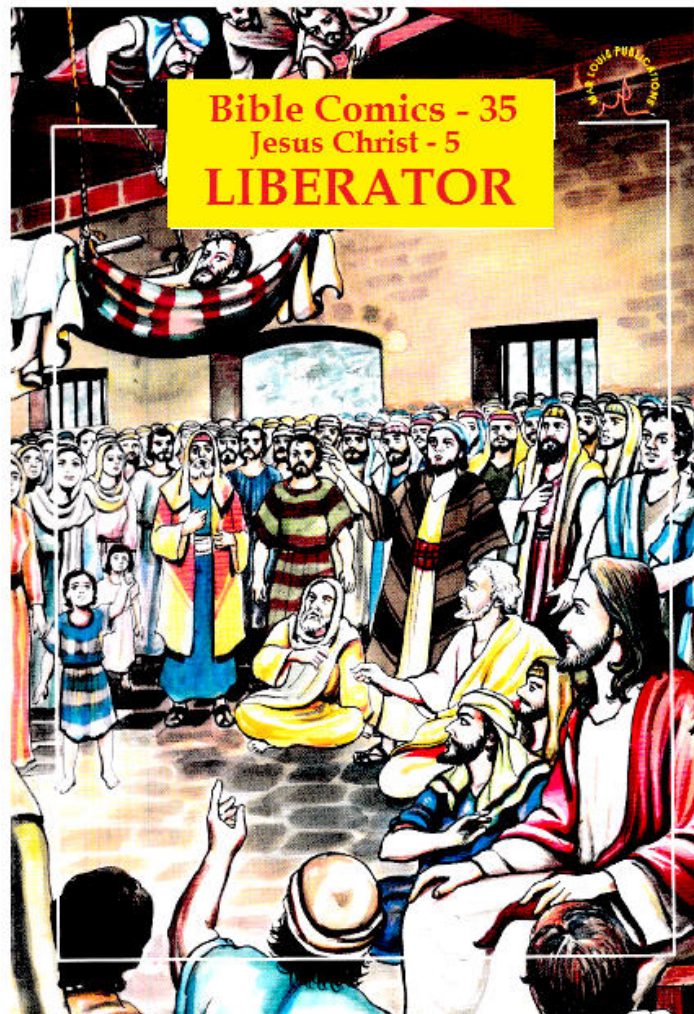


Bible Comics - 35
Jesus Christ - 5
LIBERATOR



The Liberator

Today, more than ever, People are looking to Jesus as the liberator of mankind. But in defining the nature of liberation, there exists a variety of opinions. Some emphasize the socio-political liberation while others restrict it entirely to the spiritual sphere, as liberation of the souls from sin. In the present story we are depicting a few

episodes that highlight the various aspects of liberation.

In the programmatic episode of Nazareth, Jesus announced that he was sent to proclaim the Good News of liberation to the oppressed. His subsequent ministry is the fulfillment of that programme. Hence in order to understand the nature of liberation Jesus proclaimed, we have to see what he did and taught and how he responded to the expectation of the people.

Among the contemporaries of Jesus, there existed various views about liberation and about the ways and means of achieving it. As Palestine was under Roman rule a political liberation was foremost in the mind of the Jews. There were many revolutionary groups in Palestine, especially in Galilee. They wanted to throw out the Romans by armed revolt. A Guerilla group known as Zealots that is believed to have originated in A.D. 6 with Judas the Galilean as its leader was

the most important among them. Barabbas and the two thieves crucified with Jesus probably belonged to that group. Some of the apostles of Jesus had affinity with them and one named Simon is explicitly identified as a Zealot. However, Jesus neither shared their aspirations nor approved of their violent methods.

The Liberation Jesus proclaimed concerned the whole person and the whole world. He did not make a distinction between the Israelites and the Gentiles,

between Zealots and Romans. In the eyes of Jesus the world was under the dominion of evil that manifested itself as oppression, foreign dominion, alienation, sickness and death. Hence he started his ministry striking at the root of evil, namely sin and Satan. The various healing and exorcising activities of Jesus have to be understood as liberation from evil.

The Sinai Covenant and the laws were given to Israel in order to guarantee freedom to all. But as interpreted and

enforced by the religious leaders, these very laws became an enslaving force. Sabbath was meant to give rest to those who work, but it turned out to be an unbearable burden to the people. The Laws concerning cleanliness were intended to emphasize the need of being holy in body and soul. However, in the course of time these became the basis of discrimination. The majority of the people were branded as unclean by birth (pagans, Samaritans),

health (handicapped, Lepers, possessed),
profession (tax collectors, shepherds) etc.

By Casting out demons, healing the sick, associating himself with outcasts and forgiving sins, Jesus set them free and restored them the dignity of the children of God. He placed human beings over the laws and explained that laws were meant to guarantee freedom and not slavery.

While liberating the people from various forms of slavery, Jesus called the

individuals and the entire nation to a radical conversion. The Samaritan woman must forsake her sinful past; the publican must renounce his greed and share his goods with the poor. In order to enter the kingdom of God, everybody must believe in Jesus Christ, turn away from the evil ways and dedicate themselves entirely to the service of God. True freedom can be obtained only through a radical change of heart, leading to the creation of a new society based on love that knows no limits.

Bible Comics - 35
JESUS CHRIST - 5
LIBERATOR

Script
Dr. Michael Karimattam
Illustration
Devassy & Benny



Rejected by his own people, Jesus went around the villages and towns of Galilee with his disciples, proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom. As they approached a town.



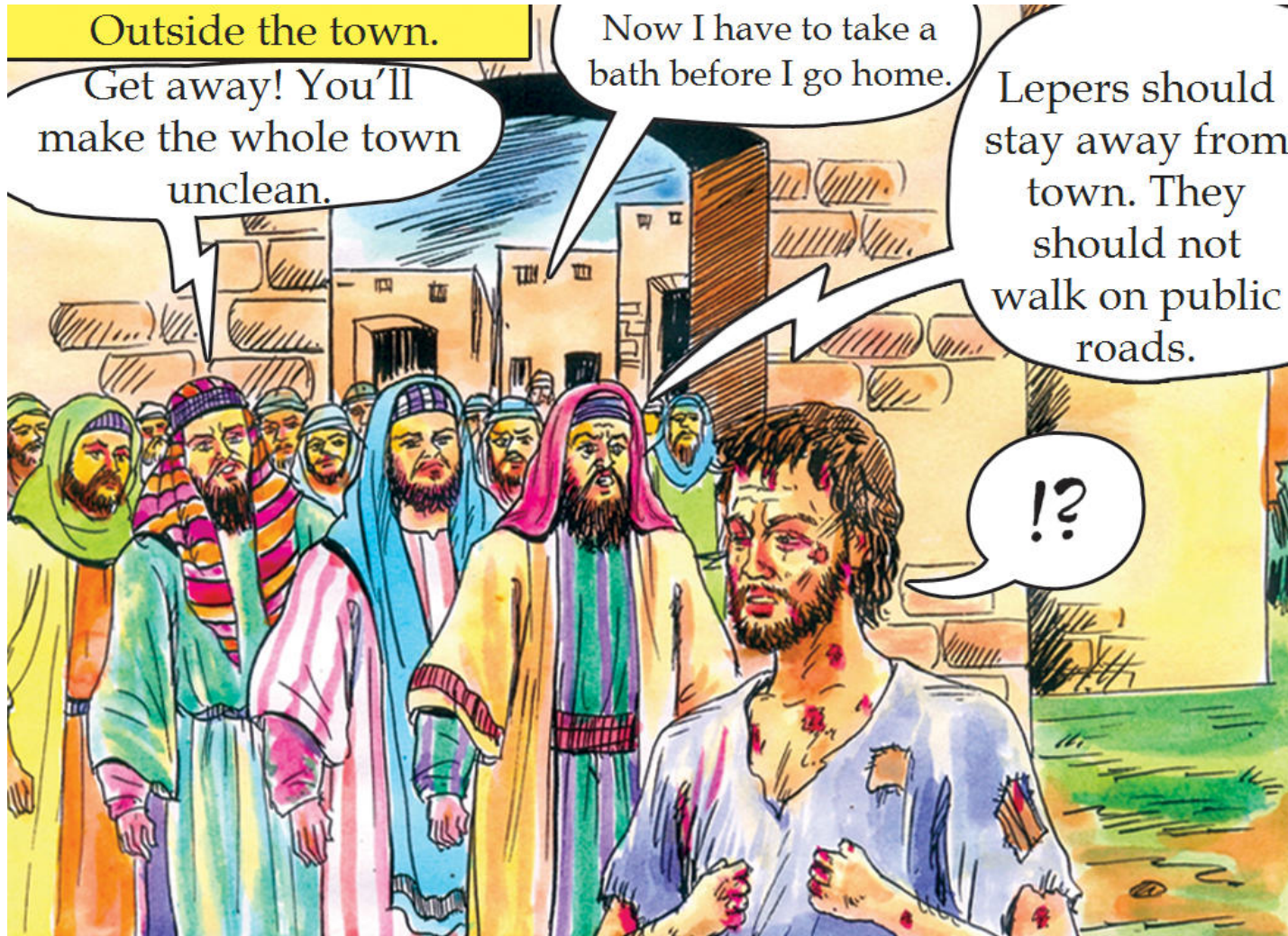
Outside the town.

Get away! You'll
make the whole town
unclean.

Now I have to take a
bath before I go home.


Lepers should
stay away from
town. They
should not
walk on public
roads.

!?



They must wear torn clothes,
and have their mouth
covered with a cloth and
keep on shouting "unclean,
unclean".





We must teach these
creeps a good lesson.

Look, there comes
Jesus of Nazareth.

Seeing Jesus, the leper ran to him.

Looks like a
leper is coming
this way.

He will make
us all unclean.

Simon, what
is clean?

!



Master, if you want to, you
can make us clean.

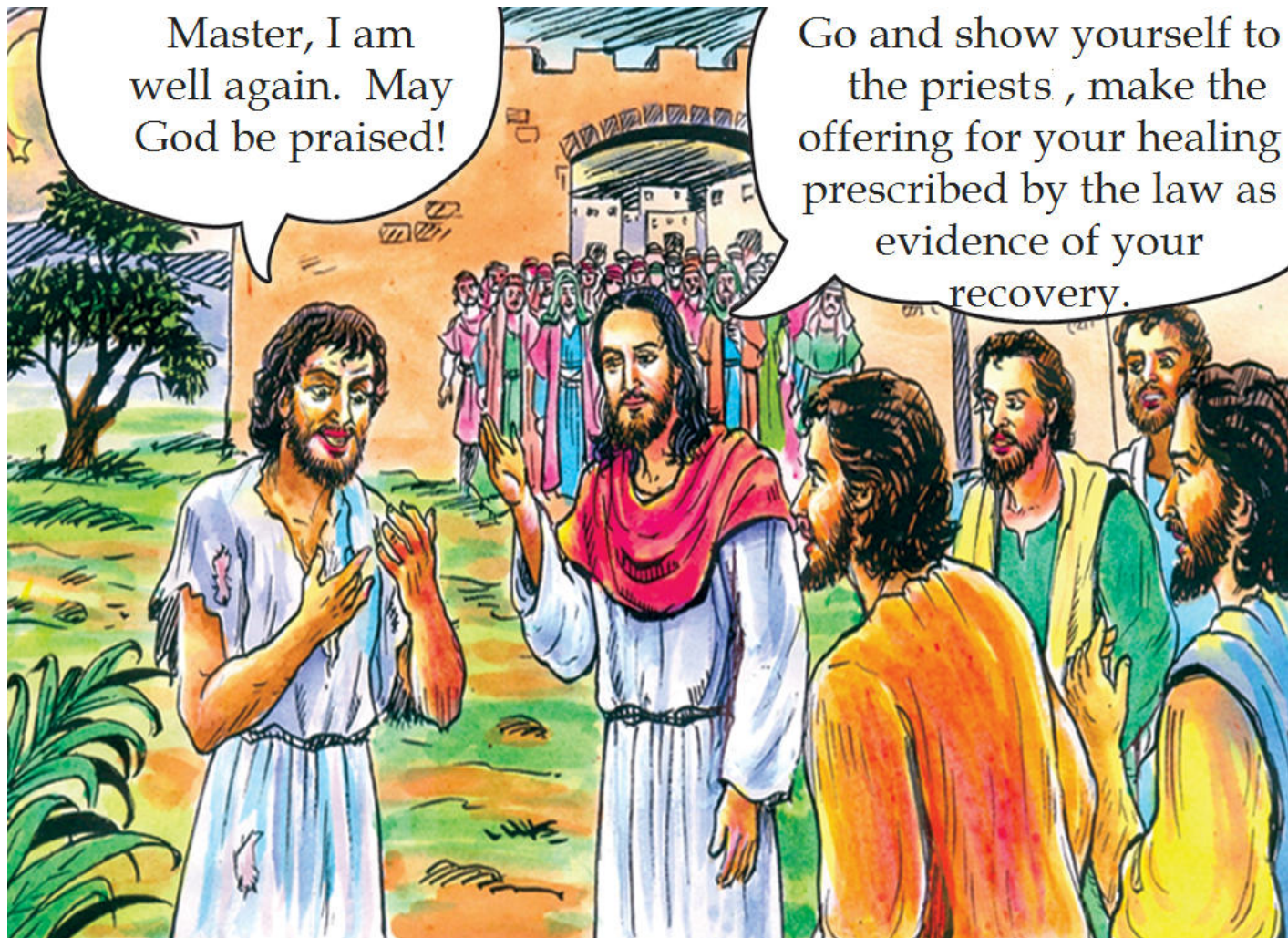
Of course! I want
to. Be cured!





Master, I am
well again. May
God be praised!

Go and show yourself to
the priests , make the
offering for your healing
prescribed by the law as
evidence of your
recovery.

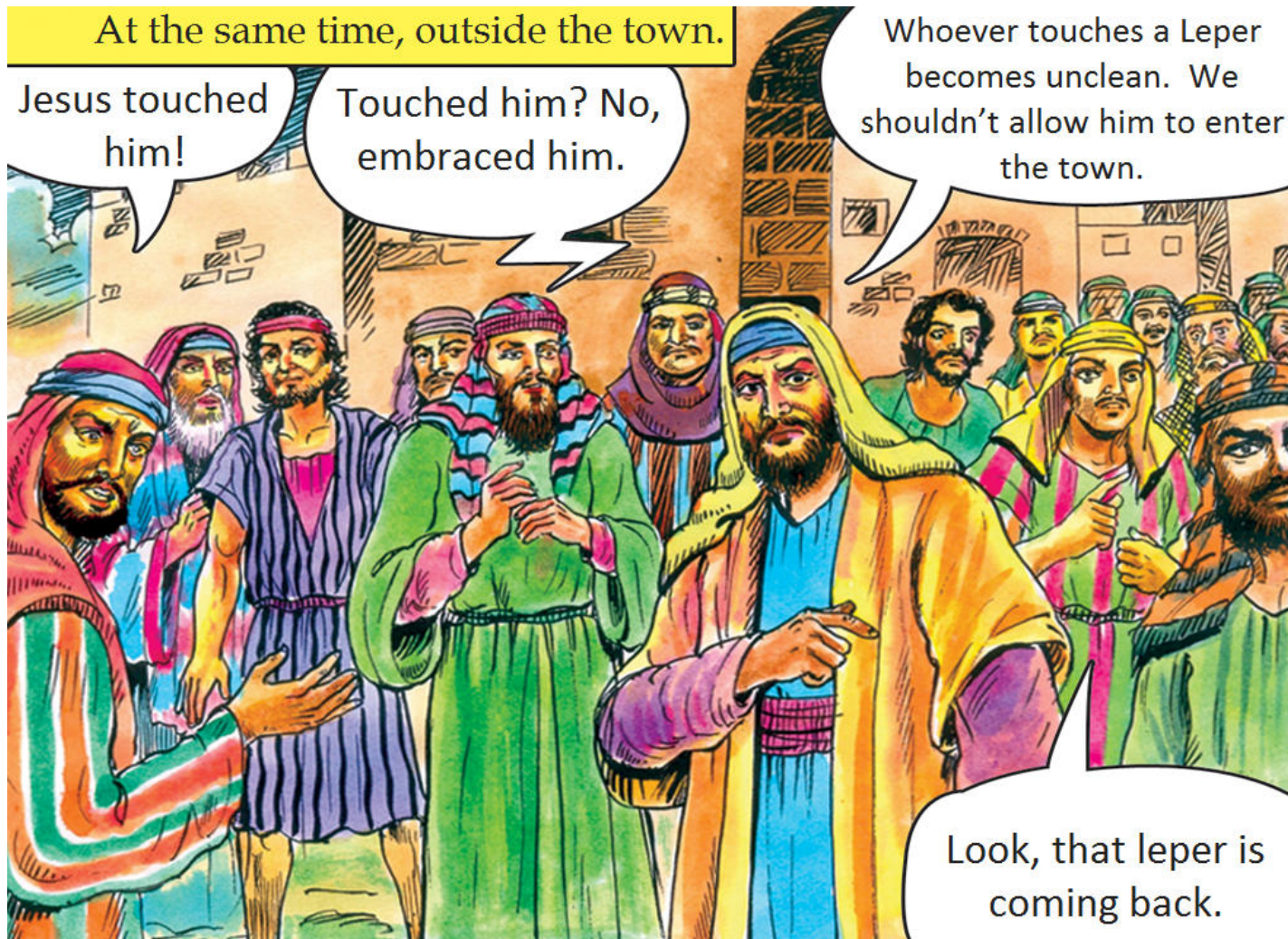


At the same time, outside the town.

Jesus touched him!

Touched him? No, embraced him.

Whoever touches a Leper becomes unclean. We shouldn't allow him to enter the town.

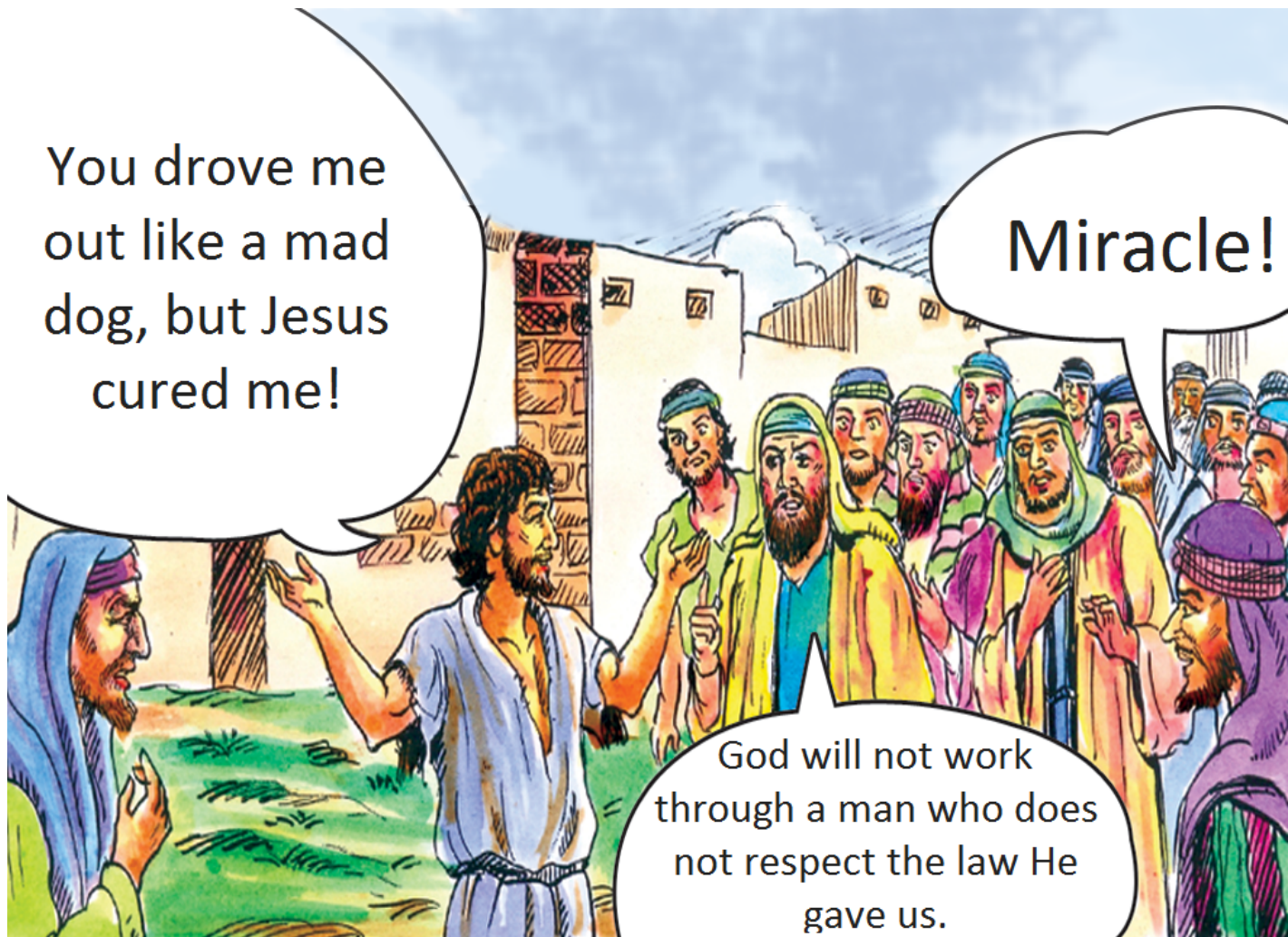


Look, that leper is coming back.

