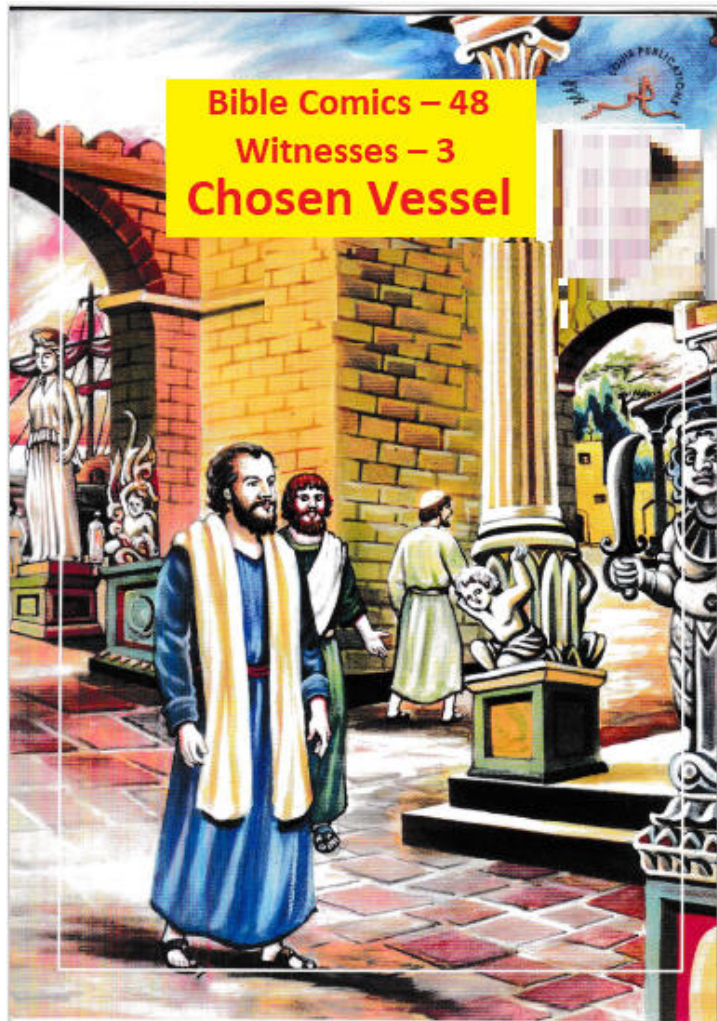


Bible Comics – 48
Witnesses – 3
Chosen Vessel



THE CHOSEN VESSEL

During the first few years of the Church, the Gospel was proclaimed mainly among the Jews. On rare occasions, the Holy Spirit led Peter and Philip to baptize the gentiles. However, this was an exception to the general practice. This trend was changed by the emergence of Paul, the apostle of the gentiles. His activities are presented in the Acts of the Apostles from chapter 13 onwards.

Luke gives great importance to the theme of “Journey” in his Gospel as well as in the Acts. He has presented the missionary activities of Paul in the framework of three journeys, two of which are depicted in this book, while the third one is described in the next book. The fourth and final journey was to Rome as a prisoner.

As the apostles met with opposition and rejection from the part of the Jews, they turned to the gentiles. Wherever Paul went, first he approached the Jews and when they

rejected him, he began to preach to the gentiles. Numerous gentiles believed in Jesus Christ and were baptized which in turn made the Jews jealous. In the Acts, of the Apostles we can see Jews constantly following Paul and trying to persuade the people to turn against him.

Mass-conversion of the gentiles raised serious problems not only among the Jews but also among the members of the Church. Paul insisted that the gentiles must not be

compelled to observe the Jewish Customs in order to become Christians. The Jewish Christians were adamant in their opposition to this policy. Finally, the dispute was settled in the Jerusalem Council, the first official meeting of the Church leaders. The Council decided that the gentiles should not be forced to observed Jewish laws and traditions. This gave new vigor and impetus to the apostles, in particular to Paul, to continue the missionary activities

among the gentiles. Miraculous cures further helped the evangelization.

The Holy Spirit revealed to the Church leaders that people can become Christians without changing their culture and becoming Jews. Holding on to the irrelevant traditions and empty rituals as well as imposing foreign cultures are detrimental to the Christian spirit. The “Good News” is the salvation attained through Jesus Christ, not the observance of Jewish customs and traditions.

Inspired by the words of Jesus to go to another town when persecuted in one, the Apostles went from place to place, proclaiming the Gospel. The Church that was born from and brought up by the blood of Christ was not weakened by persecution. Suffering was the source of growth for the Christians. The very life of the early Christian community was a powerful witness to Christ.



Bible Comics – 48

Witnesses – 3

Chosen Vessel

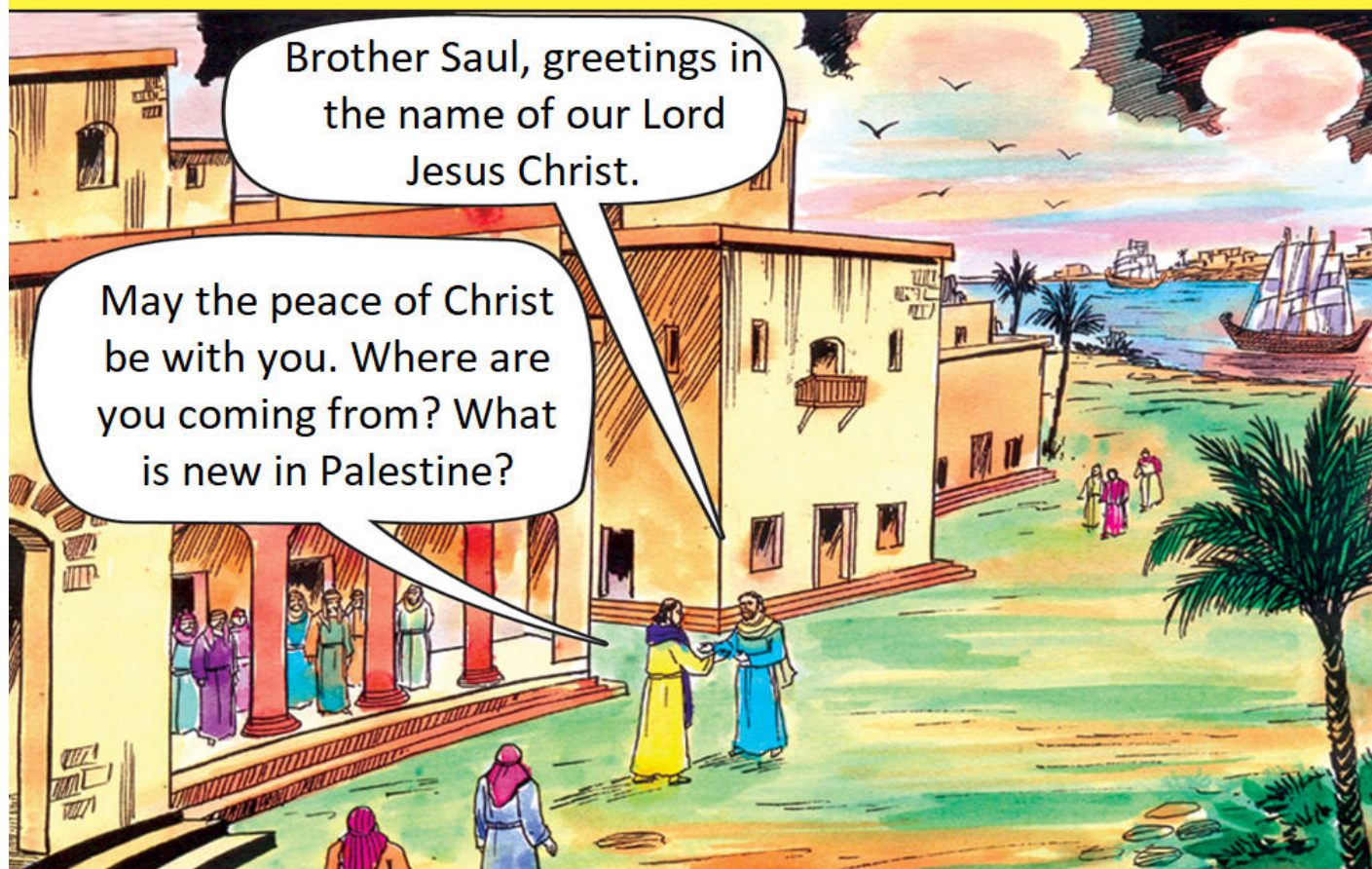
Script:

Rev. Dr. Michael Karimattam

Illustration:

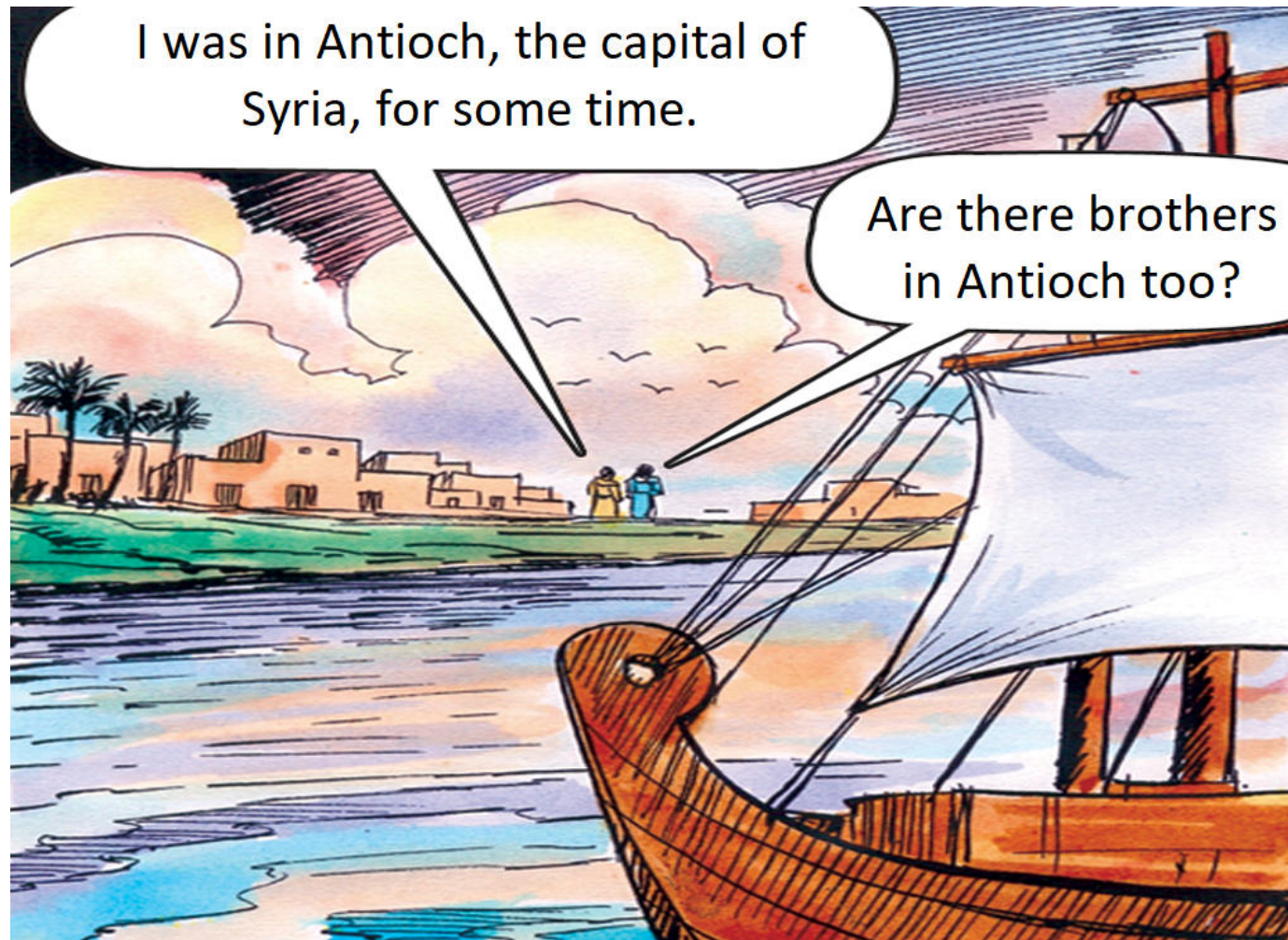
Devassy & Benny

Saul returned to his home town, Tarsus, and began to preach the Gospel there. After sometime Barnabas came to see him.

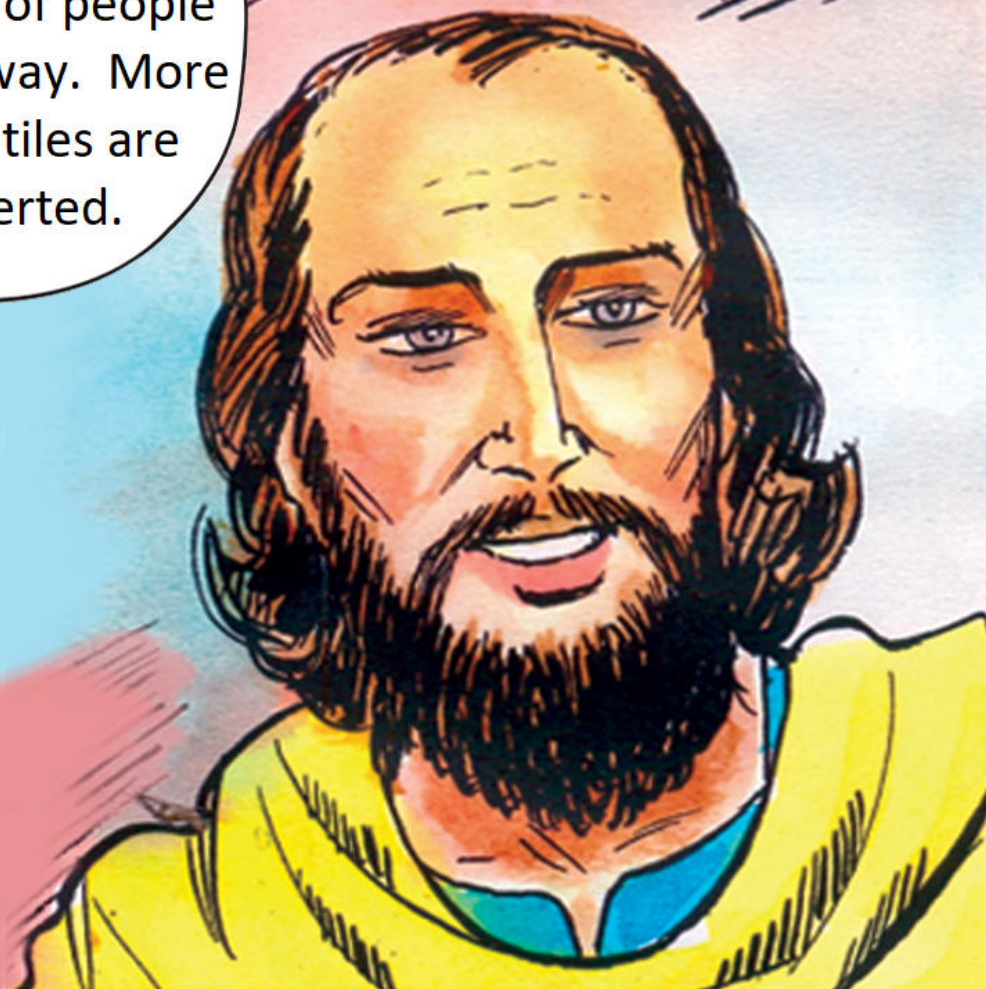


I was in Antioch, the capital of Syria, for some time.

Are there brothers in Antioch too?



Daily hundreds of people
are joining the way. More
and more gentiles are
being converted.



There the disciples are
called "Christians".

It is a very meaningful
name.



Harvest is plenty, workers are few.
Won't you come with me to Antioch?

Barnabas, it is the Lord who brought
you here. We shall start next week.
Meanwhile, I would like you address
the brothers here.



They reached Antioch and plunged into Evangelization.
One day during a prayer meeting.

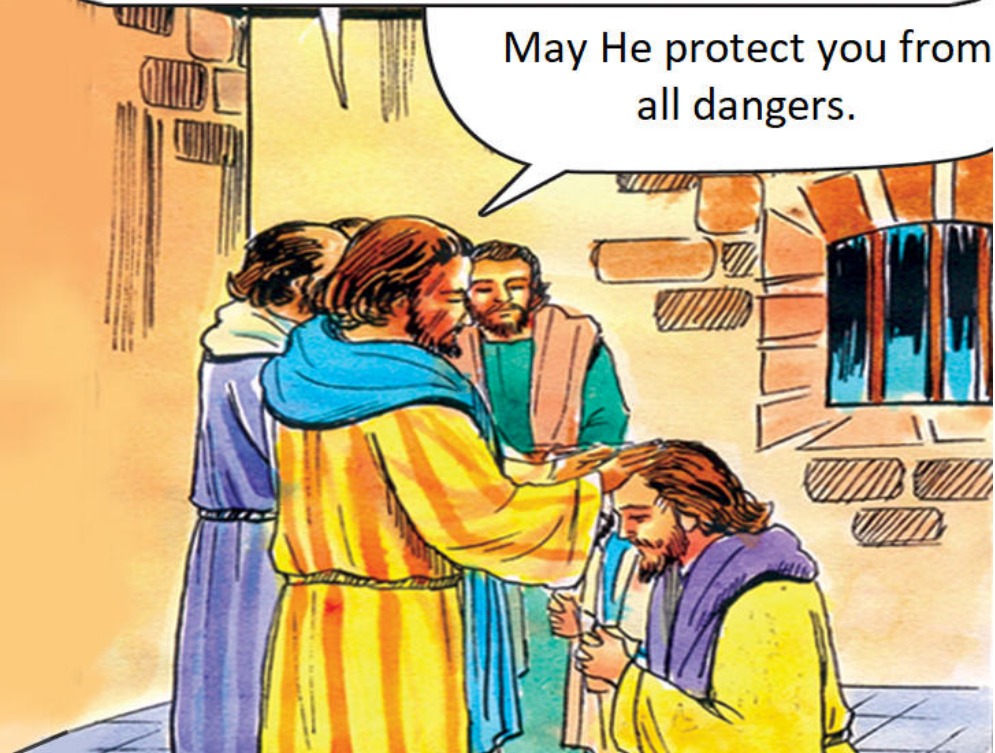
It is the Lord who speaks, "I want
Bernabás and Saul set apart for the
work to which I have called them".



After fasting and prayer.

Be filled with the Spirit and go to the
ends of the earth to proclaim
the Good News.

May He protect you from
all dangers.



Saul and Bernabas left. Mark,
known as John, also went with
them.



Proclaiming the word of God, they went from Salamis to Paphos.

Are you the one going around preaching about Jesus Christ?

Yes

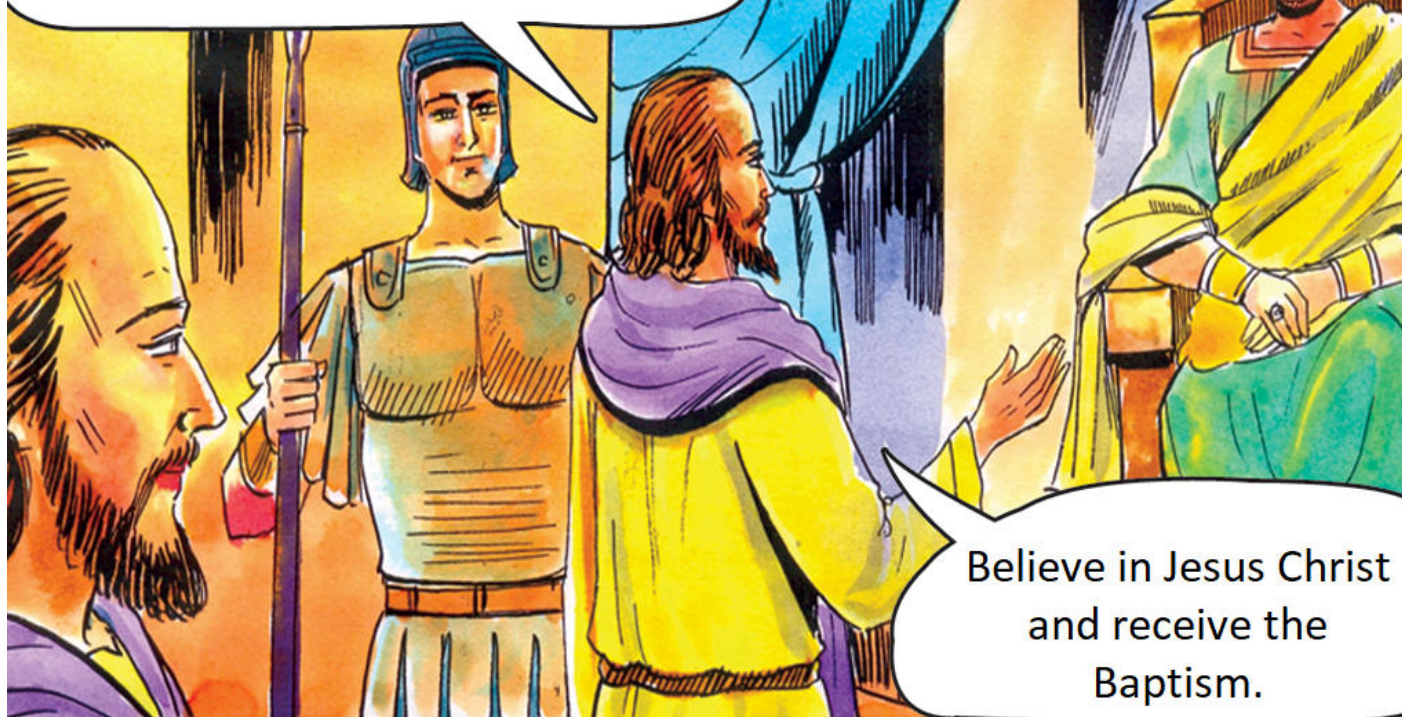
Governor Sergius Paulus wants to see you.



