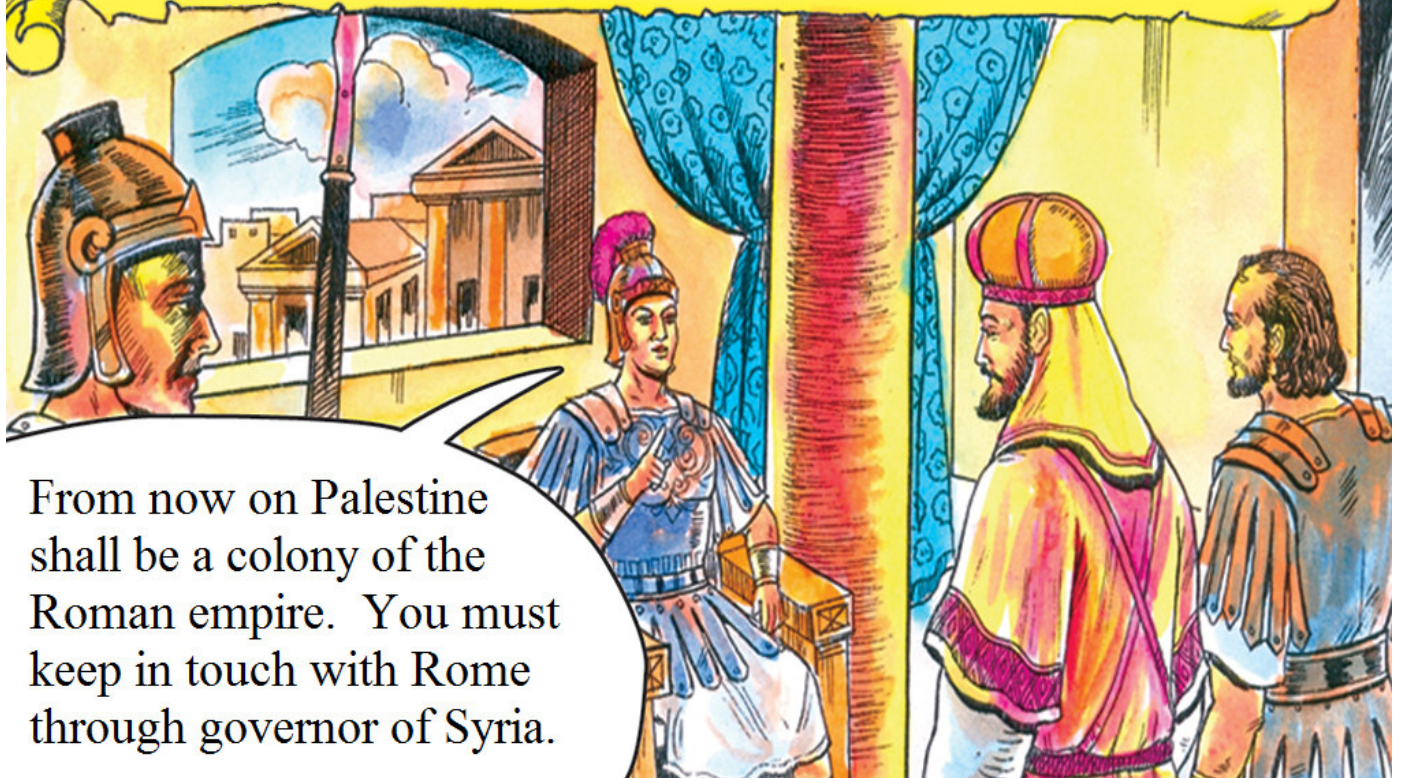
The history of Israel reached a turning point in the first century B. C., Pompey, the Roman consul said siege to the temple of Jerusalem.



The Romans captured the temple. Pompey entered the holy of holies.



Pompey appointed Hirchanus, a descendant of the Maccabees, the high priest, and Antipater of Idumea was made the ruler.



From now on Palestine shall be a colony of the Roman empire. You must keep in touch with Rome through governor of Syria.

You must pay 300 talents to Rome every year. As long as you remain faithful to Rome you shall be safe.

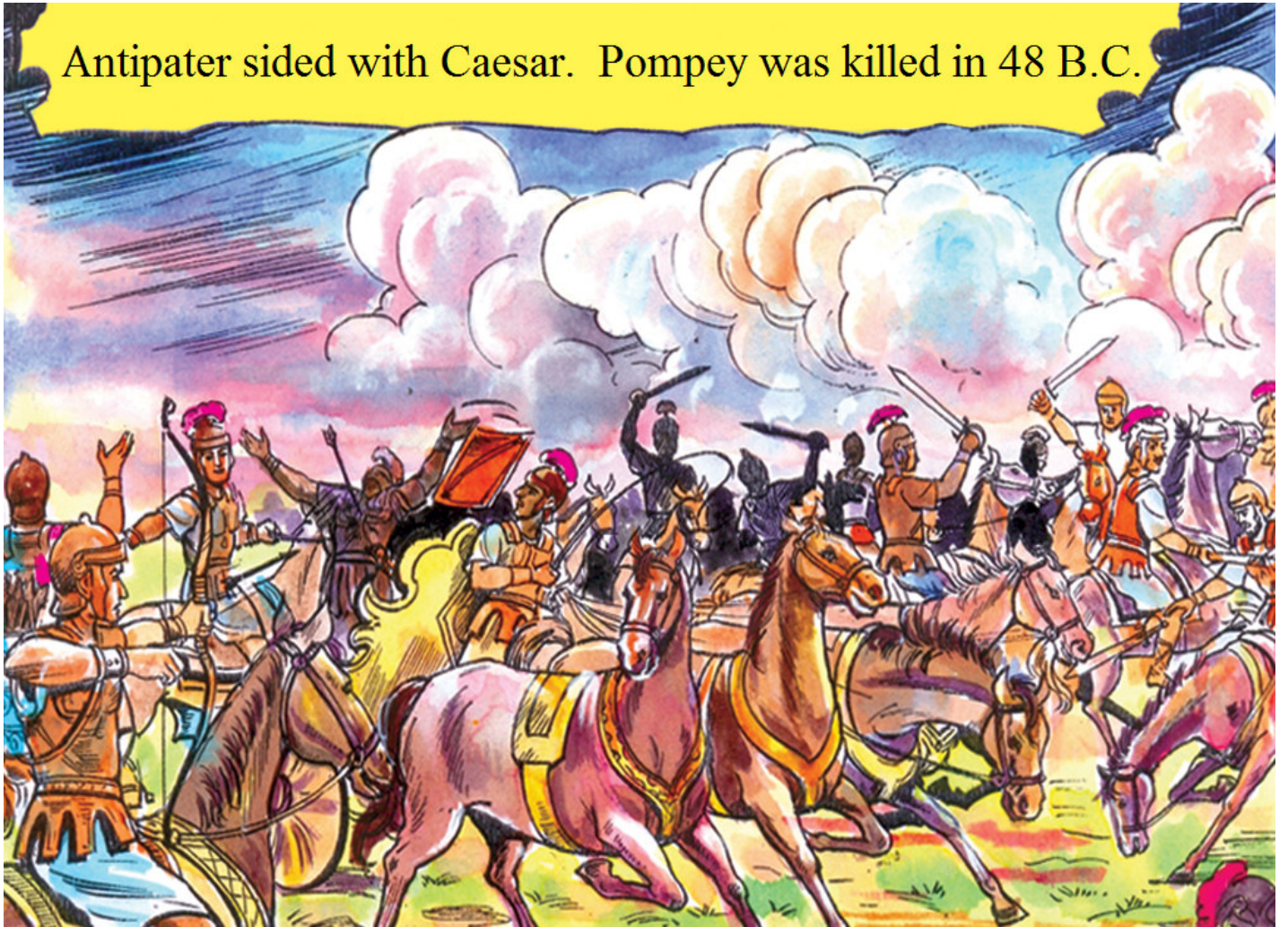
We shall be grateful for your kindness.



After that the fate of Palestine was directly linked with that of Rome. In B.C. 49 civil war broke out in Rome. All over the empire the armies of Julius Caesar and Pompey fought with one another.

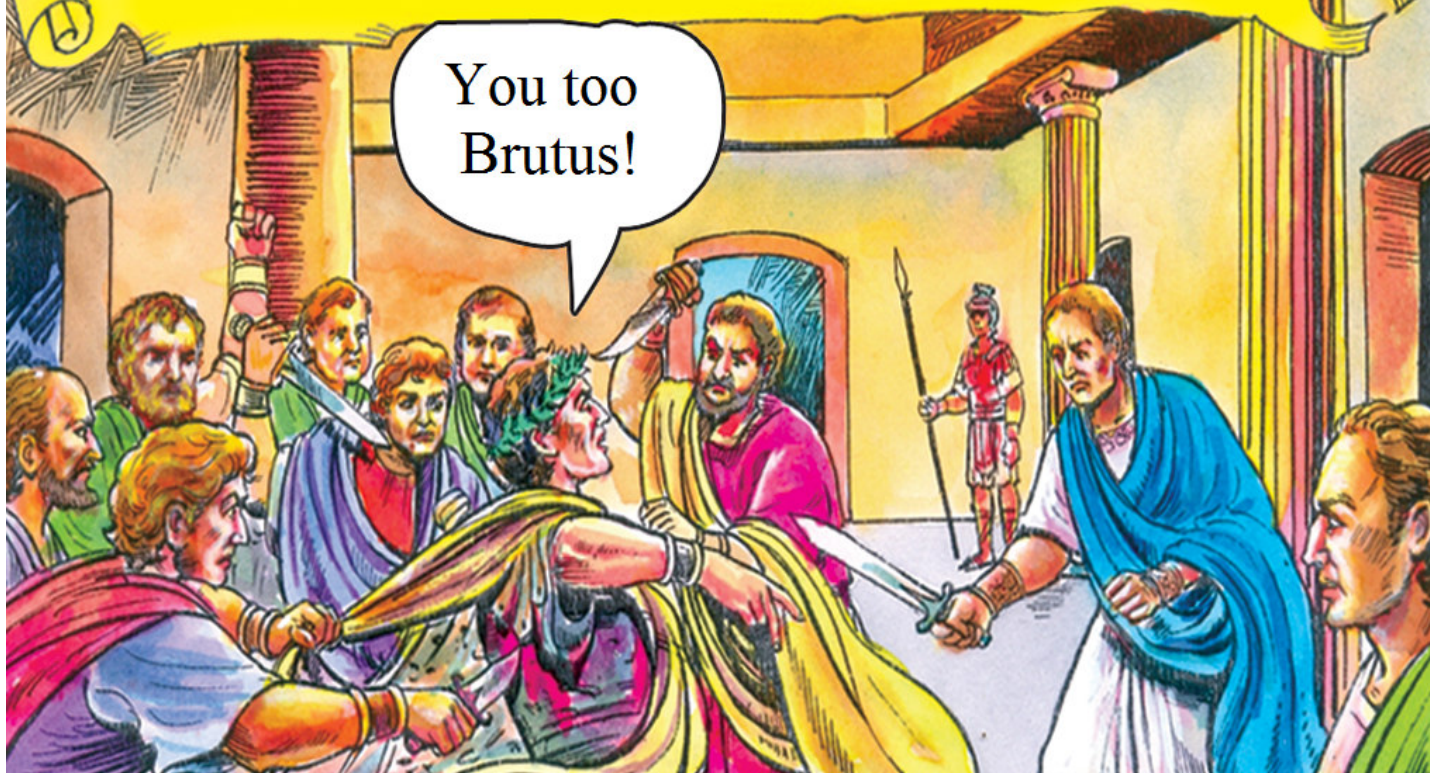


Antipater sided with Caesar. Pompey was killed in 48 B.C.



Julius Caesar became the sole ruler of Rome. But on March 14, 44 B. C. he was killed by a group of Roman nobles headed by Brutus.

You too
Brutus!



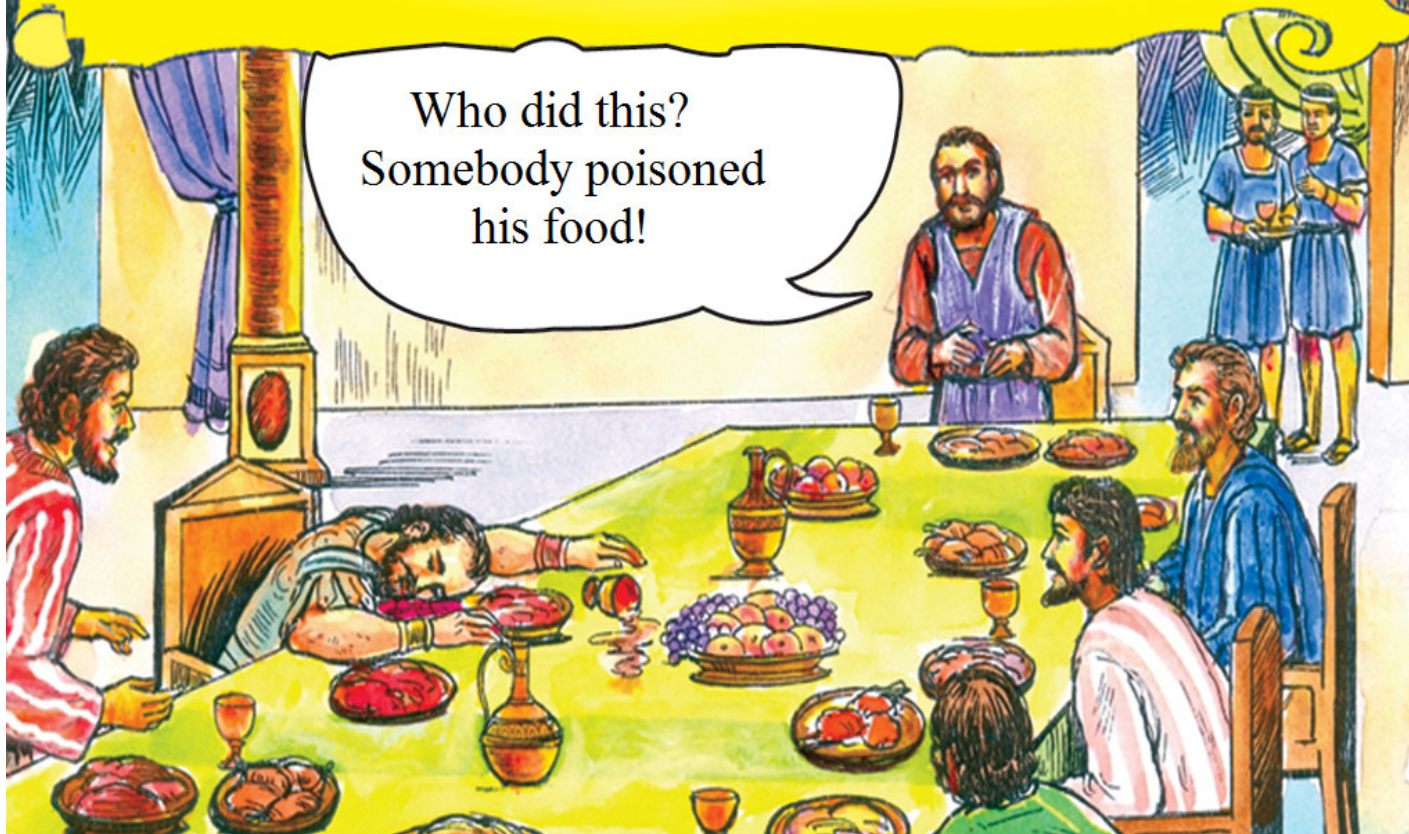
Octavian, Caesar's nephew, and Mark Antony, an army commander, joined forces and killed Brutus and his companions in 42 B.C. at the battle of Philippi.