You drove me
out like a mad
dog, but Jesus
cured me!

Miracle!

God will not work
through a man who does
not respect the law He
gave us.



You are just
imagining. Go
away.

Where is the
priest, examine
me.



The priest examined the leper.

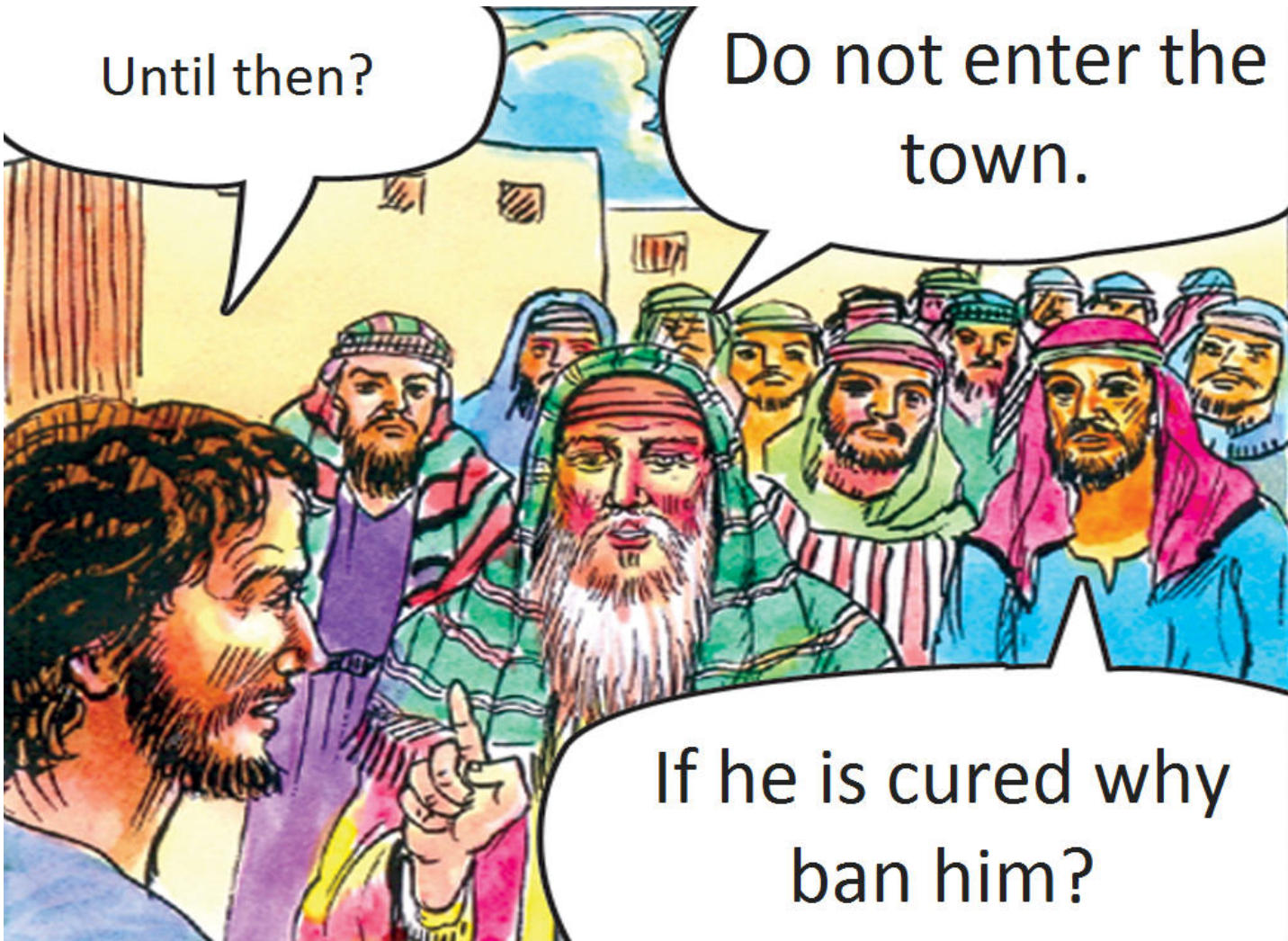
Look, examine me carefully.
I am cured. The Lord hasn't
abandoned us lepers!

Come back after
seven days.



Until then?

Do not enter the town.



If he is cured why ban him?

We have to make
sure that he is really
cured.

Not even God
can convince
you?

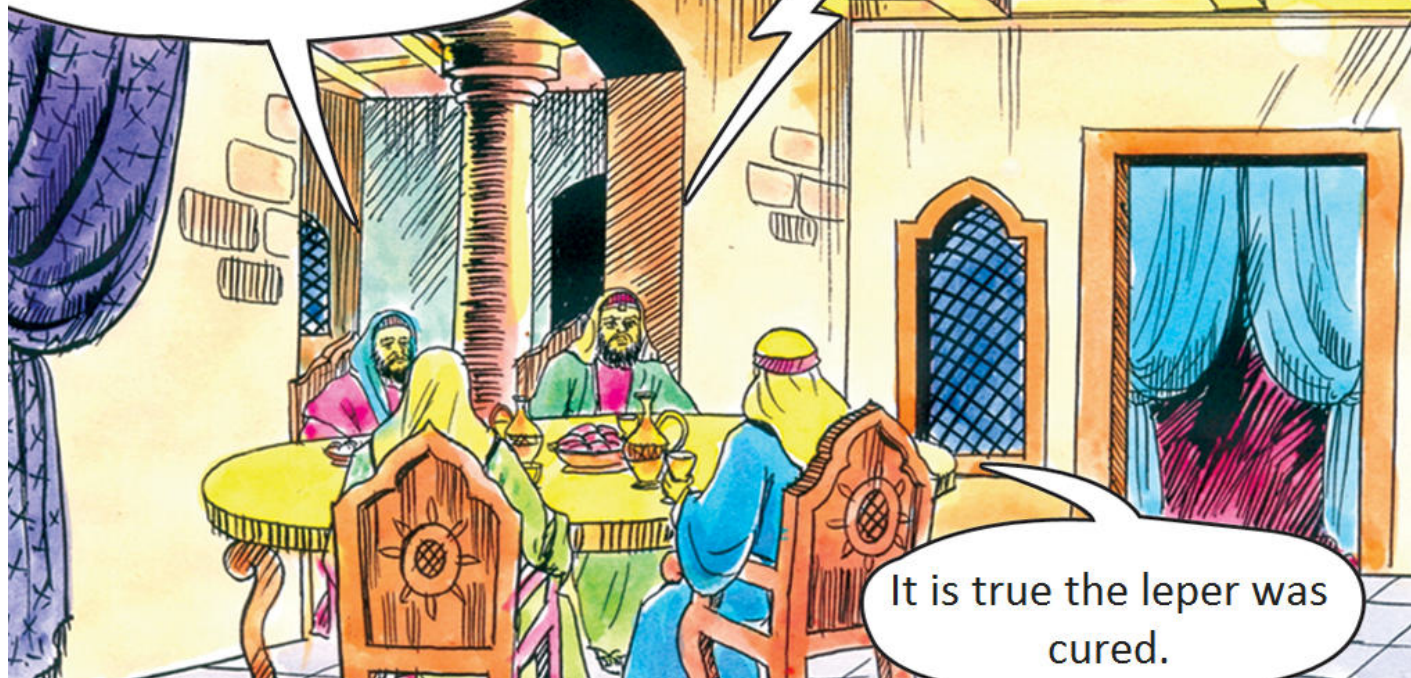


The Pharisees, lawyers, and the priest of the town called an urgent meeting.

We have to do something about this Jesus, he is a threat.

Right before our eyes he is breaking the law. This is outrageous!

It is true the leper was cured.



It must be some kind of
sorcery.

He is from
Nazareth. We have
no power over him.



Then, we shouldn't allow him to enter the town.

We must inform the High Priest in Jerusalem.

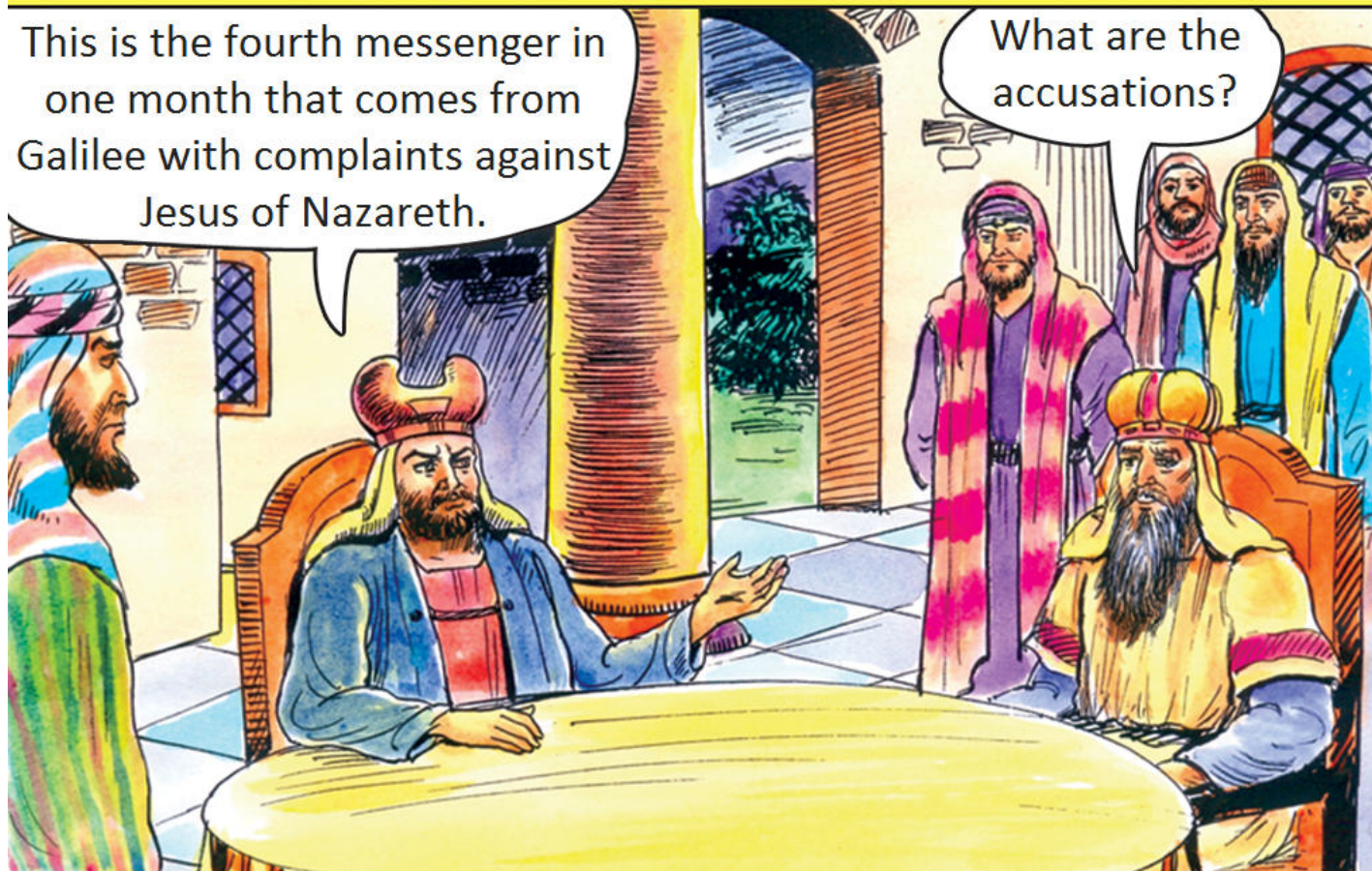
At the same time watch him closely.



A discussion between Caiaphas the High priest Annas, the retired High priest.

This is the fourth messenger in one month that comes from Galilee with complaints against Jesus of Nazareth.

What are the accusations?



He breaks the Sabbath, mingles with the lepers. He claims that the prophecies are fulfilled and the Kingdom of God has come.

These are serious offences. Yet we don't have to interfere now.

It is better to nip it in the bud. If not, he might lead all the people astray.



For now let us send two of our men to Galilee to observe him. Rabbi Samuel and Rabbi Haggai, you keep a close watch on his words and deeds and report to us regularly.



Jesus' fame spread all over the country. Also the Zealots began to take an interest in him.

Jesus of Nazareth is performing great miracles. He is attracting huge crowds wherever he goes.

The Baptist has said that he is the Liberator we are awaiting.

We must organize ourselves under him and free the Baptist.

That can wait. First we must study him.



I suggest that Judas
Iscaiot and Simon
follow Jesus for a
while.



Observe him closely and see if he is the man we are looking for. Keep us informed.

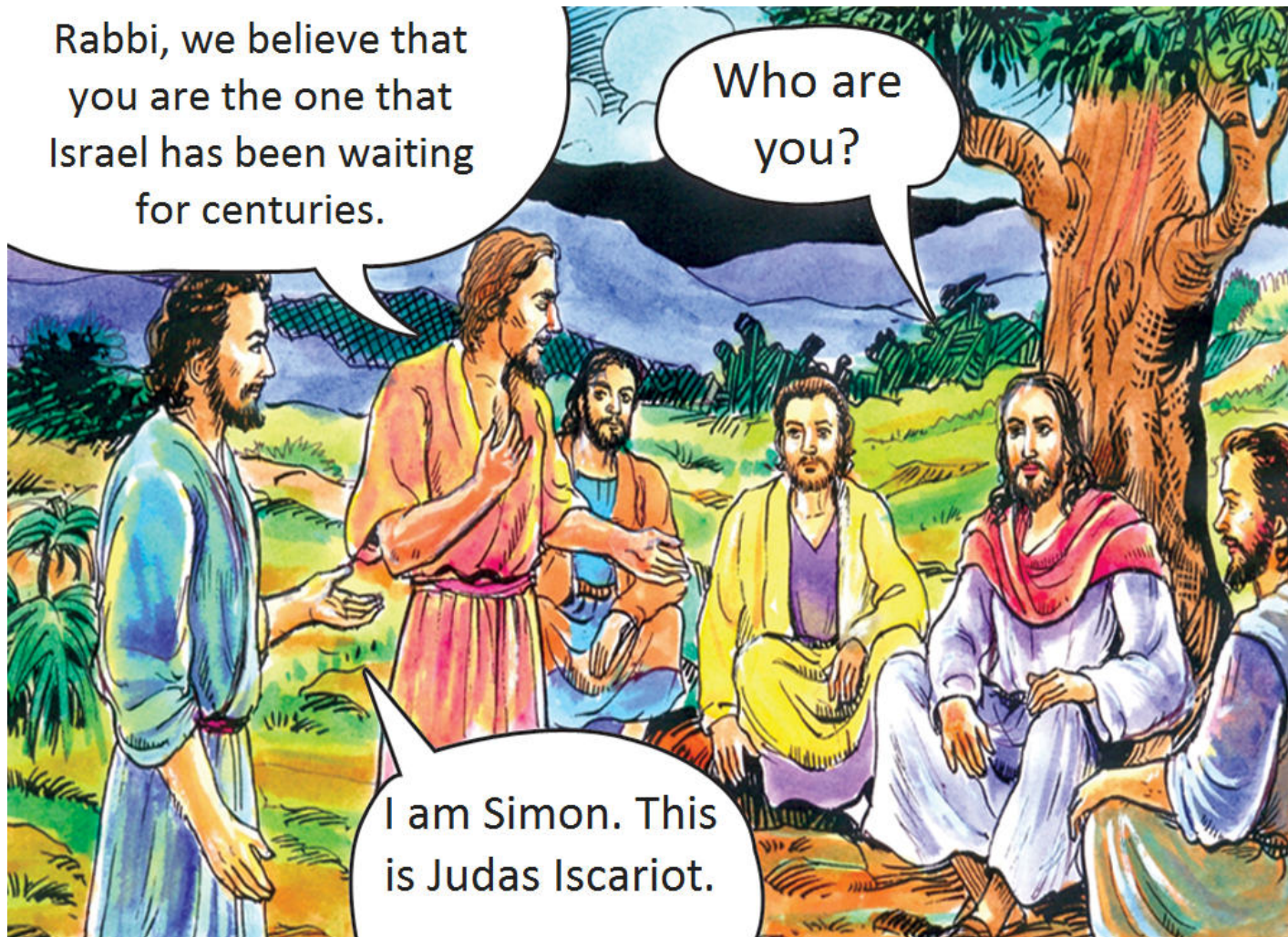
All right, Barabbas, we shall start tomorrow.



Rabbi, we believe that
you are the one that
Israel has been waiting
for centuries.

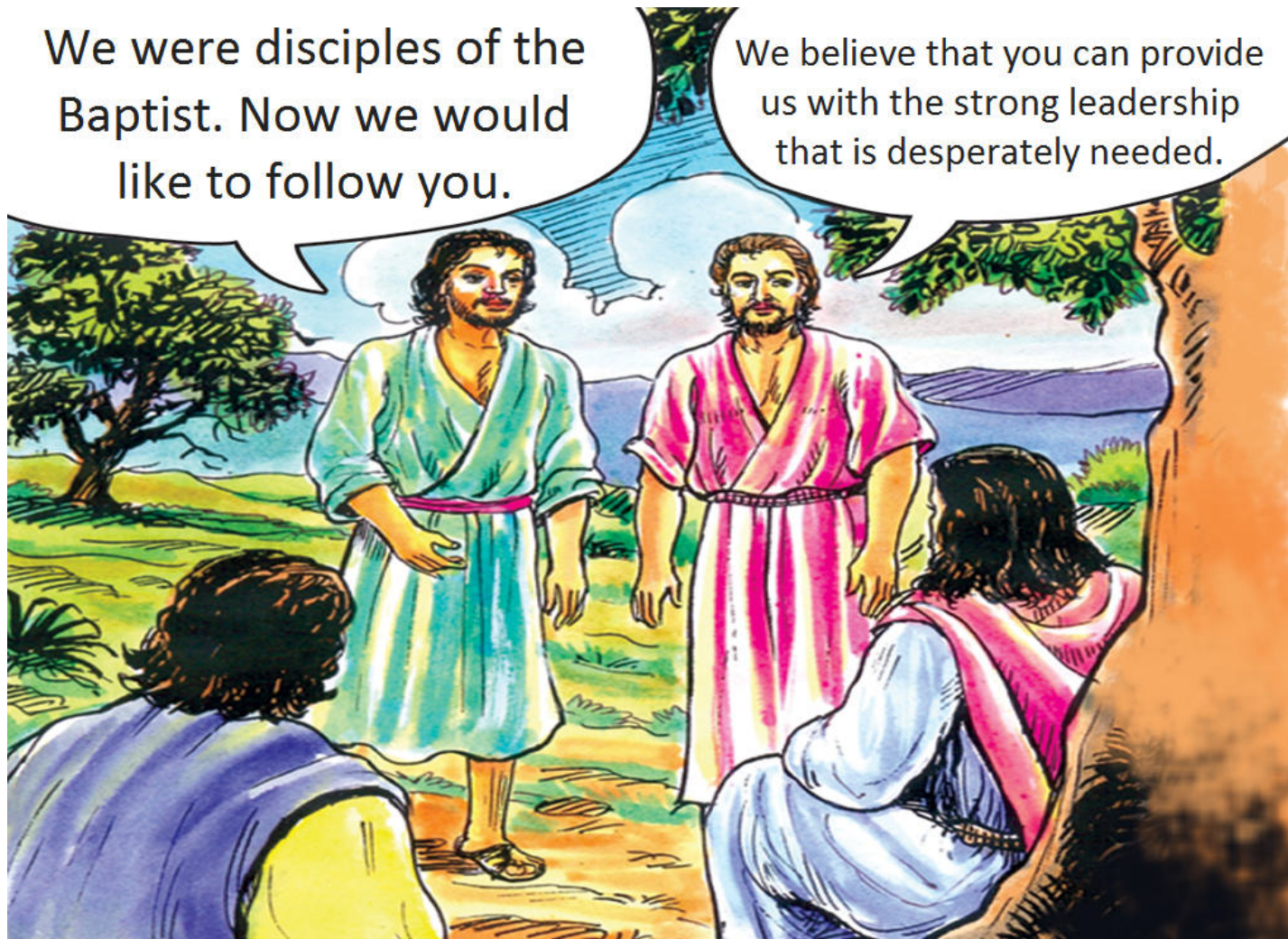
Who are
you?