Before the Governor they spoke about
Jesus Christ.

What shall I
do?

Through His death and resurrection
all are granted forgiveness of sins
and eternal life.



Among the attendants of the Governor,
there was a magician called Elymas.

Your Honour, do not listen to
these liars. There is no life after
death and so enjoy your life now.

You son of the devil, watch
how the hand of the Lord
will strike you, you will be
blind.

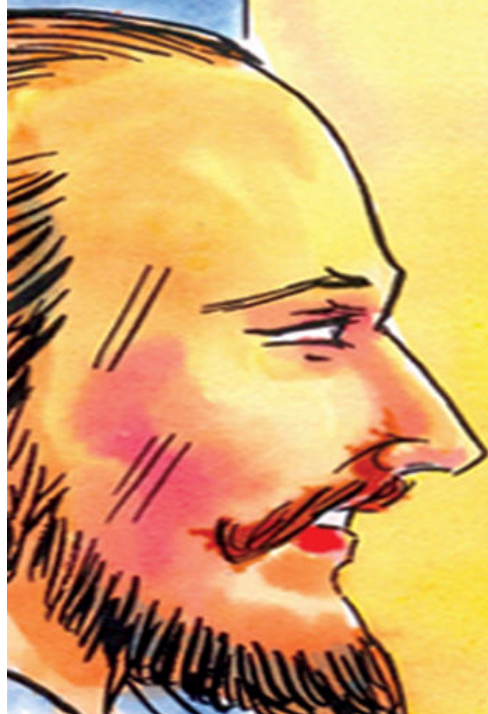


Suddenly Elymas lost his sight.

O, I can't see a thing.
Please someone lead
me by the hand.



I believe in what you say.
I am ready to become a
disciple of Jesus.



!!!

After this Saul took the Greek name "Paul". They left Paphos and went to Perga by ship.

Let us go back to
Palastine.

What? We have only
started.

I want to go back
to Jerusalem.



Mark left Paul and Bernabas, and travelled North.

This is a dangerous path.
Robbers could fall upon us.

When the Lord is with
us we have nothing to
fear. In a week, we
shall reach Antioch.



A comic panel featuring two men in a conversation. The man on the left has a beard and is wearing a yellow robe with a blue collar. The man on the right is older, with a white beard, and is wearing a purple robe. They are set against a background of a bright orange and yellow sky with dark, jagged shapes at the top. Three speech bubbles are present: a large one at the top right, a medium one below it, and a small one with an exclamation mark between the two men.

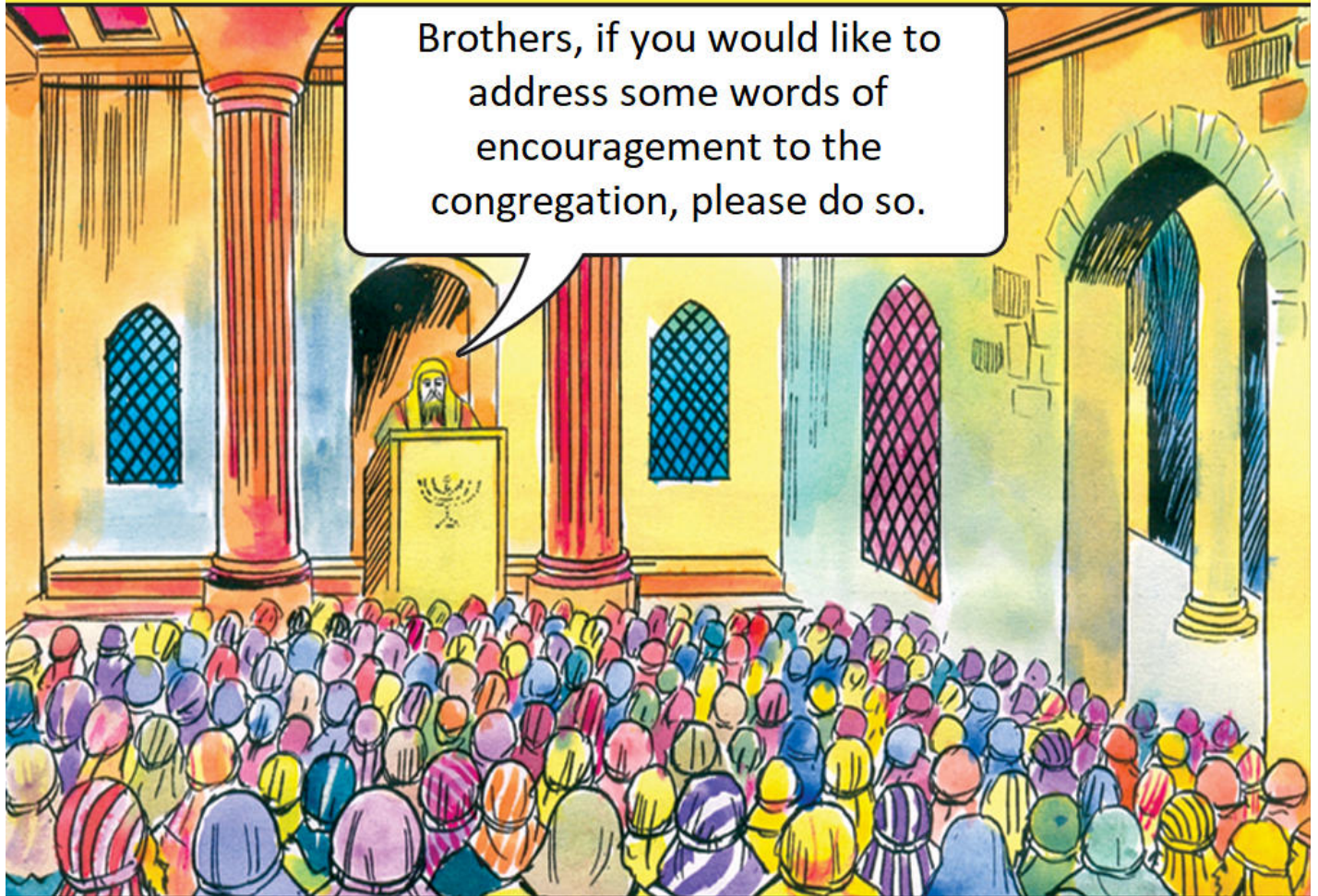
Antioch?

There are many Antiochs.
This is Antioch in Pisidia

!

They reached Antioch on a Sabbath day. They went to a Synagogue.

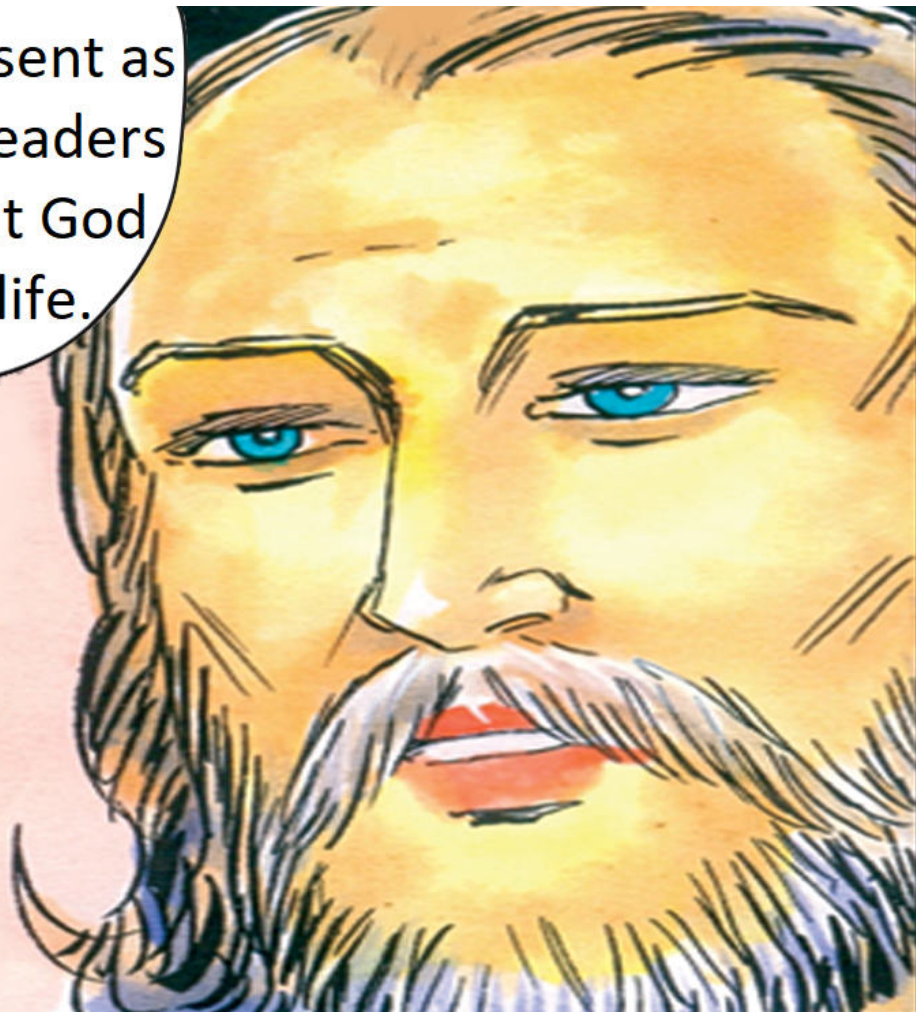
Brothers, if you would like to address some words of encouragement to the congregation, please do so.



Men of Israel and fearers
of God, listen! The promise
God made to our Fathers
has been fulfilled.



Jesus Christ was sent as
our Savior. Our leaders
crucified him but God
raised him to life.



After the speech

We would like to
learn more about
these things.

Please come the
next Sabbath day.

I shall.



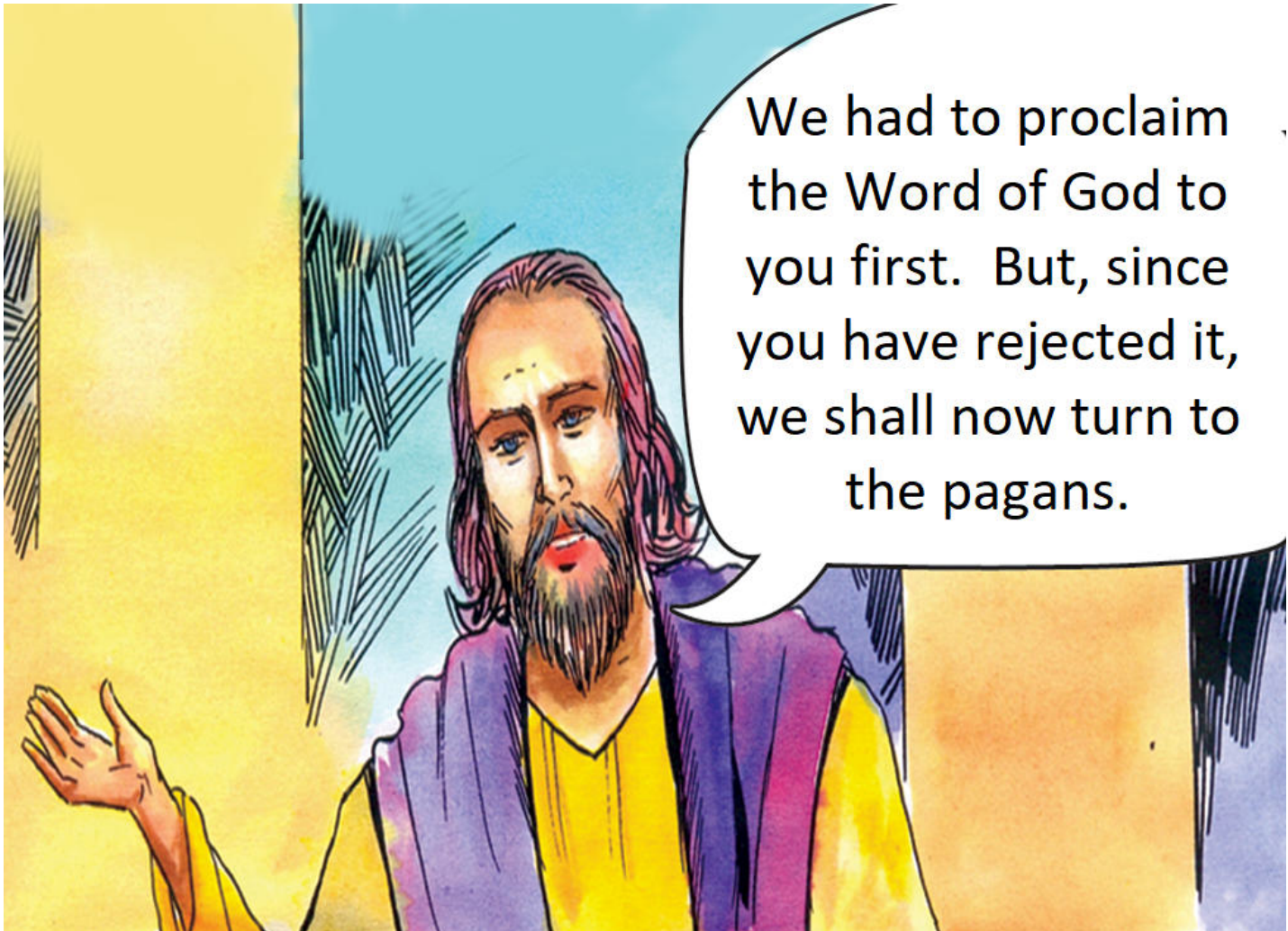
Many believed in Jesus Christ. The Jews became jealous. The next Sabbath day:

By taking the curse upon himself Jesus liberated us from the curse of the law.

Anyone who rejects the law given to us through Moses is an enemy of God.

This is blasphemy.





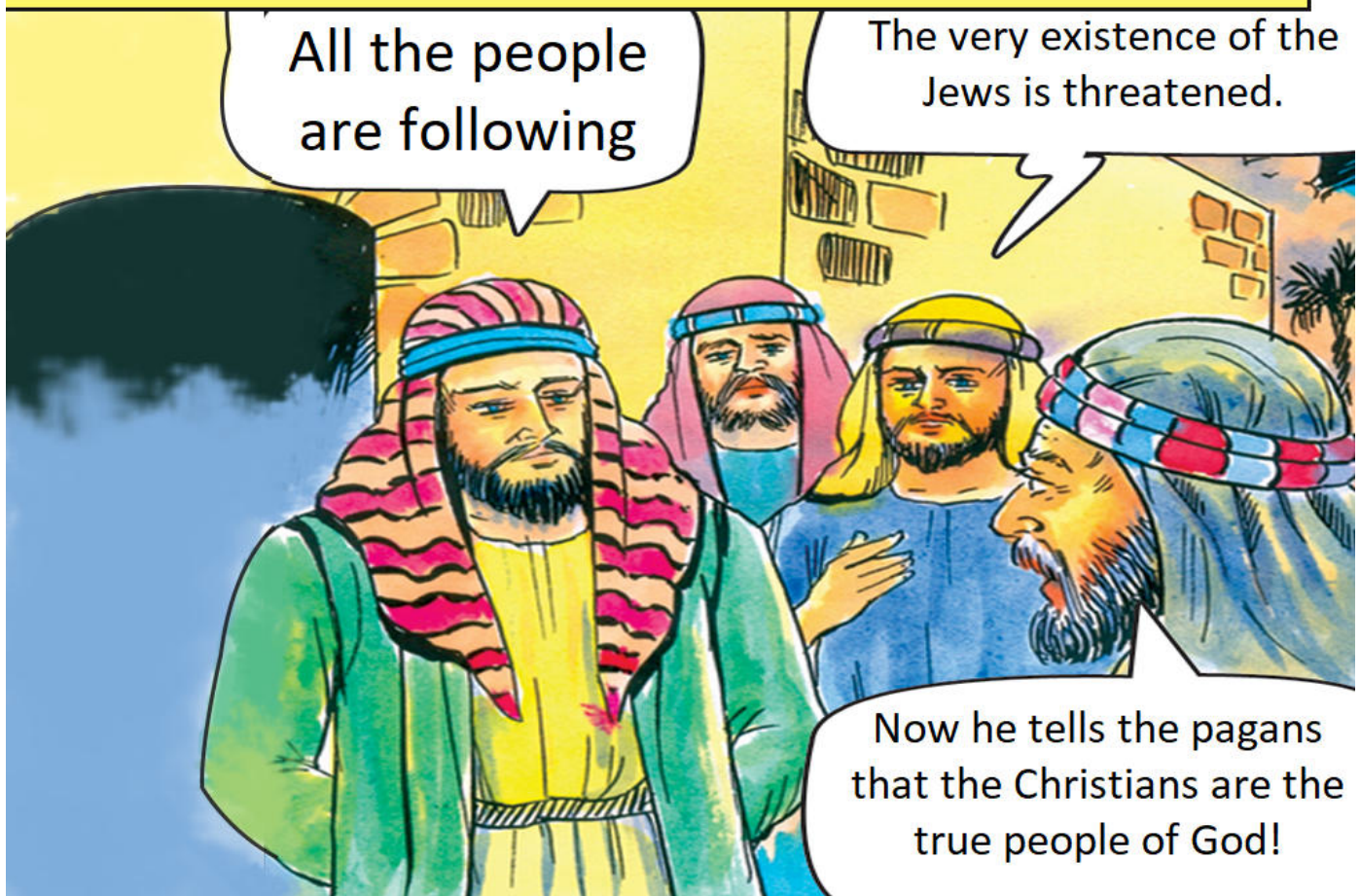
We had to proclaim
the Word of God to
you first. But, since
you have rejected it,
we shall now turn to
the pagans.


A large number of people believed in Jesus. A conversation among the Jews.

All the people
are following

The very existence of the
Jews is threatened.

Now he tells the pagans
that the Christians are the
true people of God!



A comic book illustration featuring two men in traditional Middle Eastern or North African clothing. The man on the left is shown in a close-up, wearing a red and orange striped turban with a blue band and a red and orange striped garment. He has a yellow face, blue eyes, and a black beard. The man on the right is shown from the chest up, wearing a yellow turban with a green band and a blue garment. He has a yellow face, blue eyes, and a black beard. A speech bubble from the man on the right says, "We must drive them out." Another speech bubble from the man on the left says, "For that we must turn also the pagans against them."

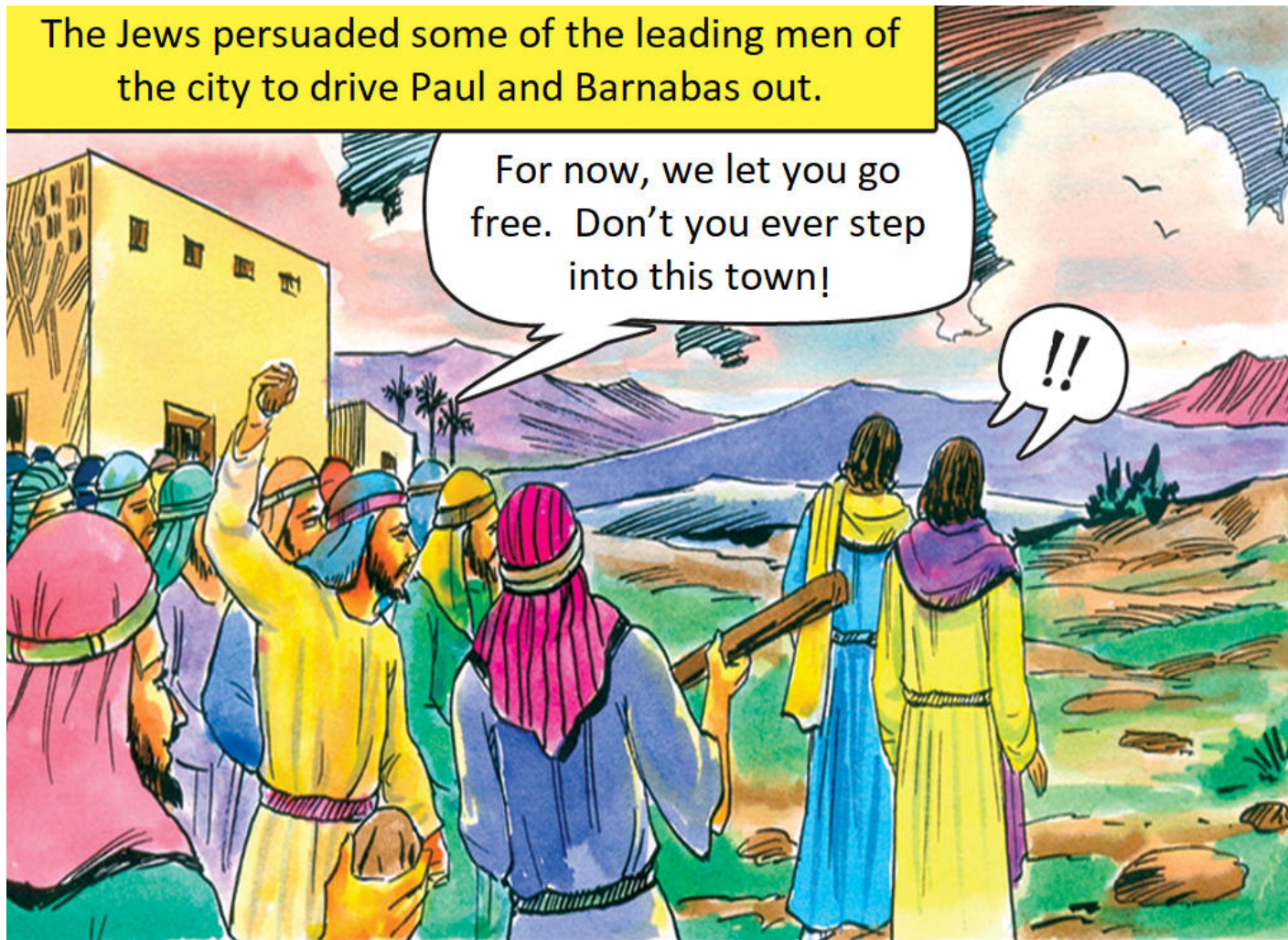
We must drive them out.