Let this be your reward for what you did to Caesar.



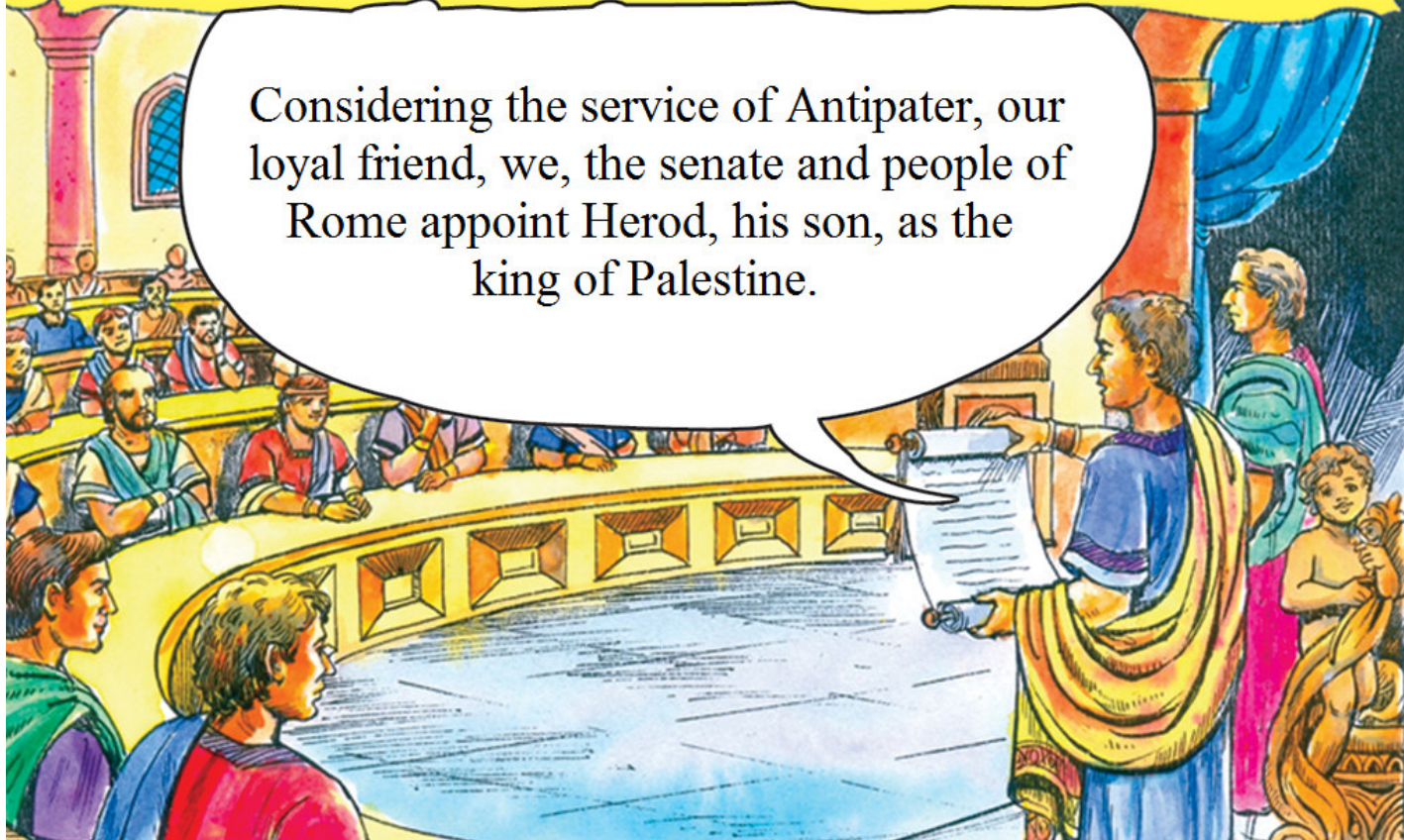
In 43 B. C. Antipater was killed as a result of political conspiracies in Palastine

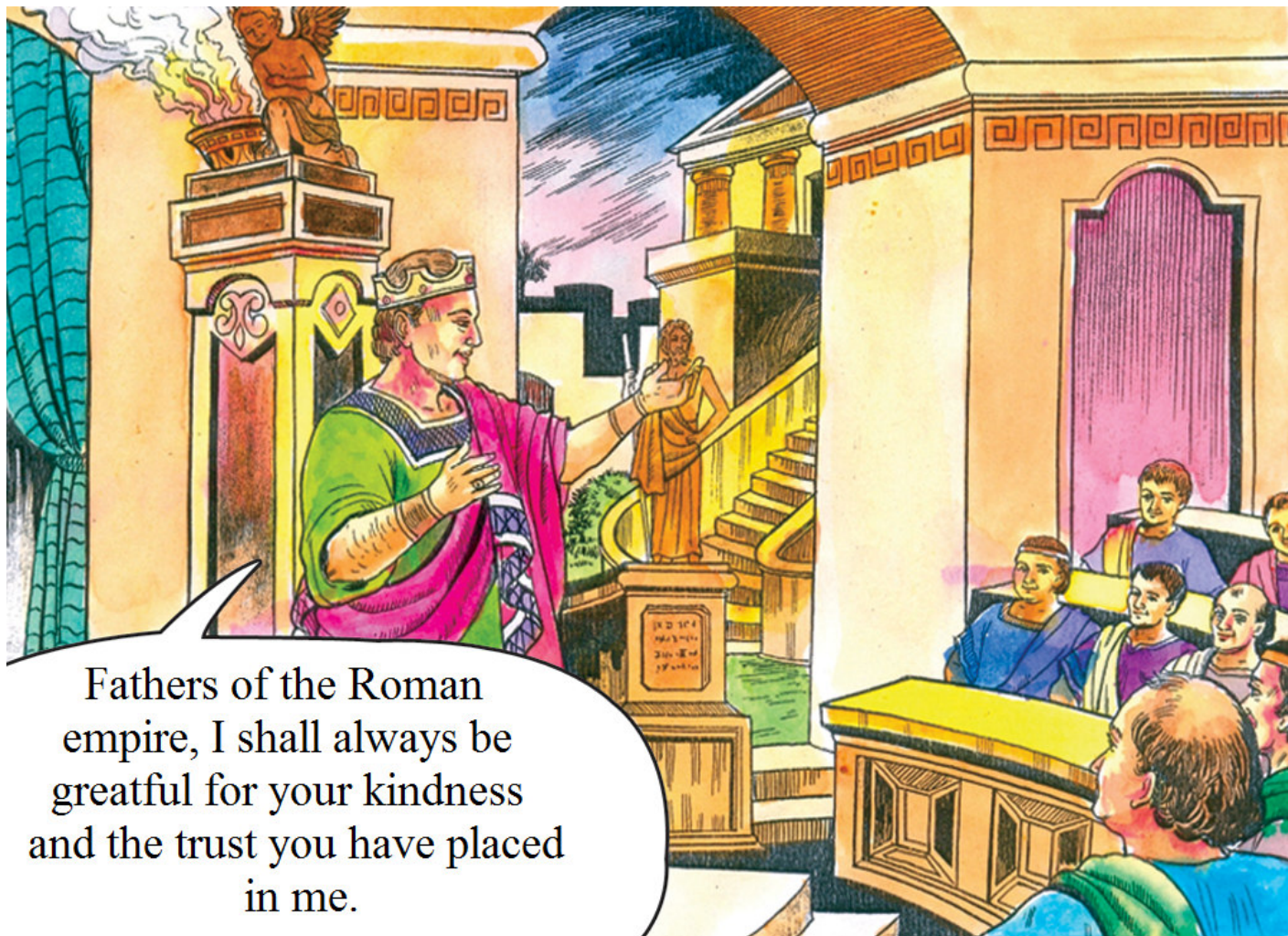
Who did this?
Somebody poisoned
his food!



During the years that followed there was continuous trouble in Palestine. Phasael, the eldest son of Antipater was killed. His second son, Herod, fled to Rome in 40 B. C. The Roman Senate:

Considering the service of Antipater, our loyal friend, we, the senate and people of Rome appoint Herod, his son, as the king of Palestine.





Fathers of the Roman empire, I shall always be greatful for your kindness and the trust you have placed in me.

I shall use all my power to
uphold the interests of Rome
and to rule the people
with justice.



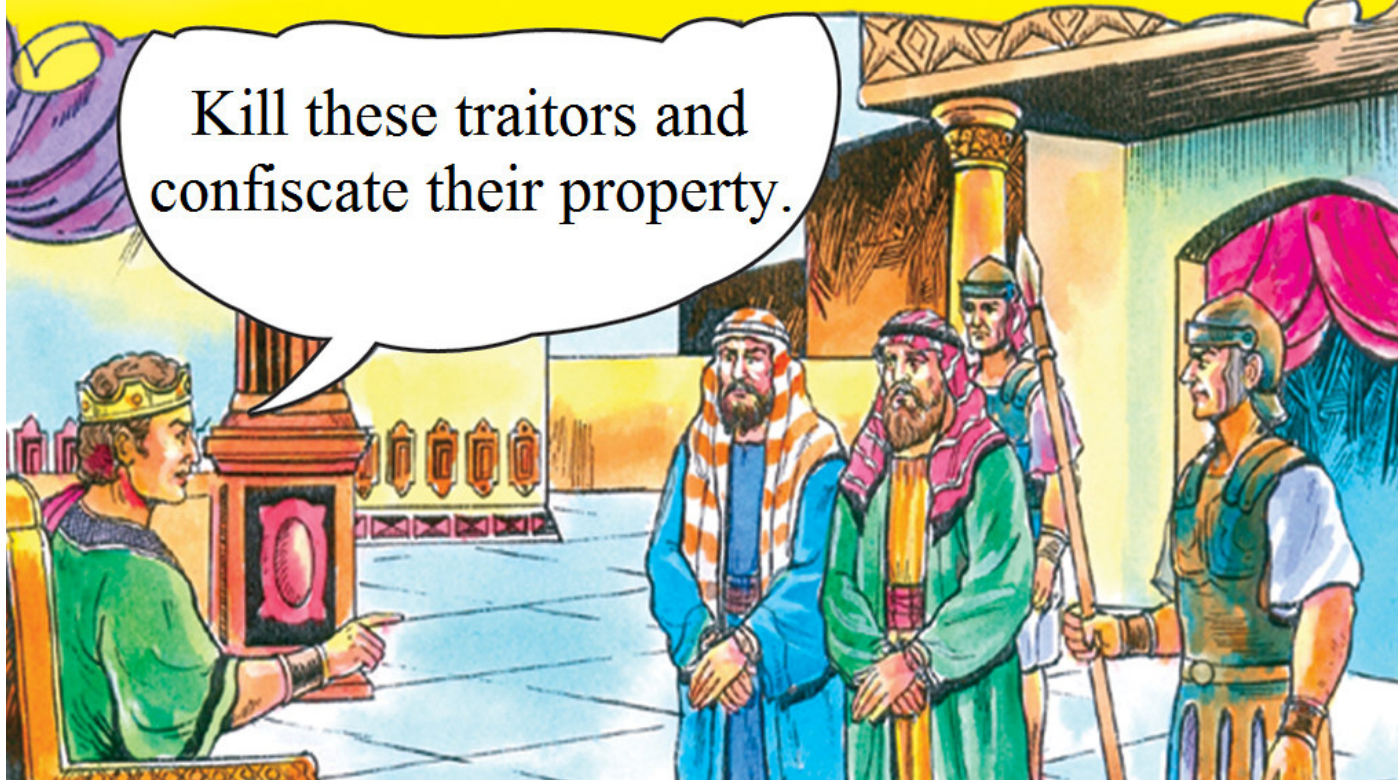
Antigonus, an enemy of Rome, is now ruling Palestine. You should help me to regain the land.

All right, we shall instruct the governor in Syria.



With the help of the Roman army Herod conquered Palestine and started his rule in 37 B. C. His first priority was to eliminate all his oponents.

Kill these traitors and confiscate their property.