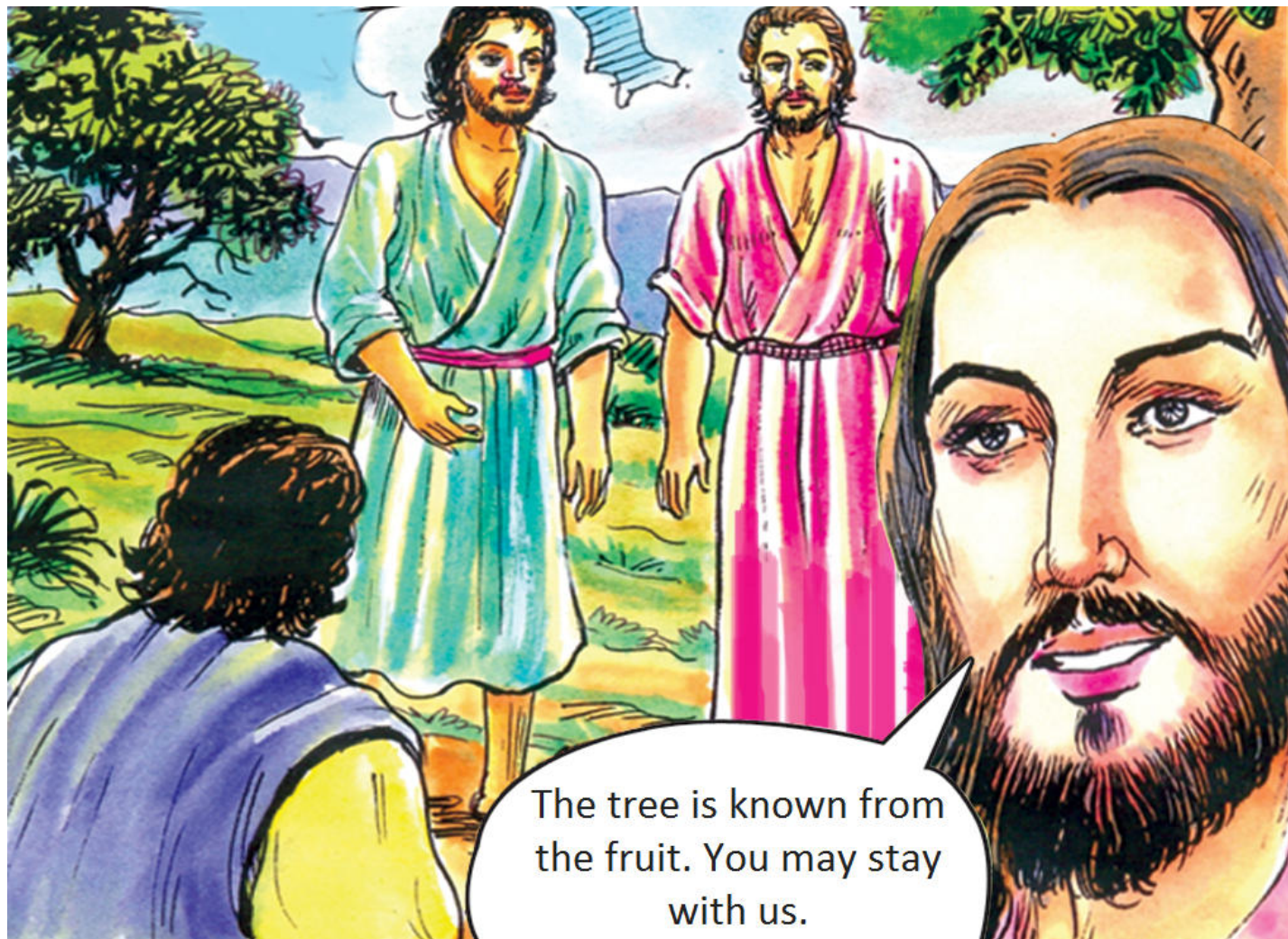
I am Simon. This
is Judas Iscariot.



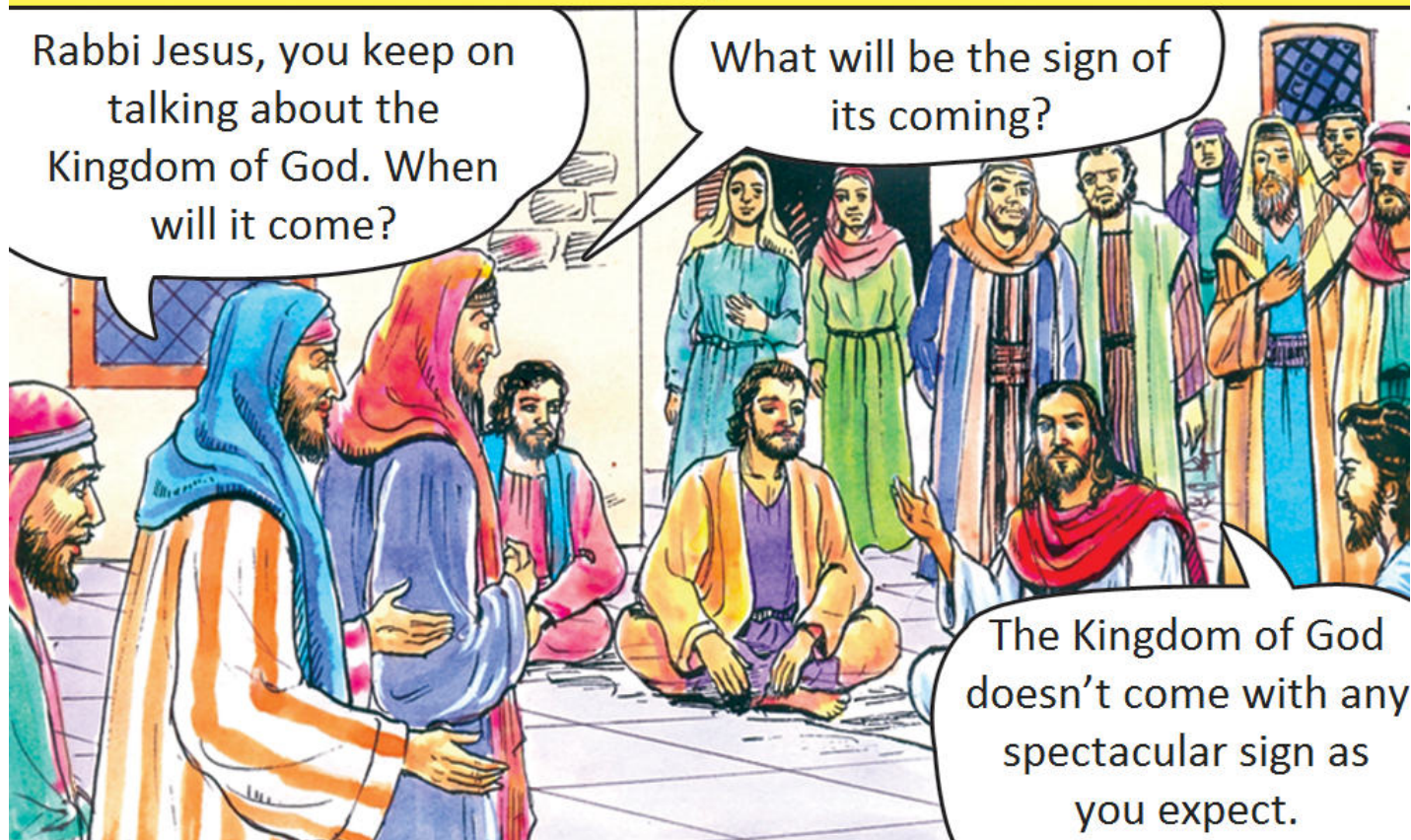
We were disciples of the Baptist. Now we would like to follow you.

We believe that you can provide us with the strong leadership that is desperately needed.





Jesus reached Capernaum and entered Simon's house. A great crowd gathered in and around the house. The spies from Jerusalem also were among the crowd.



When you see a cloud in the West
you say that it is going to rain.
When the south wind blows you
say it is going to be hot.



You know how to read the signs of
nature. Why do you fail to
recognize the signs of the time?
The Kingdom of God is in your
midst.



Some people brought a paralytic to Jesus. Because they could not enter the house through the door, they lowered him through the roof.



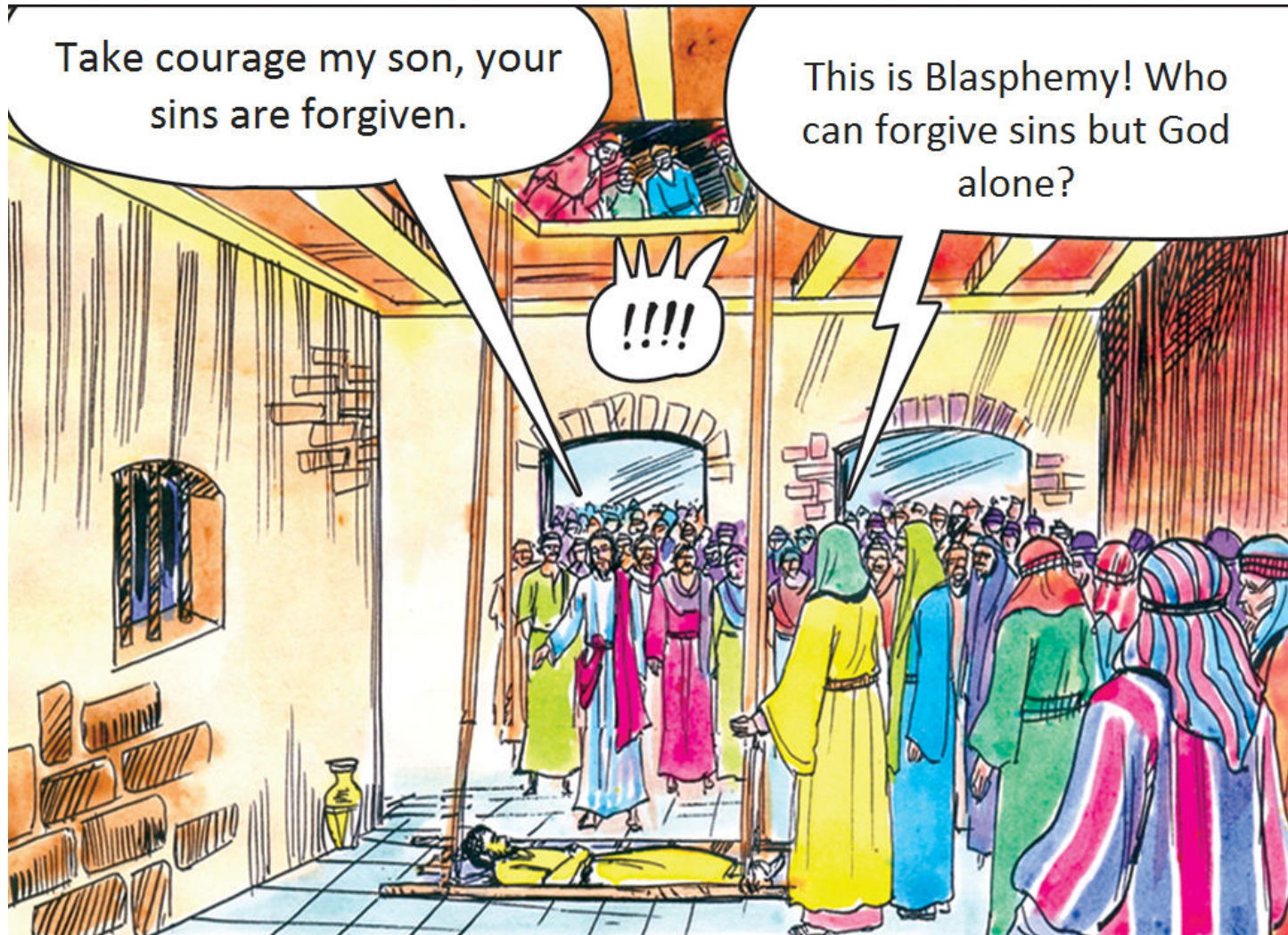
O God, is there no end to
my suffering? Is there no
pardon for my sins?



Take courage my son, your
sins are forgiven.

This is Blasphemy! Who
can forgive sins but God
alone?

!!!!



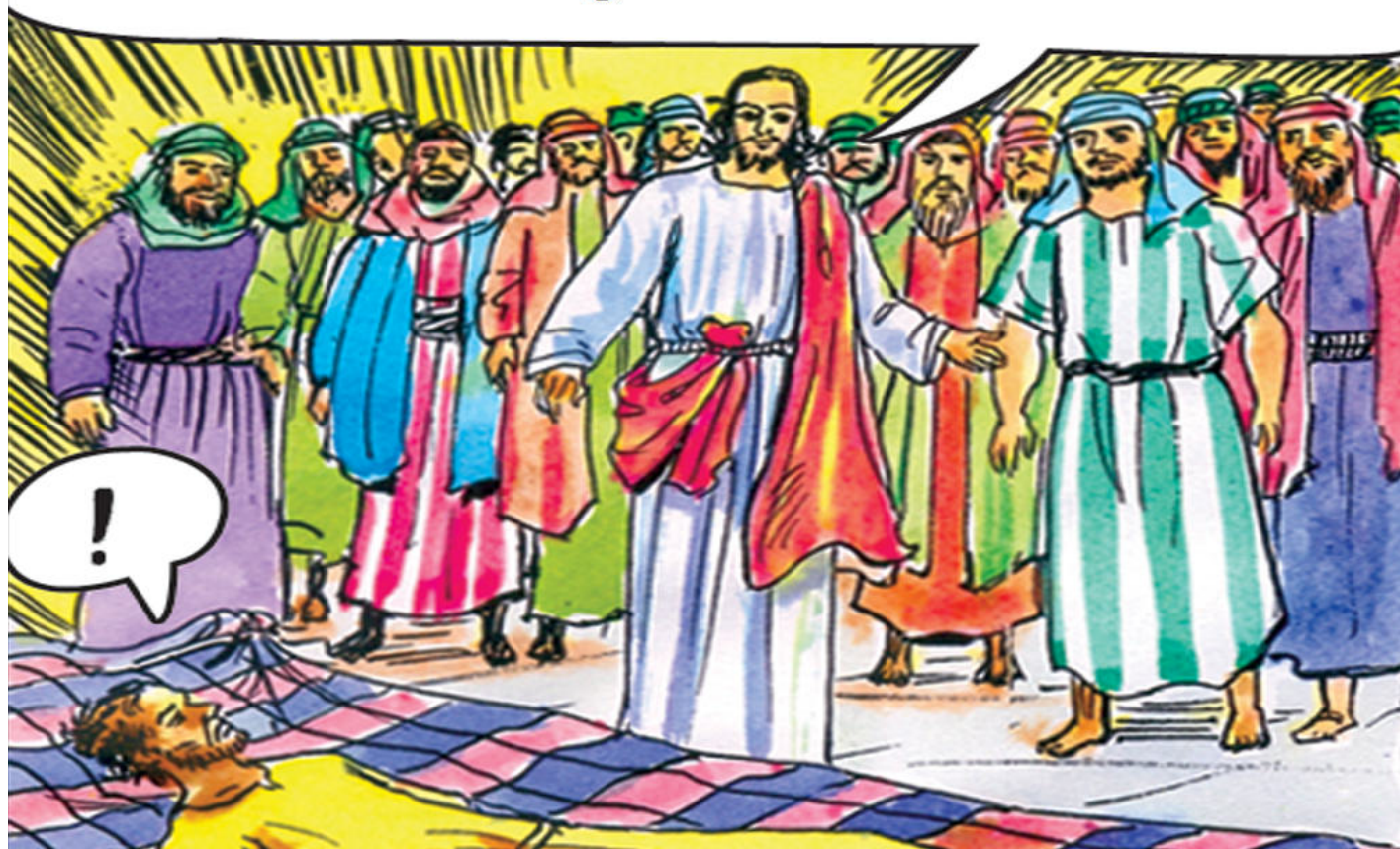
Tell me which is easier.
Forgiving one's sins or
curing a paralytic with a
word?



Would you believe that the Son of Man
has authority to forgive sins if this man
picks up his bed and walks?



I say to you: get up, take your bed
and go home.

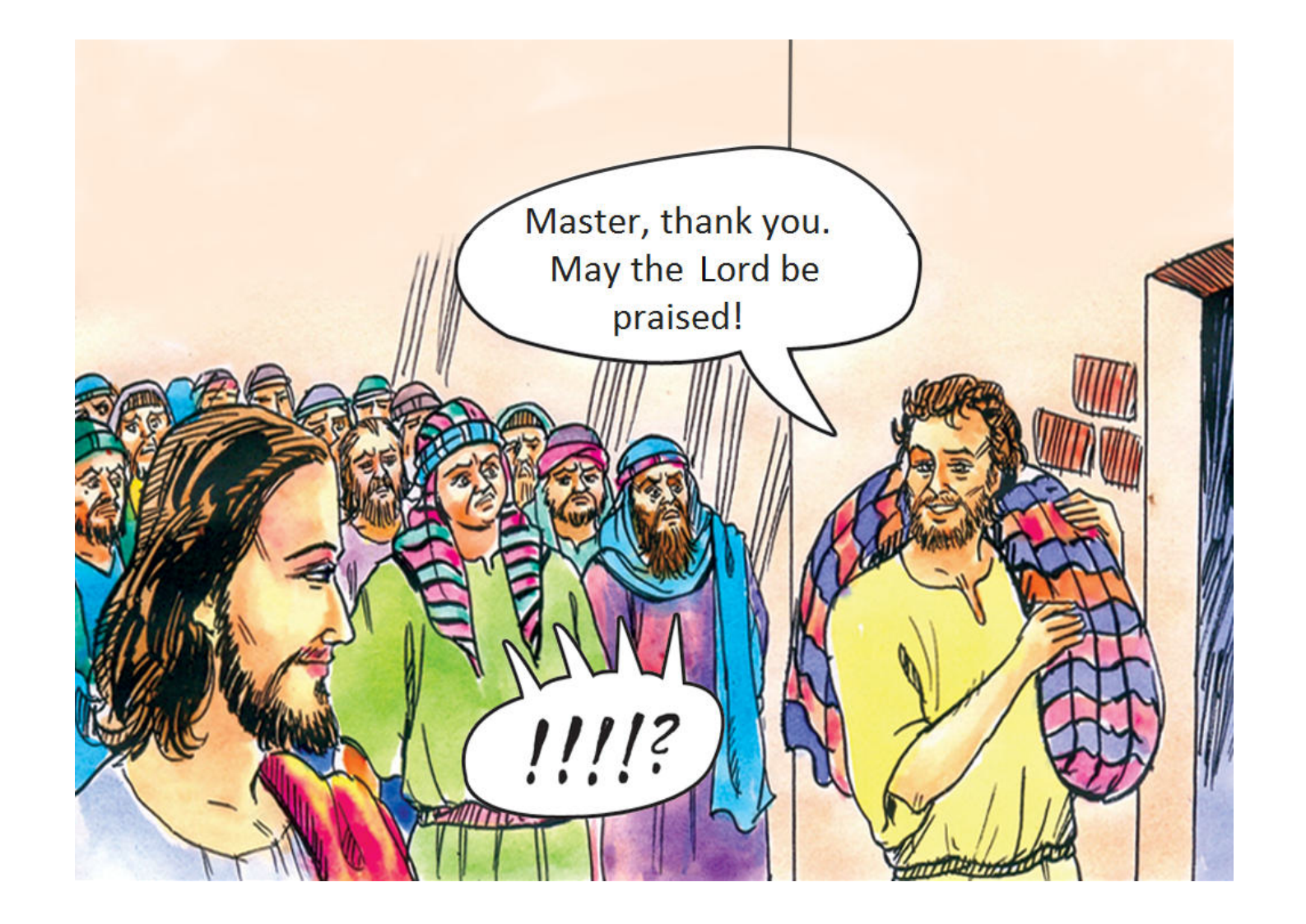






Hallelujah!

!