For that we must turn also the pagans against them.

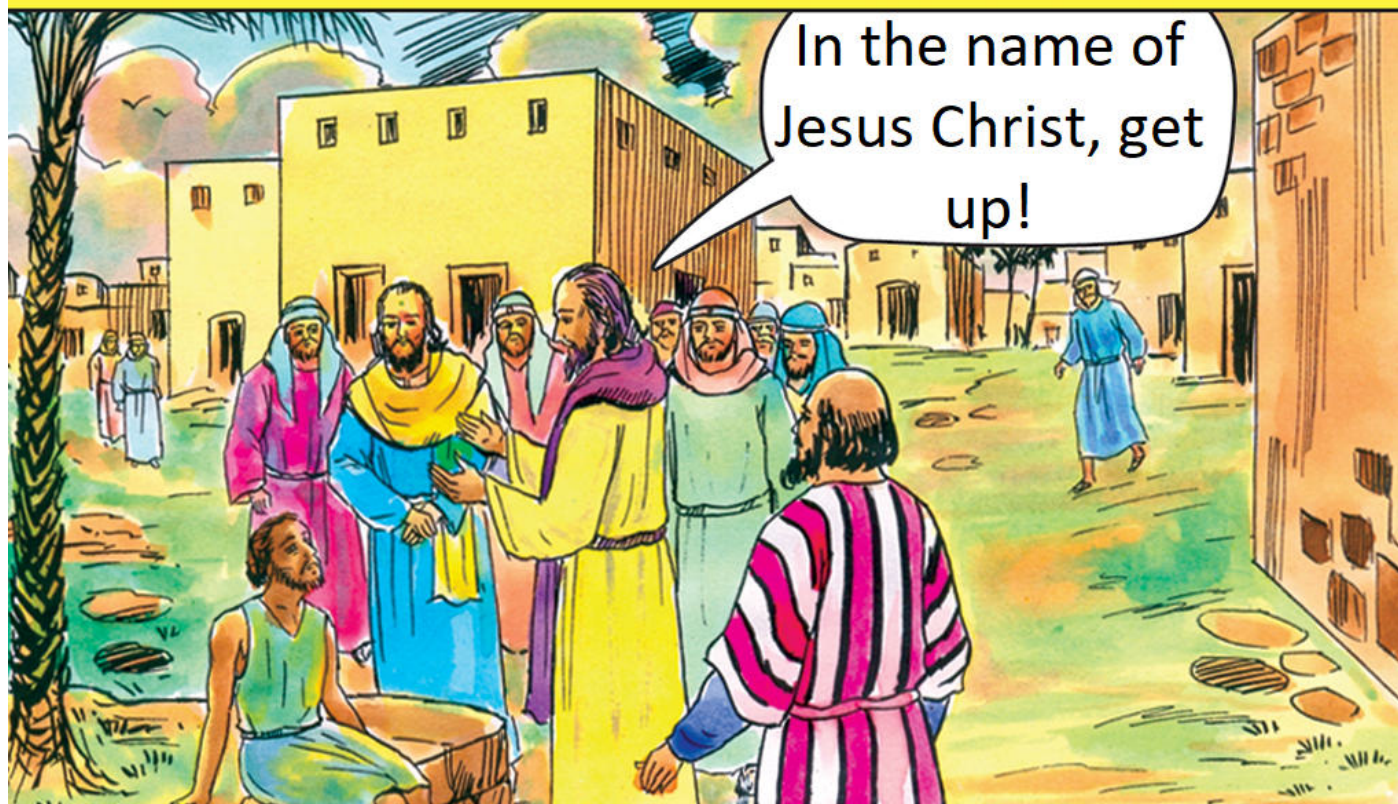
The Jews persuaded some of the leading men of the city to drive Paul and Barnabas out.

For now, we let you go free. Don't you ever step into this town!

!!



They went as far as Iconium and preached so effectively that many Jews and Greeks became believers. But some Jews turned the people against Paul. They went to Lystra.




Miracle! The man born
cripple is walking!

These people are
Gods. Zeus and
Heremes have
visited us.

!

?!!





We must inform
the priests.

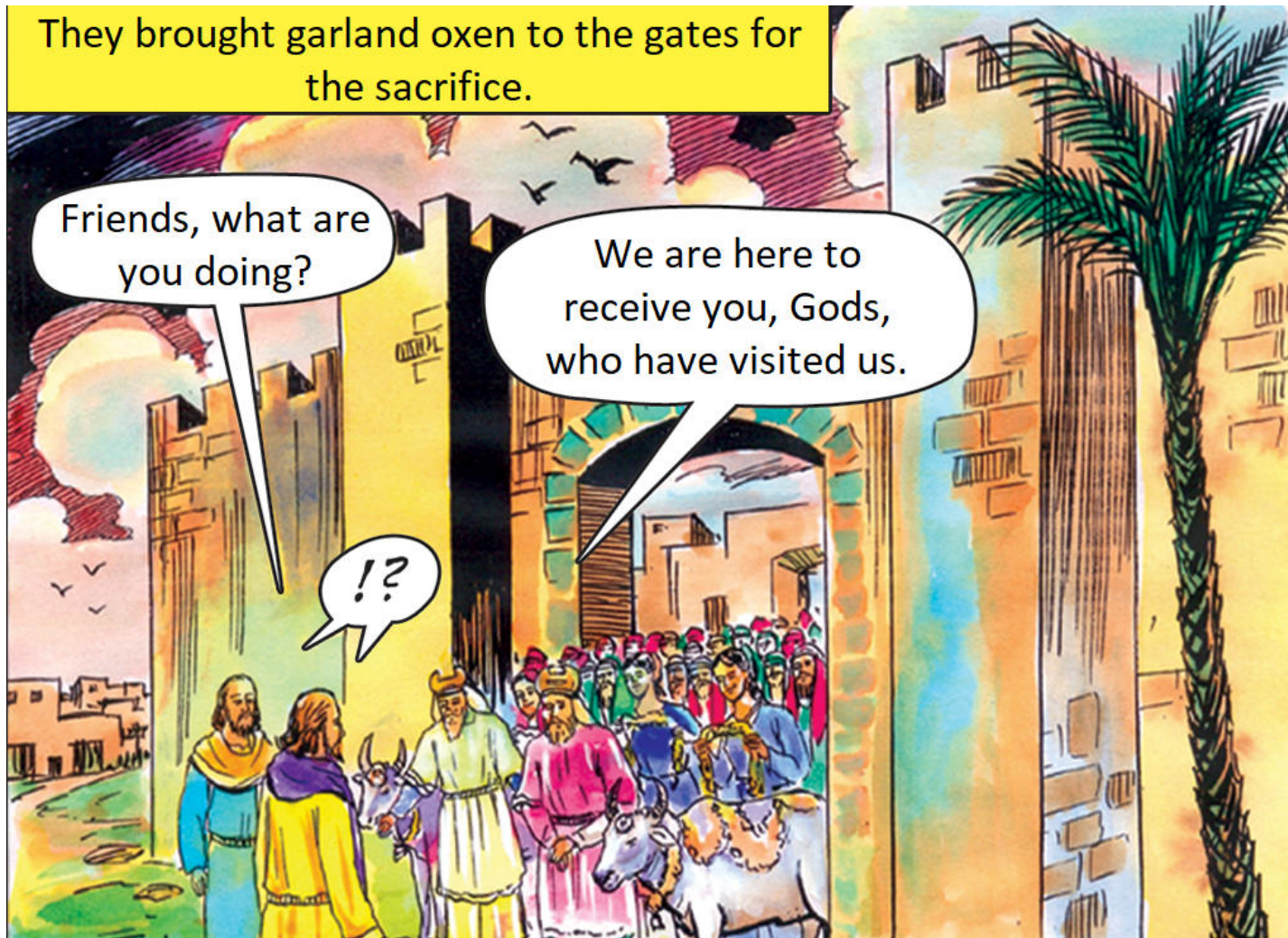
And give them a
proper reception.

They brought garland oxen to the gates for the sacrifice.

Friends, what are you doing?

We are here to receive you, Gods, who have visited us.

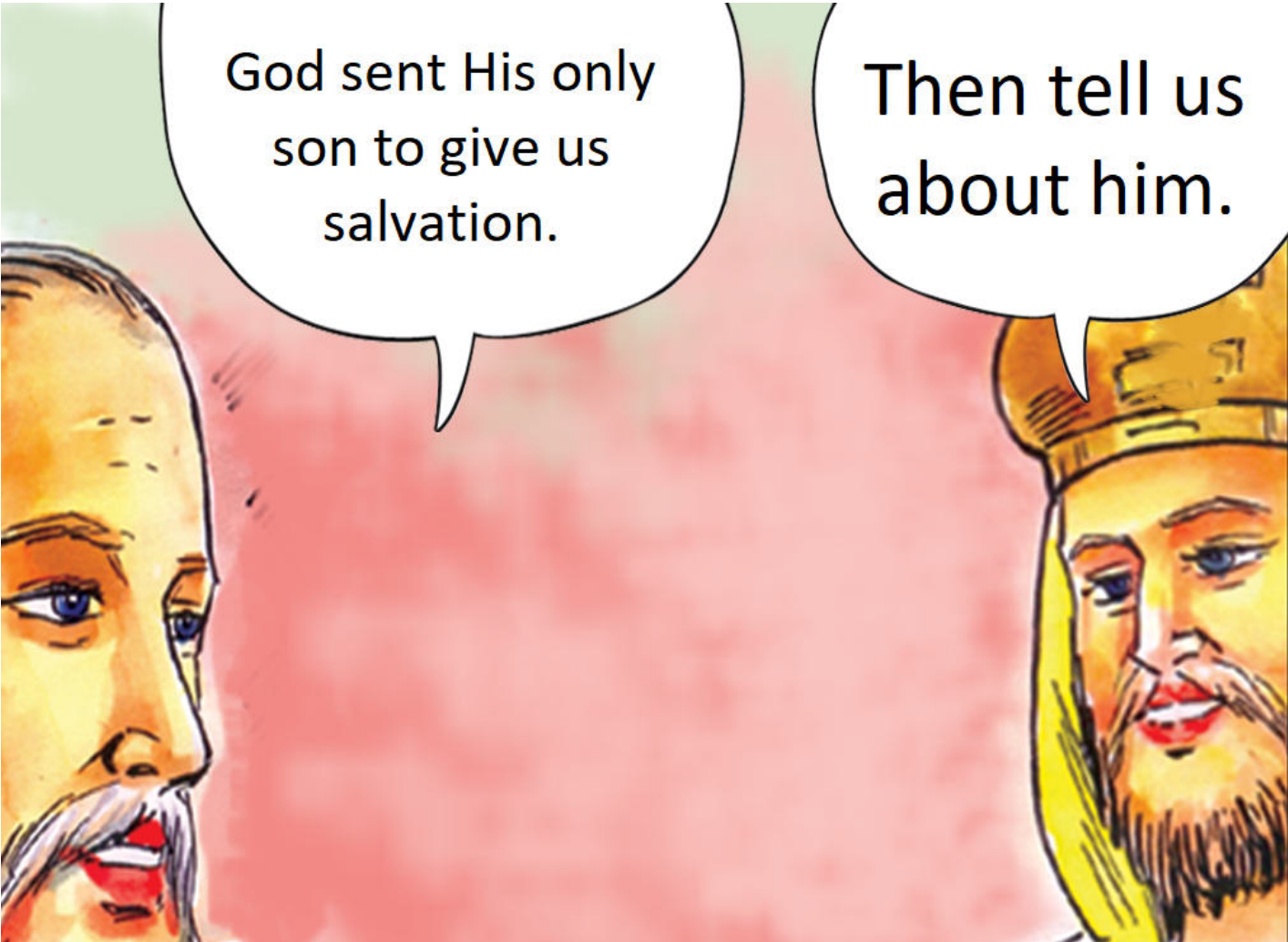
!?



We are just human beings. You must turn from these empty idols to the living God.

There is only one God,
creator of heaven and
earth.

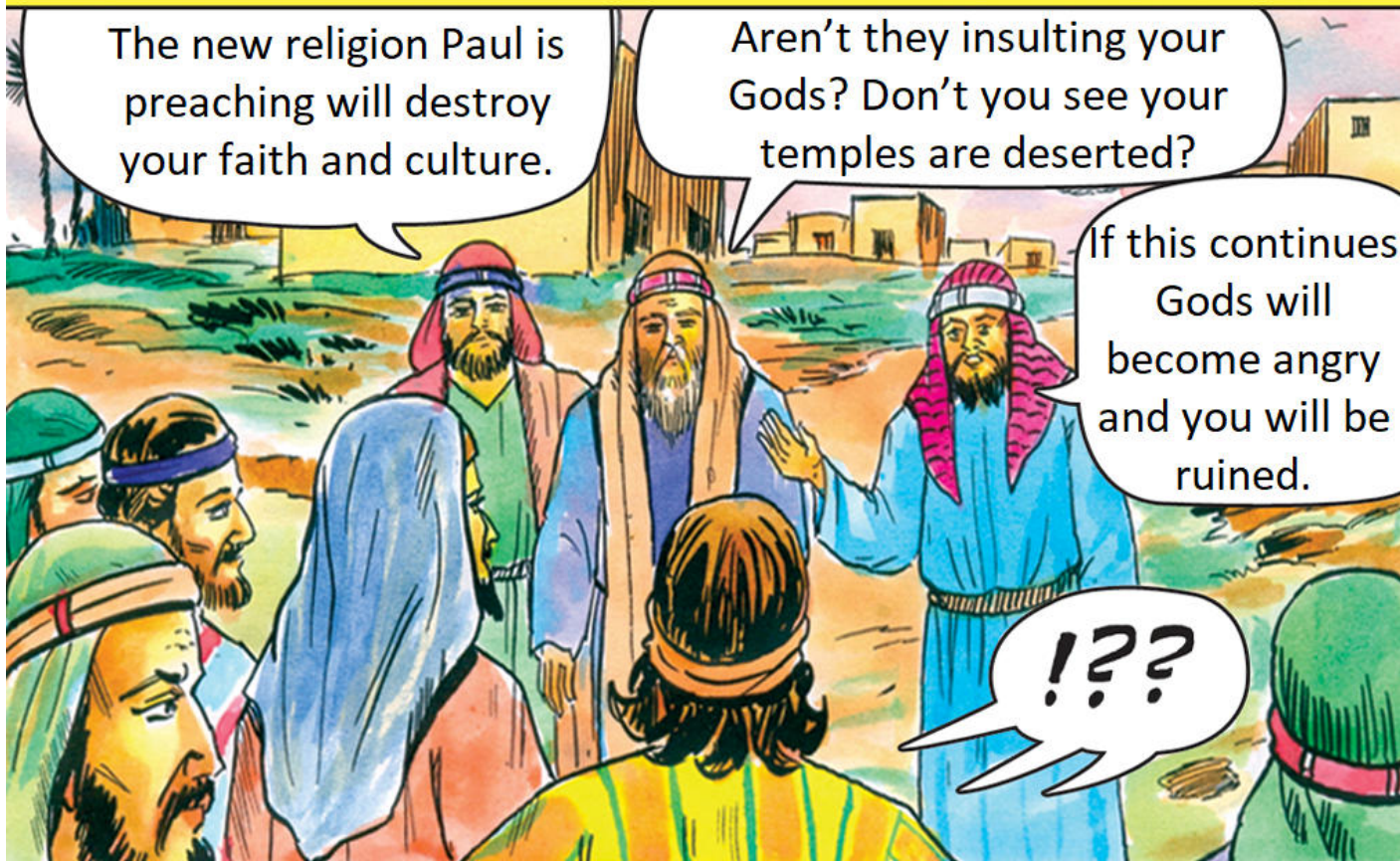




God sent His only
son to give us
salvation.

Then tell us
about him.

They stayed in Lystra and preached the Good News. Many believed in Christ. Hearing this, the Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium:



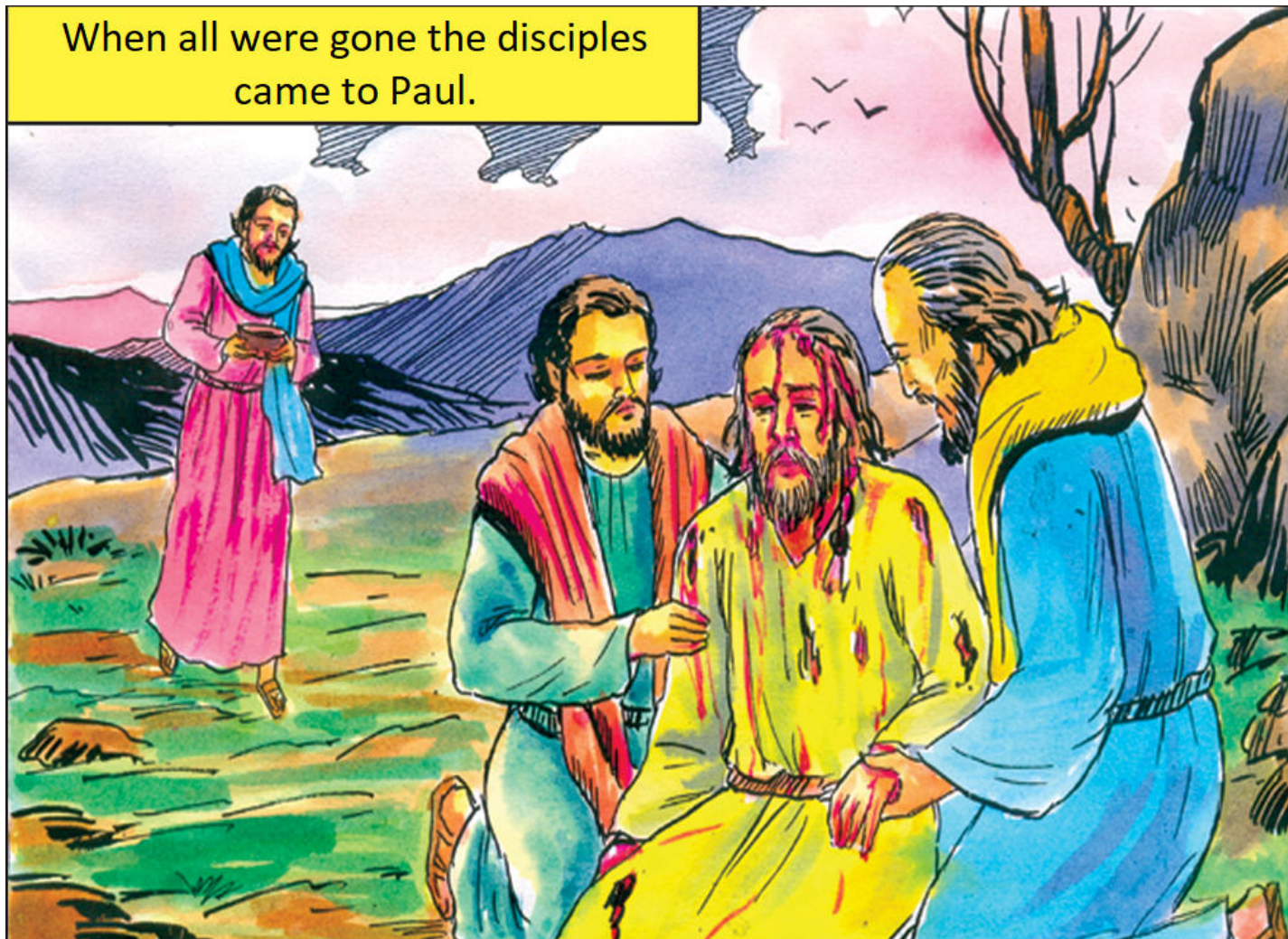
Believing in these lies, People stoned Paul.