In order to establish ties with the Hasmonean dynasty, Herod married Mariamne of that Royal family and appointed her brother, the seventeen year old Aristobulus, as high priest.

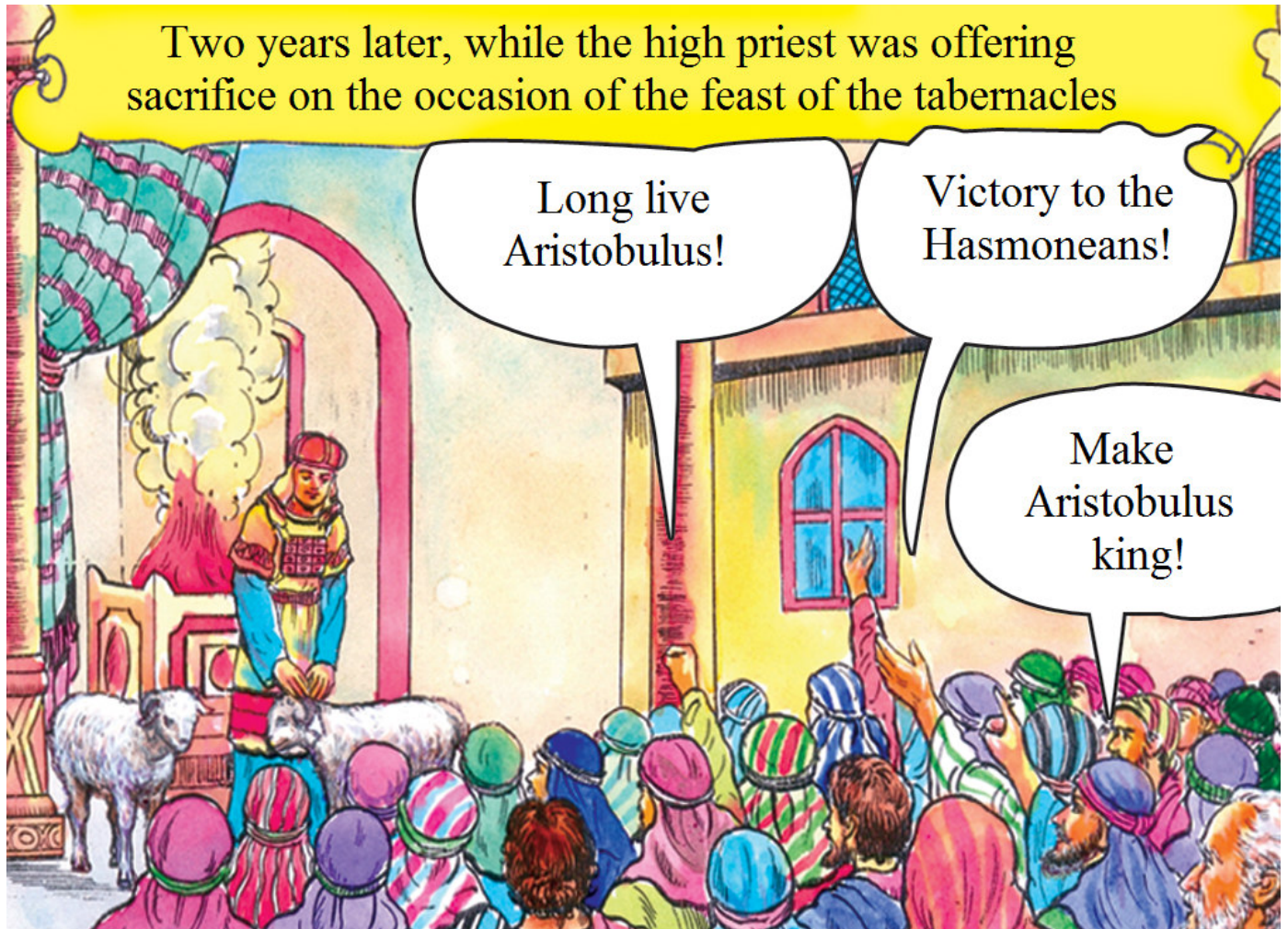


Two years later, while the high priest was offering sacrifice on the occasion of the feast of the tabernacles

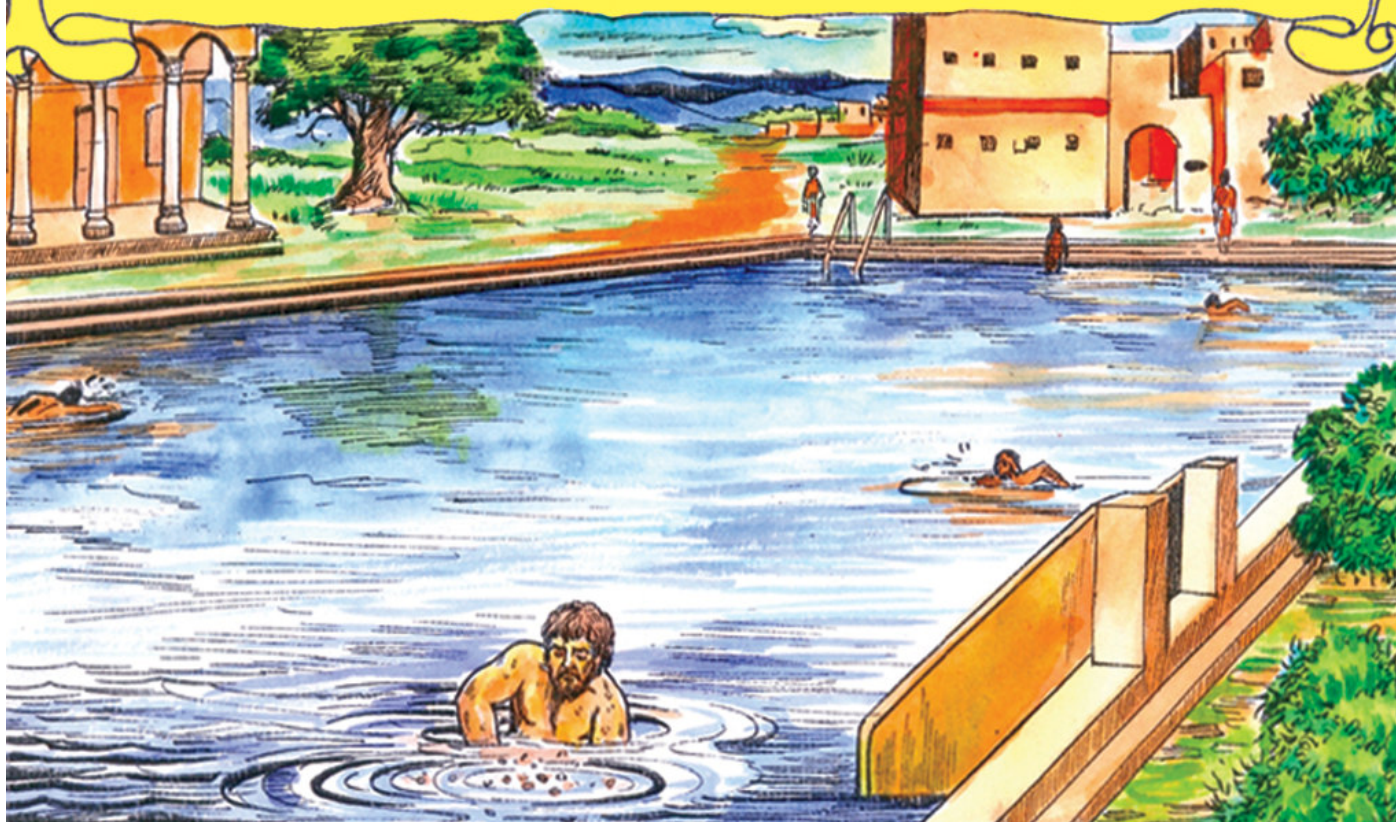
Long live
Aristobulus!

Victory to the
Hasmoneans!

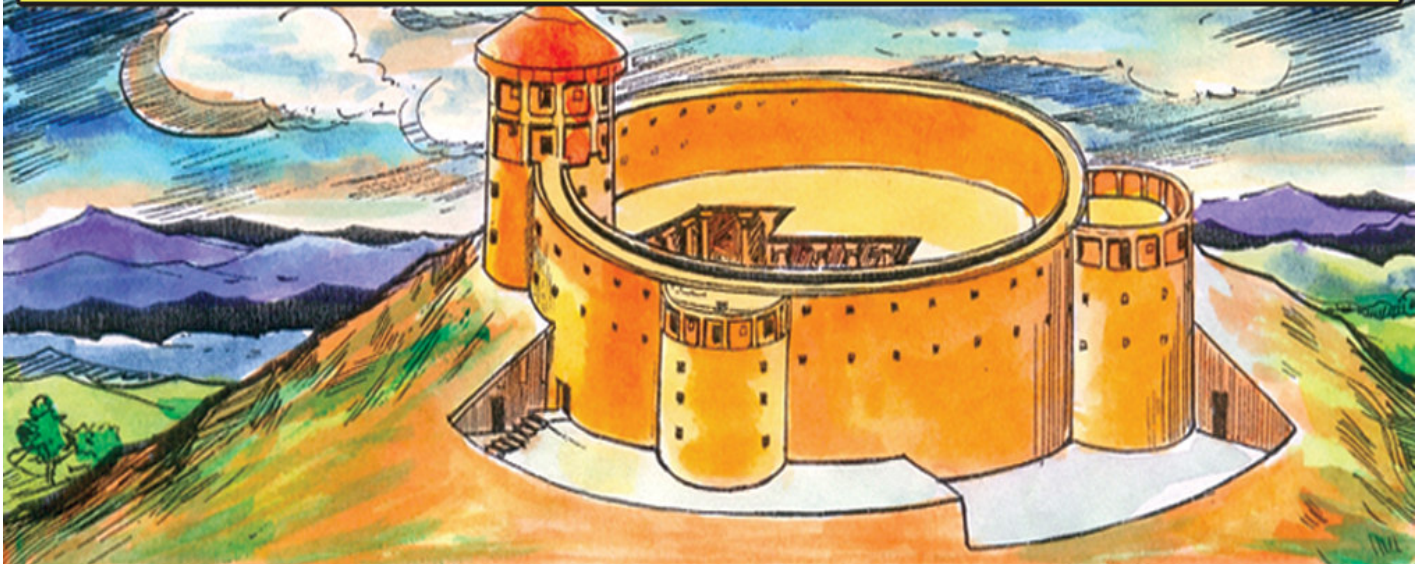
Make
Aristobulus
king!



Seeing the danger, Herod had Aristobulus drowned in a swimming pool in Jericho.



After killing everyone who posed the slightest threat to his throne, Herod secured the country by building huge fortresses such as Masada, Machaerus, and Herodion.



In 32 B. C. again civil war broke out in Rome. The armies of Mark Antony and Octavian met in battle.



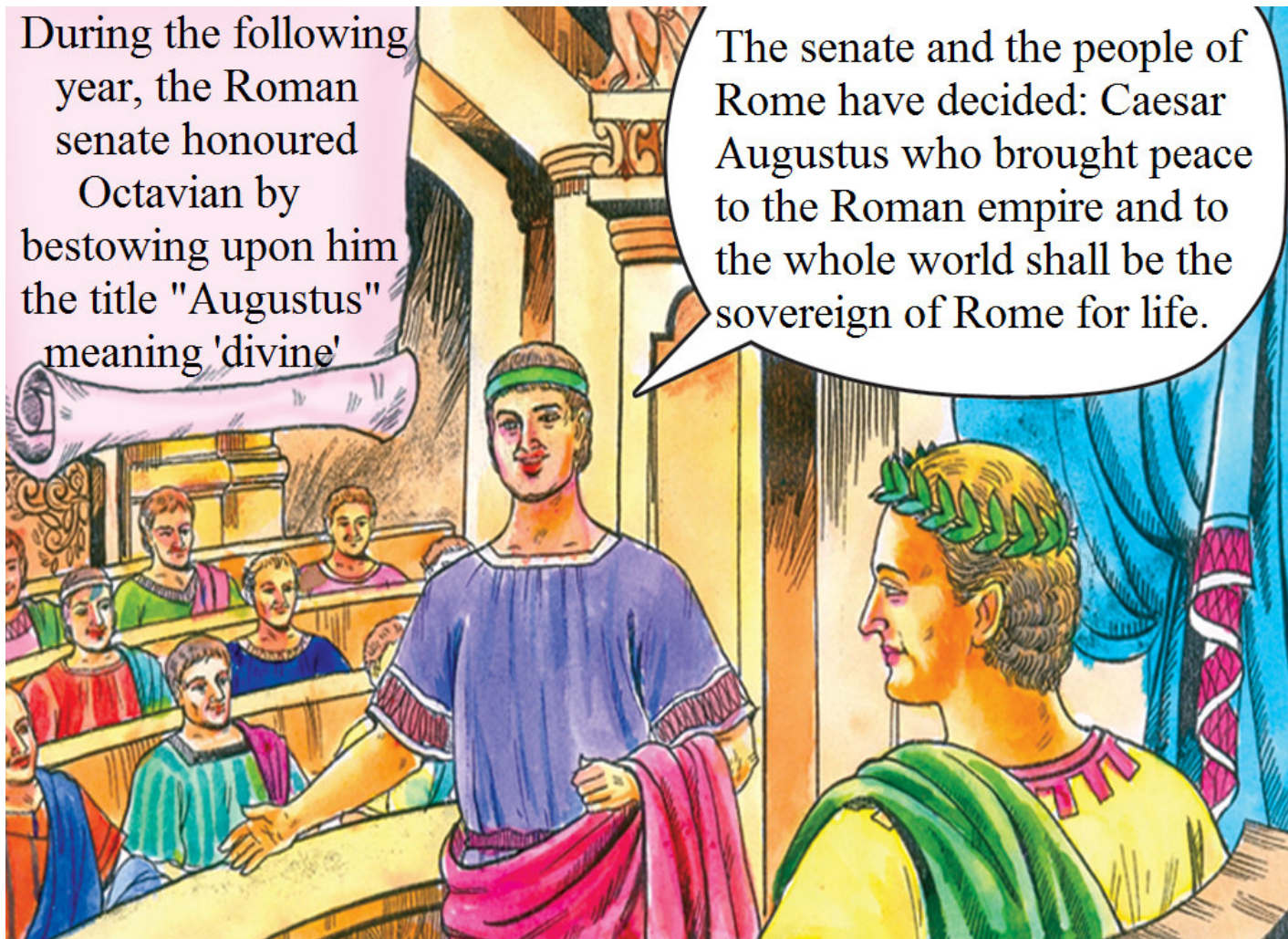


Octavian defeated Antony on September 2, 31 B. C.
Peace was established in the Roman empire. The age of
"Pax Romana" started.