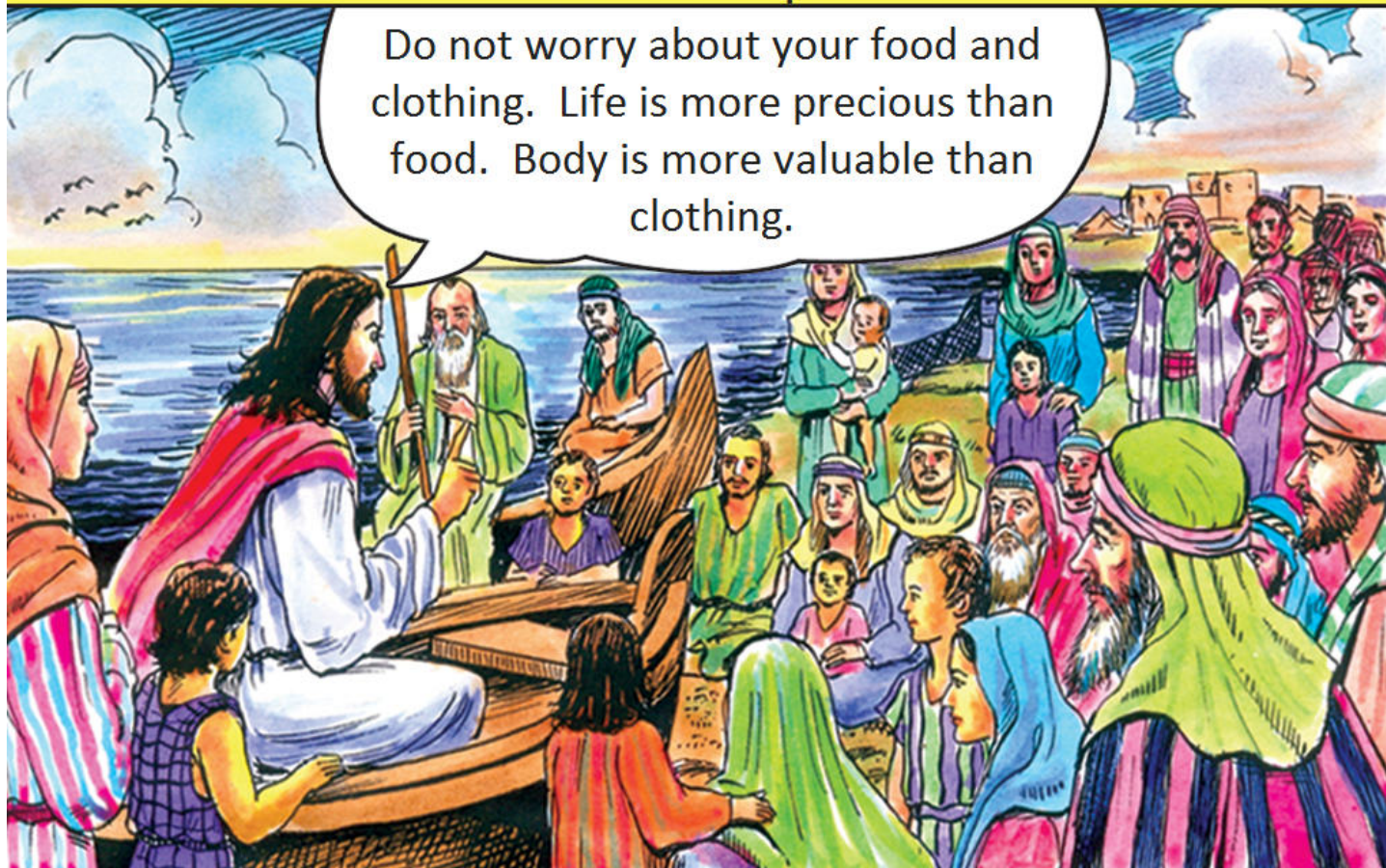


Master, thank you.
May the Lord be
praised!

!!!!?

Jesus went to the Lake. A huge crowd gathered there from various places.

Do not worry about your food and clothing. Life is more precious than food. Body is more valuable than clothing.



Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap. They have no storehouse and Barns.



Your Father in heaven feeds them all.
Are you not more precious than the
birds?

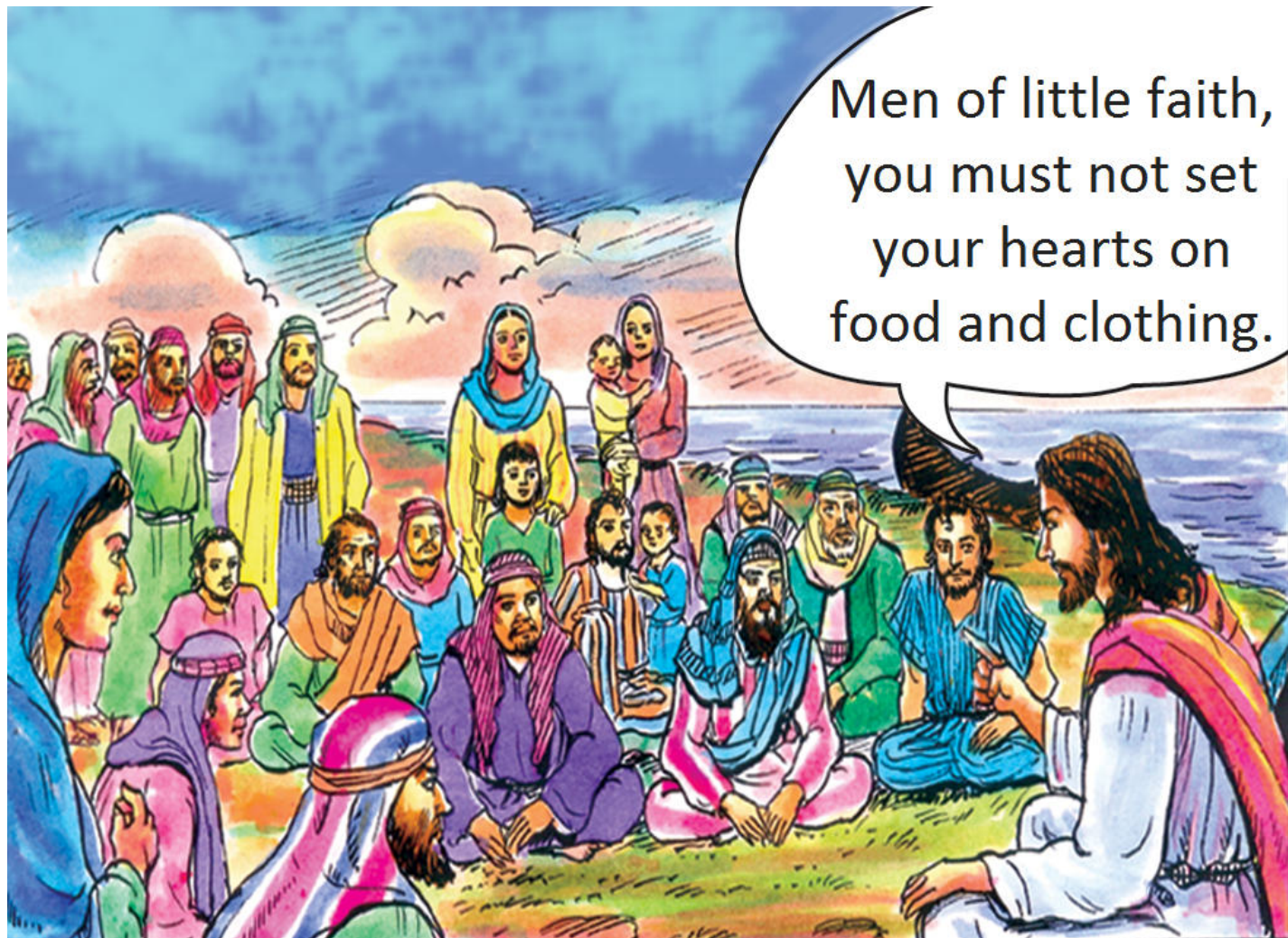


Look at the lilies of the field.
How beautiful they are!



If that is how God looks after
the grass, how much more He
will look after you!





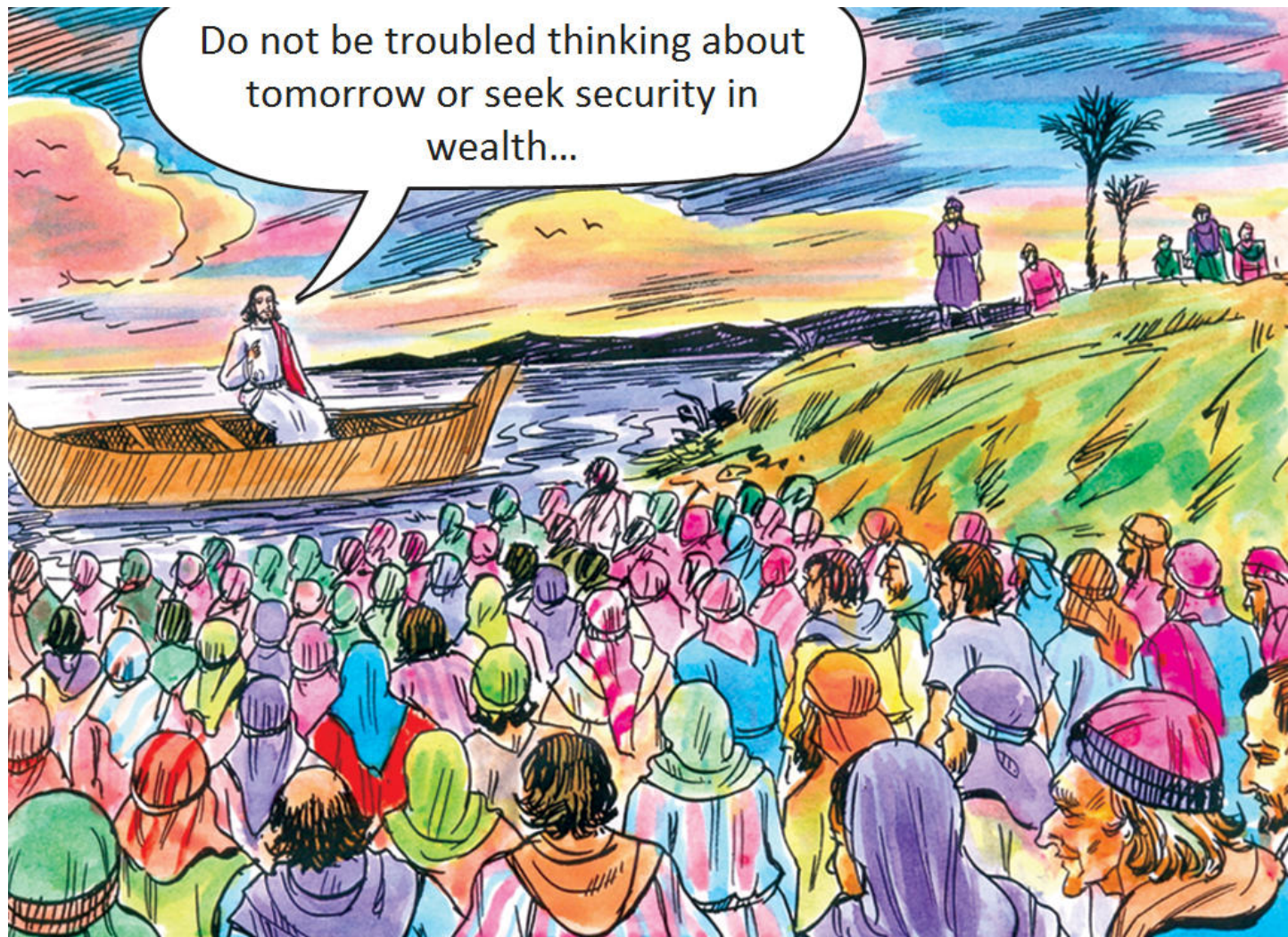
Your Father in heaven knows
that you need them.



Seek first the
Kingdom of God
and His justice.
With that you shall
receive all these
things.



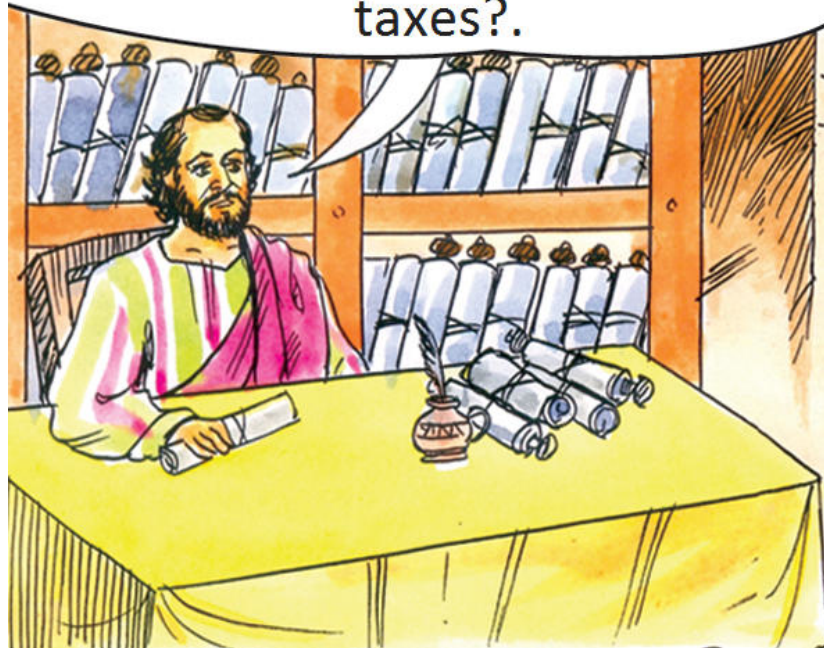
Do not be troubled thinking about tomorrow or seek security in wealth...



Jesus continued to preach. At the same time at Mathew's tax office.

What happened? Had I not told you to seize Simon's boat and net if he still refuses to pay the taxes?.

When we reached there the house was empty and the roof was gone, as if hit by a Tornado.



Anyway, we
went to shore to
seize his boat.

We could not get
anywhere near because
of the crowd. And
there in Simon's boat
sits Jesus, teaching!



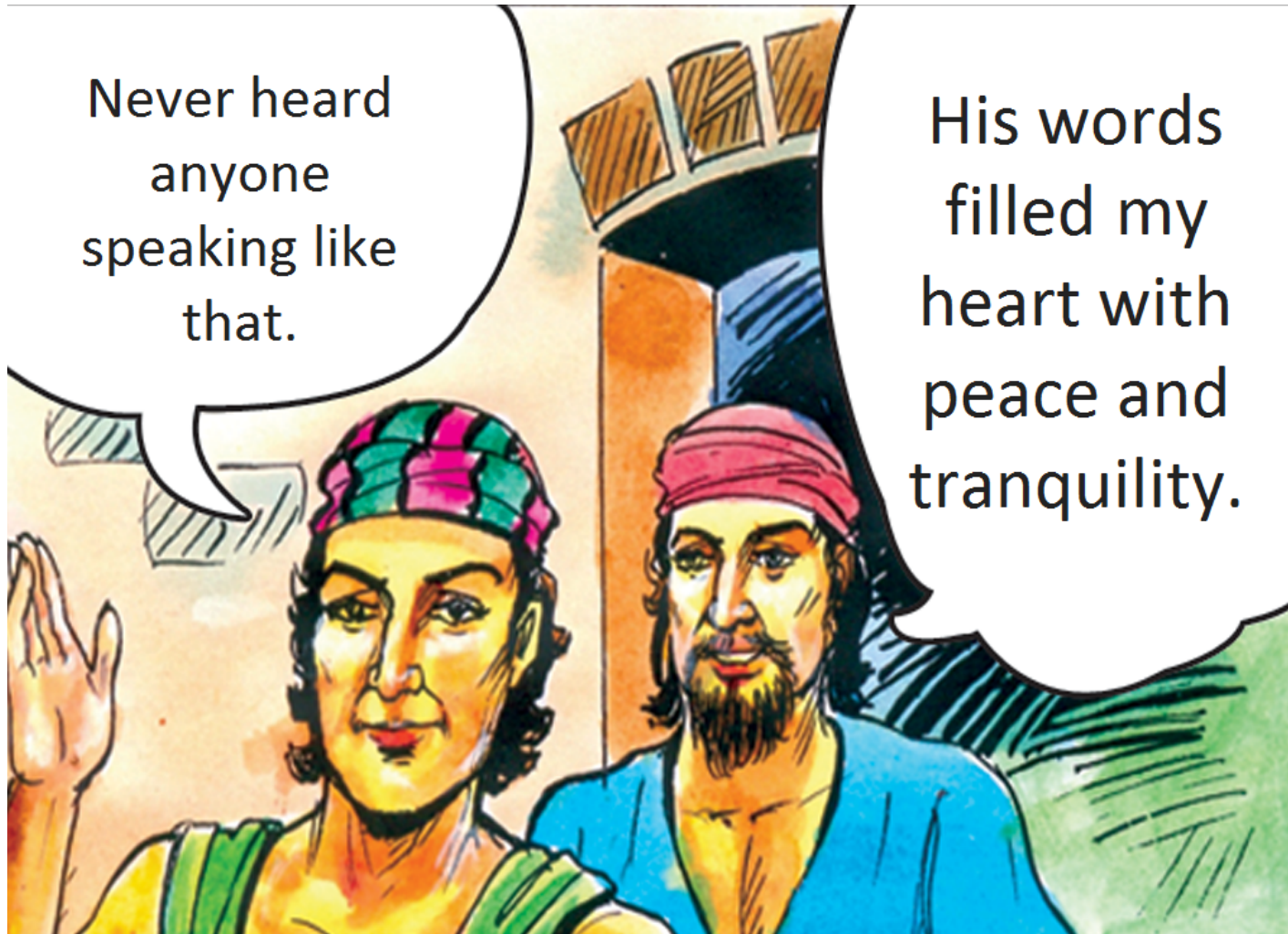
When we heard him,
we forgot about
everything.

Then, you can forget
about the job here
also. You may go and
stay with him.



Never heard
anyone
speaking like
that.

His words
filled my
heart with
peace and
tranquility.



At the end he asked a
very unsettling question.



What was that?

What does it profit a
man to gain the
whole world if he
loses his soul?



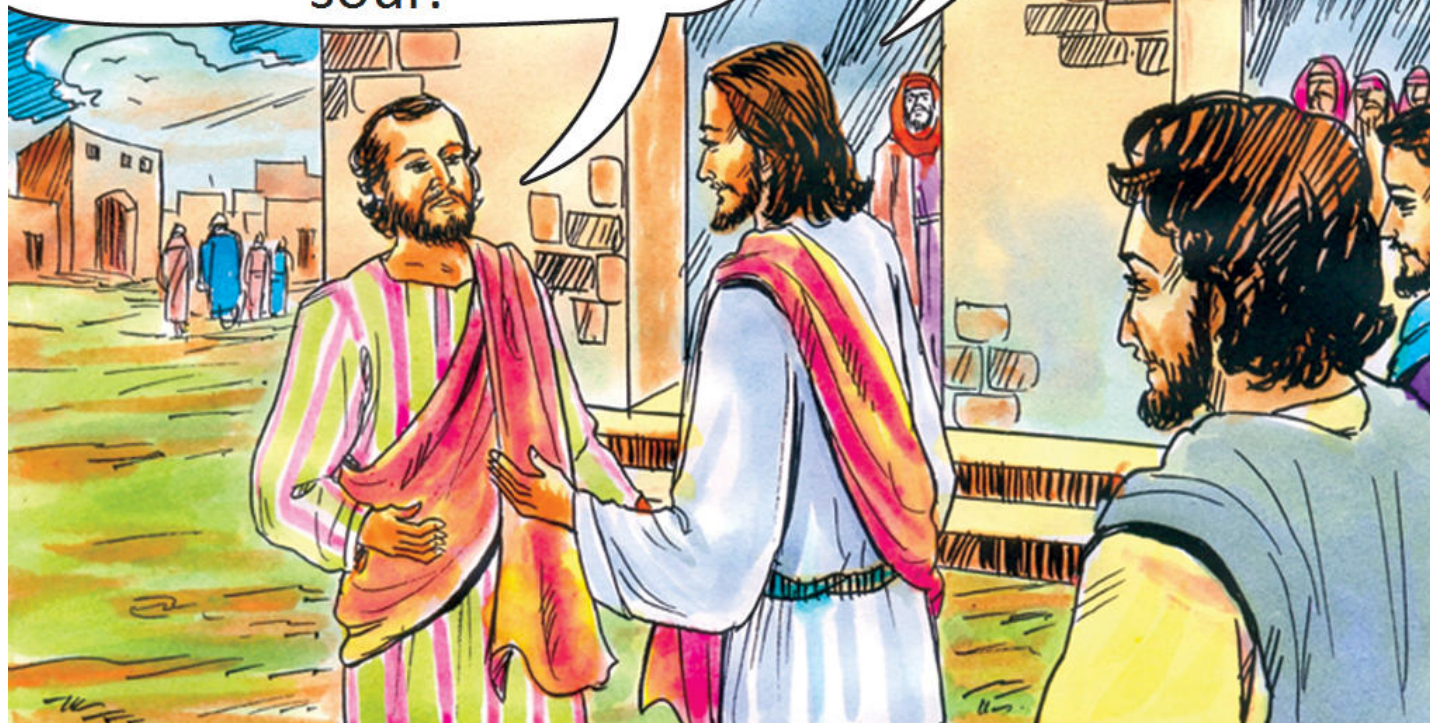
Look, He is coming
this way. The
crowd is behind
him.

Gain the whole
world ...what
profit....