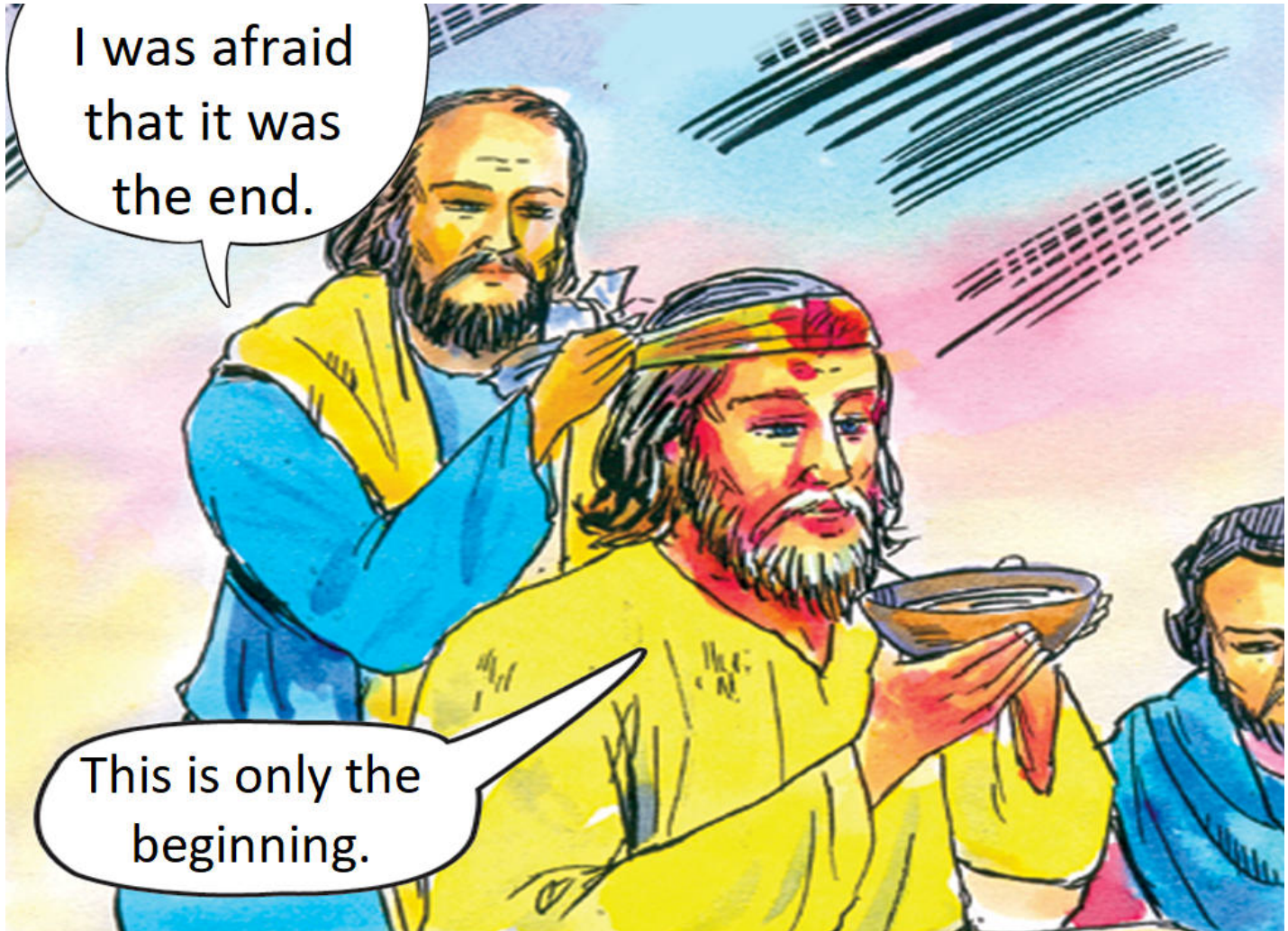
Enough, he is
dead.

Let us throw
him out of
the town.



When all were gone the disciples
came to Paul.





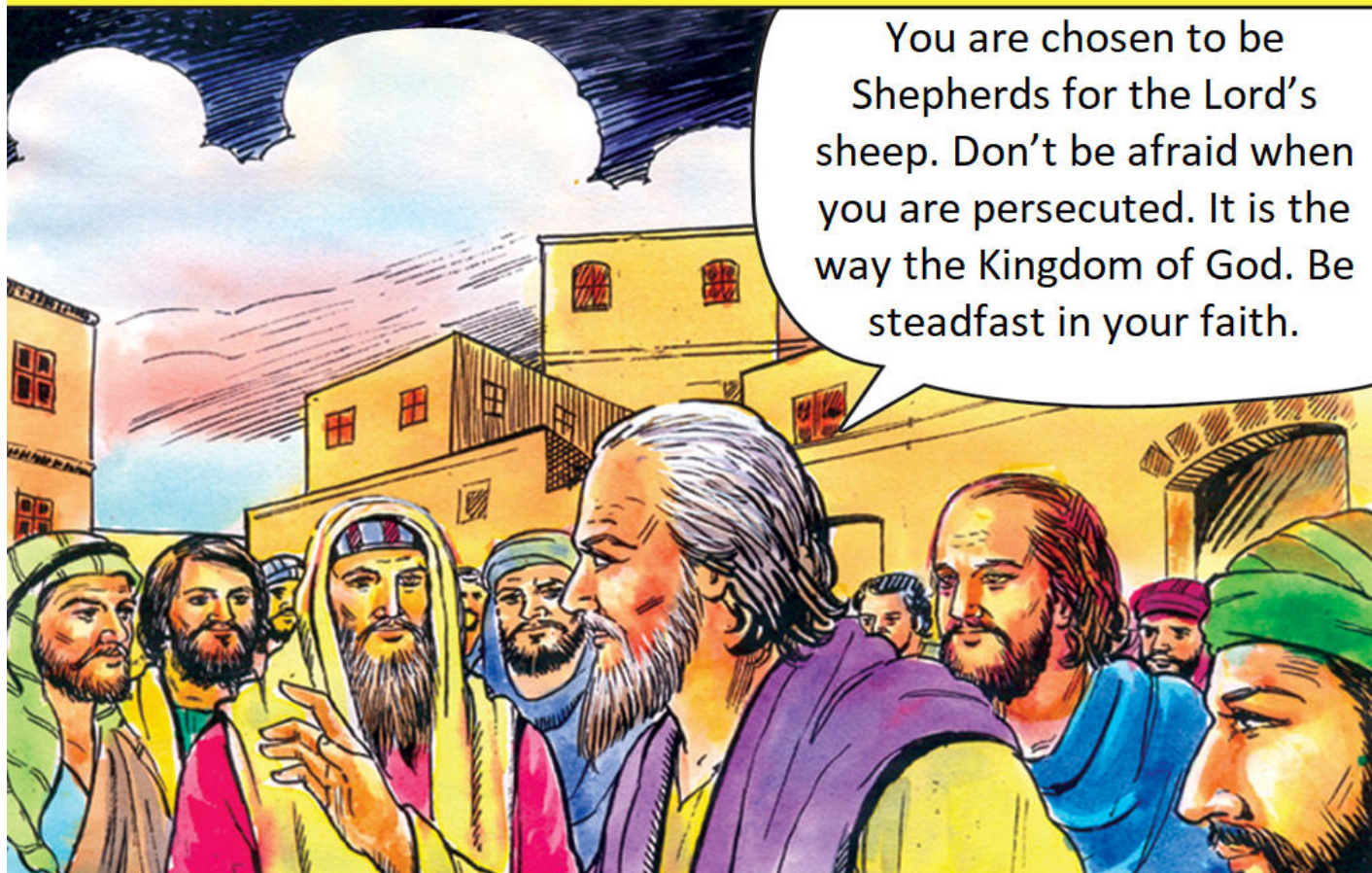
I was afraid
that it was
the end.

This is only the
beginning.

I have been blessed to
share in the suffering of
the Lord who was
crucified for me. Let us go
to Derbe.



After leaving Derbe, they visited all the Churches they had founded and appointed elders in each of them.



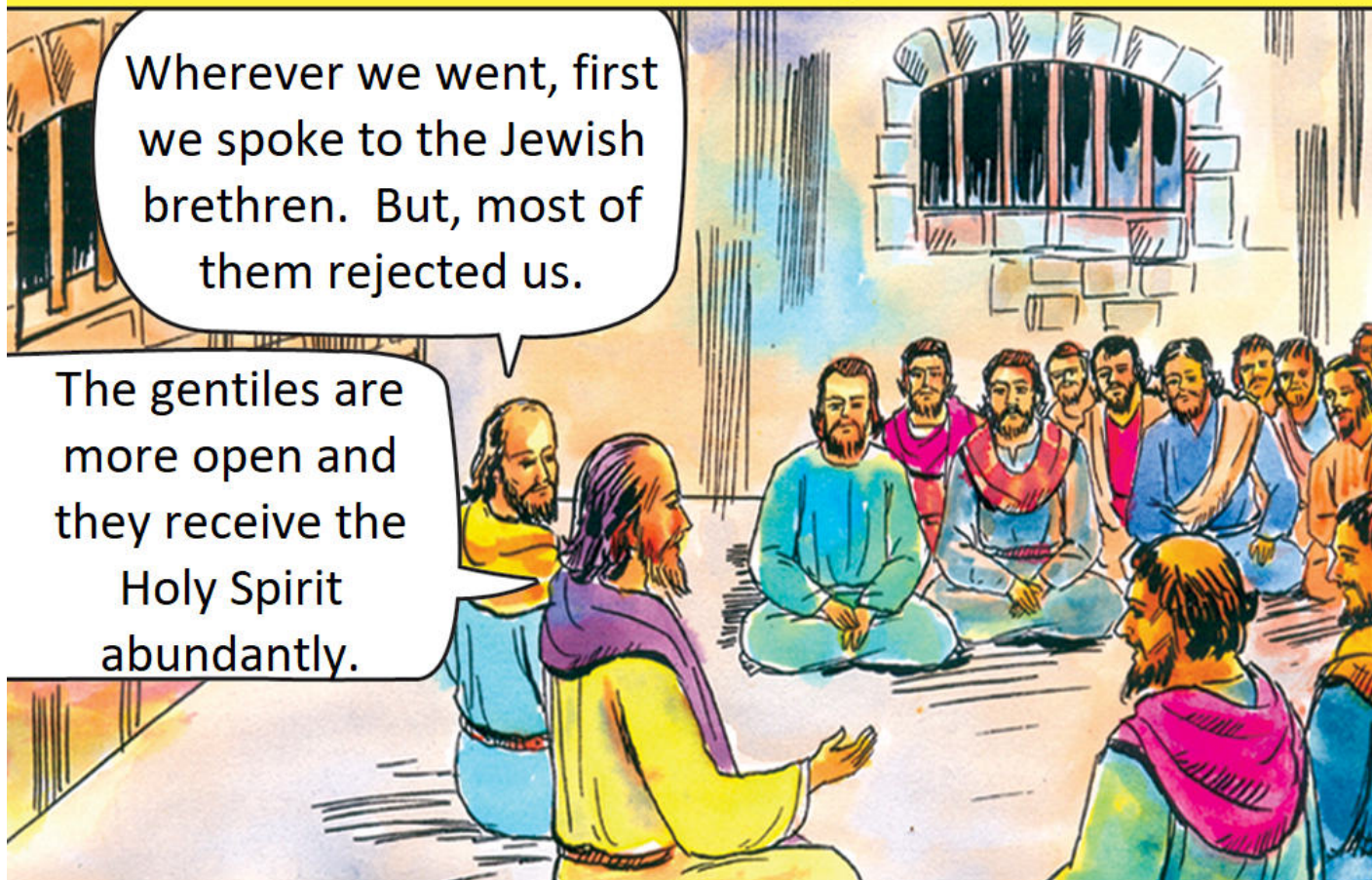
FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL



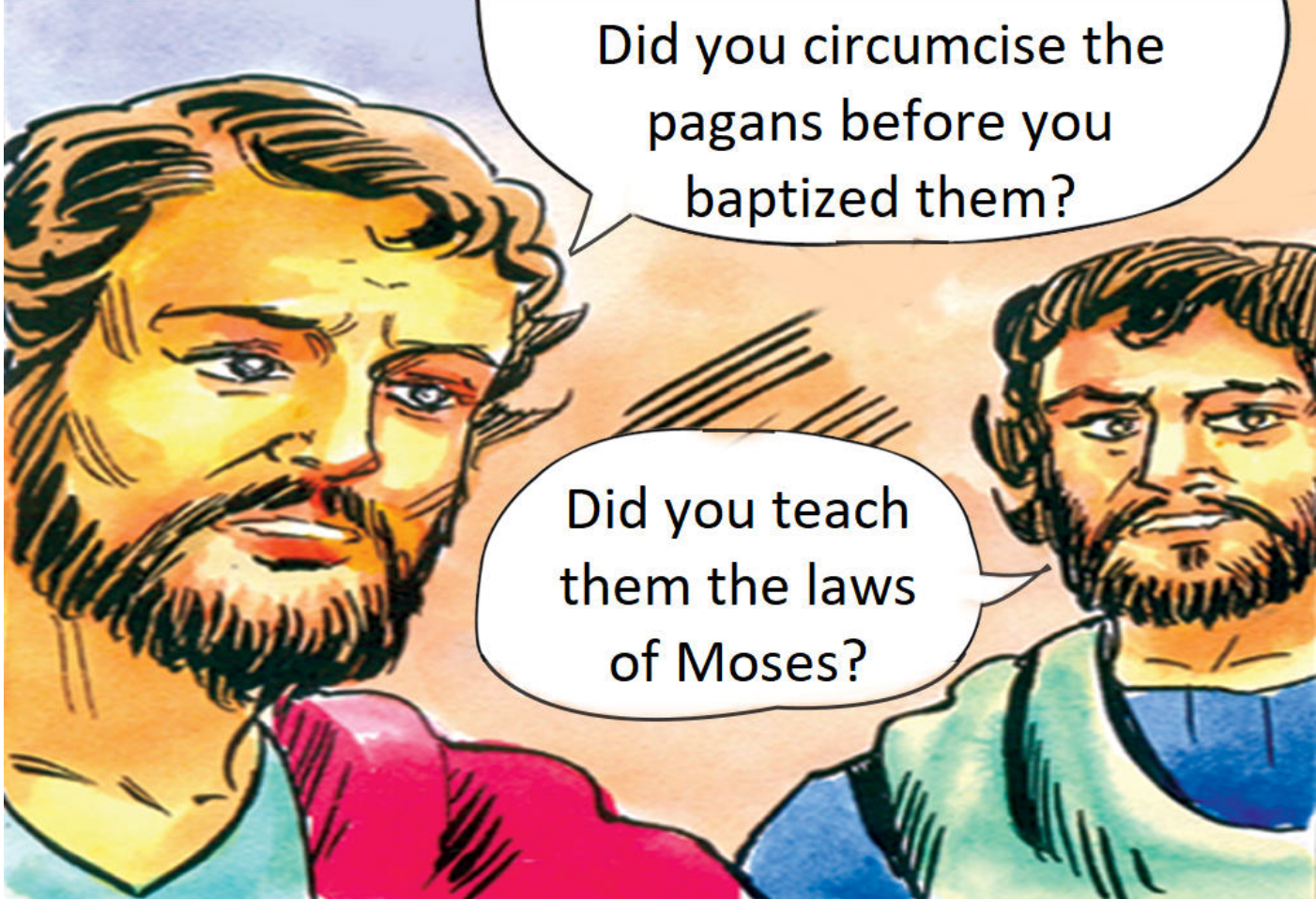
Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch and they told the disciples all that God had done through them.

Wherever we went, first we spoke to the Jewish brethren. But, most of them rejected us.

The gentiles are more open and they receive the Holy Spirit abundantly.



The leaders from Jerusalem questioned them.




Did you circumcise the
pagans before you
baptized them?

Did you teach
them the laws
of Moses?

We preached only about Jesus Christ who was crucified and was raised from the dead.

The promise was made to the Jews and no one can become a Christian without first becoming a Jew.





Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise. We must obey the law of Christ not of Moses.

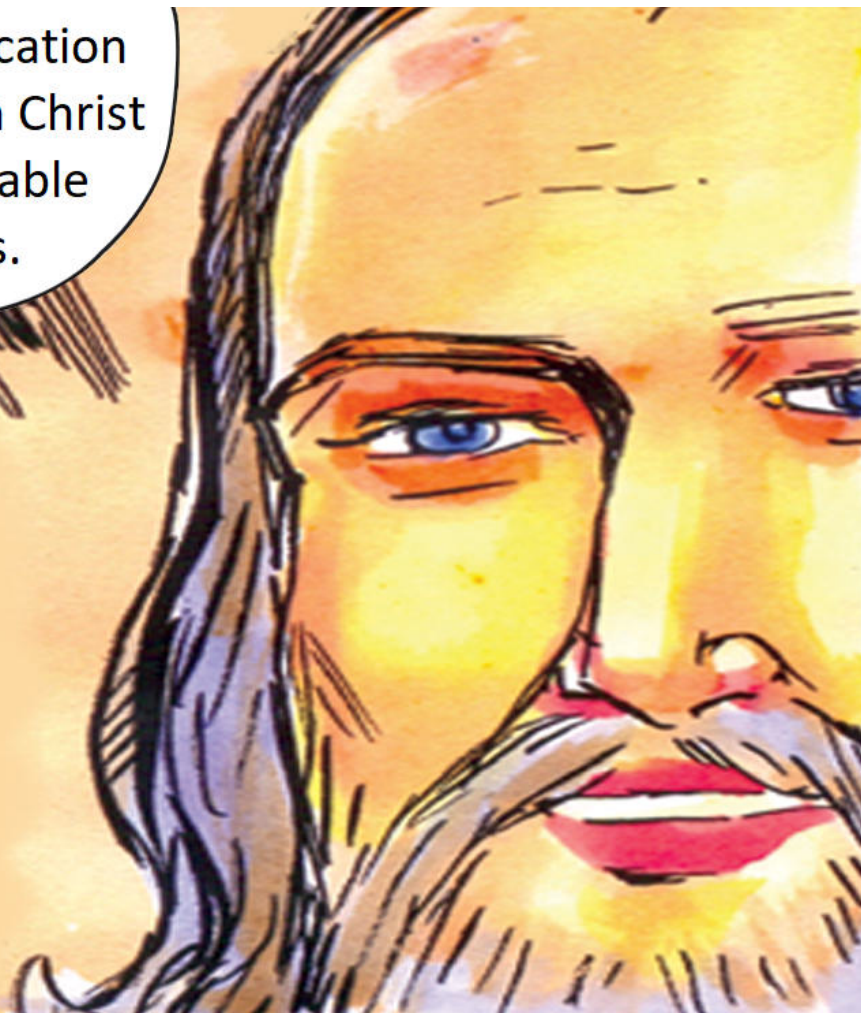
But, first become a Jew then a Christian.

We witnessed the Holy Spirit coming upon the pagans who were not circumcised.

You are forgetting
your origin. This line
of thought and action
are dangerous.



The faith and justification
we received through Christ
were never attainable
through Moses.



You have no authority to preach the Gospel as you like.
It is to the Apostles that the Lord entrusted His Church.

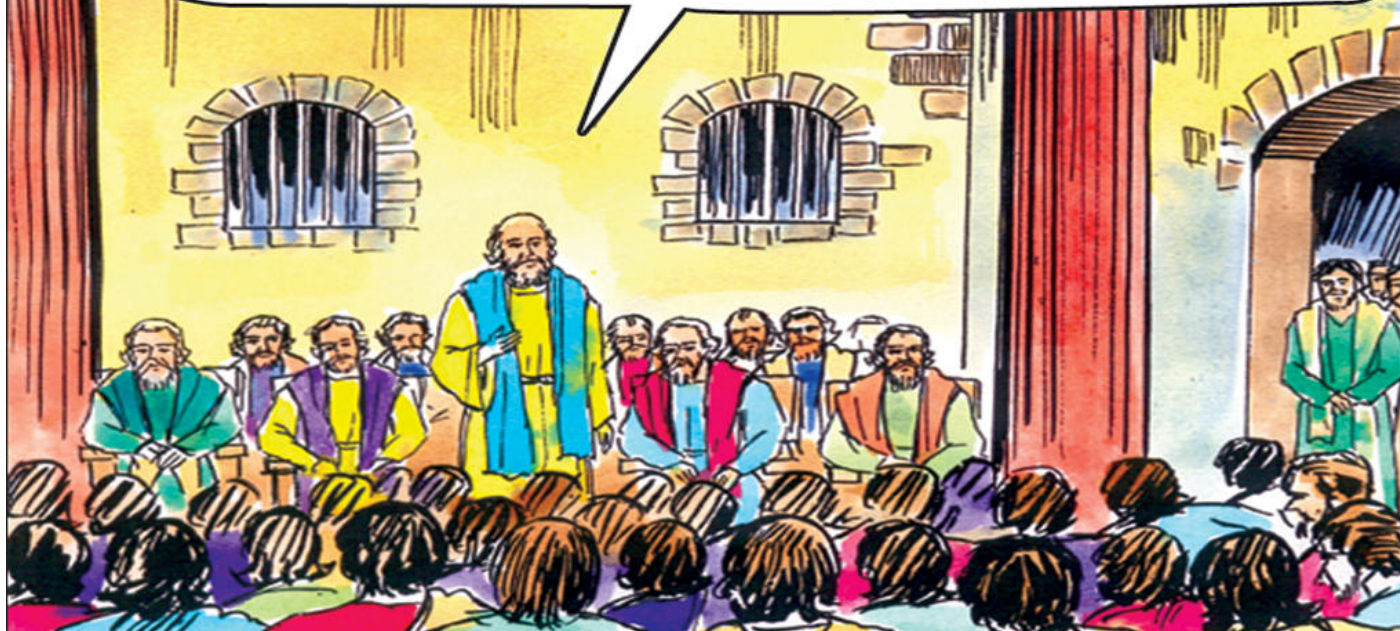
Then let us discuss it with the Apostles.