During the following year, the Roman senate honoured Octavian by bestowing upon him the title "Augustus" meaning 'divine'

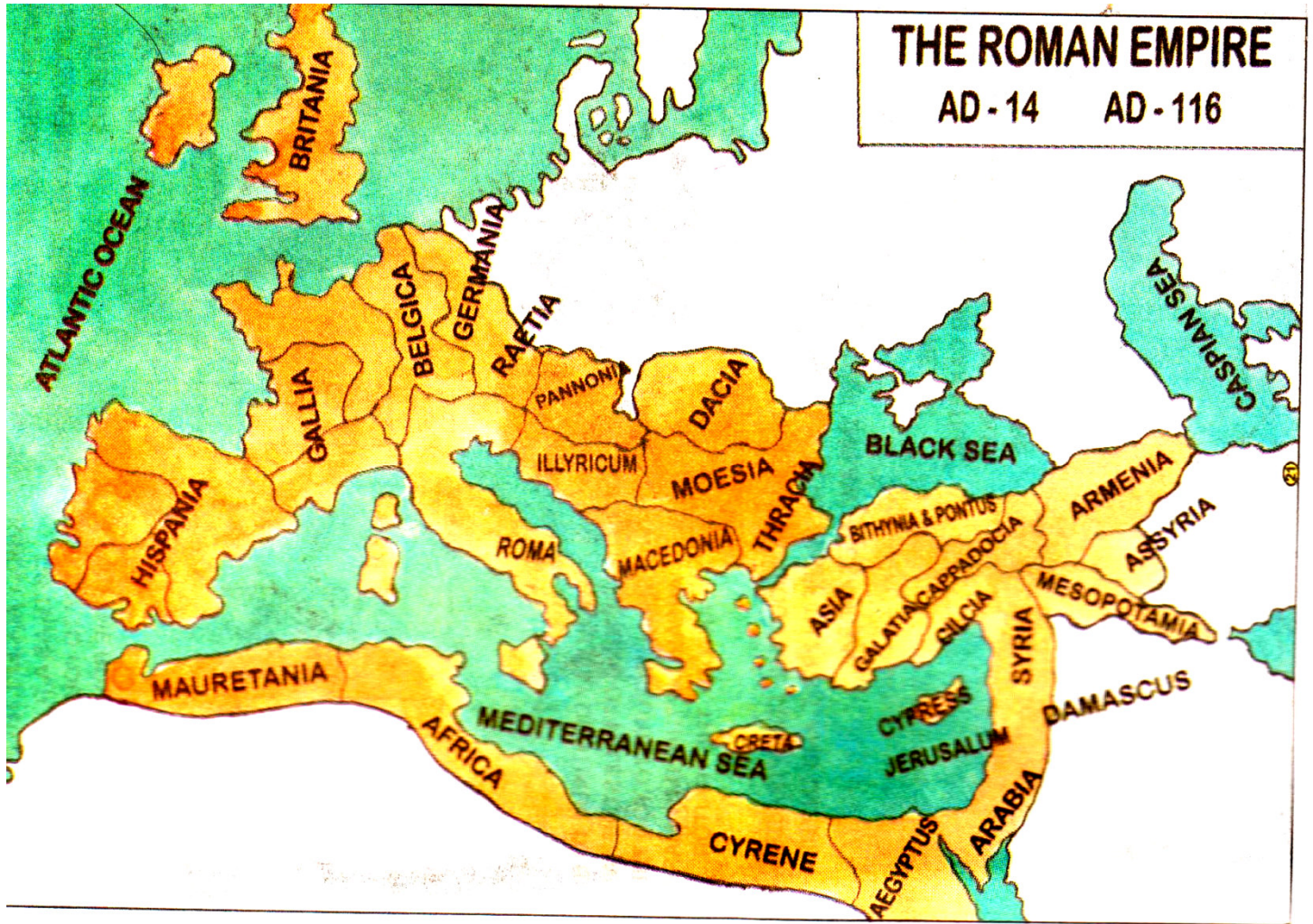
The senate and the people of Rome have decided: Caesar Augustus who brought peace to the Roman empire and to the whole world shall be the sovereign of Rome for life.



THE ROMAN EMPIRE

AD -14

AD -116



With precious gifts
Herod visited
Augustus.

Kindly accept these humble
gifts as a token of my loyalty
to your majesty and to the
Roman empire.

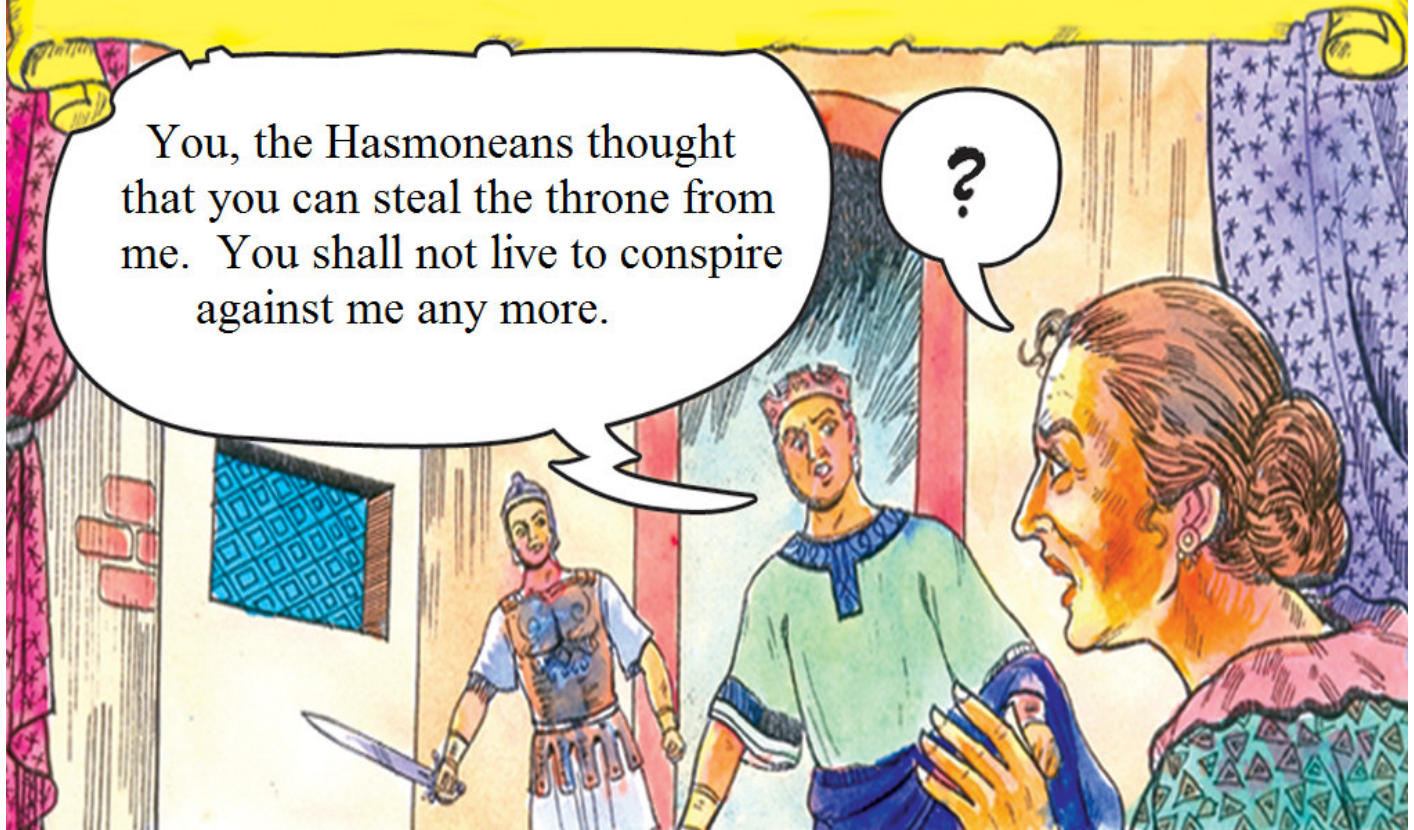
You may continue to be the
king of Palestine. We shall
return to you the areas
captured by Mark Antony the
traitor.



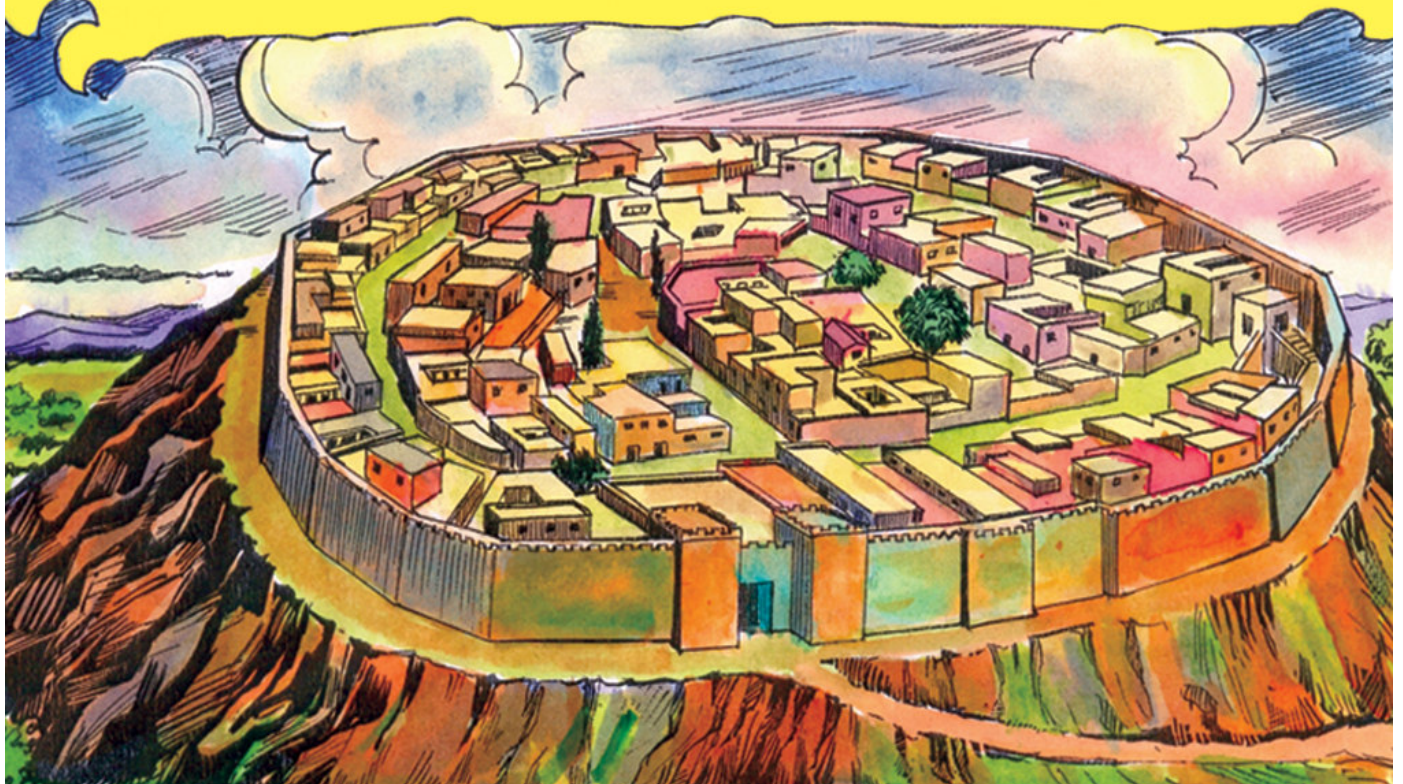
Herod returned to Palestine. He heard about the conspiracies against him. He killed Mariamne his wife in 29 B. C. and in the following year his mother-in-law Alexandra.

You, the Hasmoneans thought that you can steal the throne from me. You shall not live to conspire against me any more.

?



After eliminating all the possible oppositions Herod concentrated on the construction of the cities. He rebuilt Samaria and named it 'Sebaste' in honor of Augustus.