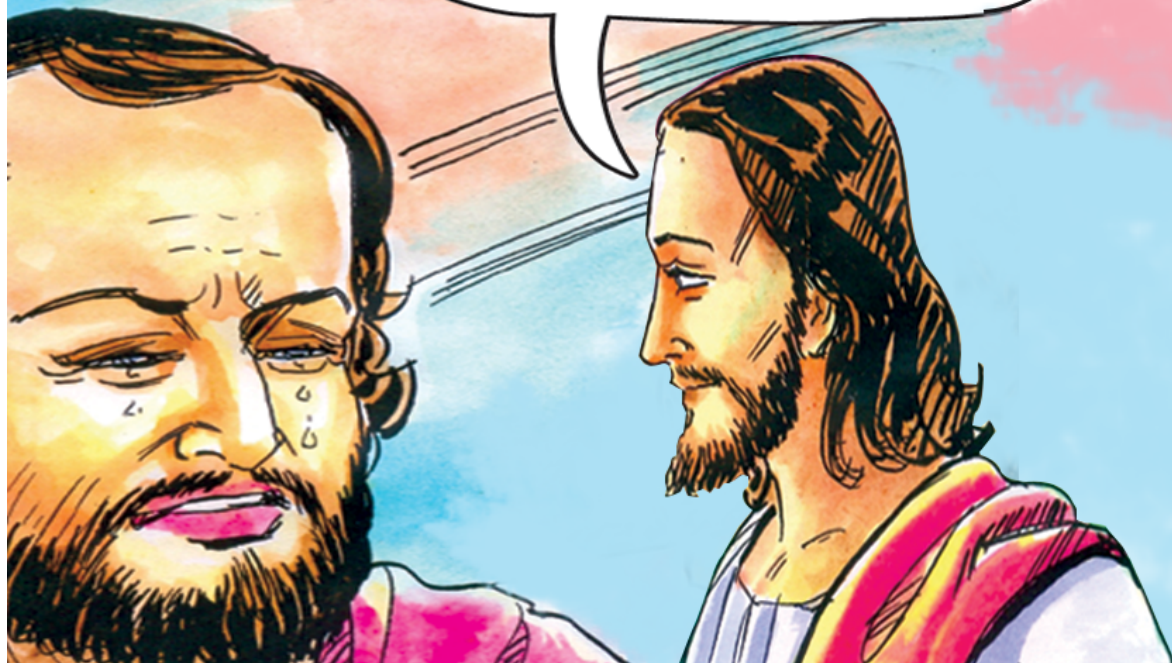
I am all confused. I have made a lot of money but what shall I do to save my soul?

Follow me!

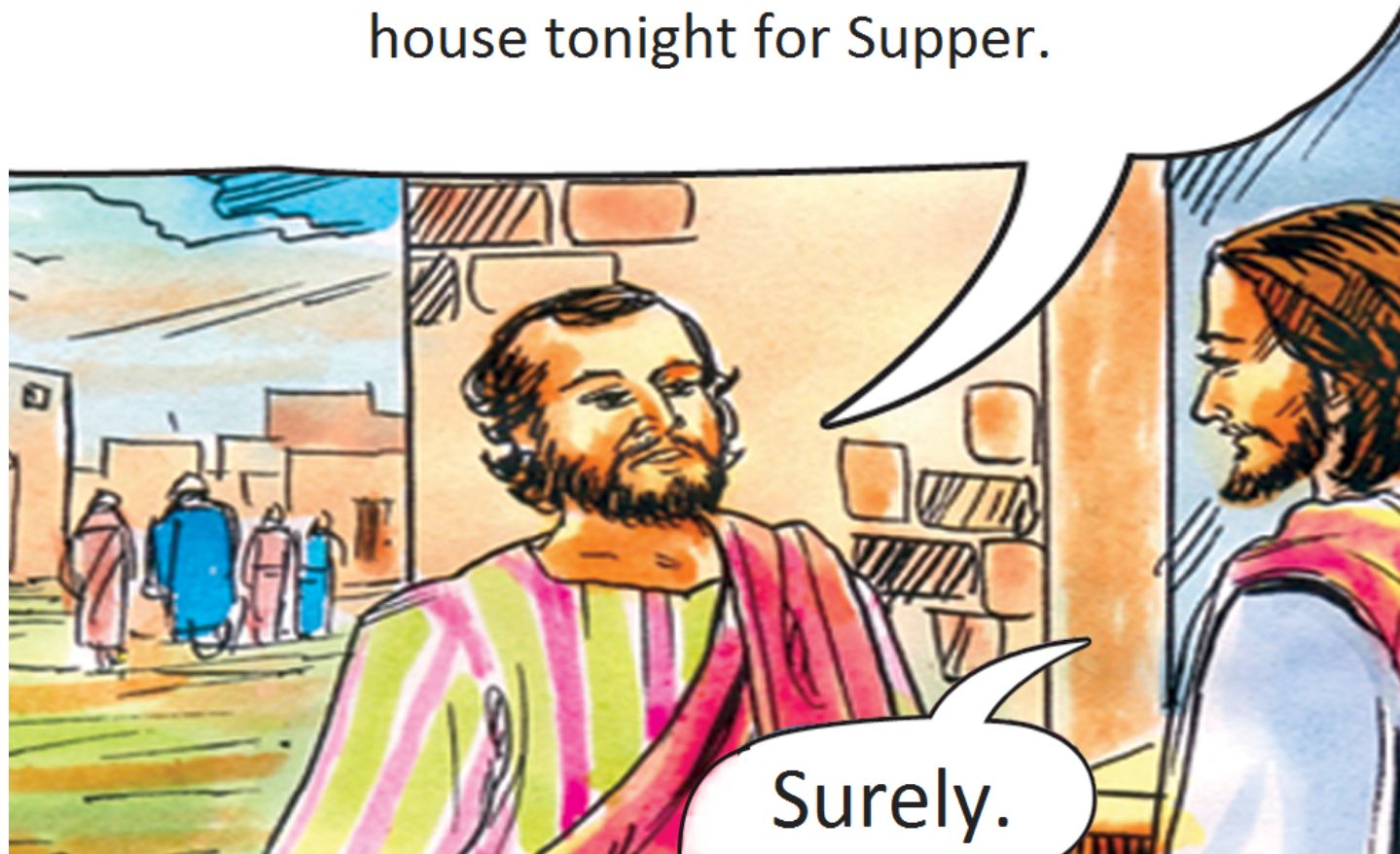


Me, a tax collector and a sinner?

The Son of Man has
come to call the sinners.



Master if that is so, please do come to my house tonight for Supper.



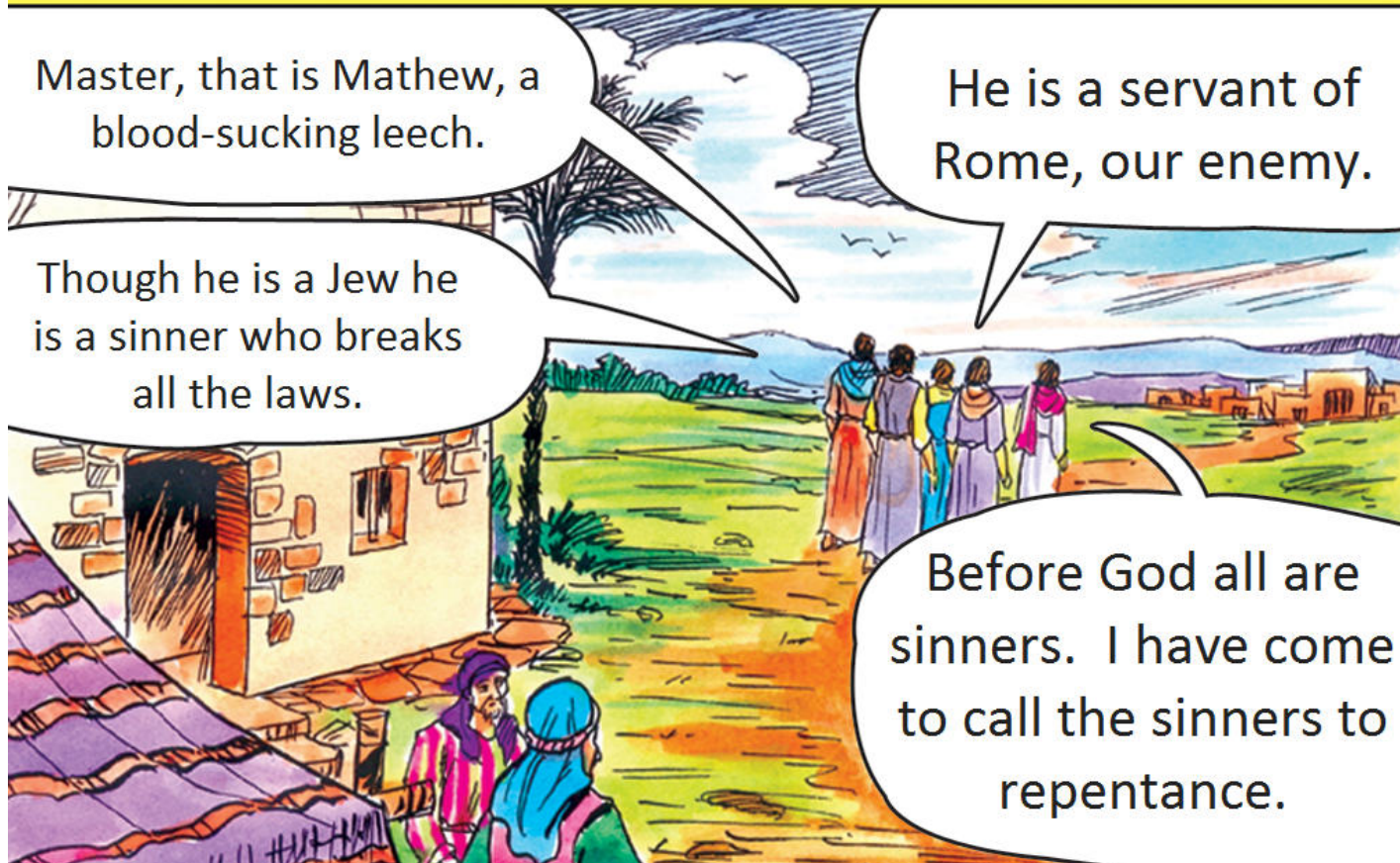
People were scandalized that Jesus called a tax collector to be his follower and accepted his hospitality.

Master, that is Mathew, a blood-sucking leech.

He is a servant of Rome, our enemy.

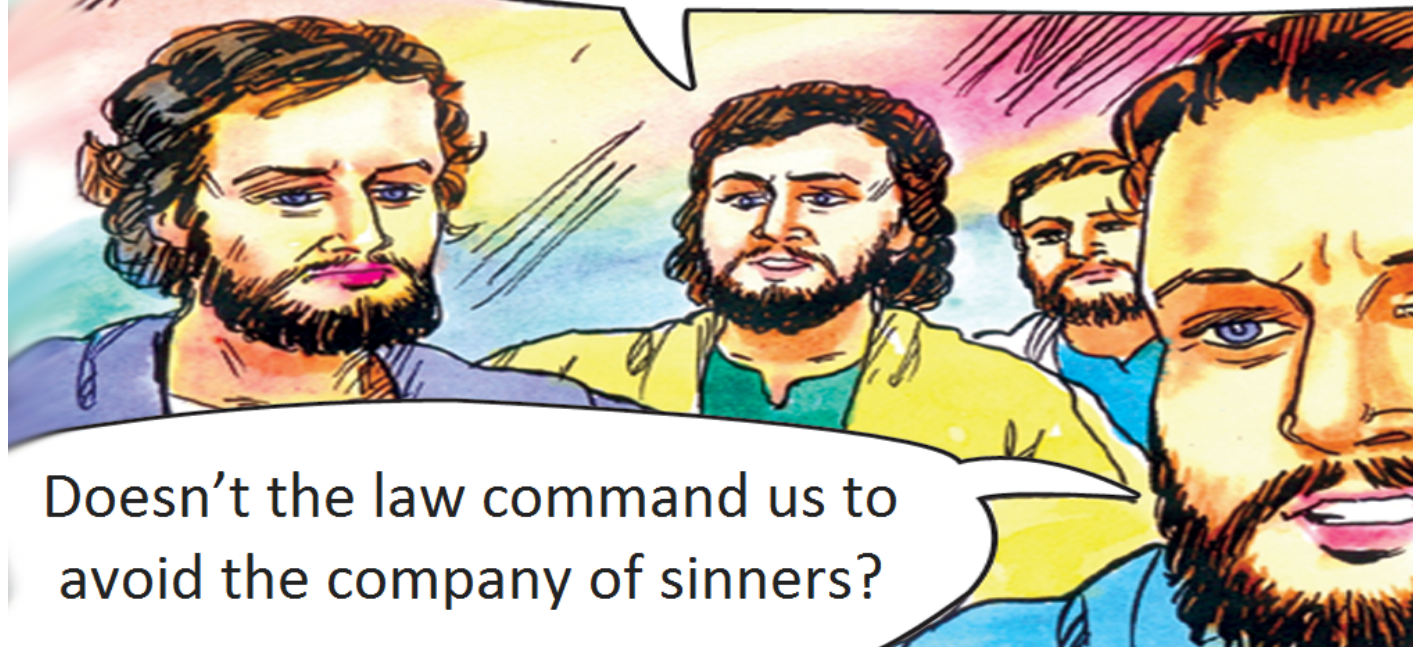
Though he is a Jew he is a sinner who breaks all the laws.

Before God all are sinners. I have come to call the sinners to repentance.



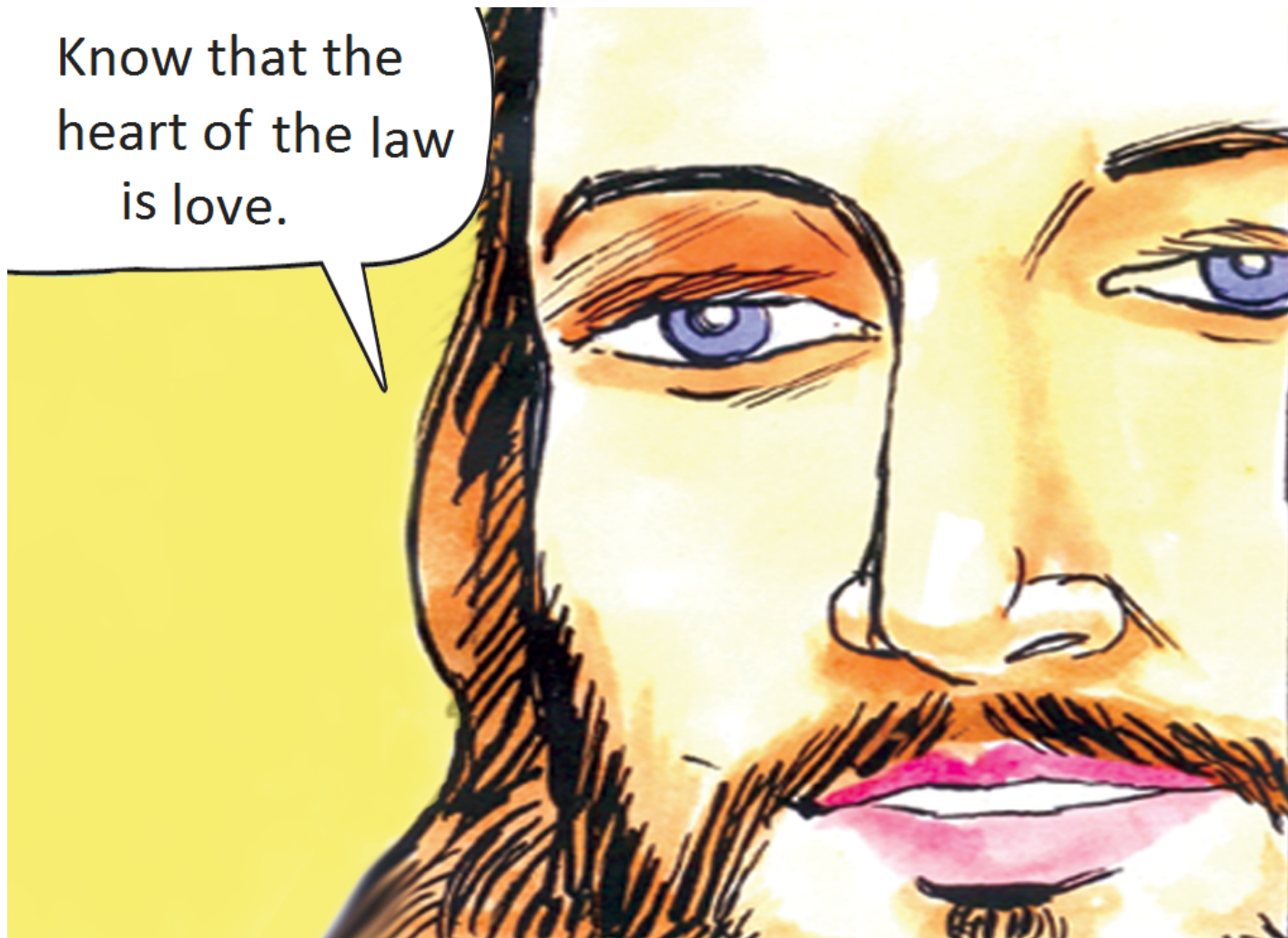
The people will hate us if we go to his house.

There will be other tax collectors and even prostitutes in his house.



Doesn't the law command us to avoid the company of sinners?

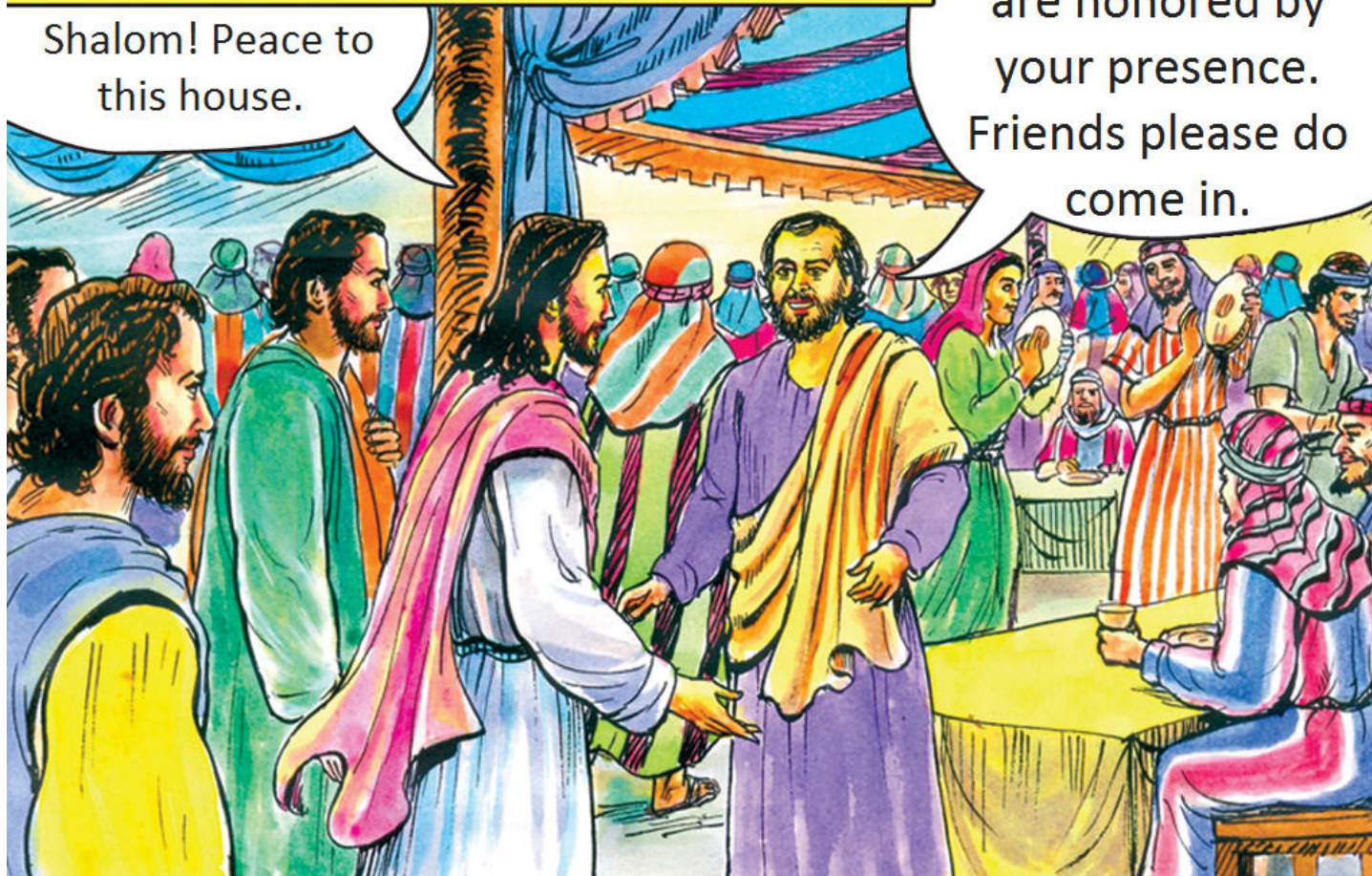
Know that the
heart of the law
is love.



Mathew had invited many of his friends for the dinner he prepared for Jesus.

Shalom! Peace to this house.