Right, let us go
to Jerusalem.

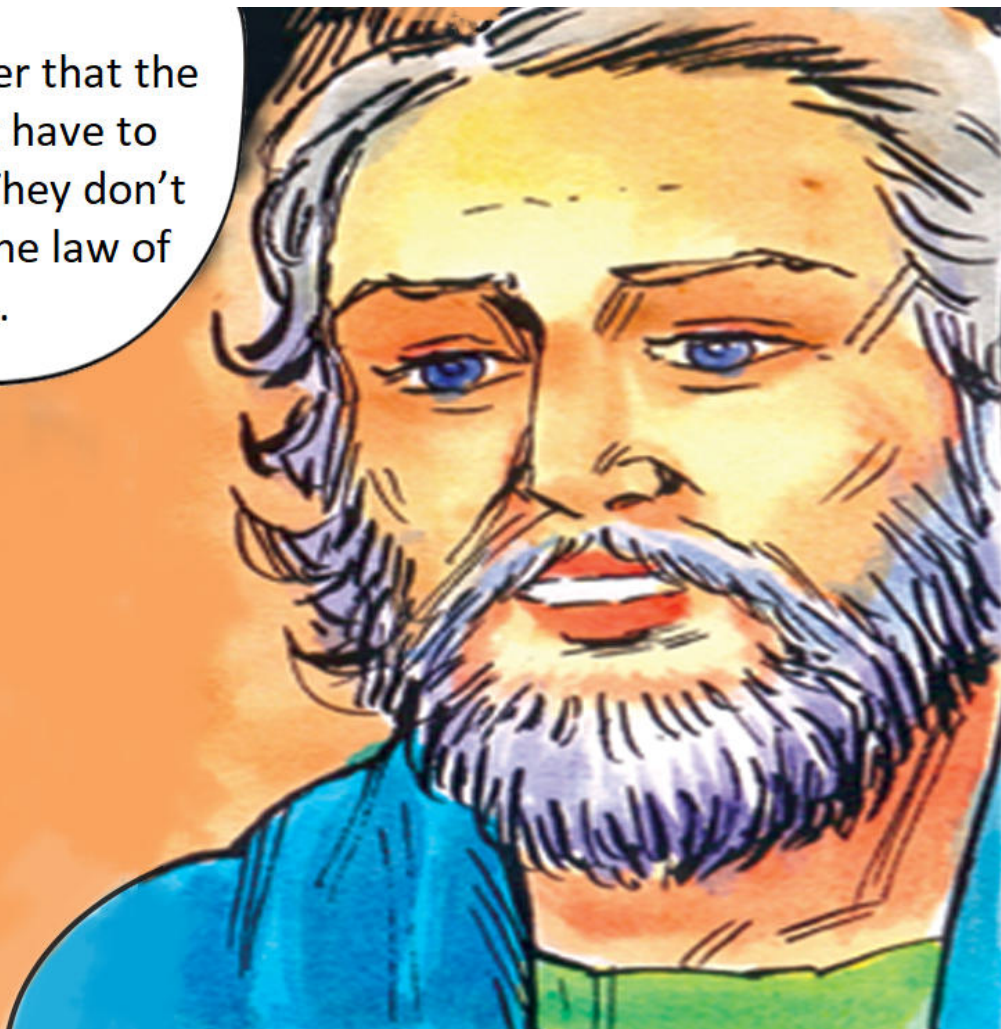


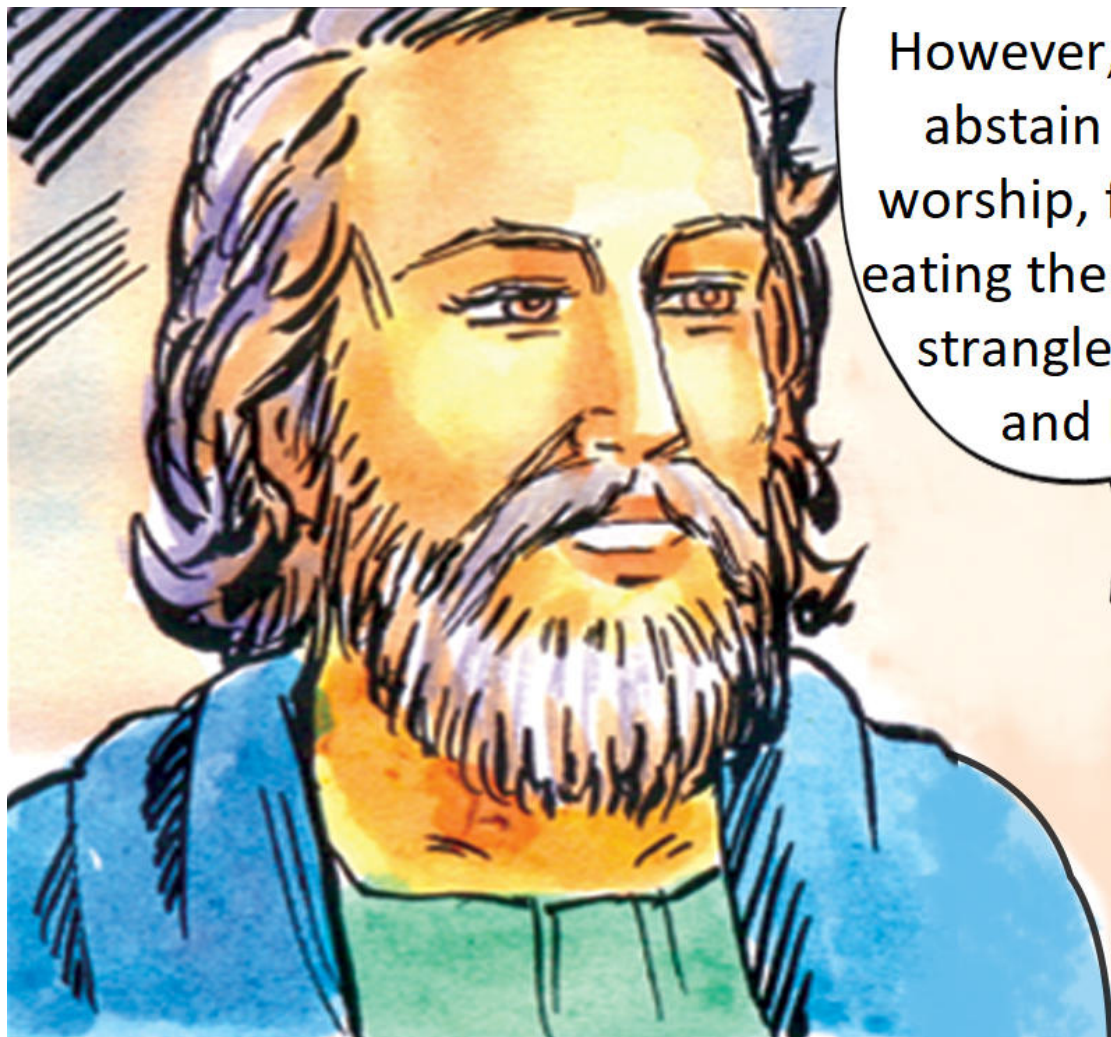
The Apostles and elders met in Jerusalem and discussed the matter.

Brothers, God showed His approval of the uncircumcised pagans by giving the Holy Spirit to them. It would only provoke God's anger if we impose this burden on them.



I agree with Peter that the
pagans do not have to
become Jews. They don't
have to obey the law of
Moses.

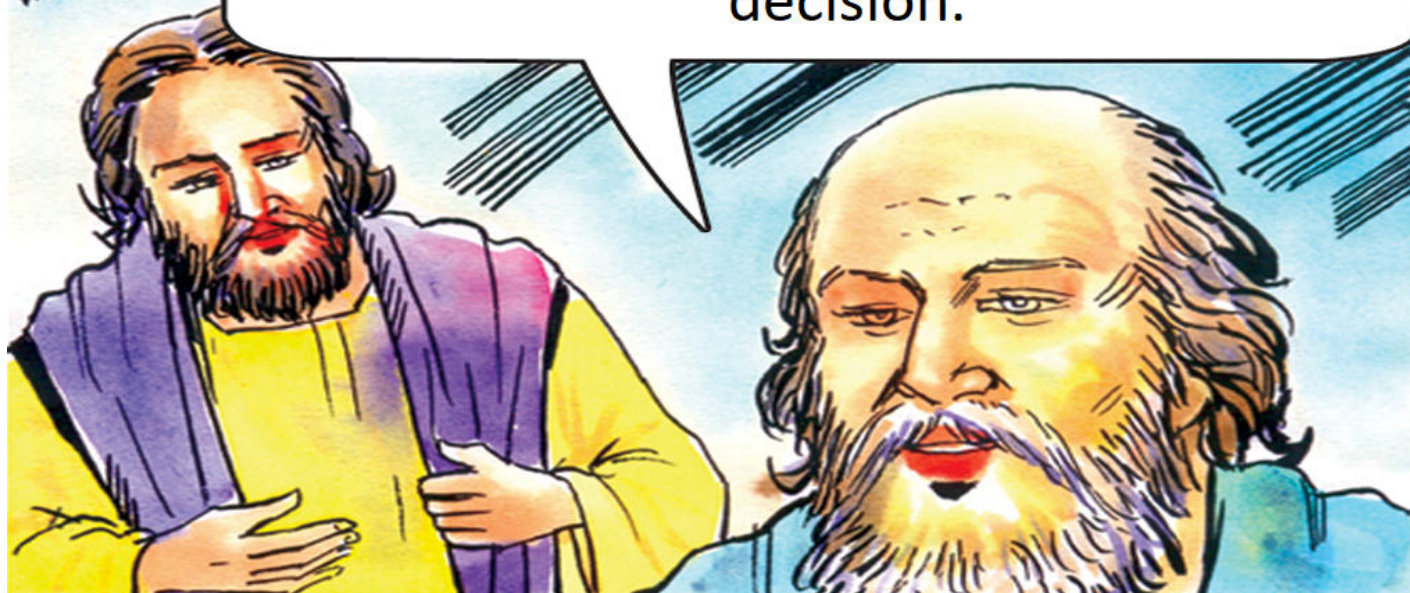




However, they must
abstain from idol
worship, fornication,
eating the meat of the
strangled animals
and blood.

This is the decision of the Holy Spirit. Let us write a letter to all the brothers to this effect.

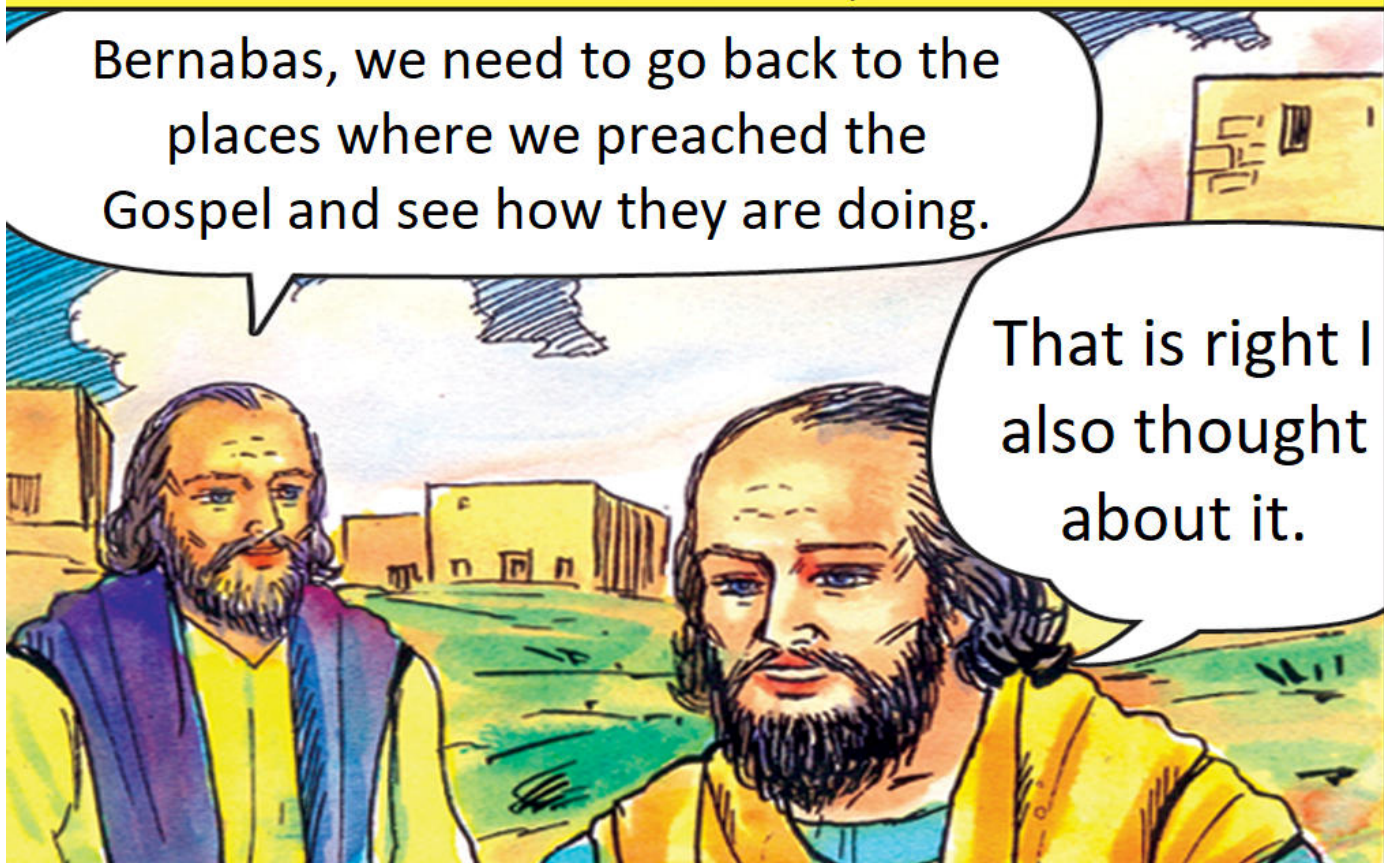
Judas and Silas shall go to Antioch with the letters and inform them about our decision.



The decision of the Jerusalem council gave full sanction of the Evangelization among the Gentiles. With new vigor and enthusiasm Paul and Bernabas got back to Antioch. One day.

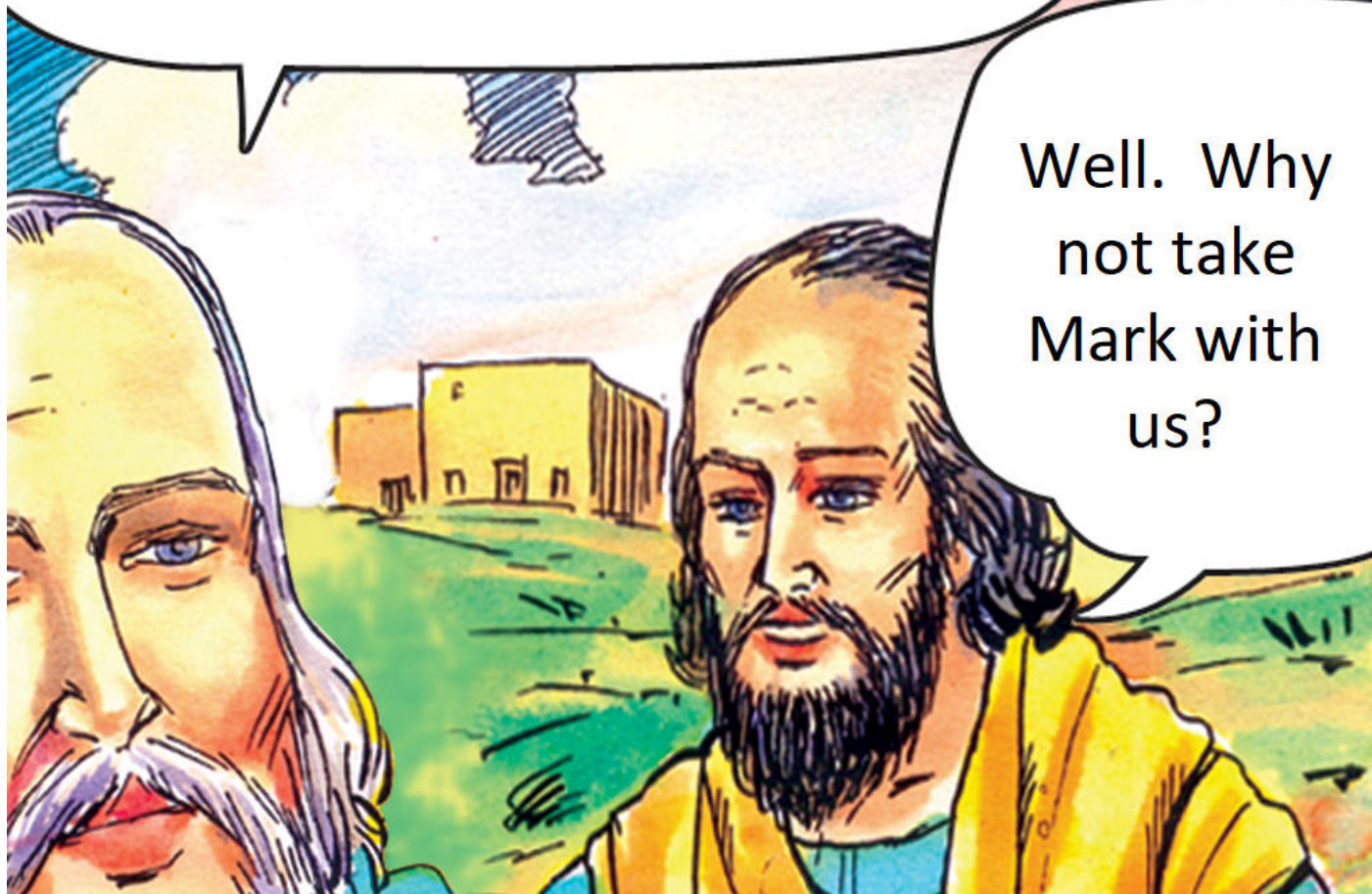
Bernabas, we need to go back to the places where we preached the Gospel and see how they are doing.

That is right I also thought about it.



Then, let us start next week?