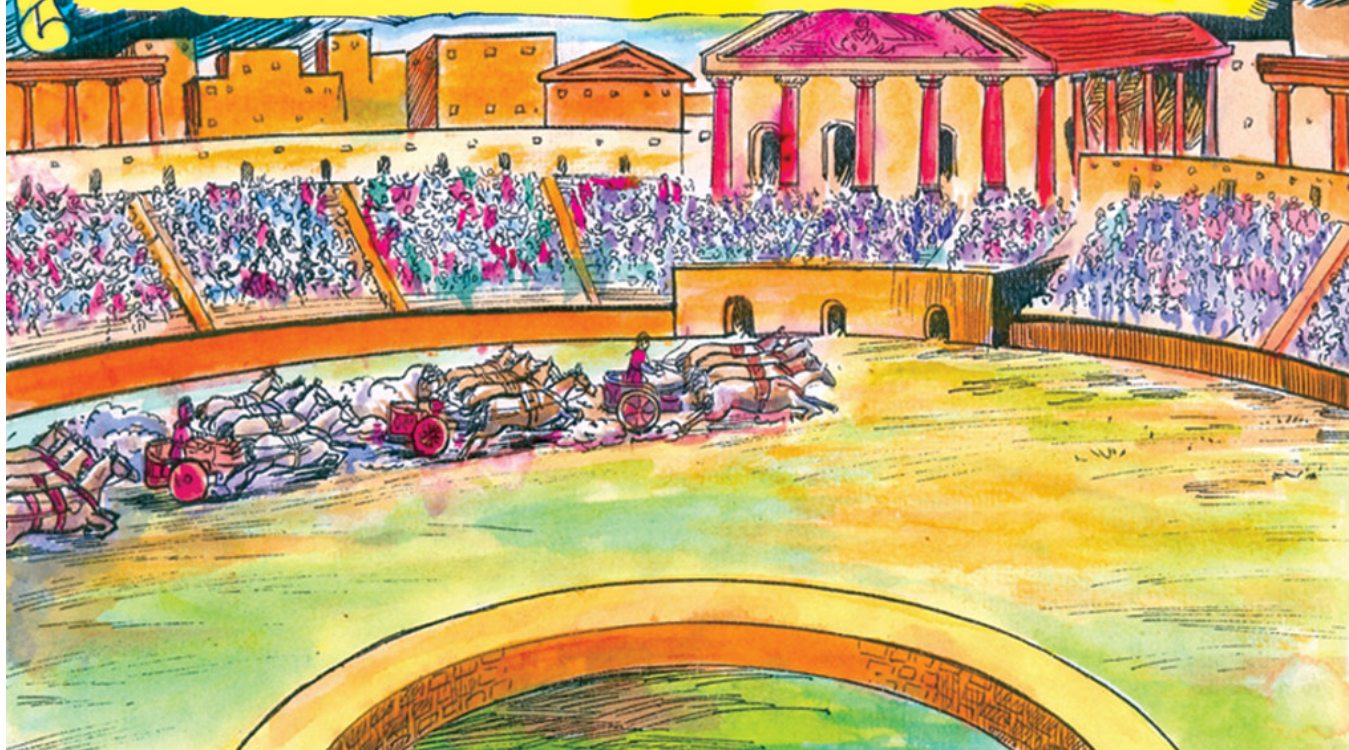
He built a city on the coast of the Mediterranean sea and called it Caesarea in honor of Caesar.



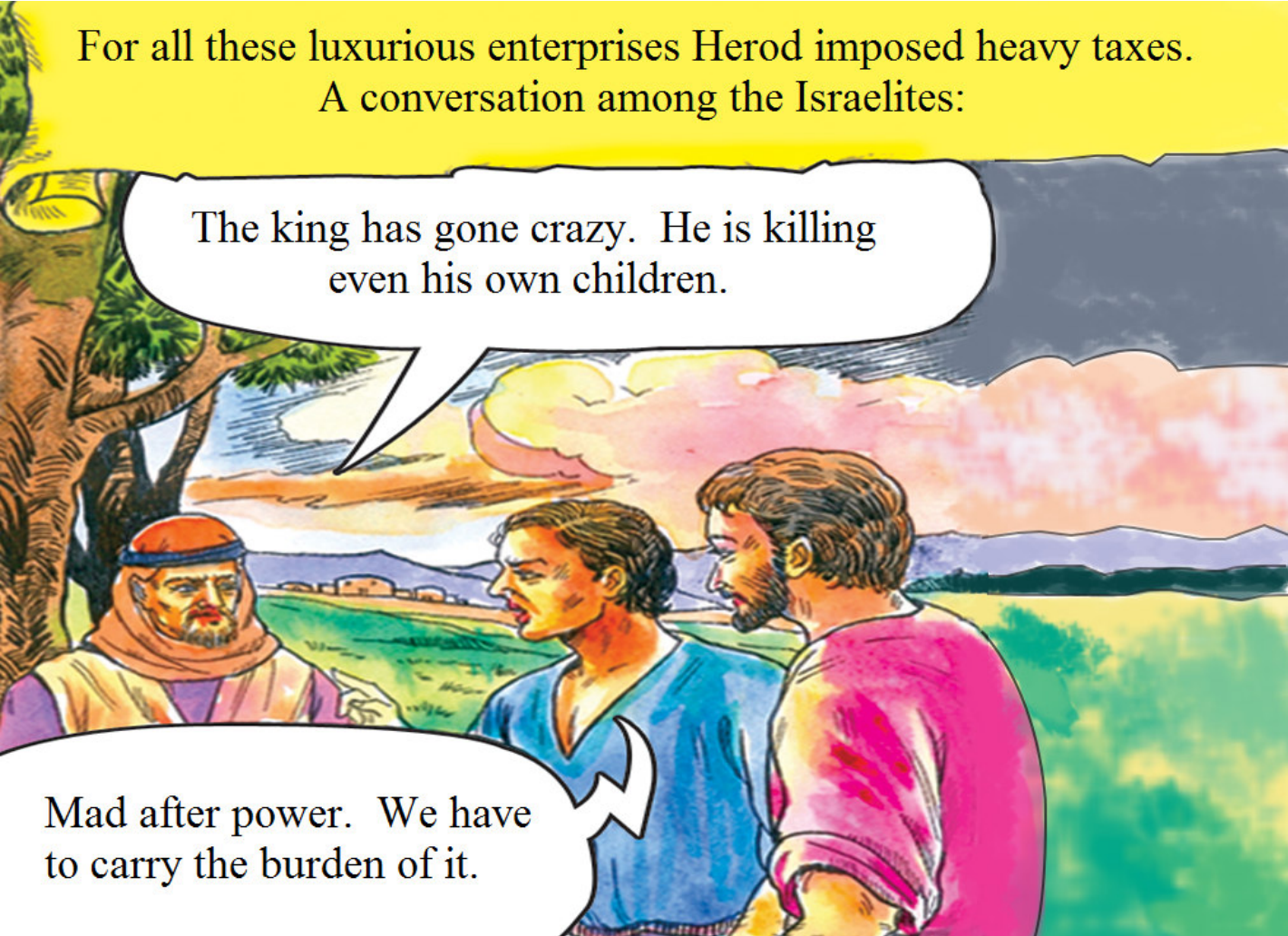
To please the Jews, in 20 B. C., he started beautifying the temple of Jerusalem.



In various towns of Palestine temples were built in Caesar's name and emperor-worship was instituted. Stadiums were constructed and games were conducted also in honor of Caesar.



For all these luxurious enterprises Herod imposed heavy taxes.
A conversation among the Israelites:



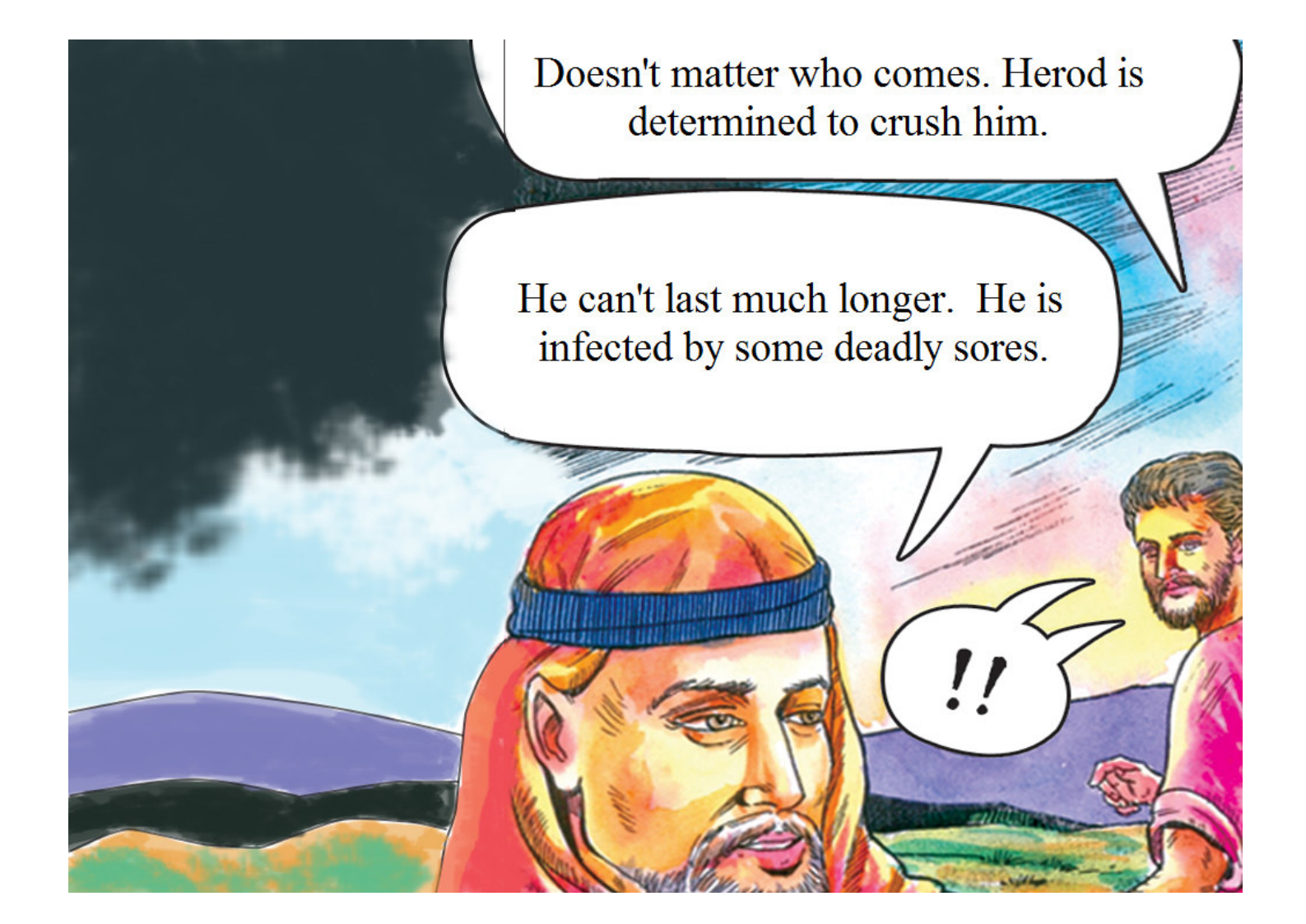
The king has gone crazy. He is killing
even his own children.

Mad after power. We have
to carry the burden of it.

That man from Idumea is
making us all slaves.

When are we going to get some relief?
How much longer do we have to wait
for the Messiah!

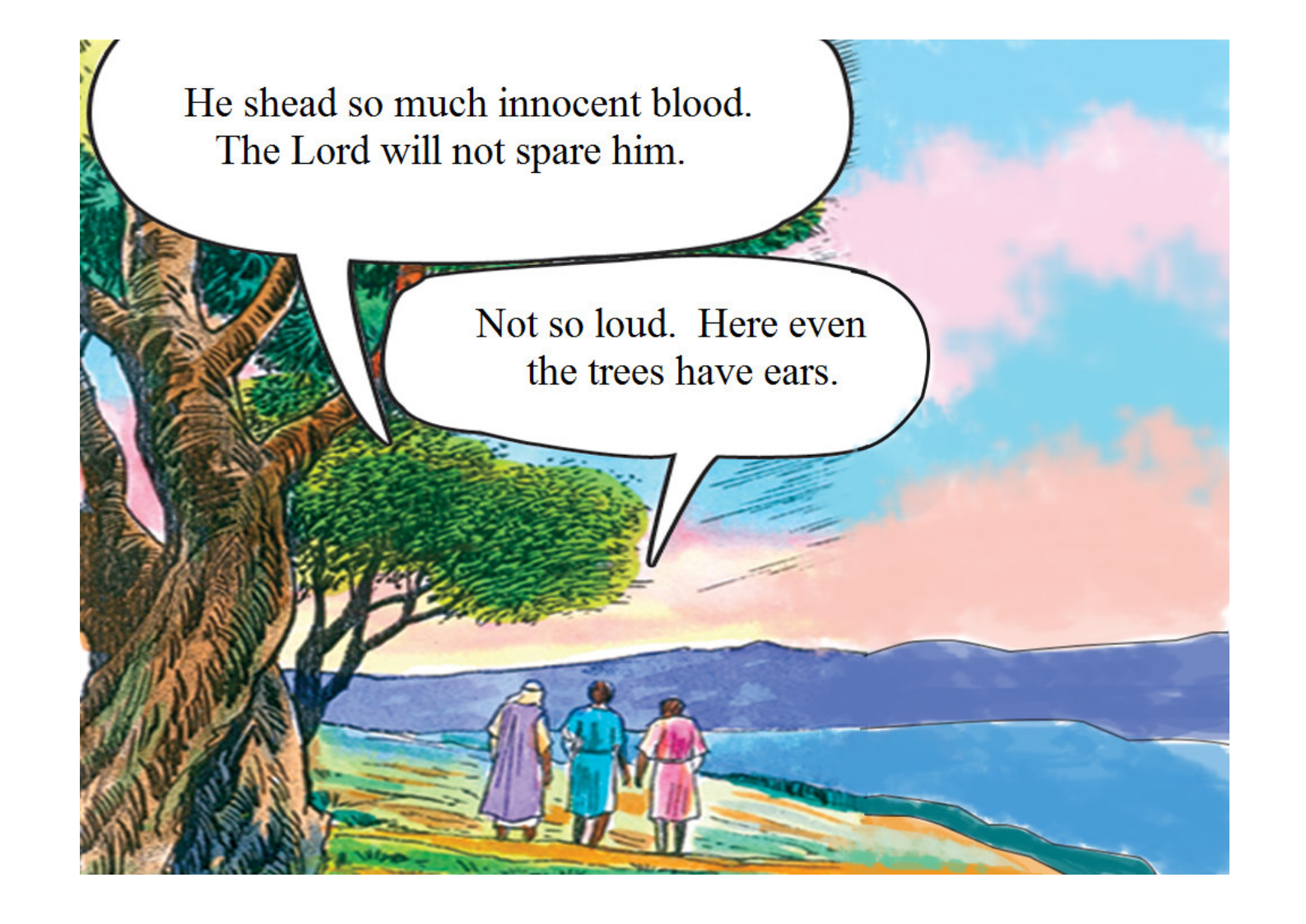




Doesn't matter who comes. Herod is determined to crush him.