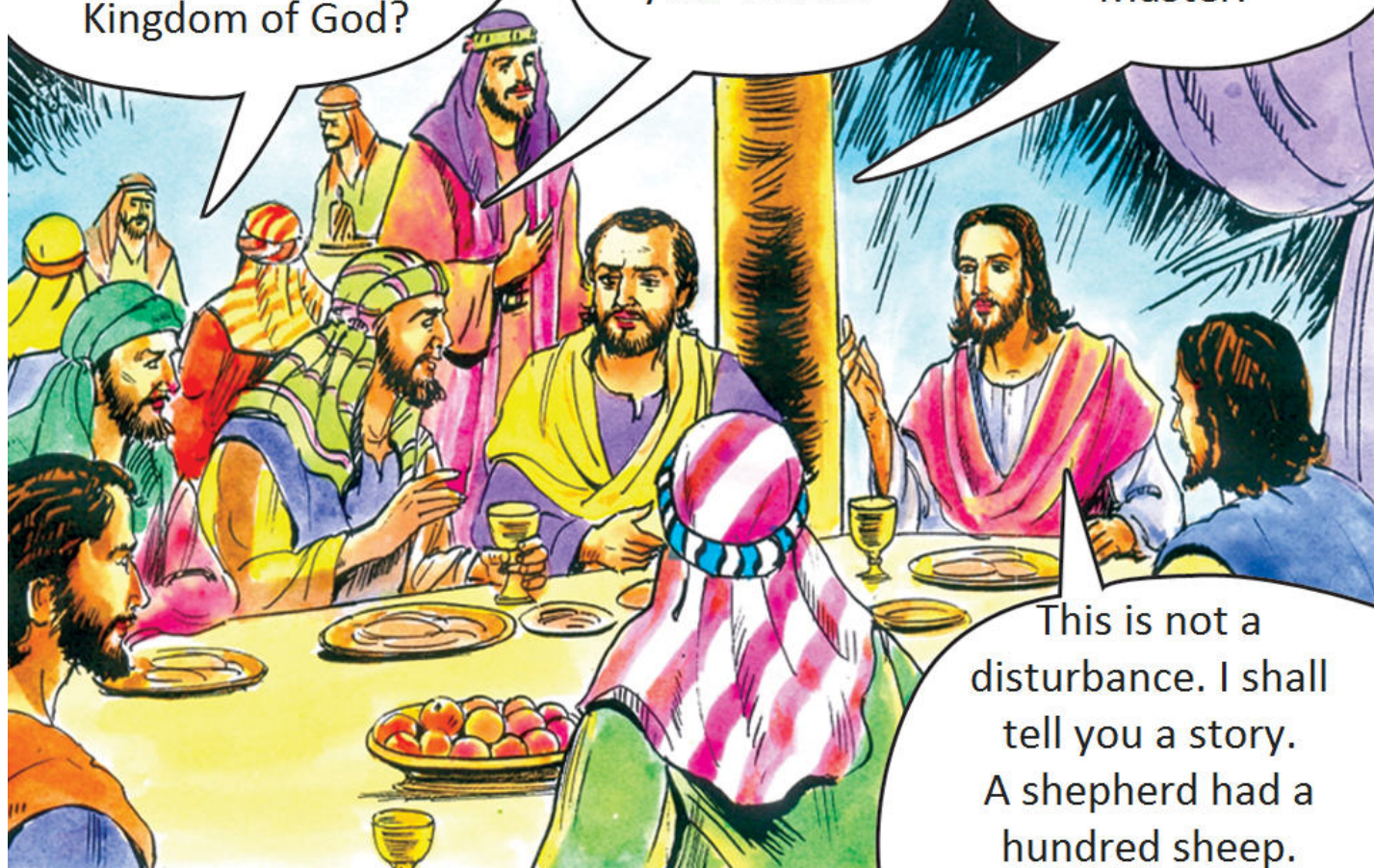
Shalom Master, we are honored by your presence. Friends please do come in.



Master, won't you
speak to us about the
Kingdom of God?

We long to hear
your words.

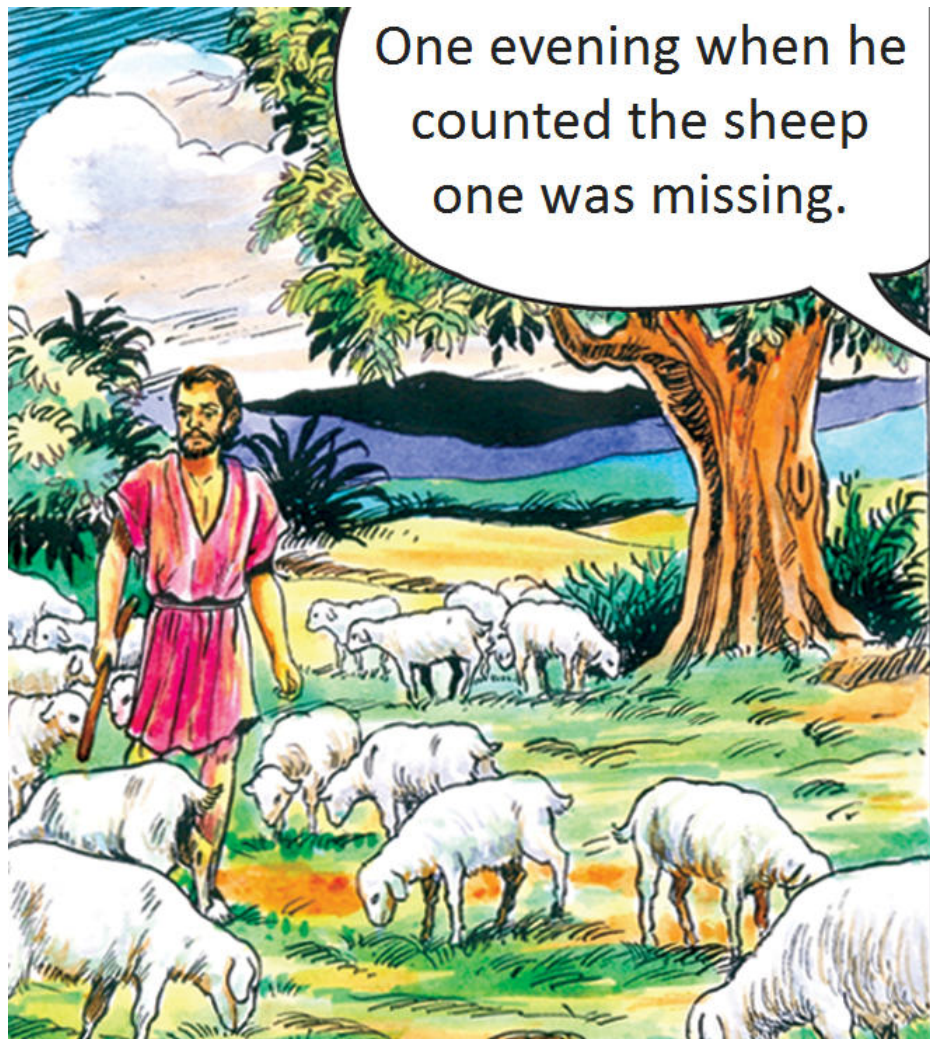
Don't disturb the
Master.



This is not a
disturbance. I shall
tell you a story.
A shepherd had a
hundred sheep.

One evening when he counted the sheep one was missing.

Leaving the ninety-nine sheep behind, he went seeking for the missing one.



Upon finding it he carried it home, rejoicing.





He invited all his friends to celebrate. He told them to rejoice with him because he found the lost sheep alive.



There will be more joy in heaven over a sinner who repents than the ninety-nine who have no need of repentance.



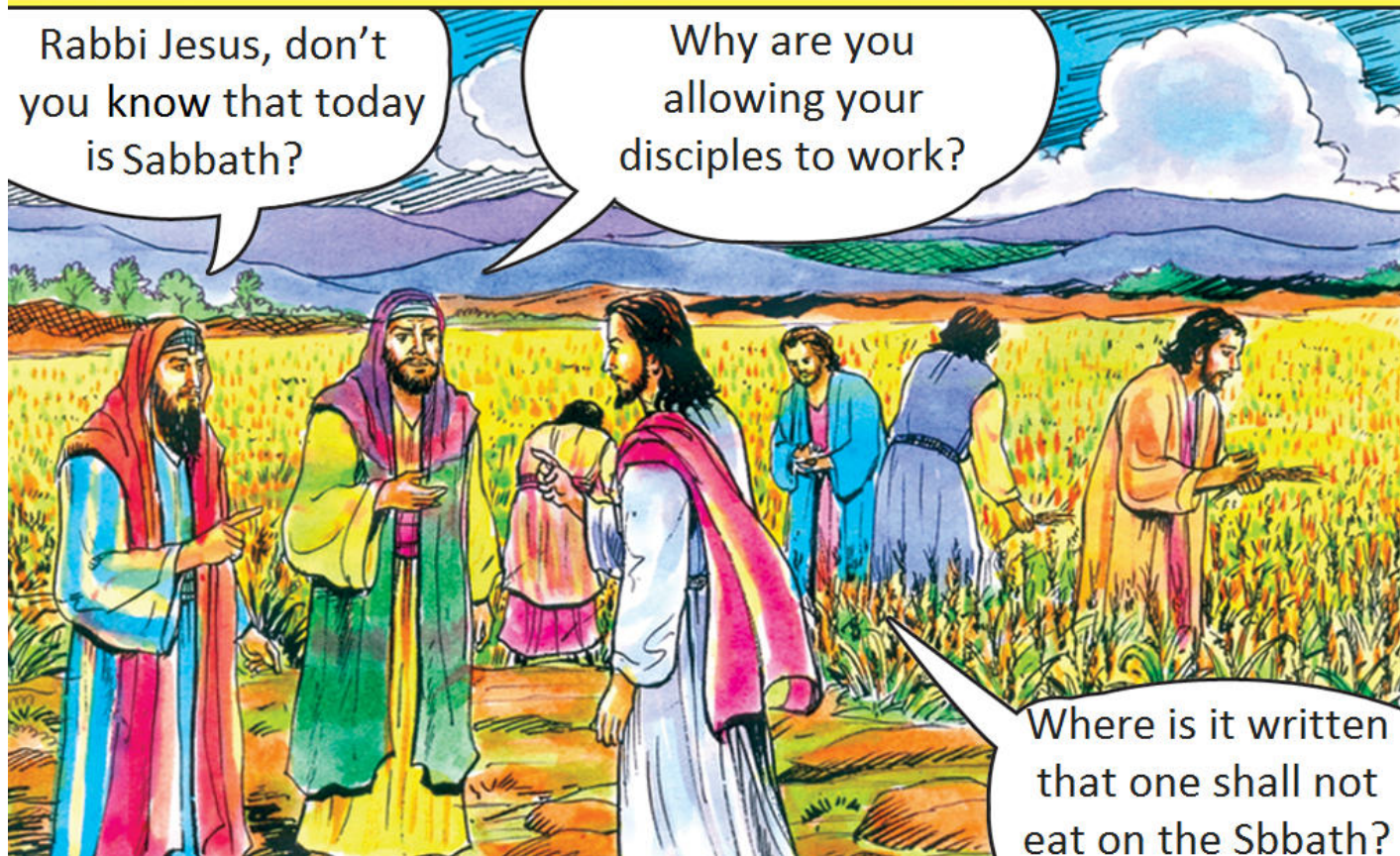
The Lord is my Shepherd. There is nothing I shall want.



Mathew distributed all his wealth among the poor and then followed Jesus. On a Sabbath day, they were walking through the corn field.

Rabbi Jesus, don't you know that today is Sabbath?

Why are you allowing your disciples to work?



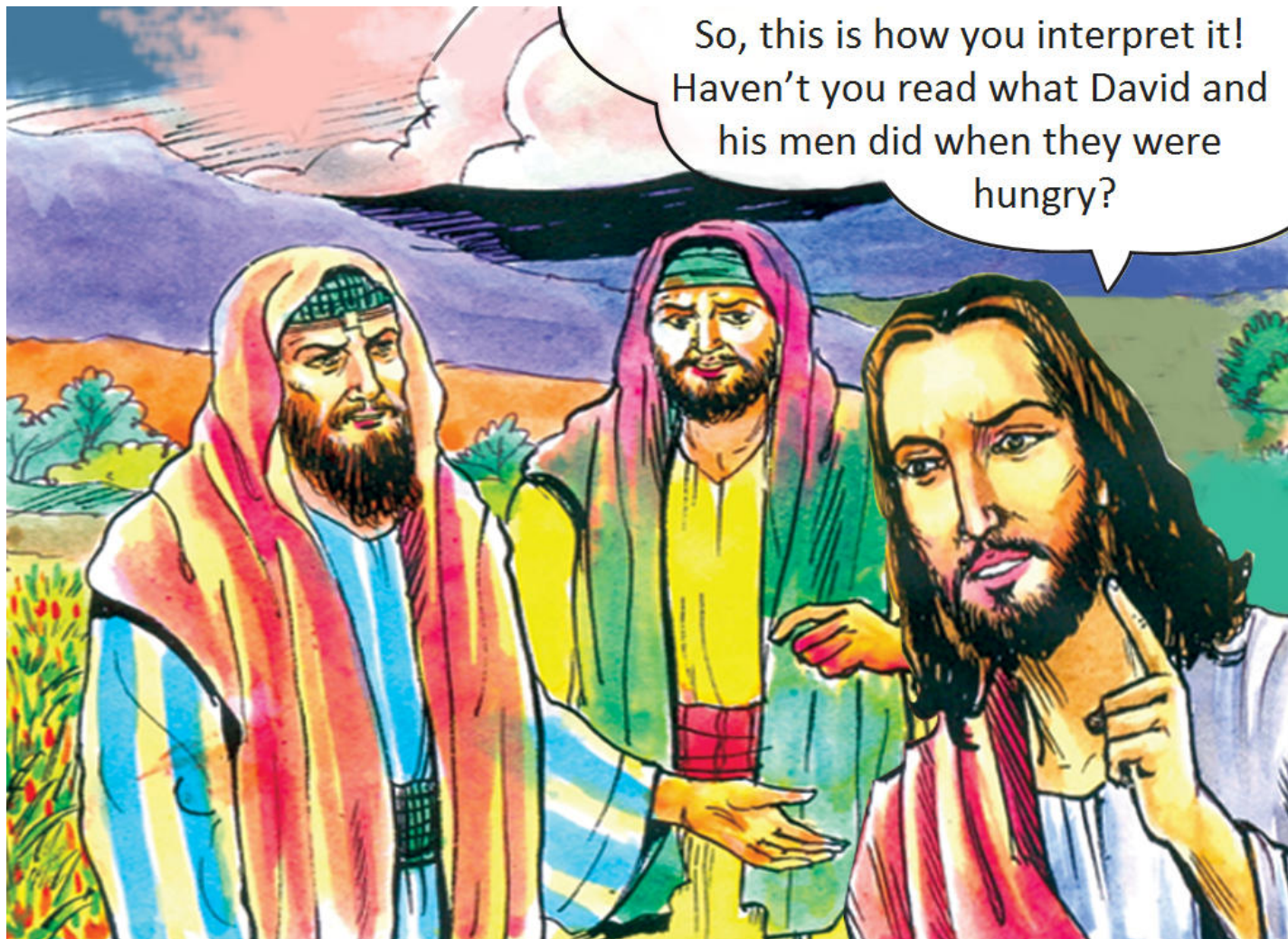
Where is it written that one shall not eat on the Sabbath?

Is this eating?

Aren't they reaping,
threshing, cooking and
eating all at once?



So, this is how you interpret it!
Haven't you read what David and
his men did when they were
hungry?



They entered the Sanctuary and ate the consecrated bread that only the priests were allowed to eat.

He was the anointed of the Lord.

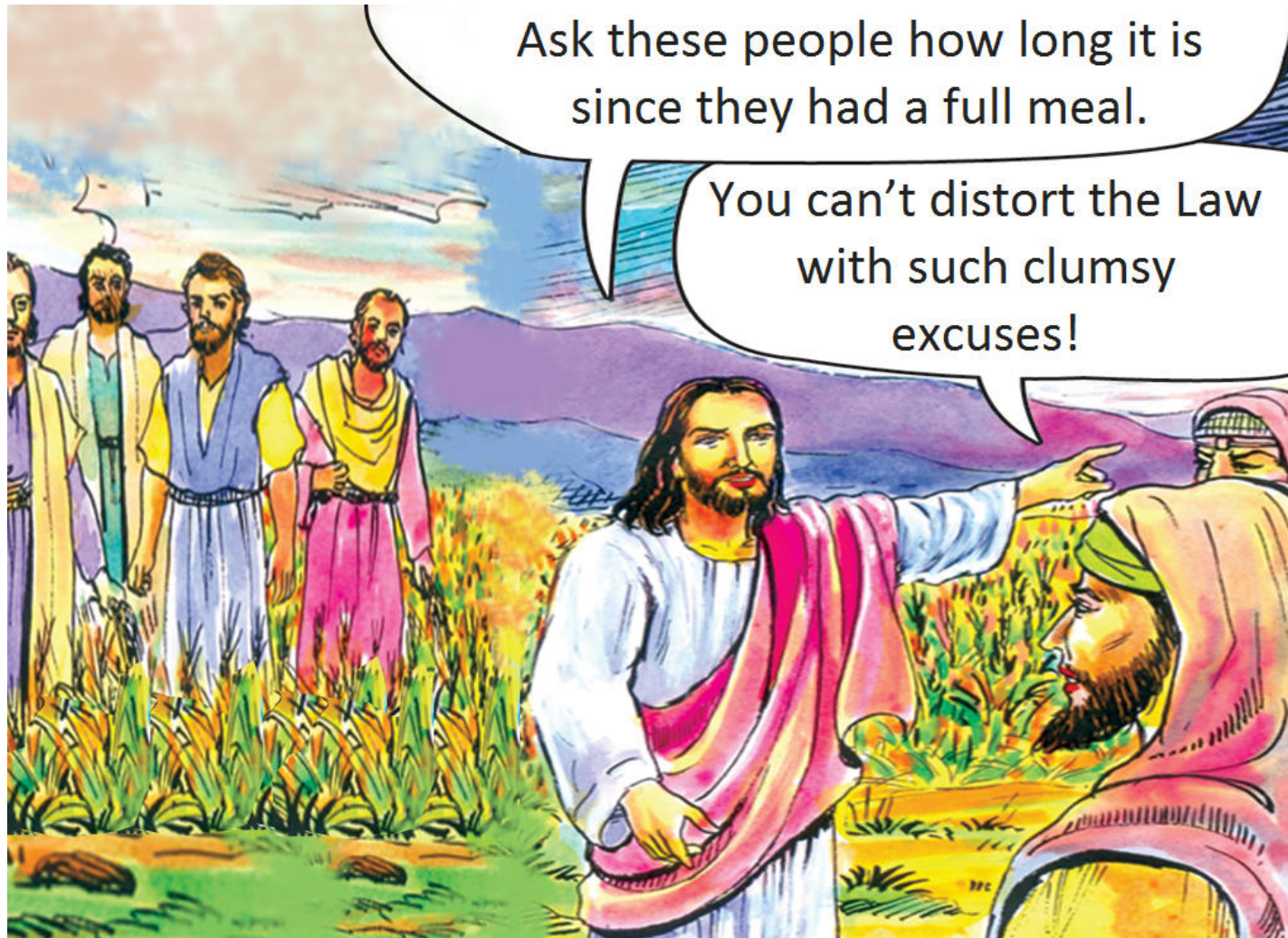
2!!!



Not only that, their lives were in danger.

Ask these people how long it is
since they had a full meal.

You can't distort the Law
with such clumsy
excuses!



The Sabbath was made for man, not man
for the Sabbath. The Son of Man is
master even of the Sabbath.

!!



Jesus and his disciples reached Sychar, a town in Samaria.

You go into the town and buy some food. I will rest here a while.

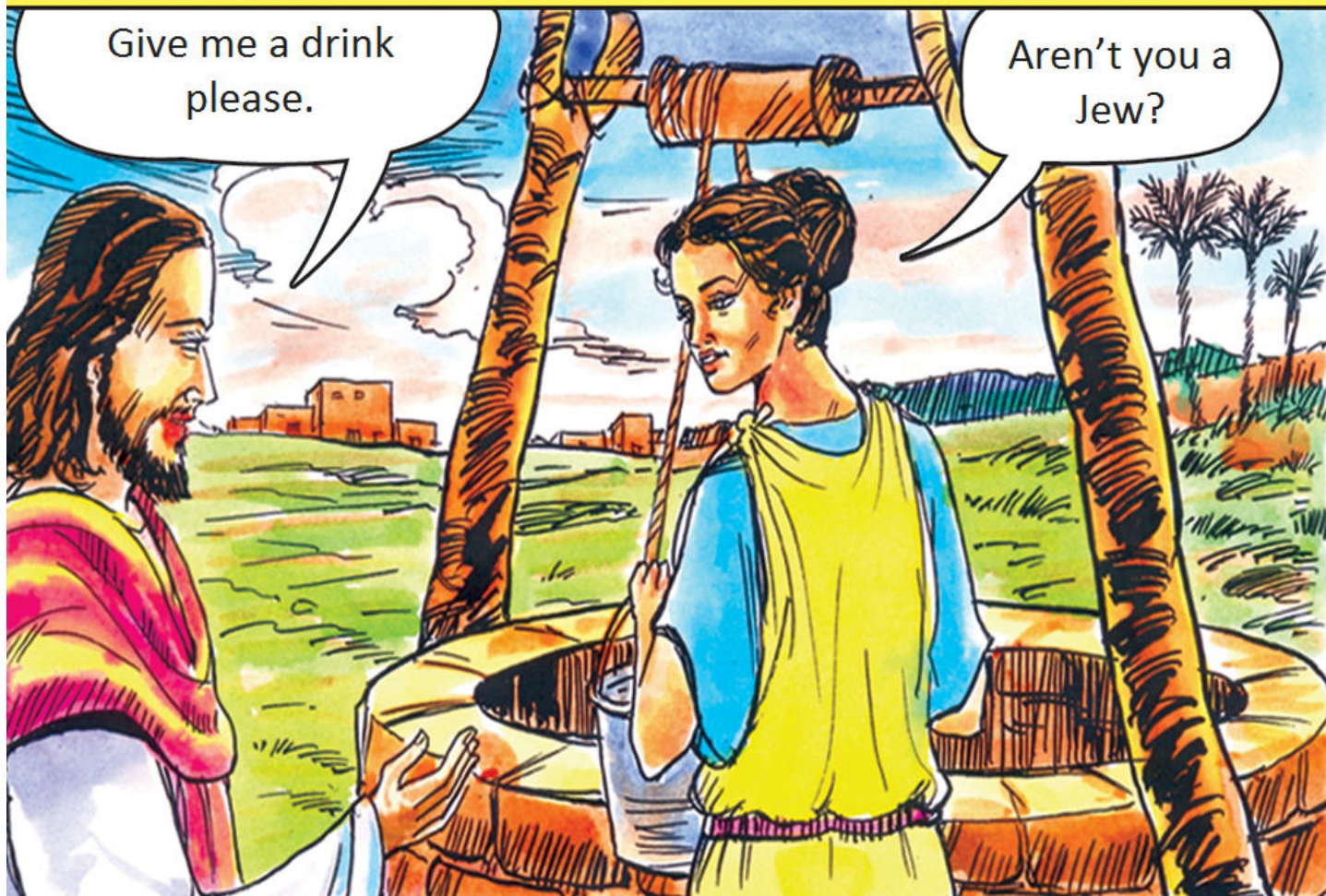
We shall return soon.