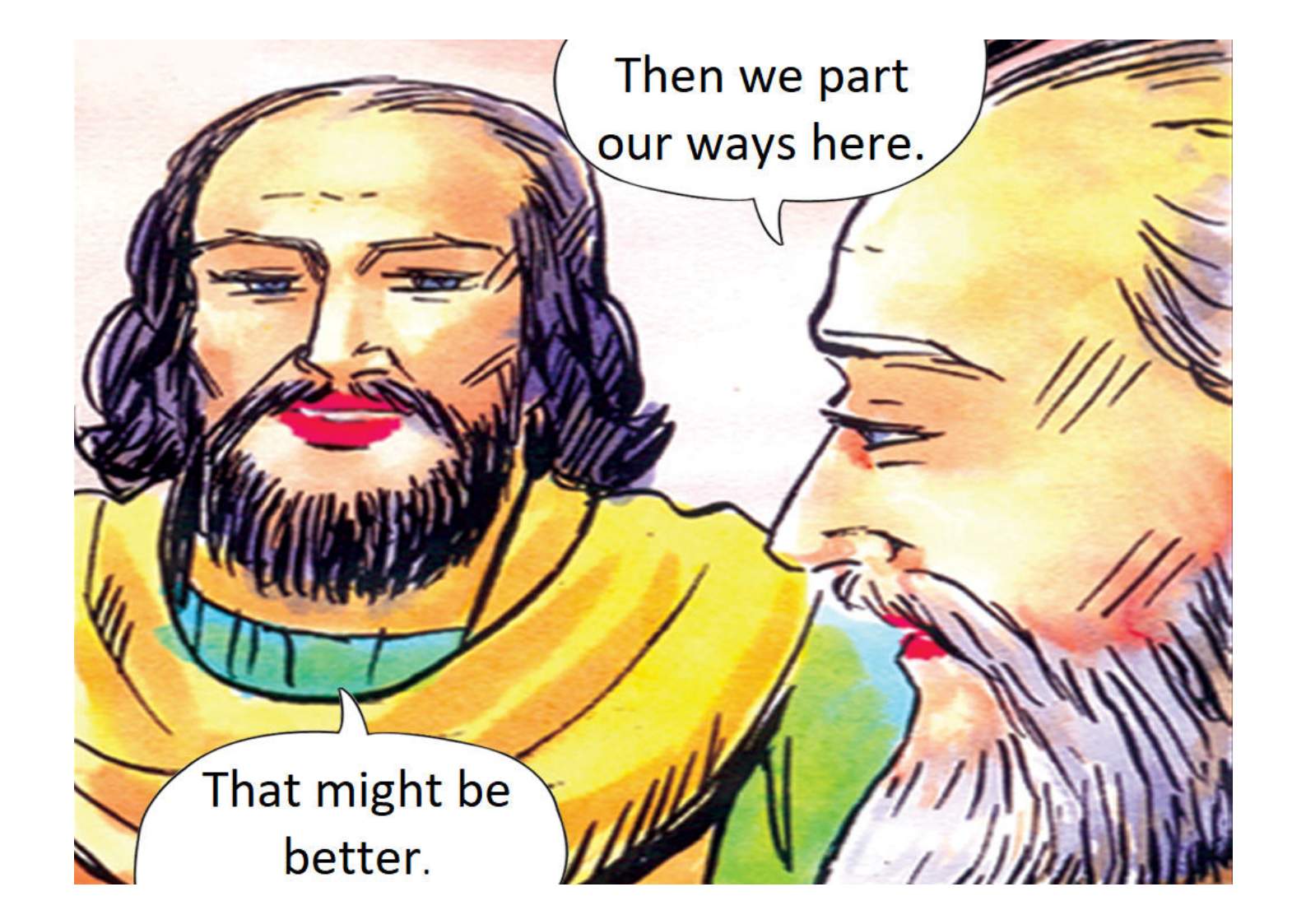
Well. Why
not take
Mark with
us?



No, the last time he turned back in the middle of the journey. He may change his mind again.

I am not ready for any travel without Mark.





Then we part
our ways here.

That might be
better.

Bernabás sailed off with Mark to Cypress. Paul chose Silas to accompany him. They travelled by land and reached Lystra.

We were afraid that we would never see you alive again.

They are really sorry for stoning you. Many of those took part in the event are now our best missionaries.

Day by day the Church is growing. Now the people have great respect for us.


Son, what is your name?





Timothy.

He has preached the Gospel in
Iconium and Lystra and has
performed many miracles.



Timothy, would you like to come
with us to preach the Gospel?

I will be glad to.

!

With Timothy Paul went to Troas.

The famous Troy, the town that was destroyed on account of a woman, is not far from here.

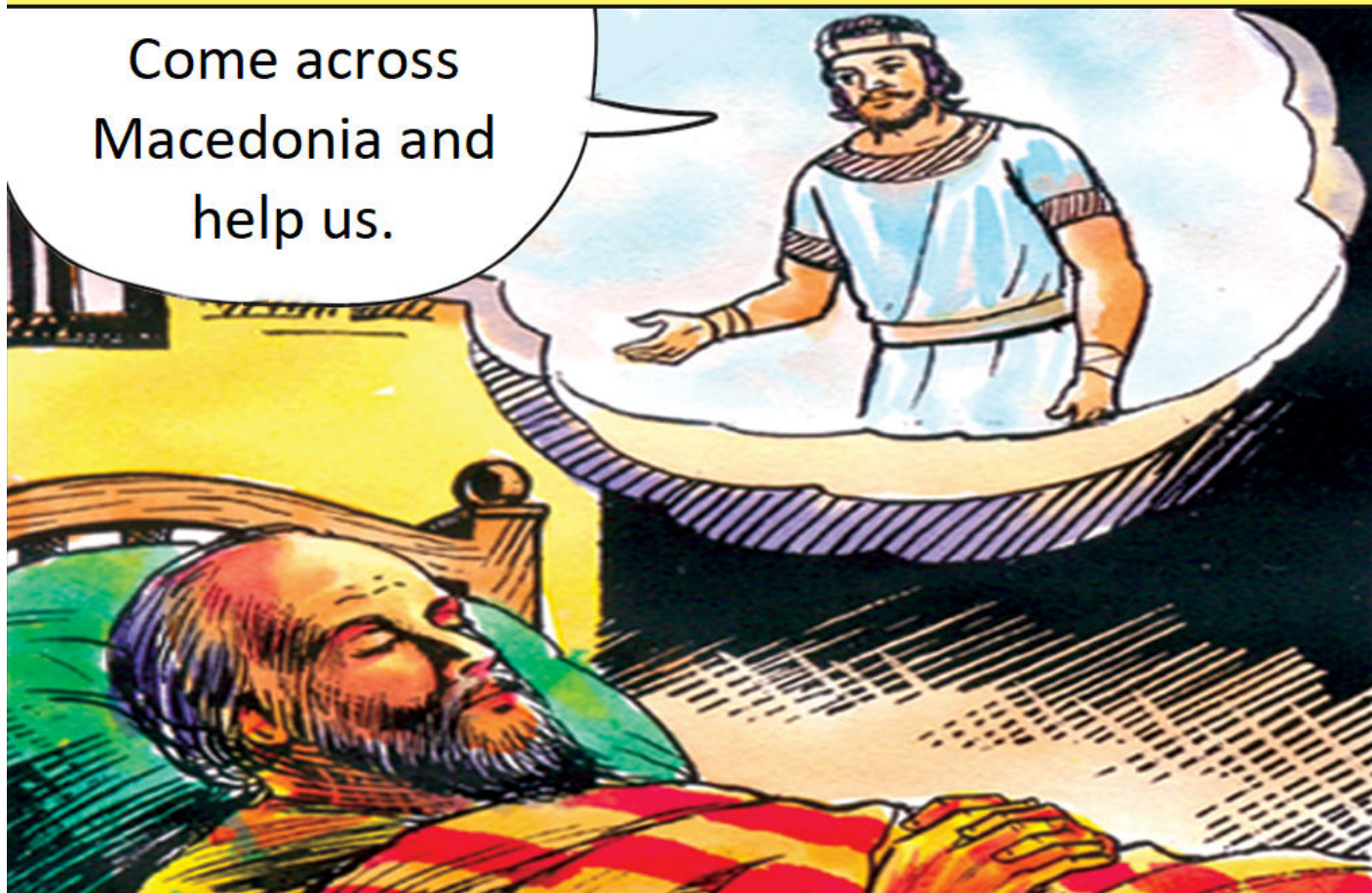
Now we have reached the western tip of Asia. Where shall we go next?

The Holy Spirit who led us this far will show the way.



That night a Macedonian appeared to Paul in a dream.

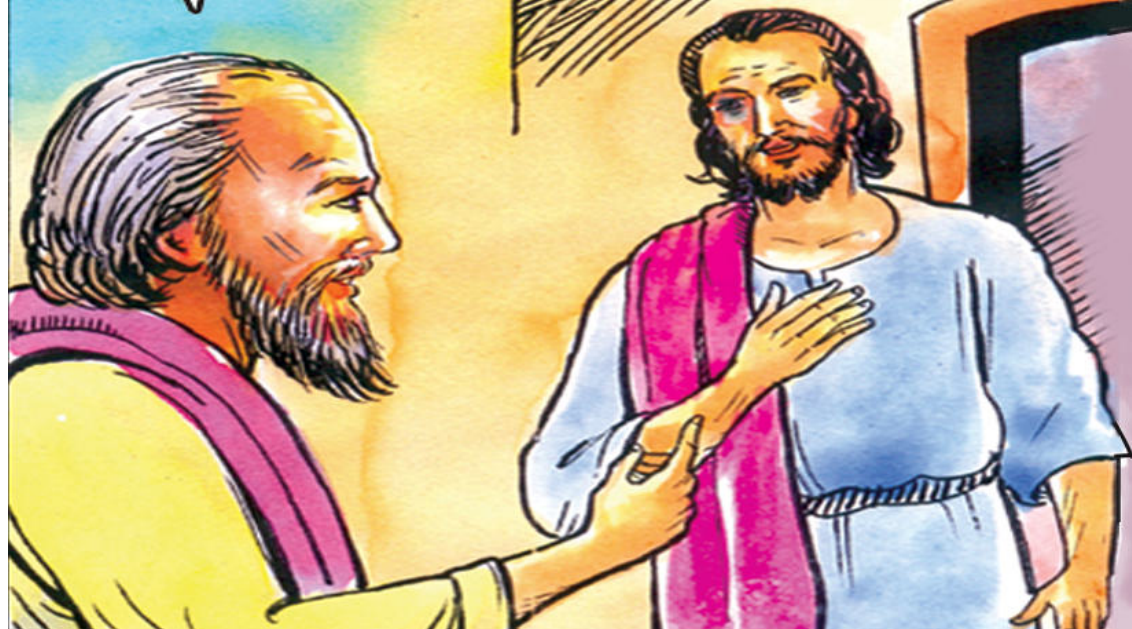
Come across
Macedonia and
help us.



The next morning.

Who are you?

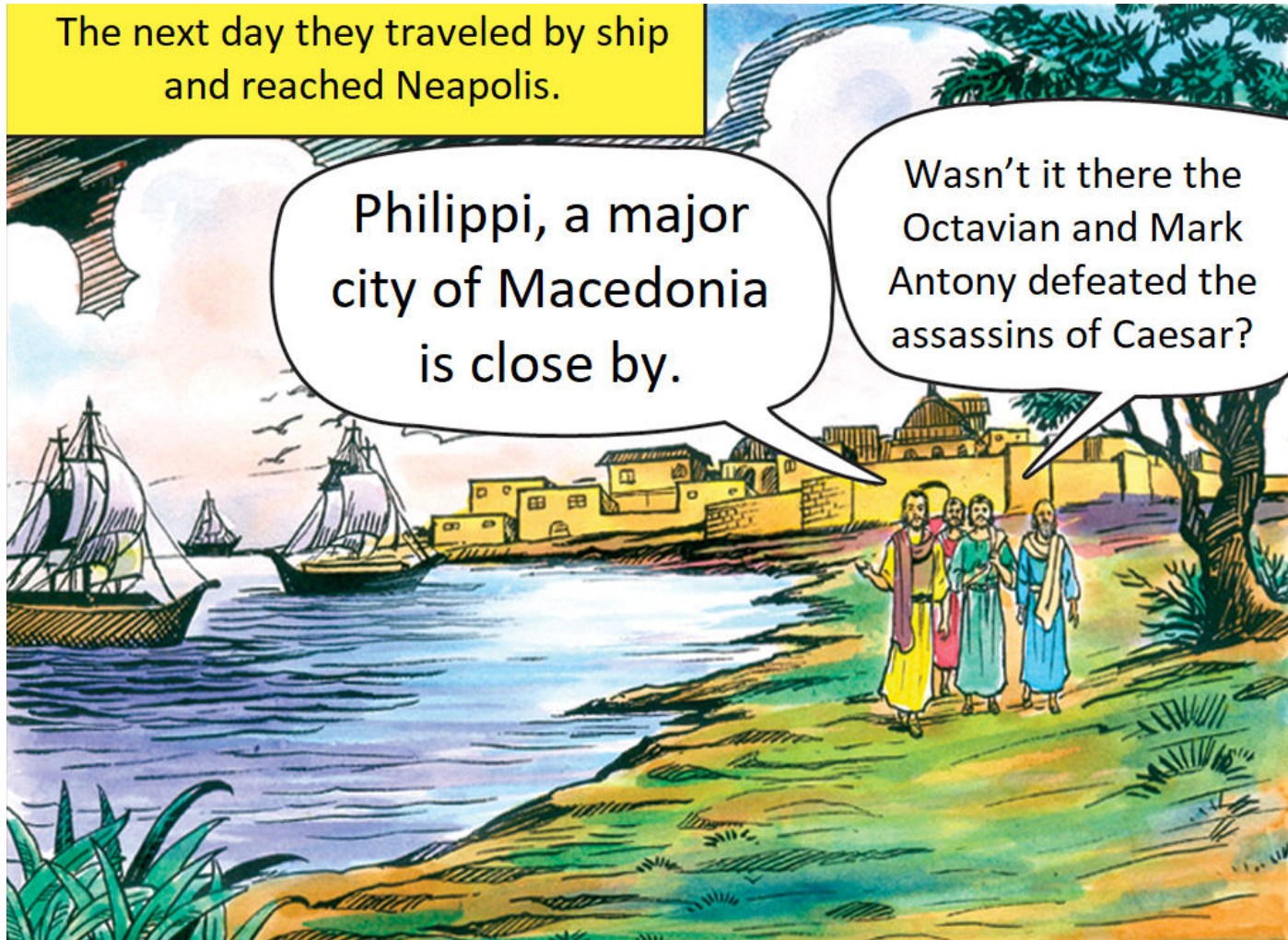
Luke, would you please
come to Macedonia and
preach the Gospel to us?



The next day they traveled by ship
and reached Neapolis.

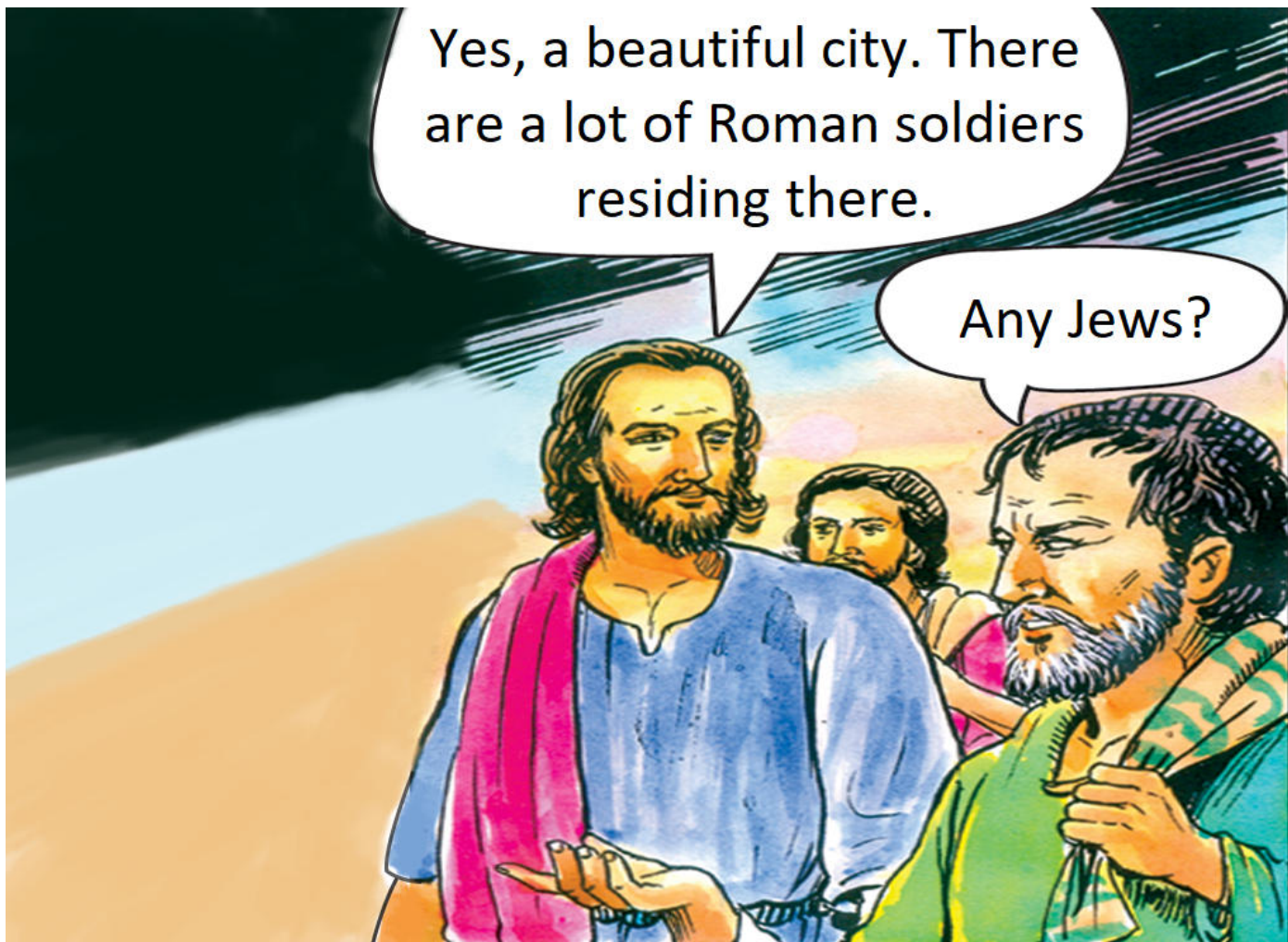
Philippi, a major
city of Macedonia
is close by.

Wasn't it there the
Octavian and Mark
Antony defeated the
assassins of Caesar?



Yes, a beautiful city. There
are a lot of Roman soldiers
residing there.

Any Jews?

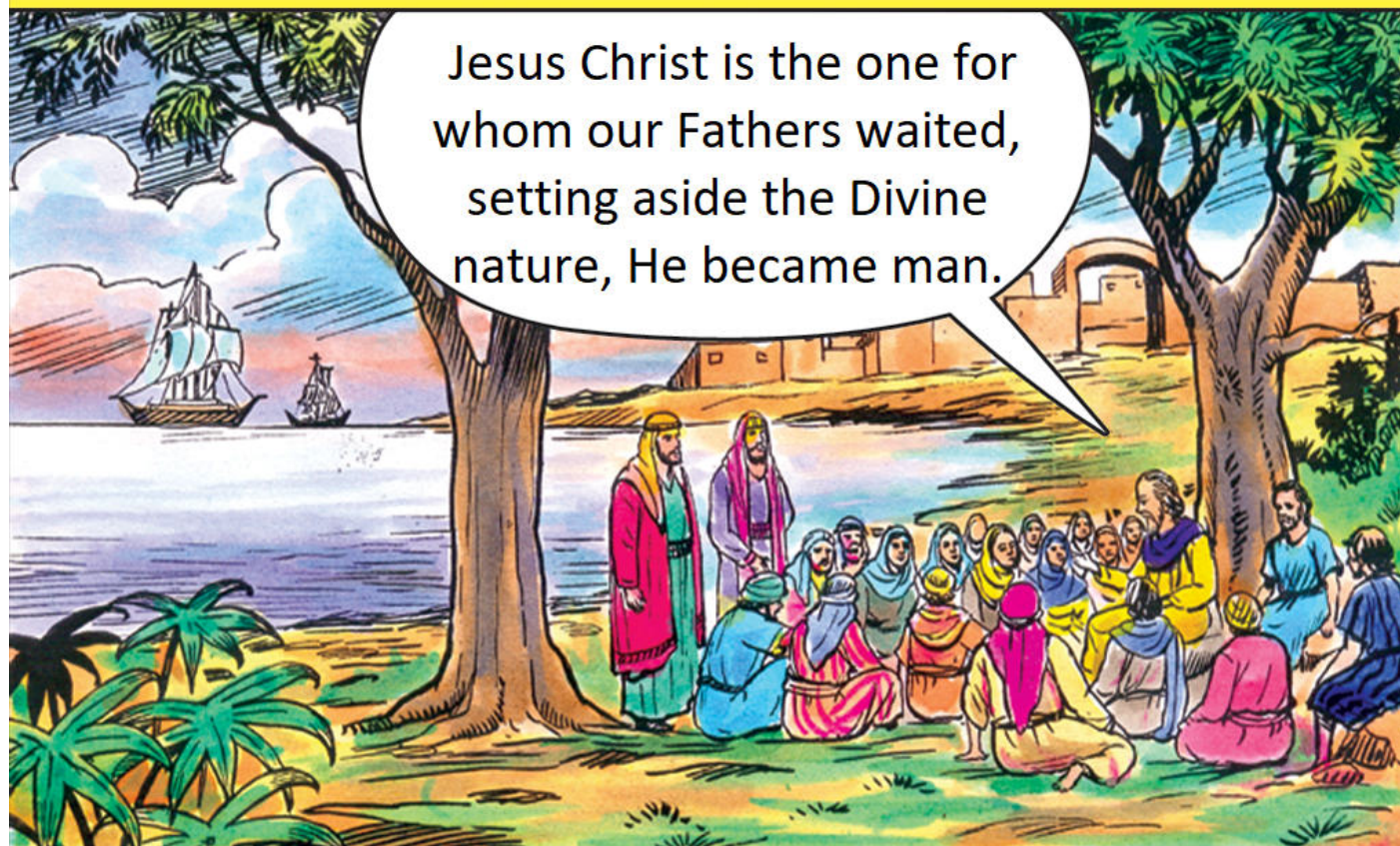


There is a small community of Jews.
They have no Synagogue and so
they at the river side to pray.

Let us go
there.