He can't last much longer. He is infected by some deadly sores.

!!



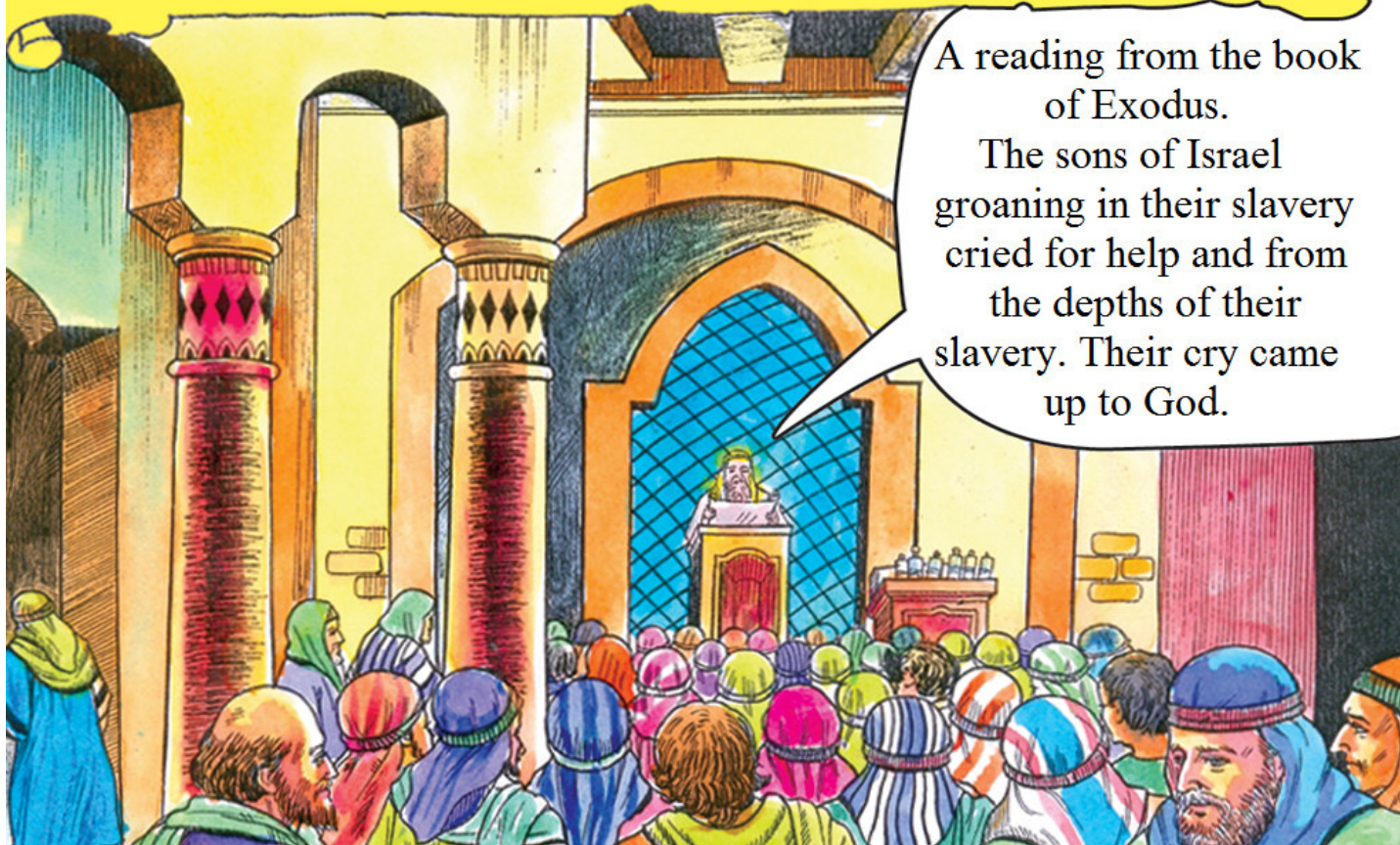
He shed so much innocent blood.
The Lord will not spare him.

Not so loud. Here even
the trees have ears.

The people, brutally oppressed, cried to the Lord and prayed for the coming of the Messiah. In the synagogue in Galilee:

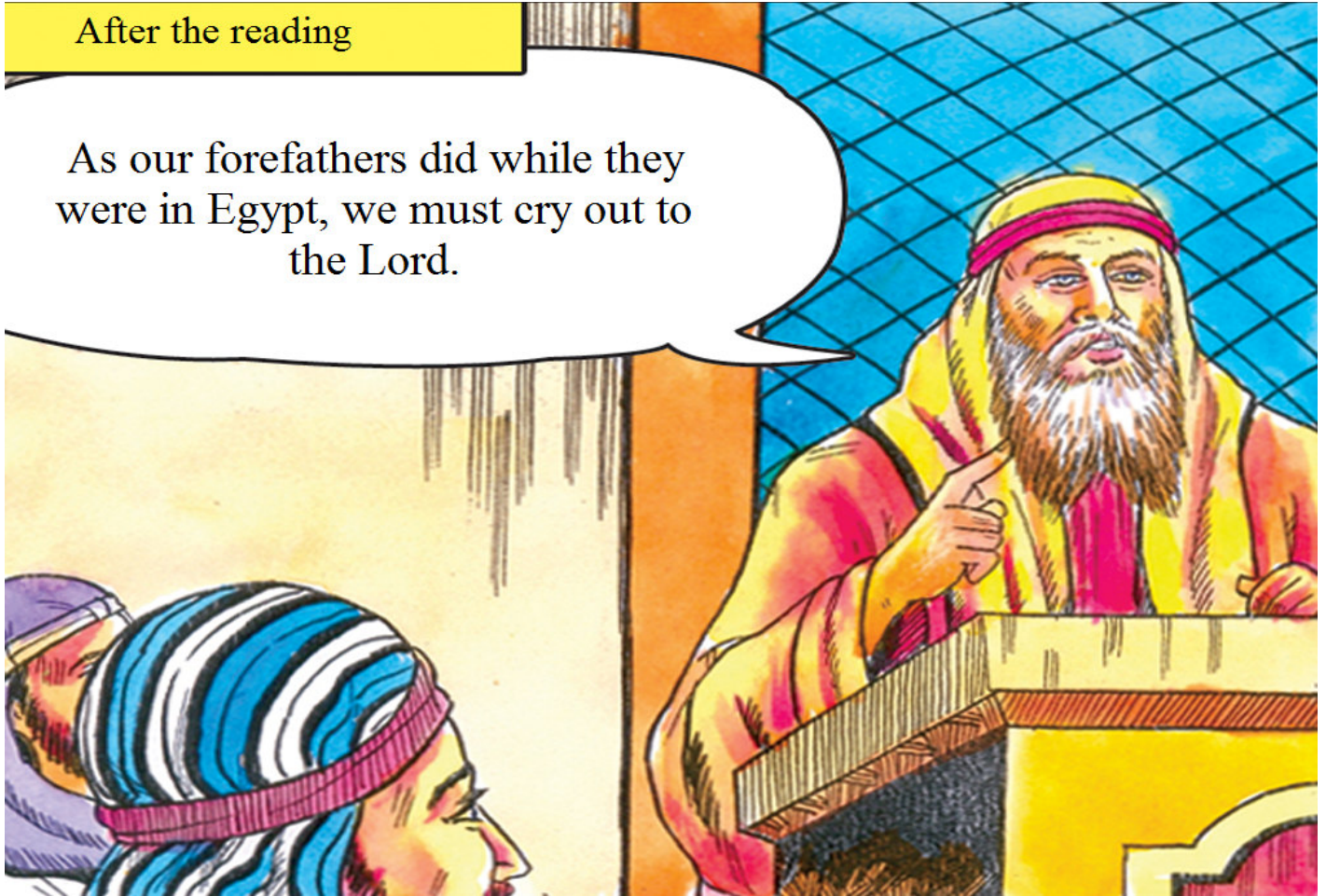
A reading from the book of Exodus.

The sons of Israel groaning in their slavery cried for help and from the depths of their slavery. Their cry came up to God.



After the reading

As our forefathers did while they were in Egypt, we must cry out to the Lord.



The Lord will not delay to
send the Messiah to save us.



God heard their cry and made preparations for the coming of the Messiah. In Ain-Karim, a village near Jerusalem, there lived a priest named Zechariah with his wife Elizabeth.

I can't bear this humiliation any longer.
All are laughing at me.

Are we to blame if the Lord didn't give us a child?

How long have we been praying in tears?



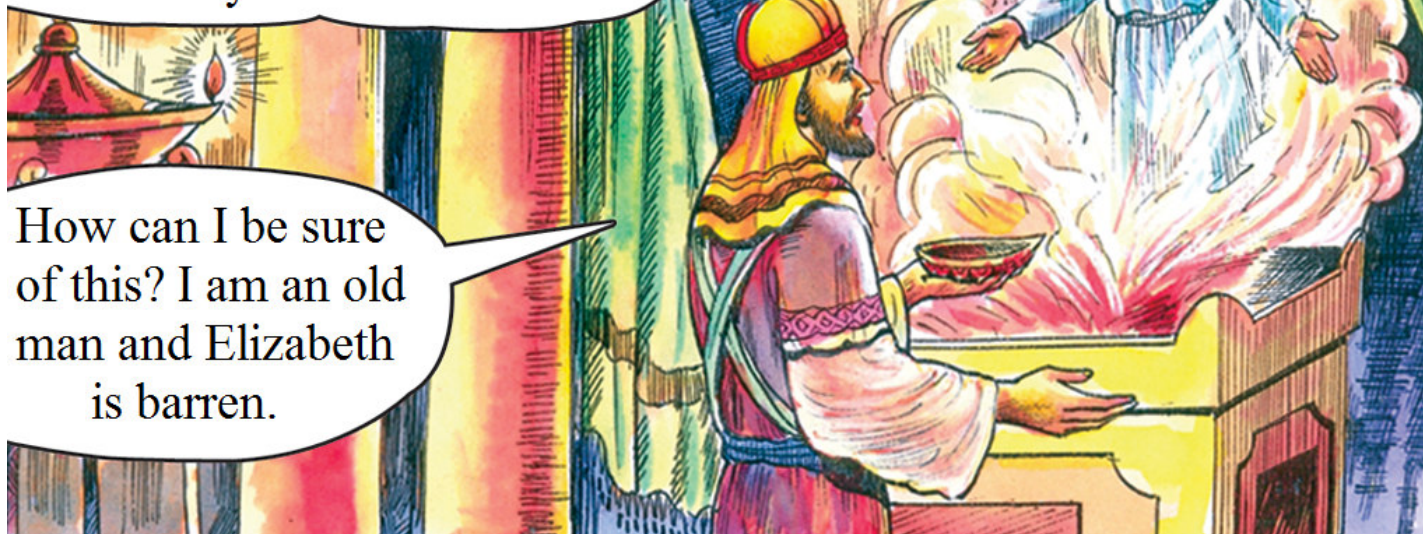
Let's keep praying. We
don't know when the
Lord will look kindly
upon us.

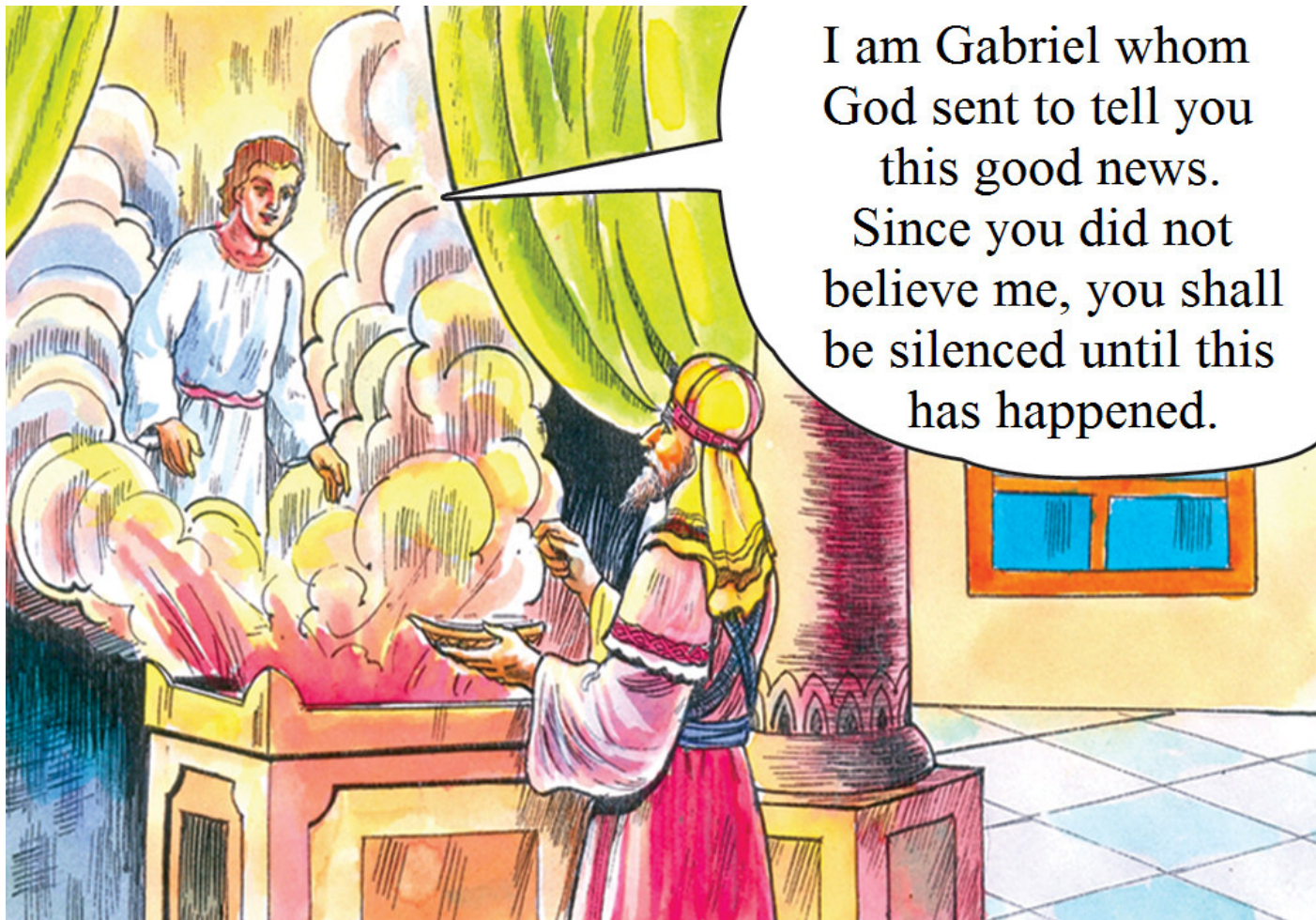


Zechariah's turn came by lot to offer incense before the Lord. While in the sanctuary he had a vision.