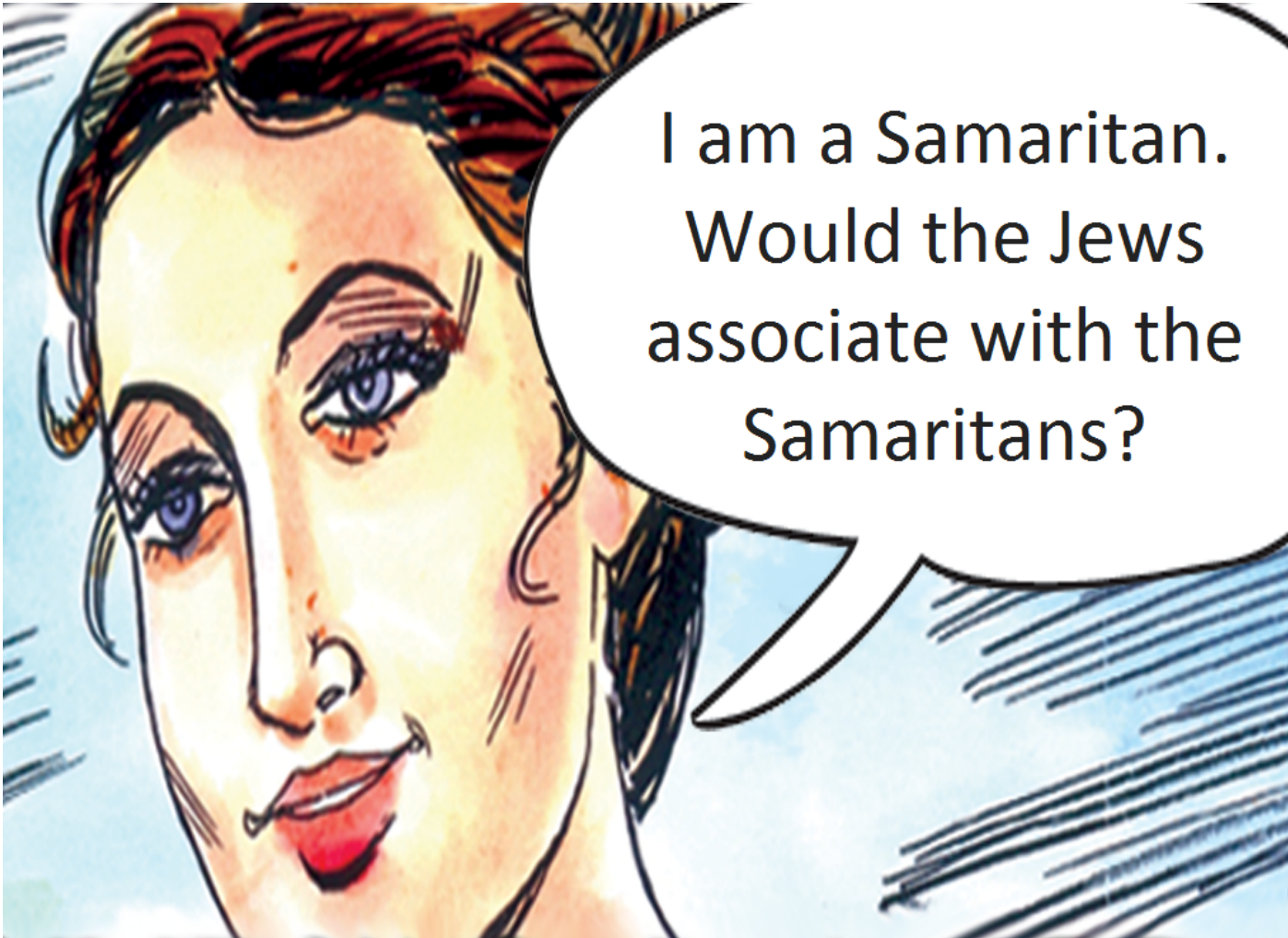


Then a woman came to draw water.

Give me a drink
please.

Aren't you a
Jew?





I am a Samaritan.
Would the Jews
associate with the
Samaritans?

If you only knew what God is offering and who I am, you would have asked me and I would have given you living water.

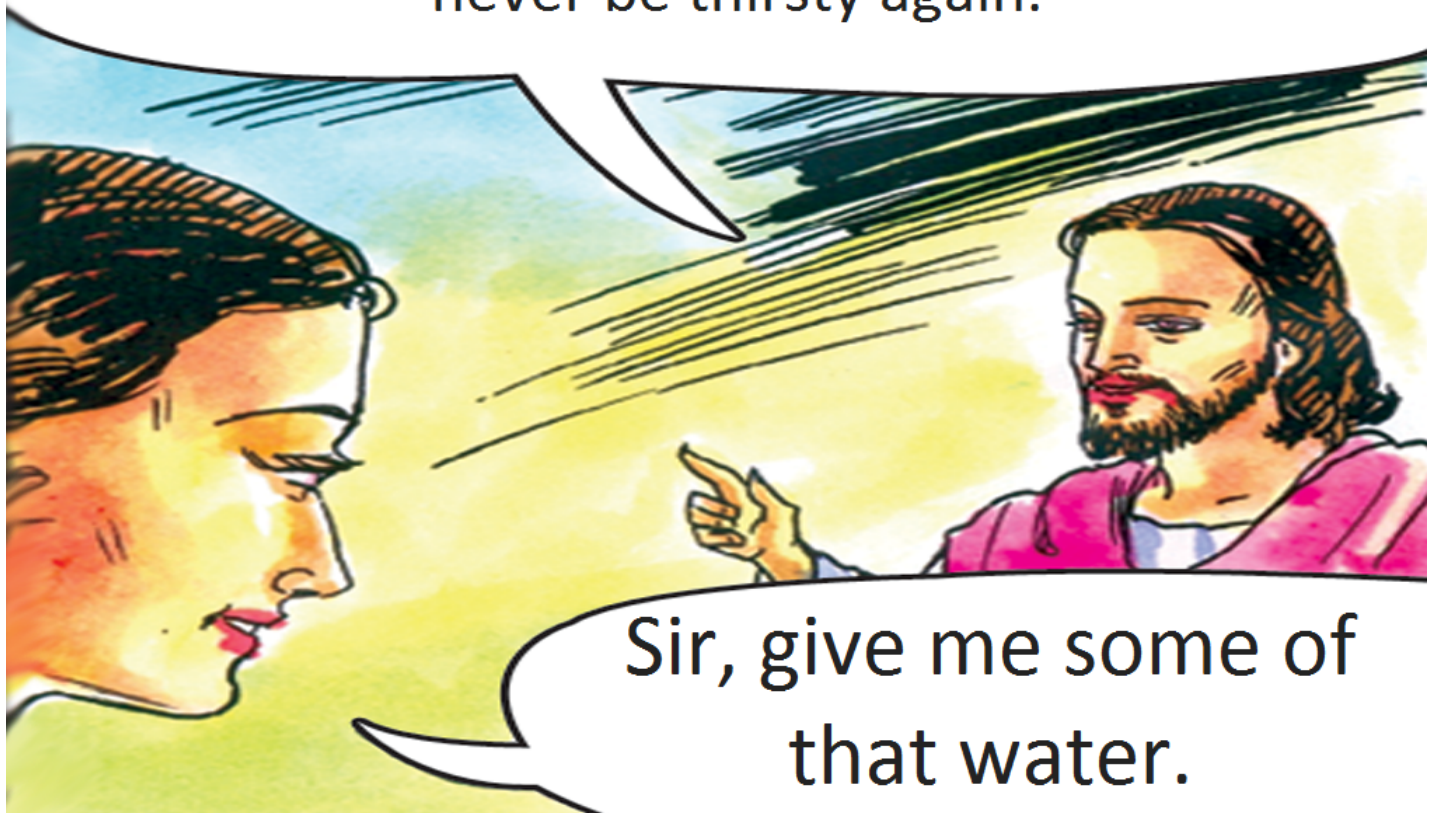
You have no bucket Sir, the well is deep.



Are you greater than our Father Jacob who gave us this well.



Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again.
But anyone who drinks the water I give shall
never be thirsty again.



Go, call your husband and come back here.

I have no husband.

You are right. Although you have had five husbands, the one you have now is not your husband.

I see that you are a prophet. Tell me, where should we worship, on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem?



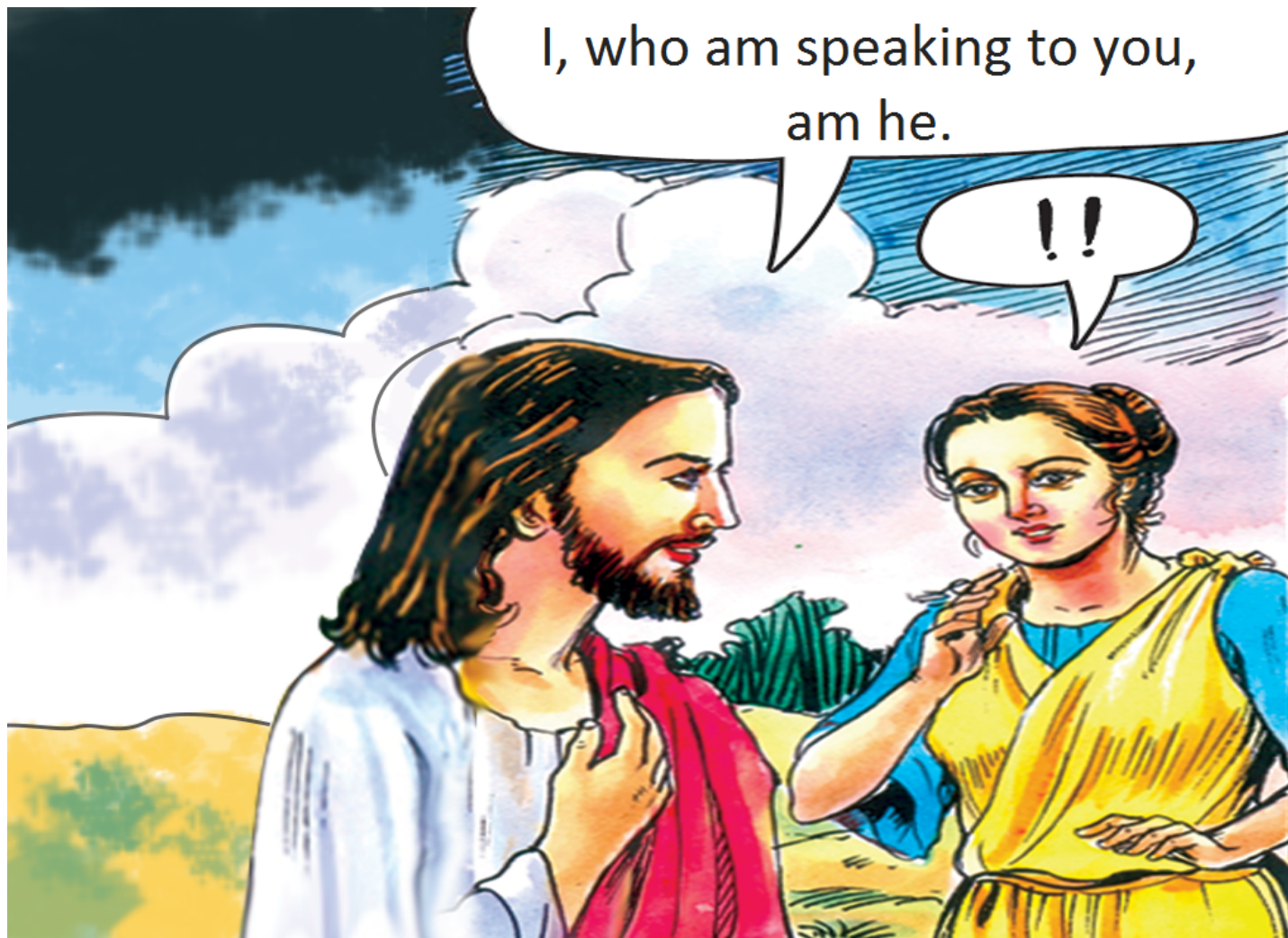
Neither. True
worshippers will
worship the Father
in spirit and truth.

I know that when
the Messiah
comes, he will
teach us the whole
truth.



I, who am speaking to you,
am he.

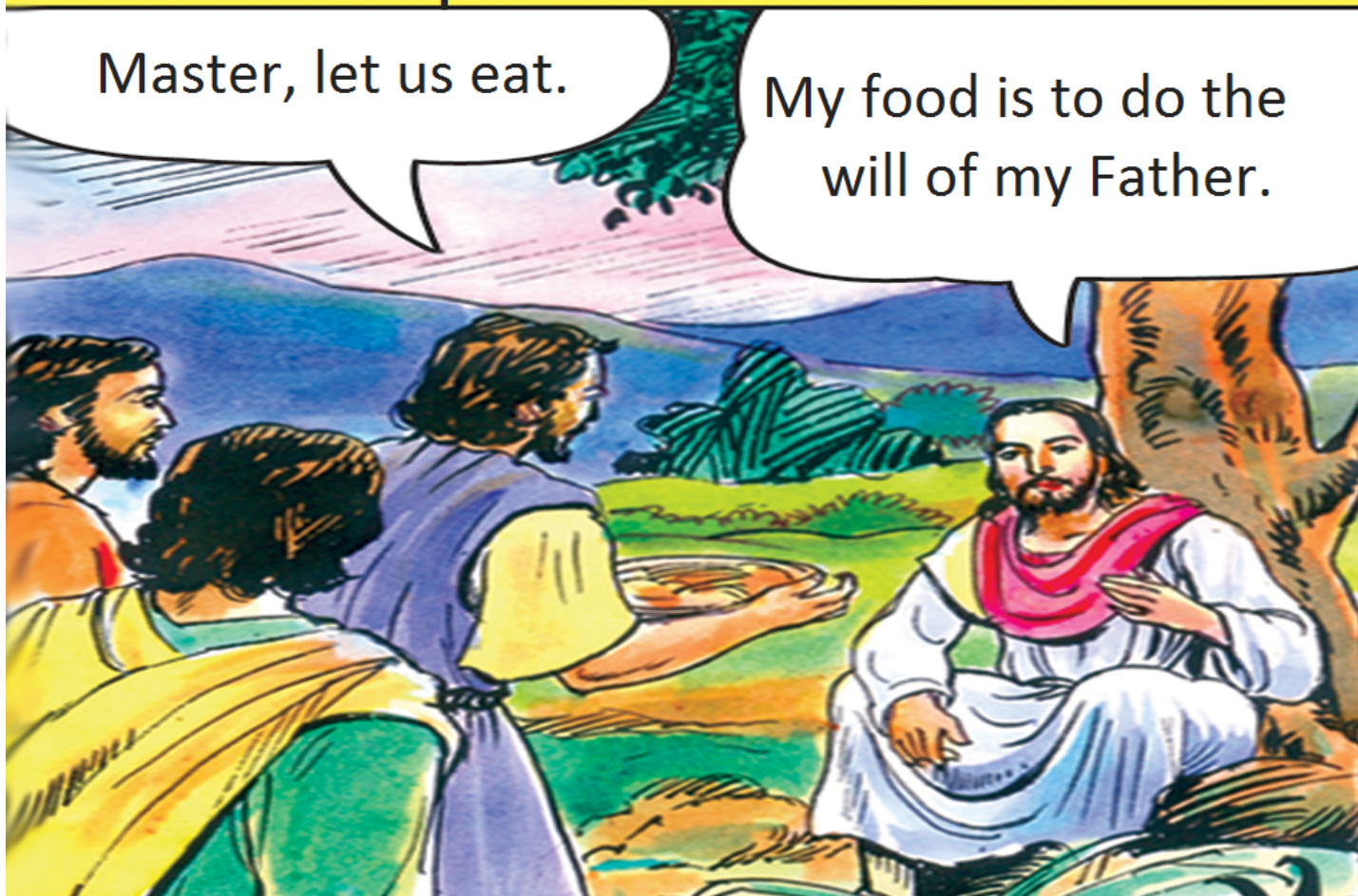
!!



The disciples returned with food.

Master, let us eat.

My food is to do the will of my Father.

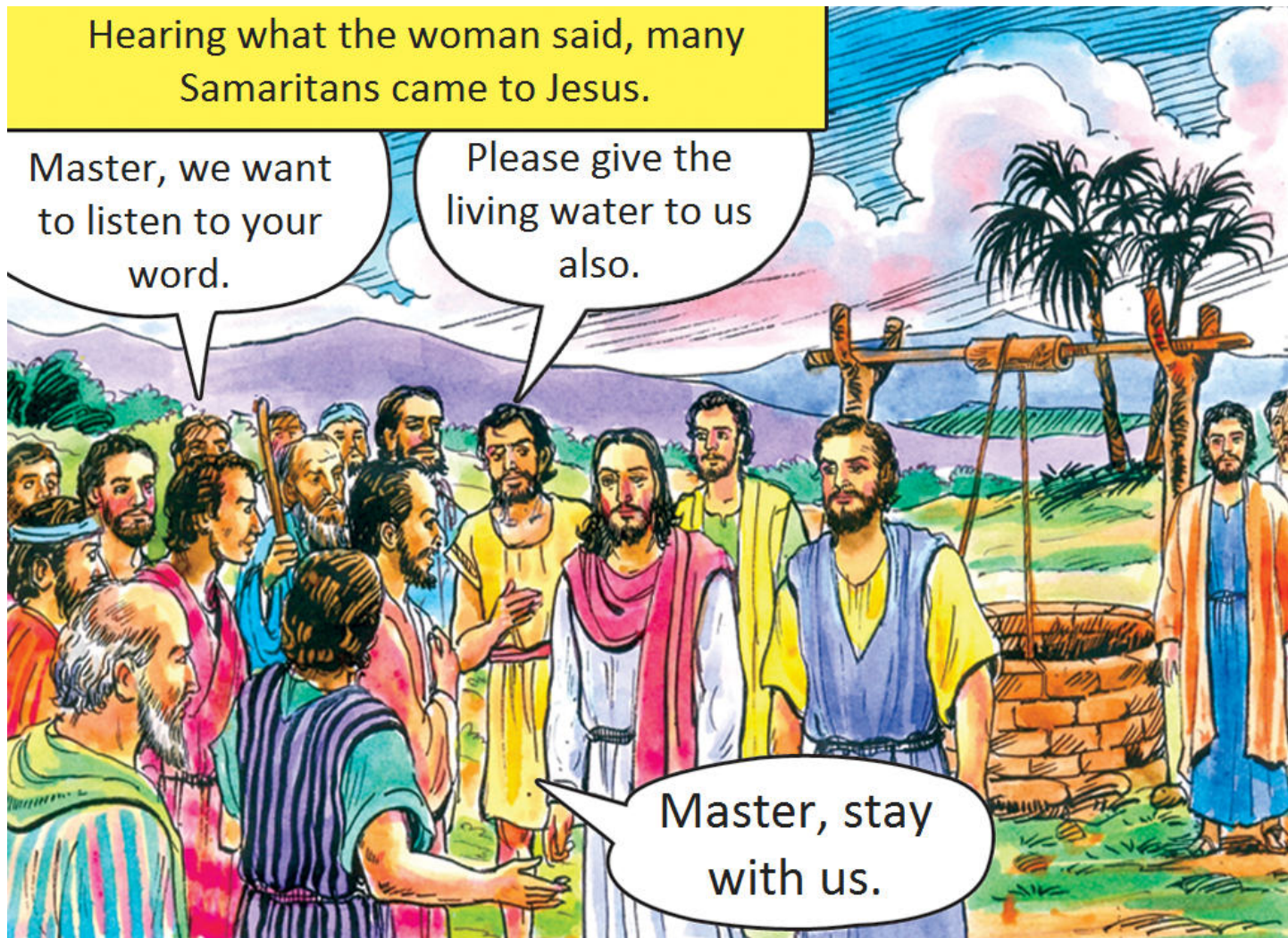


Hearing what the woman said, many Samaritans came to Jesus.