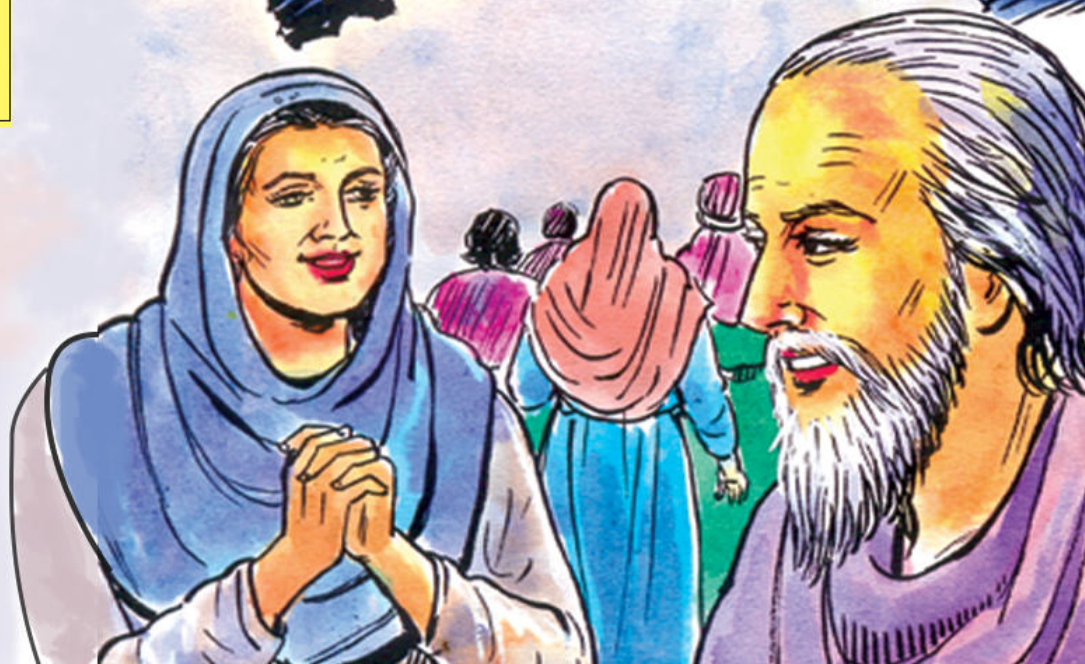
Paul and company reached Philippi and took part in the prayer meeting of the Jews. Paul spoke to them about Jesus Christ.




When the Assembly was dispersed, after the prayer meeting, a devout woman Lydia met Paul.

Myself and our family believe in Jesus Christ.

Then receive the baptism and join the disciples.





We are ready, would you please come to our house?

Sure.

Paul and his companions stayed with Lydia and preached the Gospel. Many believed in Jesus Christ. One day:

Here are the servants
of the Most High.
They are teaching the
way of Salvation.

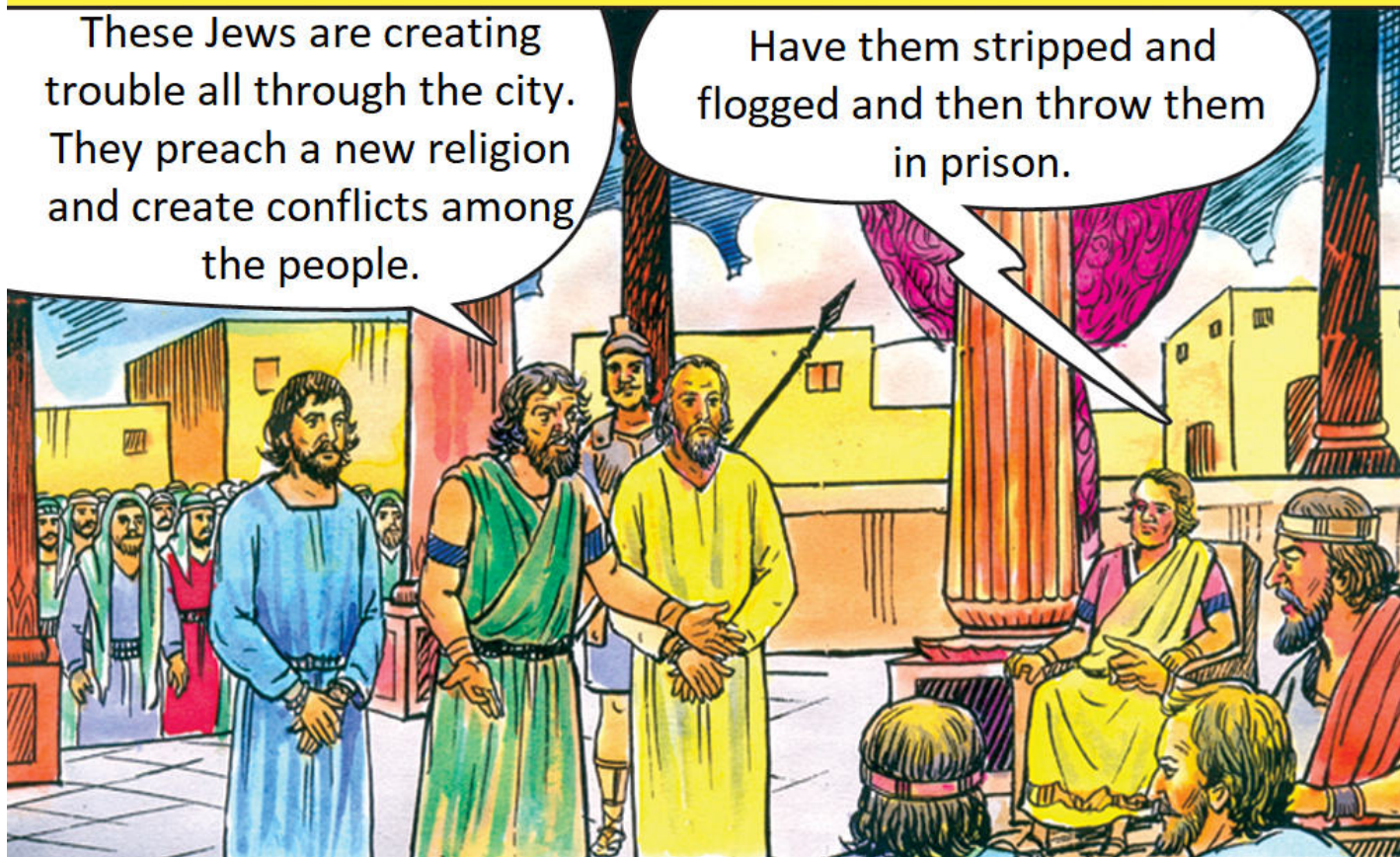
Evil Spirit in the
name of Jesus
Christ, I command
you leave her.



The girl lost her ability to foretell the future. Her masters became furious and dragged Paul and Silas before the Magistrates.

These Jews are creating trouble all through the city. They preach a new religion and create conflicts among the people.

Have them stripped and flogged and then throw them in prison.



The next morning.

The judges have
set you free. You
can go.

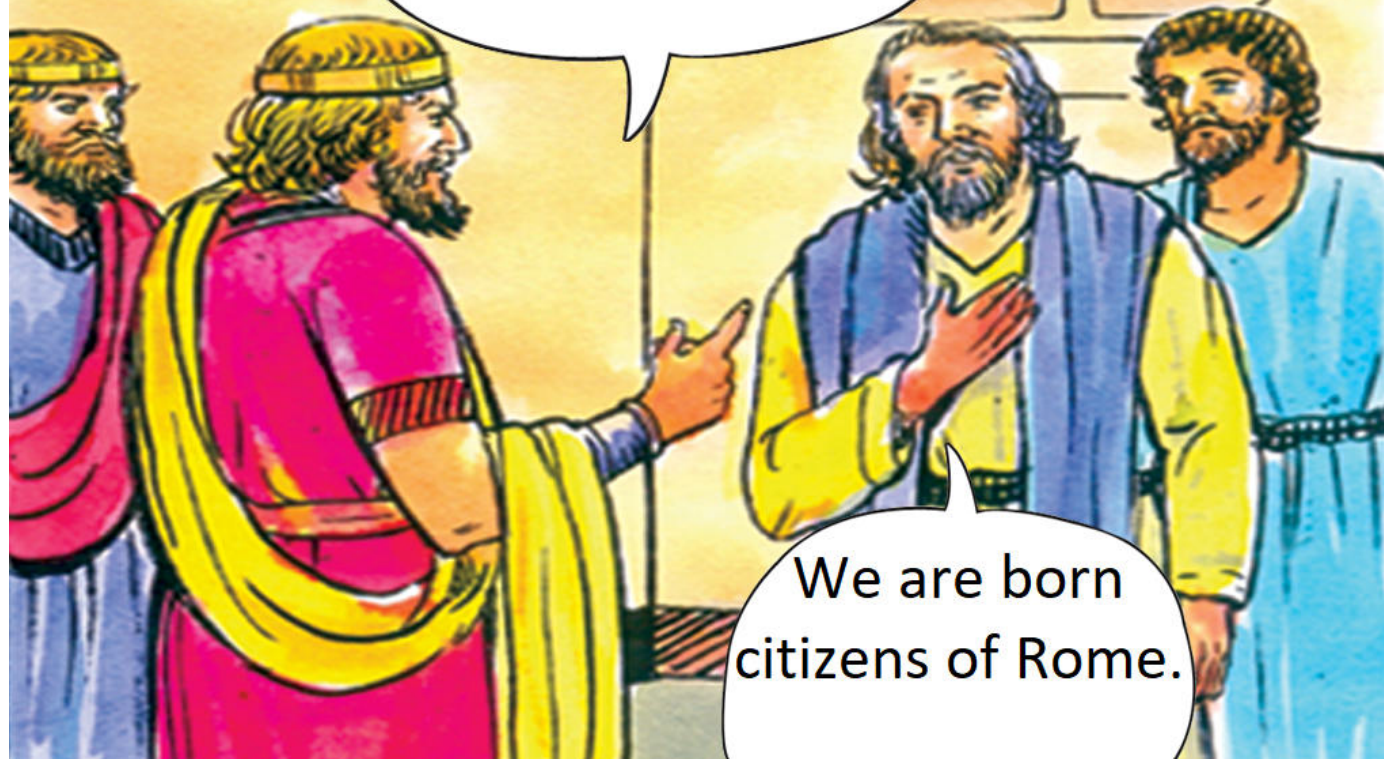
What? They flog and
imprison Romans
without trial and then
push them out? Let
them come and
escort us out.



The judges came.

Is it true that you are
Roman citizens?

We are born
citizens of Rome.



We didn't know that.
Please forgive us. We beg
you to leave the town.

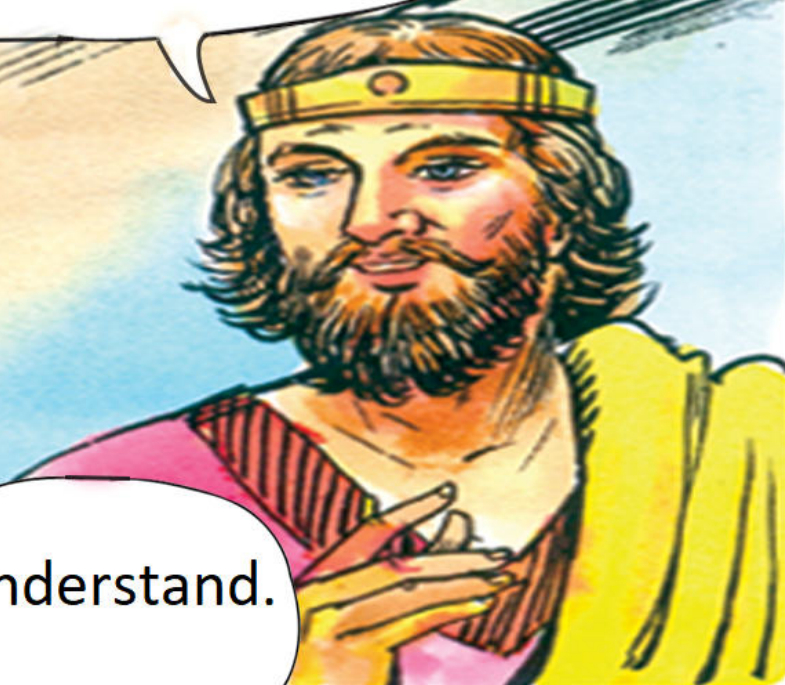
Why? We haven't
done anything against
the law.



You know that Philippi is a Roman colony. Any disturbance here will be taken seriously.

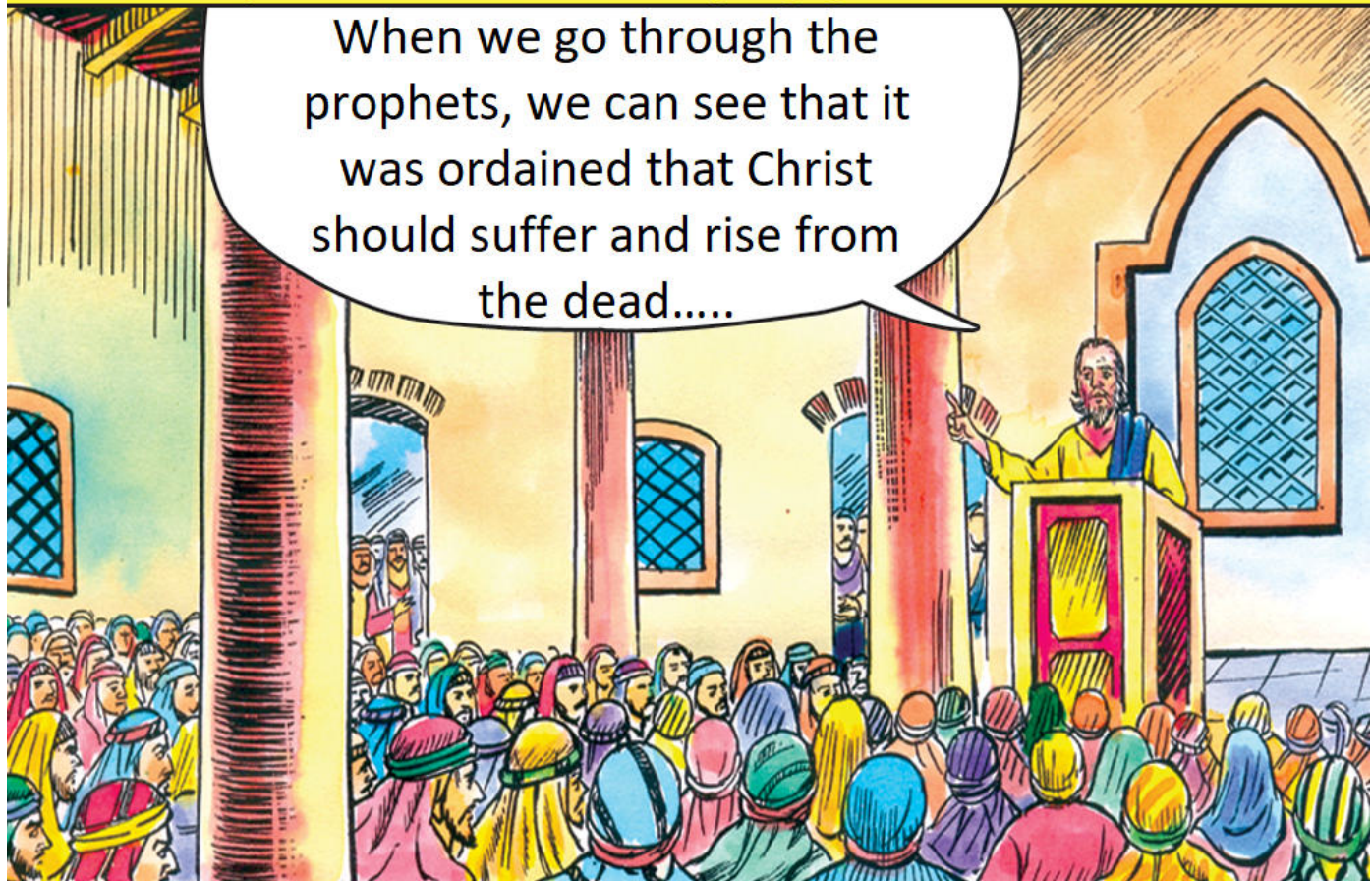


I understand.



They went to Thessalonika, the capital of Macadonia. Paul preached in the Jewish Synagogue on Sabbaths.

When we go through the prophets, we can see that it was ordained that Christ should suffer and rise from the dead.....



Many believed and some Jews became Jealous.

We must stop that
Paul and party.

Many of the Jews have
become Christians. A
good number of rich
women also have joined
them.



Since three weeks, they have been preaching in the Synagogue and going from house to house.

Now they are at Jason's house. Let us drag them to the People's Assembly.



They could not Paul and so they dragged Jason, the Synagogue's president, before the City Council.

These people have been turning the whole world upside down.

They have committed high treason by claiming that there is another emperor, Jesus. This Jason is hiding them.

Jason, you must send Paul away immediately.

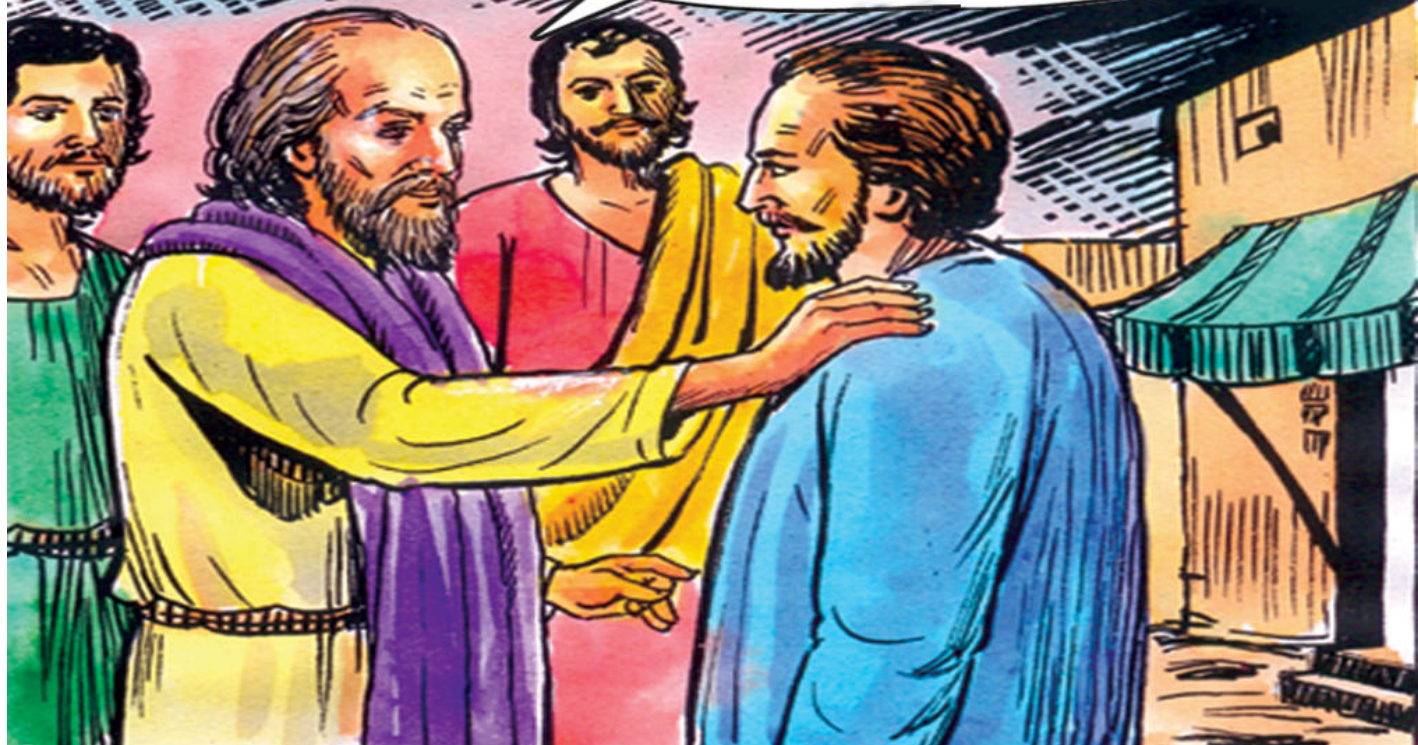


You will see to it that
he never returns. If
he does, you and your
family will be
imprisoned and your
property
confiscated.



That night.

Jason, don't be afraid. Believe in the Lord. For now, we shall go to Beroea.