Zechariah, do not be afraid.
Your prayer has been heard.
Your wife Elizabeth is to bear
you a son and you must name
him John. He will prepare
the way for the Lord.

How can I be sure
of this? I am an old
man and Elizabeth
is barren.





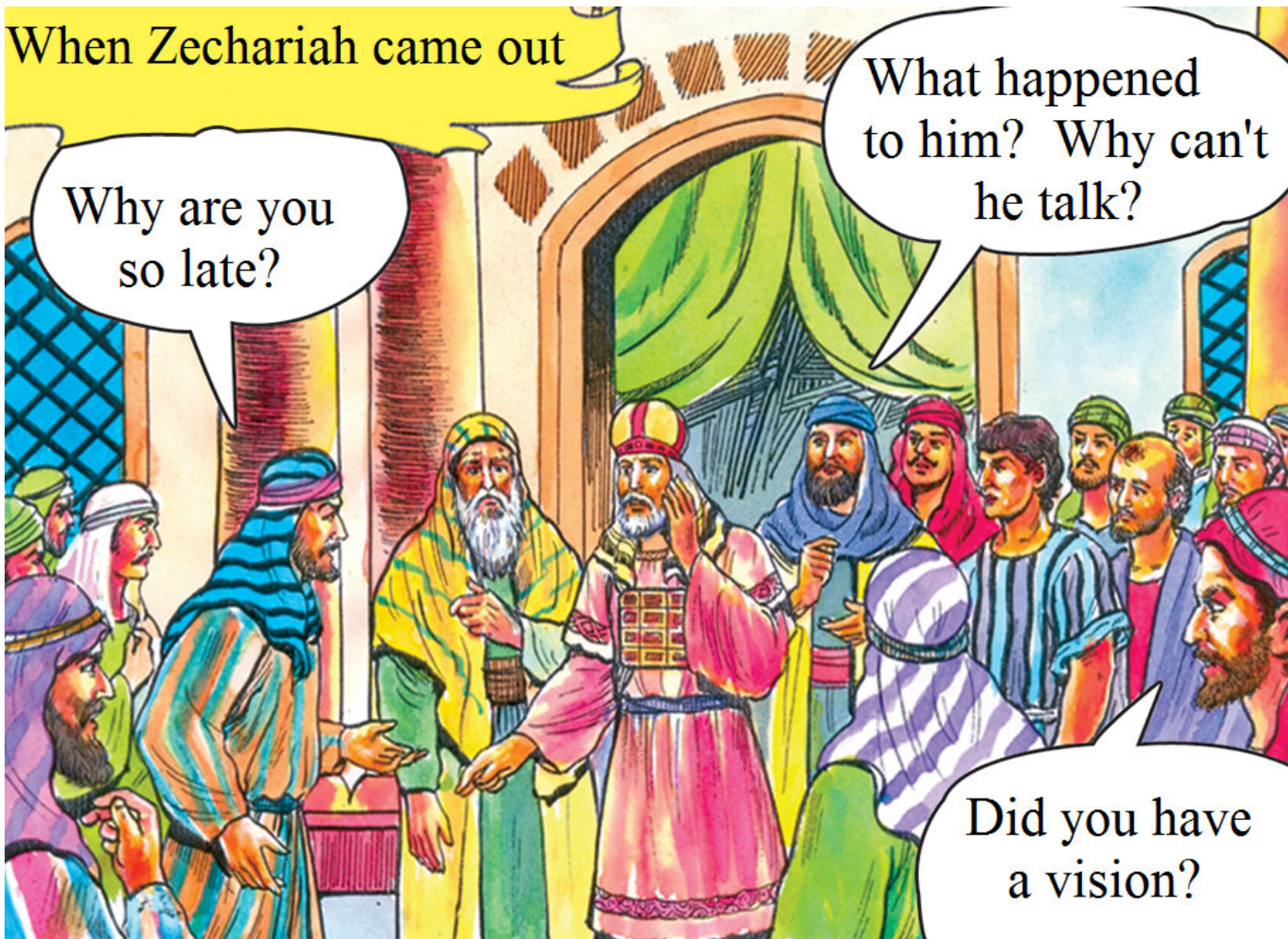
I am Gabriel whom
God sent to tell you
this good news.
Since you did not
believe me, you shall
be silenced until this
has happened.

When Zechariah came out

Why are you so late?

What happened to him? Why can't he talk?

Did you have a vision?



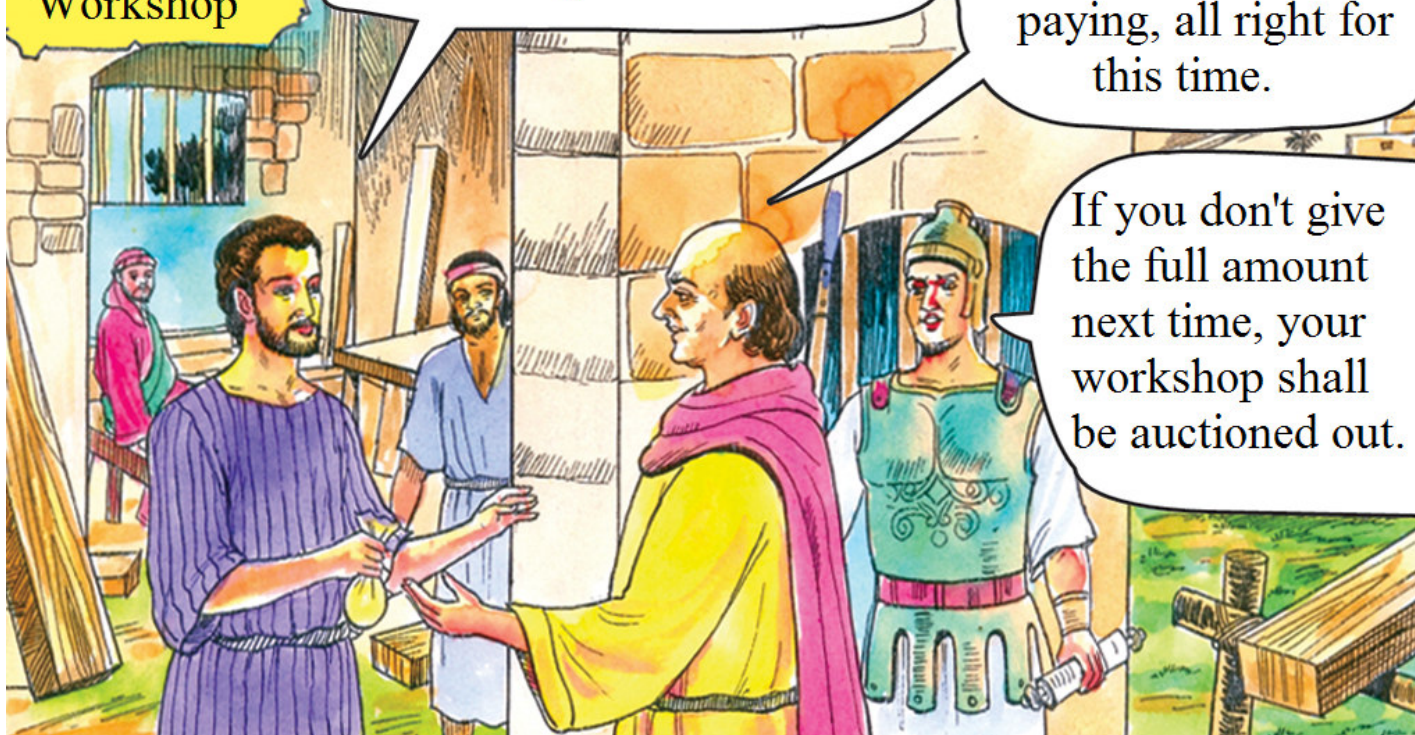
In Galilee, the northern province of Palestine, there is a little town called Nazareth. There lived a young carpenter called Joseph.

Joseph's Workshop

Here are five shekels. The rest I shall give next week.

Since you were always prompt in paying, all right for this time.

If you don't give the full amount next time, your workshop shall be auctioned out.



When the soldiers were gone

How much
is the tax?

More than three days'
earning a week.

Well,
what
about your
marriage?

!



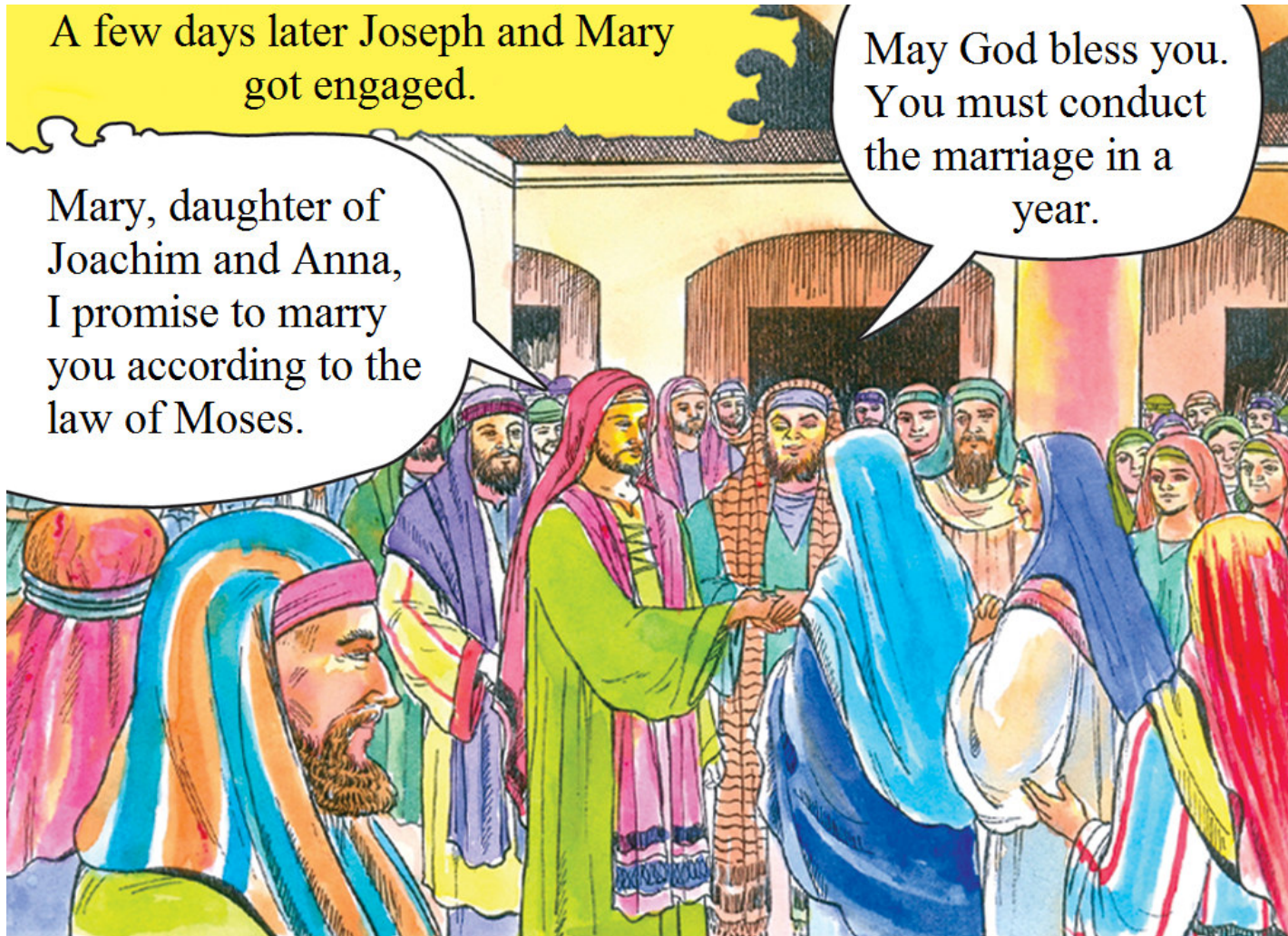
Joachim's daughter Mary,
is a beautiful girl. Good
natured as well. What are
you waiting for?



A few days later Joseph and Mary got engaged.

Mary, daughter of Joachim and Anna, I promise to marry you according to the law of Moses.

May God bless you. You must conduct the marriage in a year.



After the ceremony, friends greeted them.

Joseph, you are lucky to get a girl like Mary.