Master, we want to listen to your word.

Please give the living water to us also.

Master, stay with us.

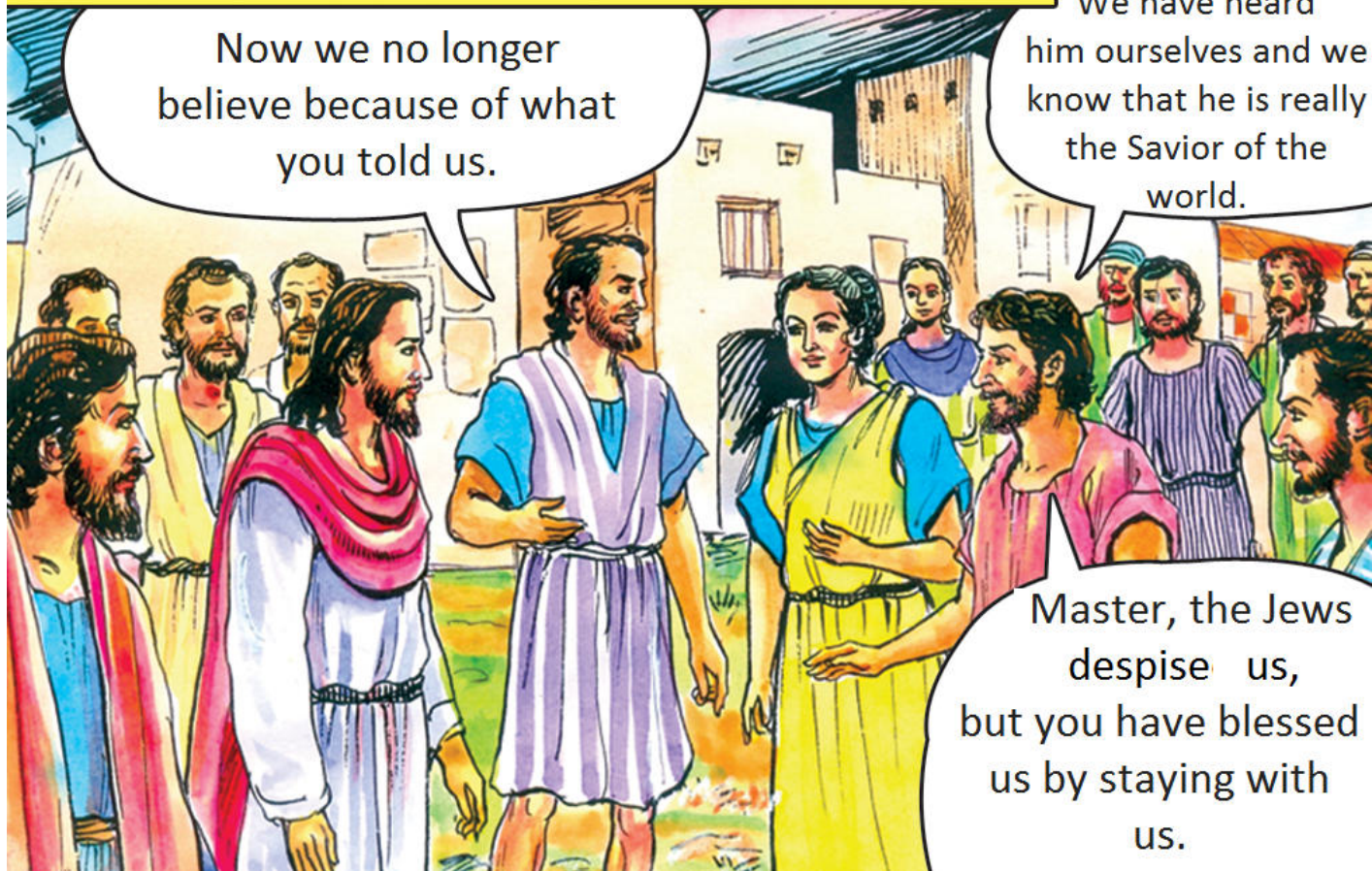


Jesus stayed with them for two days. As he was departing.

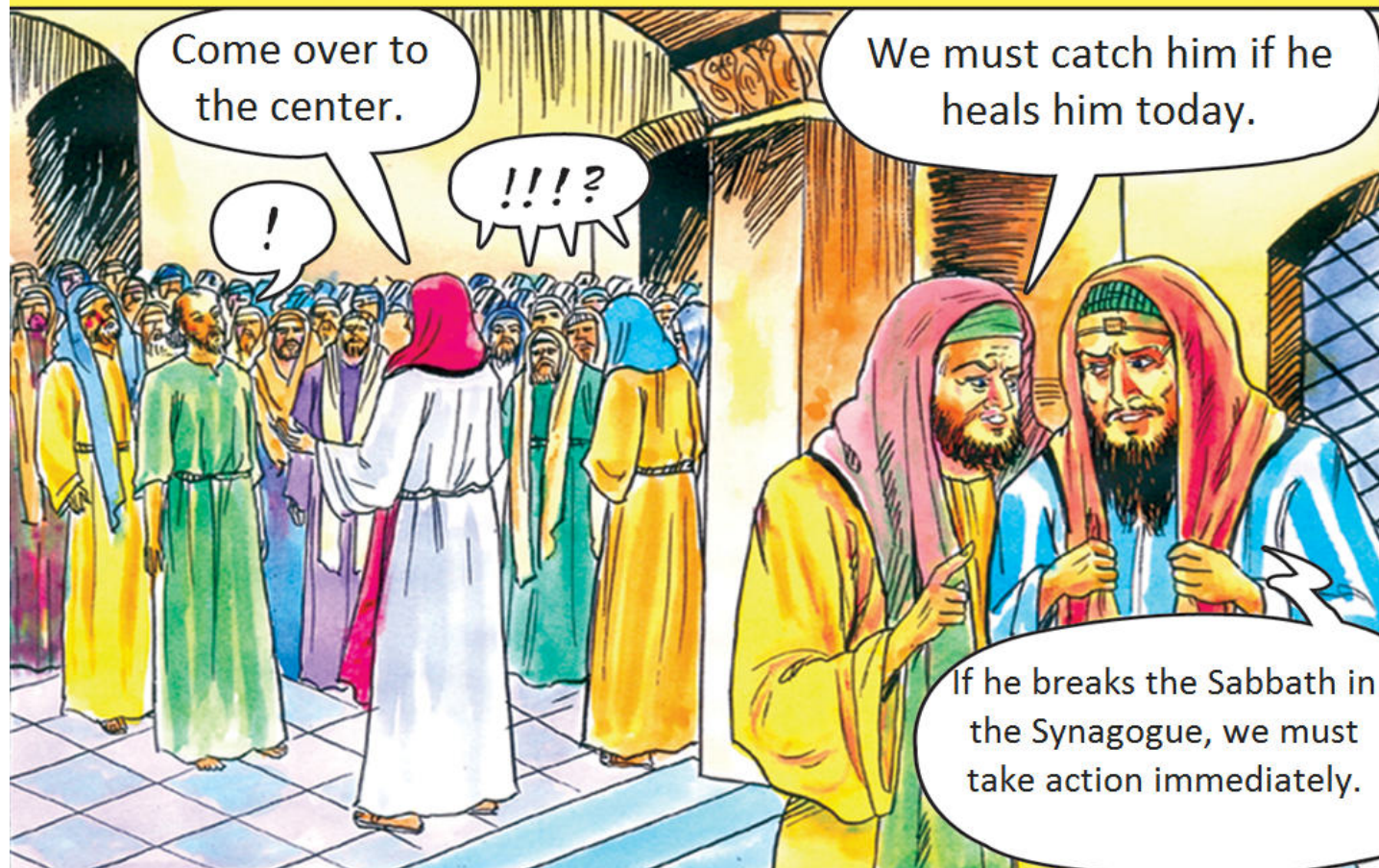
Now we no longer believe because of what you told us.

We have heard him ourselves and we know that he is really the Savior of the world.

Master, the Jews despise us, but you have blessed us by staying with us.



They came back to Capernaum. On a Sabbath day Jesus entered the Synagogue. There was a man with a withered hand.

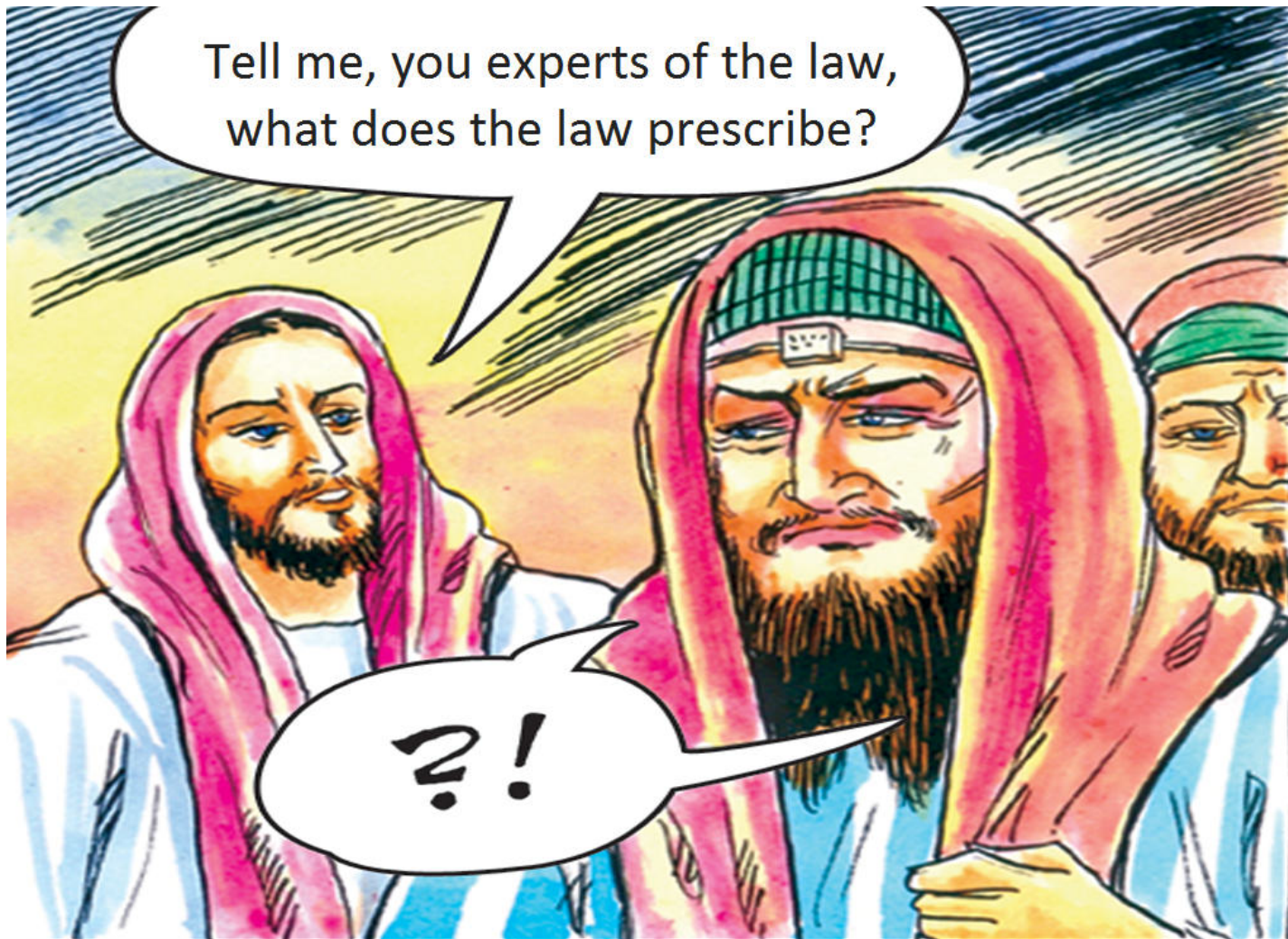


Is it lawful to do good or to
do harm on the Sabbath, to
save life or to kill?

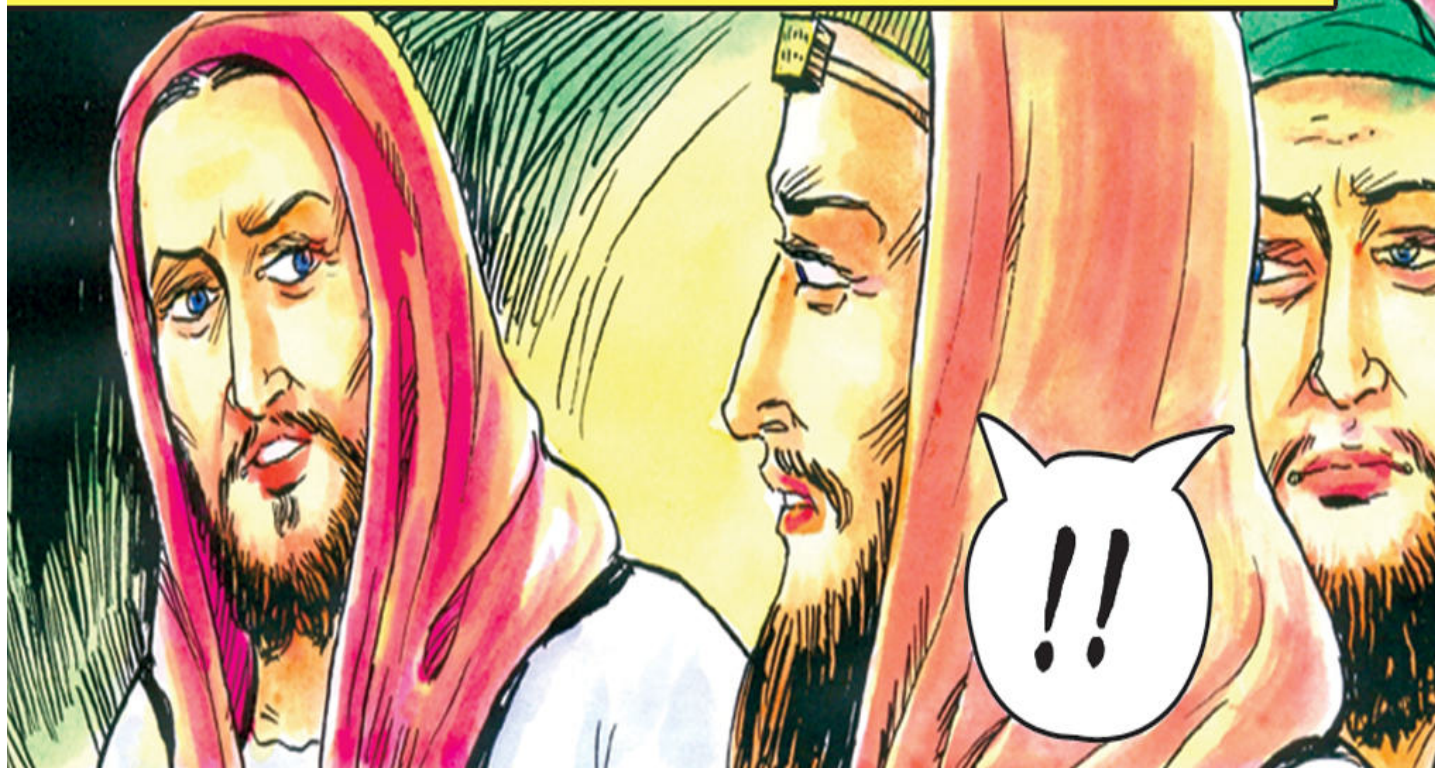


Tell me, you experts of the law,
what does the law prescribe?

?!



They remained silent. Seeing how wicked they were, Jesus was grieved and looked at them with anger.





He stretched out
his hand and he
was healed.

Praise and
Glory to God!

!?



We have lawyers
and learned men to
interpret the law.
You are
distorting it.

It is a sin to interpret the
law against the official
teaching of the Holy
Sanhedrin.



God completed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day. Sabbath is taking part in that rest.



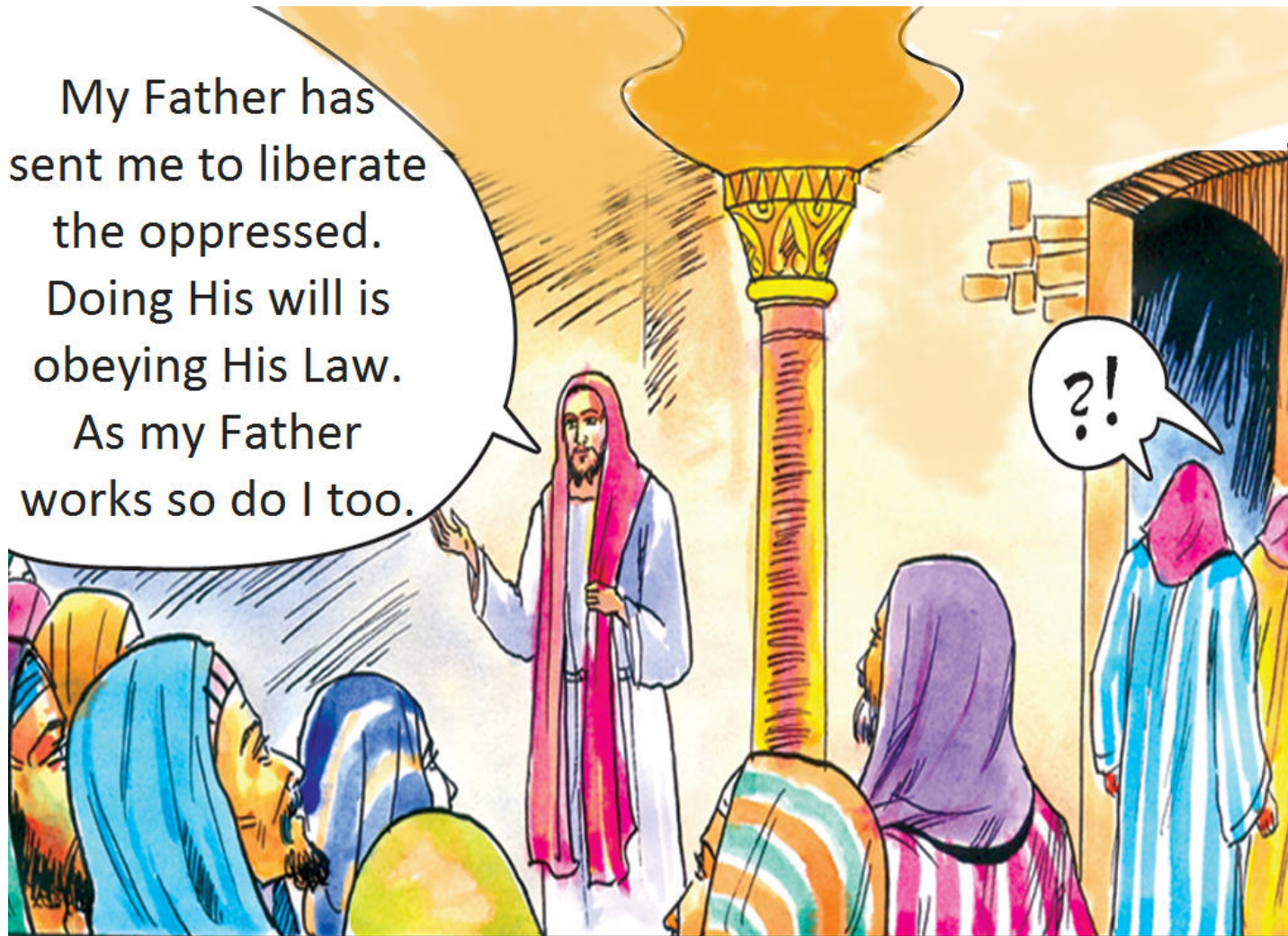
Healing is the work of the
Doctors, a work forbidden
on the Sabbath.



God's rest is not inactivity. My Father goes on working, giving life and salvation to all.



My Father has
sent me to liberate
the oppressed.
Doing His will is
obeying His Law.
As my Father
works so do I too.



The Pharisees and lawyers walked out in rage and conspired against Jesus.

He not only breaks the Law, but even dares to call the Almighty one his Father.

Didn't he say that he acts like God? What a presumption!



Not just presumption, it is blasphemy.

He shouldn't be allowed
to live. We must inform
the Sanhedrin and seek a
way to eliminate
him.



The liberating actions of Jesus infuriated those in authority. They sought ways to destroy him. But Jesus moved ahead with firm determination and laid the foundation for a new community.

NEXT STORY

THE ONE TO COME

QUESTIONS

1. Why did the people chase away the Leper?
2. What was the goal of the Zealots?
3. Who has the authority to forgive sin?
4. According to Jesus, what should we seek first?
5. Whom did the Son of Man come to seek?
6. Give four examples of Jesus' liberating actions.
7. Why did Jesus become sad and angry?
8. Why did the Pharisees and Lawyers plot to kill Jesus?
9. Why do people try to accumulate wealth and how?
10. What should we do to achieve true and lasting freedom?

Memorize: *"Will a person gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life?"*(Mt 16, 26)

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