Joseph is a good match. Hard working and kind hearted.

Yes, God has been good to us.

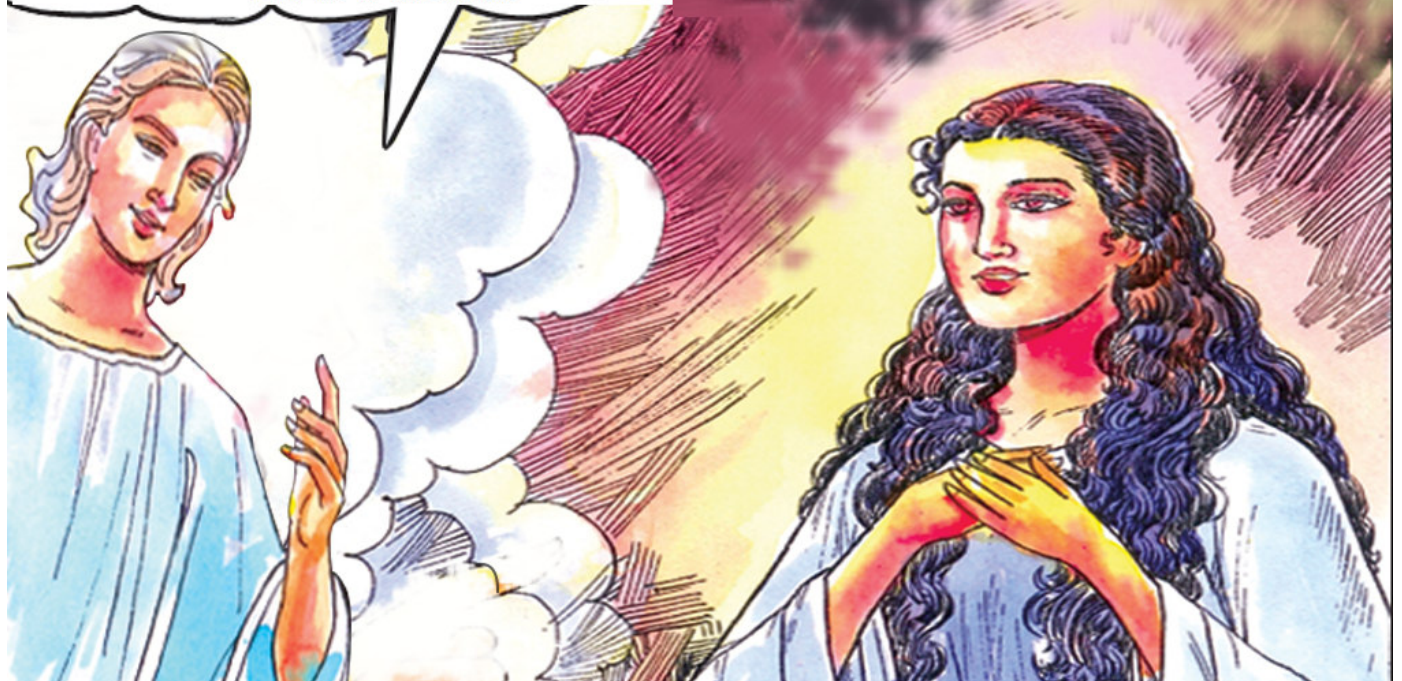
When the appointed time came, God sent his angel Gabriel to Mary

Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you.

Who is this?
What does this mean?

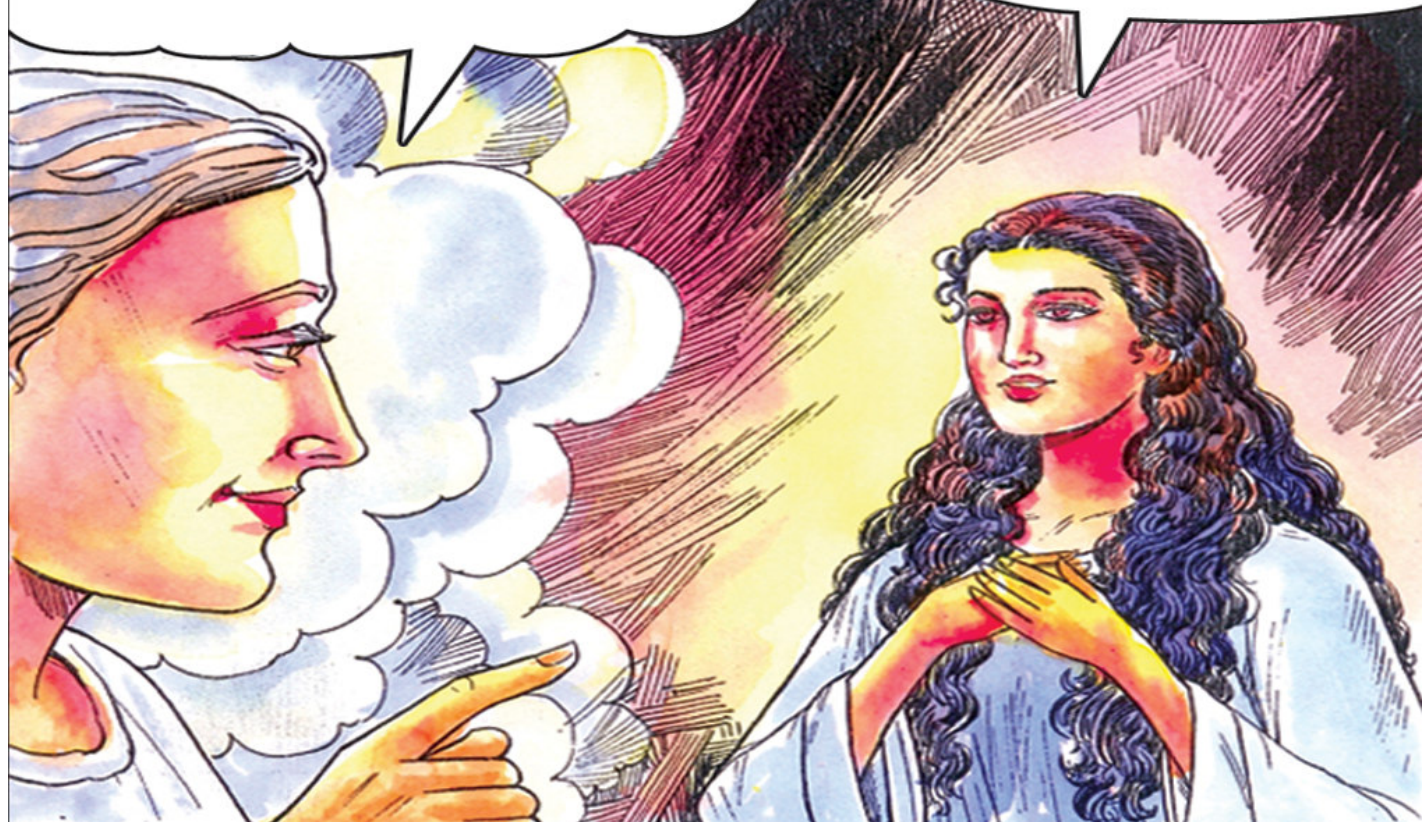


Do not be afraid. God is pleased with you. You shall conceive and give birth to a son. You must name him Jesus.

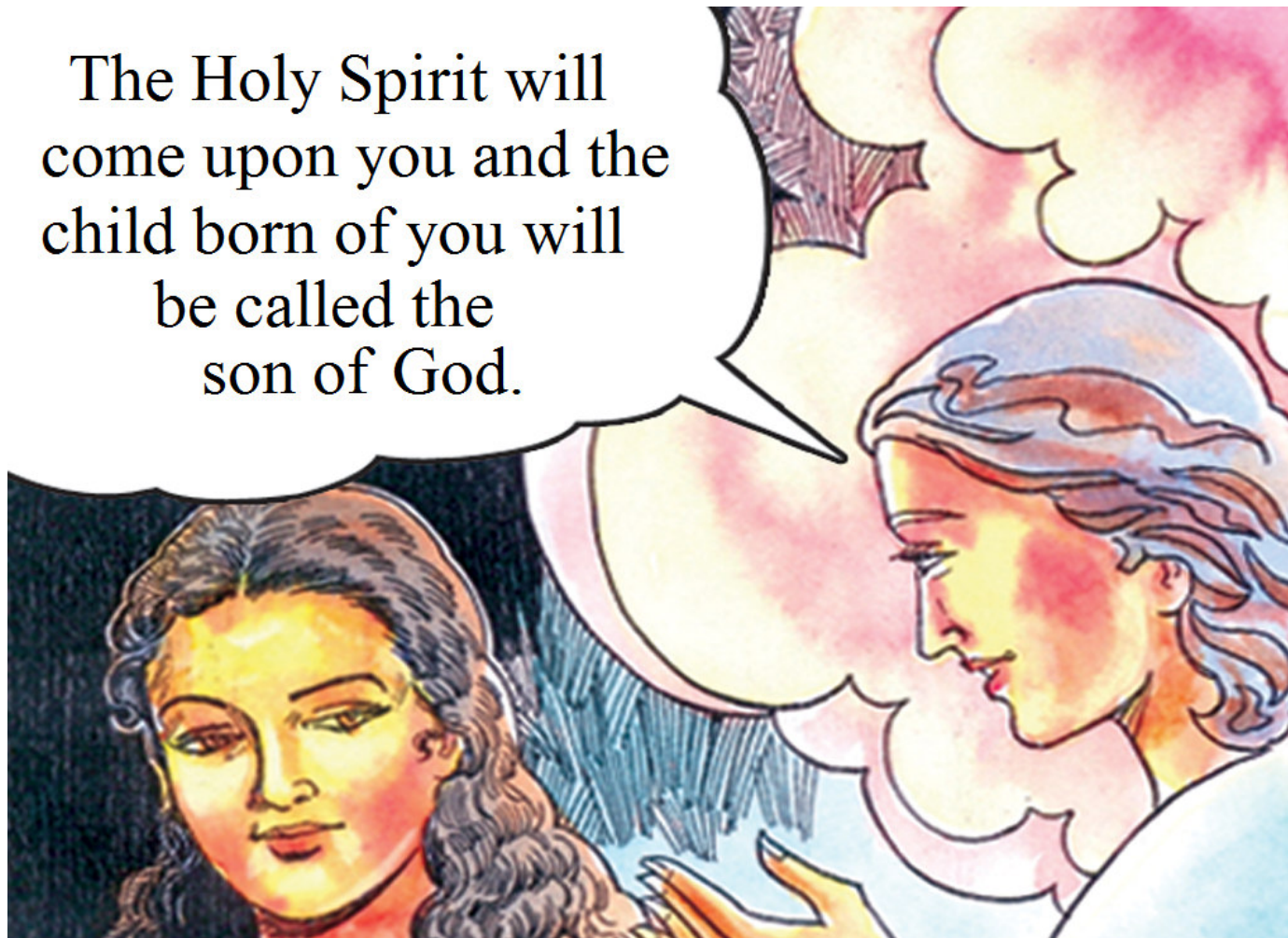


He will save his people from sin. God will give him the throne of his ancestor, David.

How could this be since I do not know man?



The Holy Spirit will
come upon you and the
child born of you will
be called the
son of God.



Your kinswoman Elizabeth has
conceived a son. This is her
sixth month. Nothing is
impossible with God.



I am the handmaid
of the Lord. Let
what you have said
be done to me.



Questions

1. Why is the title “A World Awaiting” given to this book?
2. What did Buddha say about the Redeemer to come?
3. Who is Prometheus? When will his punishment be over?
4. Name the Roman poet who reported the belief that the Redeemer would be born of a virgin.
5. Name the prophets mentioned in this story.
6. Name the Roman General who conquered Palestine.
7. Name the emperor who brought peace to the Roman empire.
8. Why did the Jews hate Herod?
9. Why Zechariah was struck dumb?
10. What was the main purpose of writing the gospels?

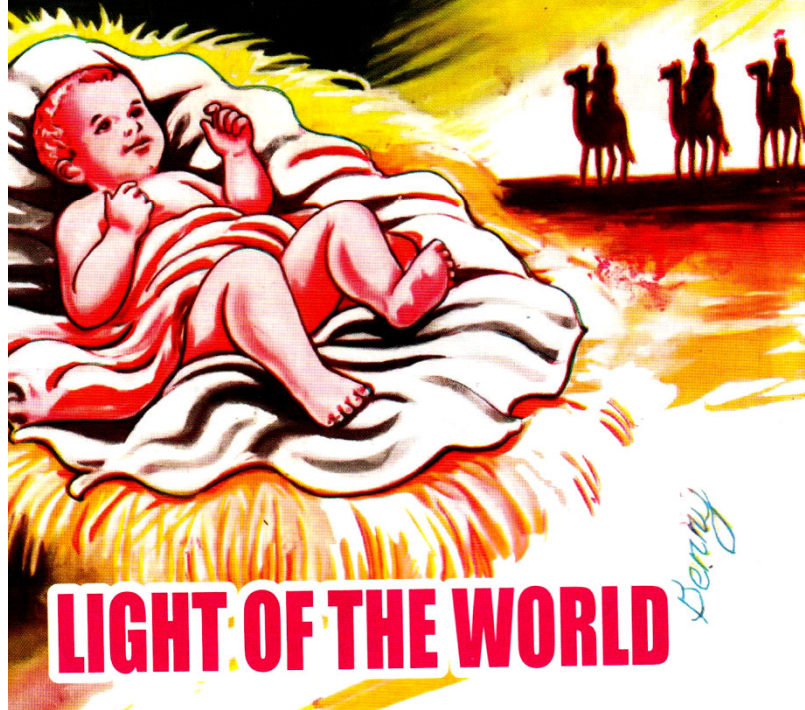
Memorize:

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it done to me according to the word.

NEXT STORY

**THE KING OF KINGS
IN A MANGER**



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Denny