In Beroea, many Jews and Greeks became Christians. One Day:

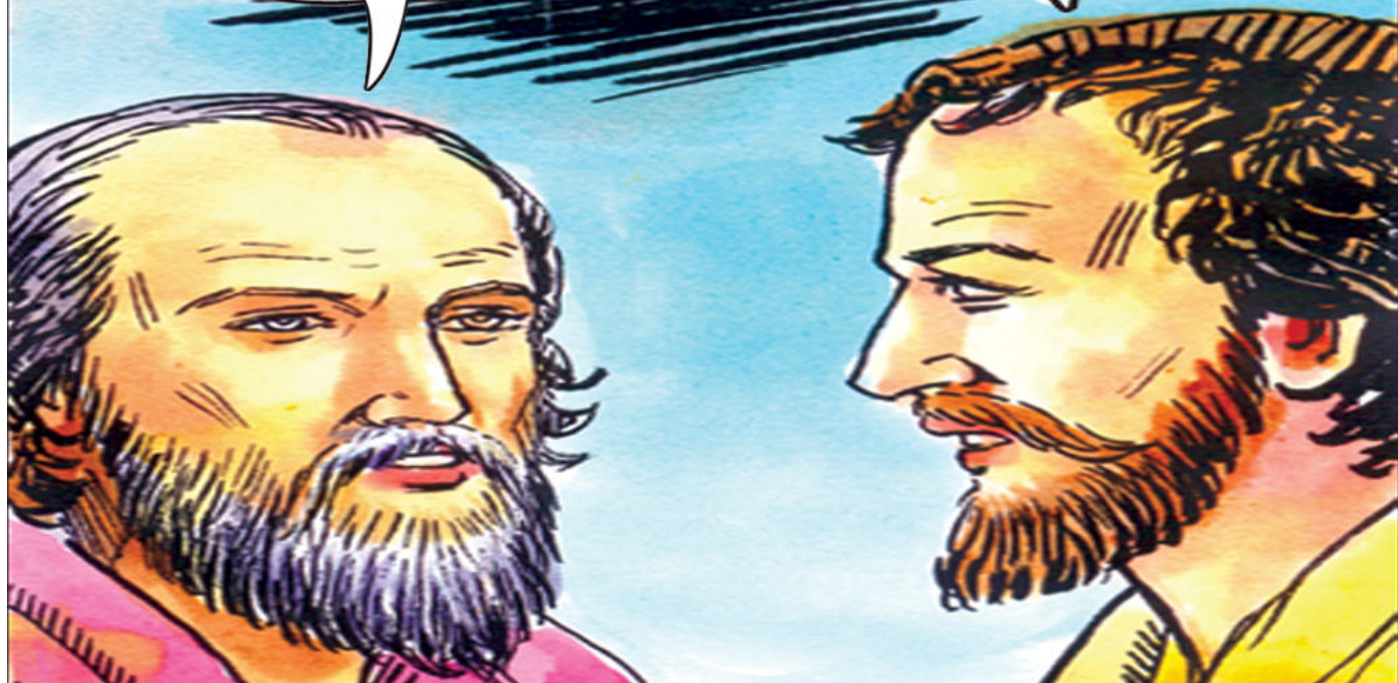
The news from Thessonika have come here and have started to stir the people against us.

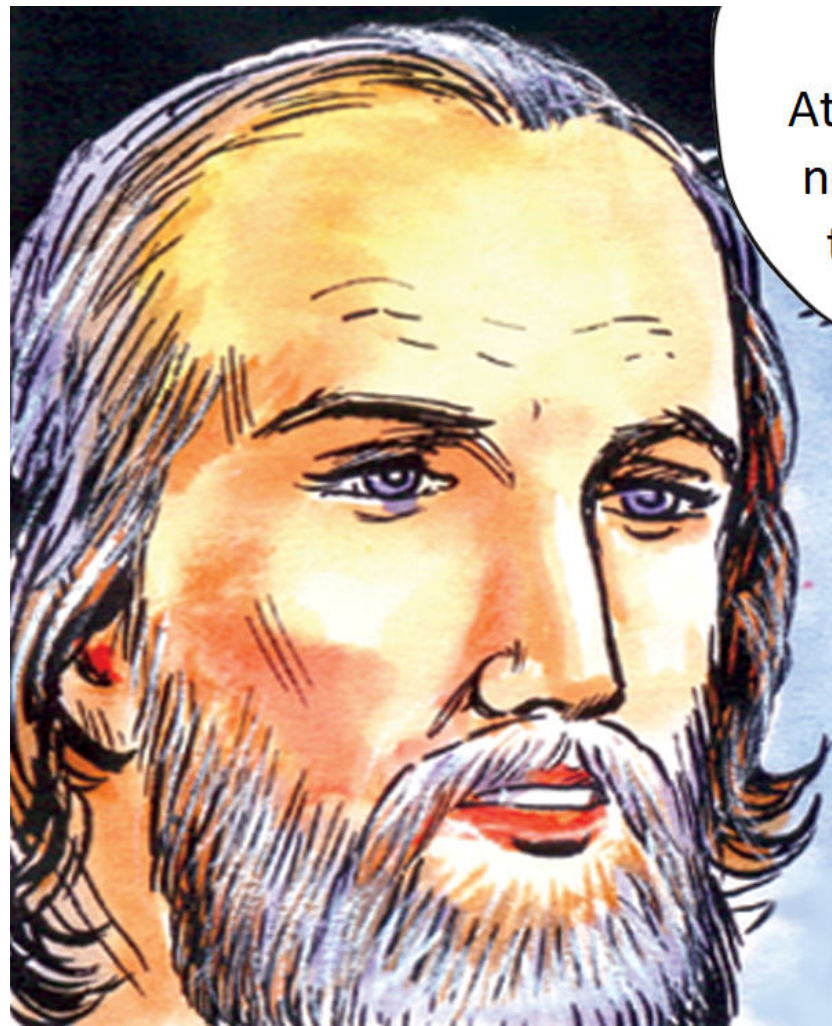
Master, it is better that you leave this place immediately.



Is it safe for
you to stay
here?

You are their
target.



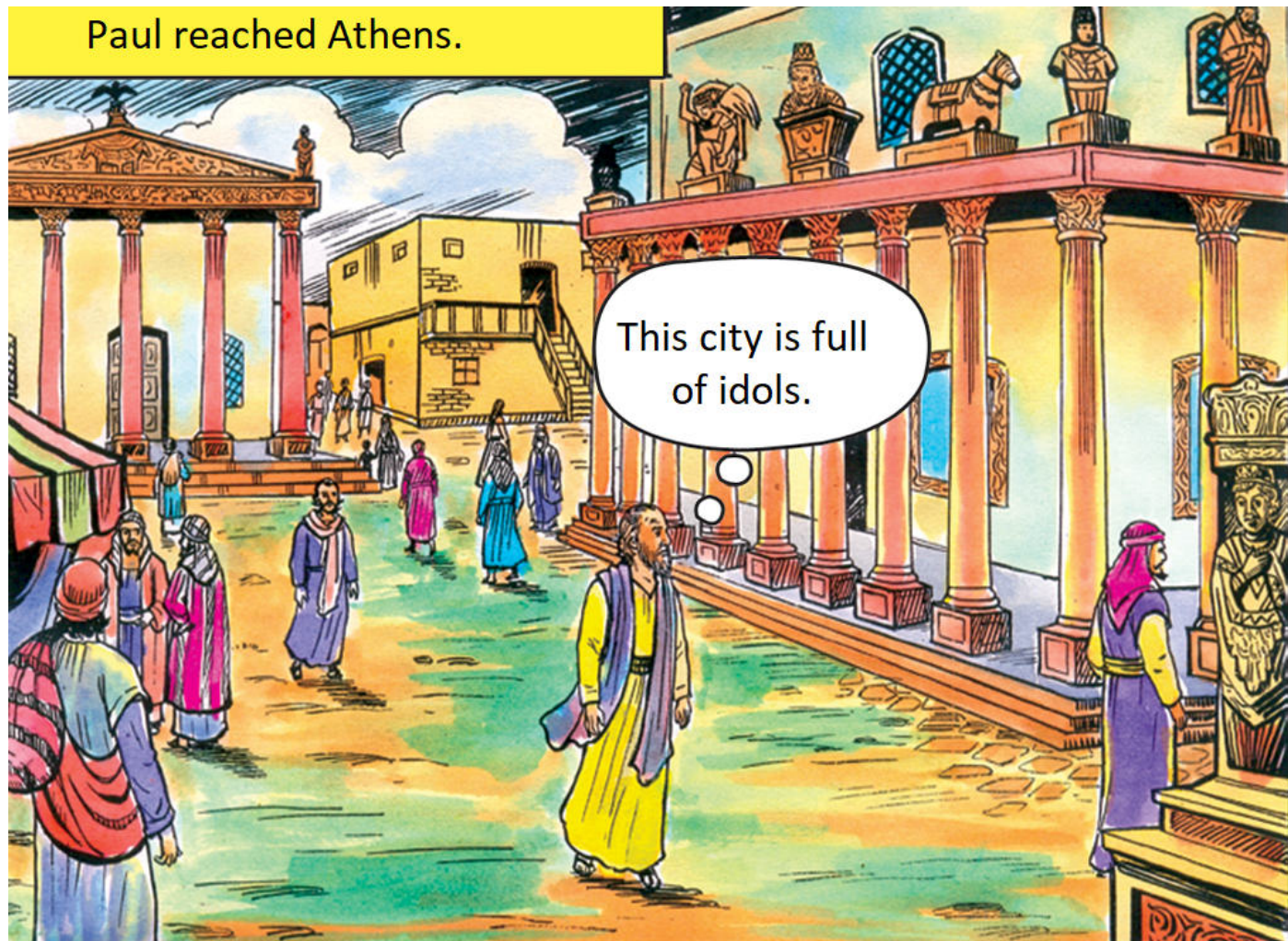


Then, I shall go to Athens. After giving the necessary instructions to the brothers, you must join me.

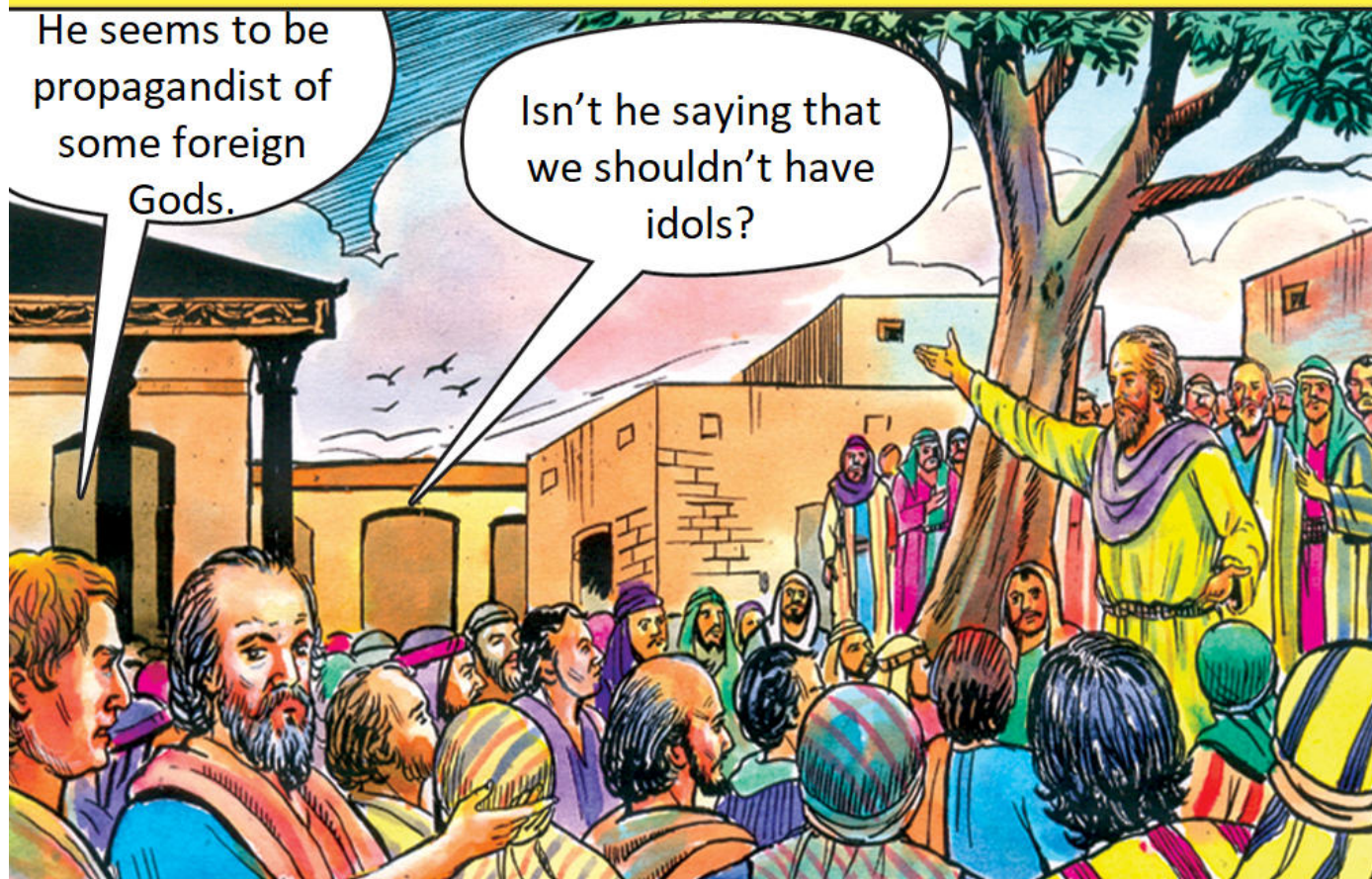
Paul boarded the ship to Athens.

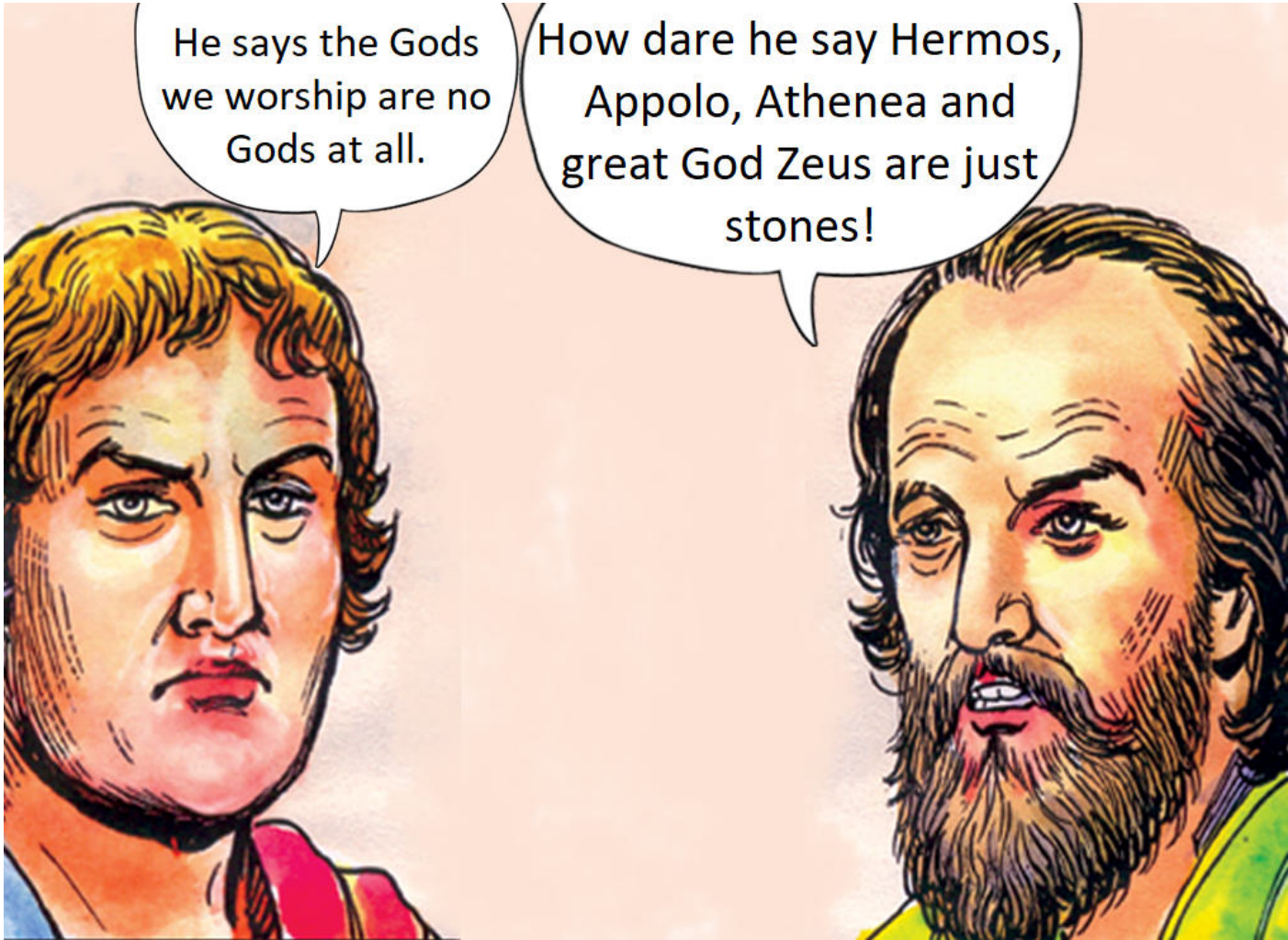


Paul reached Athens.



Paul preached about Jesus Christ in the Synagogues and in the market places.



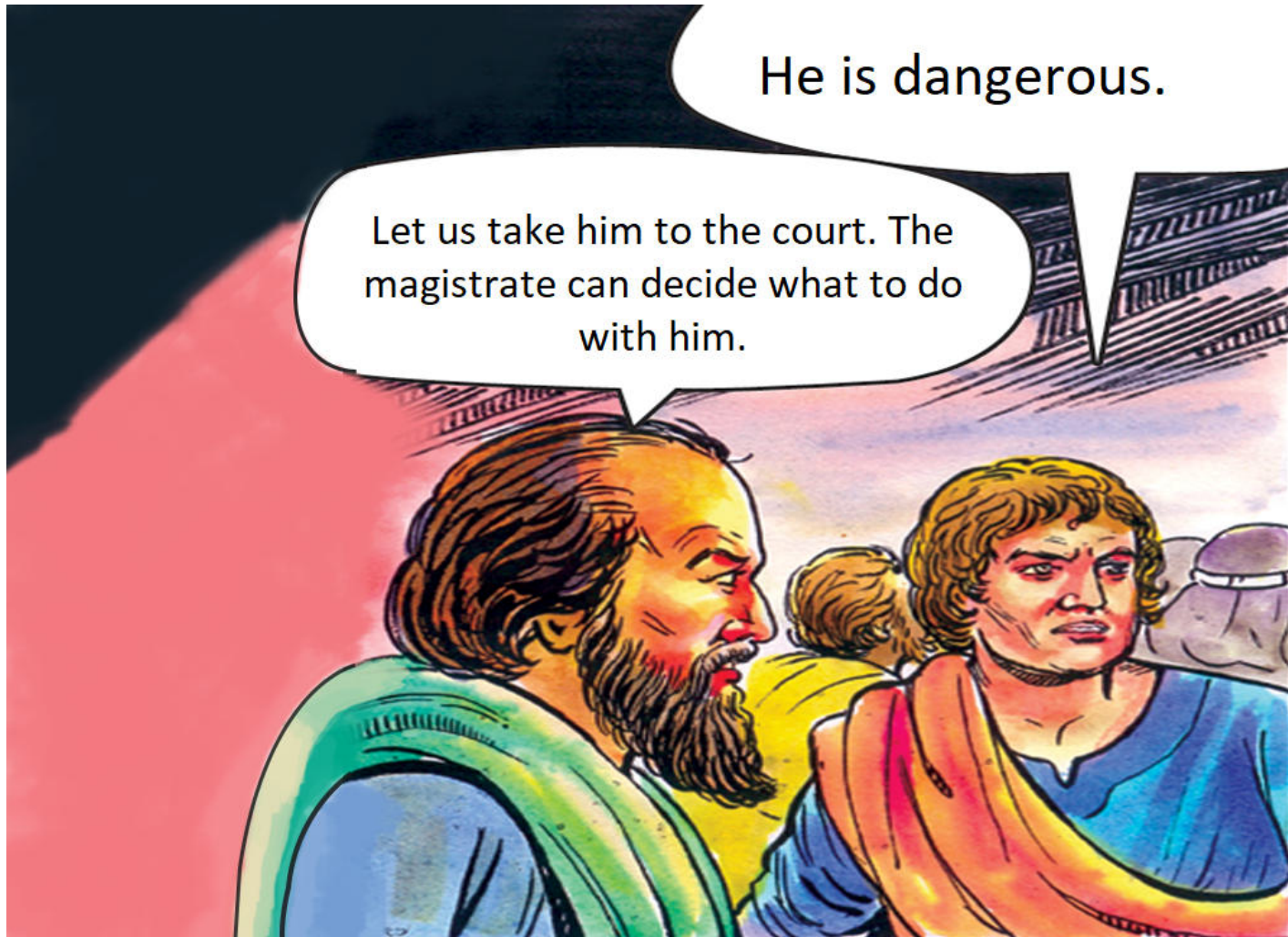


He says the Gods
we worship are no
Gods at all.

How dare he say Hermos,
Appolo, Athenea and
great God Zeus are just
stones!

He is dangerous.

Let us take him to the court. The
magistrate can decide what to do
with him.



They brought Paul to the Council of
Areopagus.

What is this new
religion you are
propagating.

Fathers and men of
Athens, I see for
myself in every way
you are very
religious.



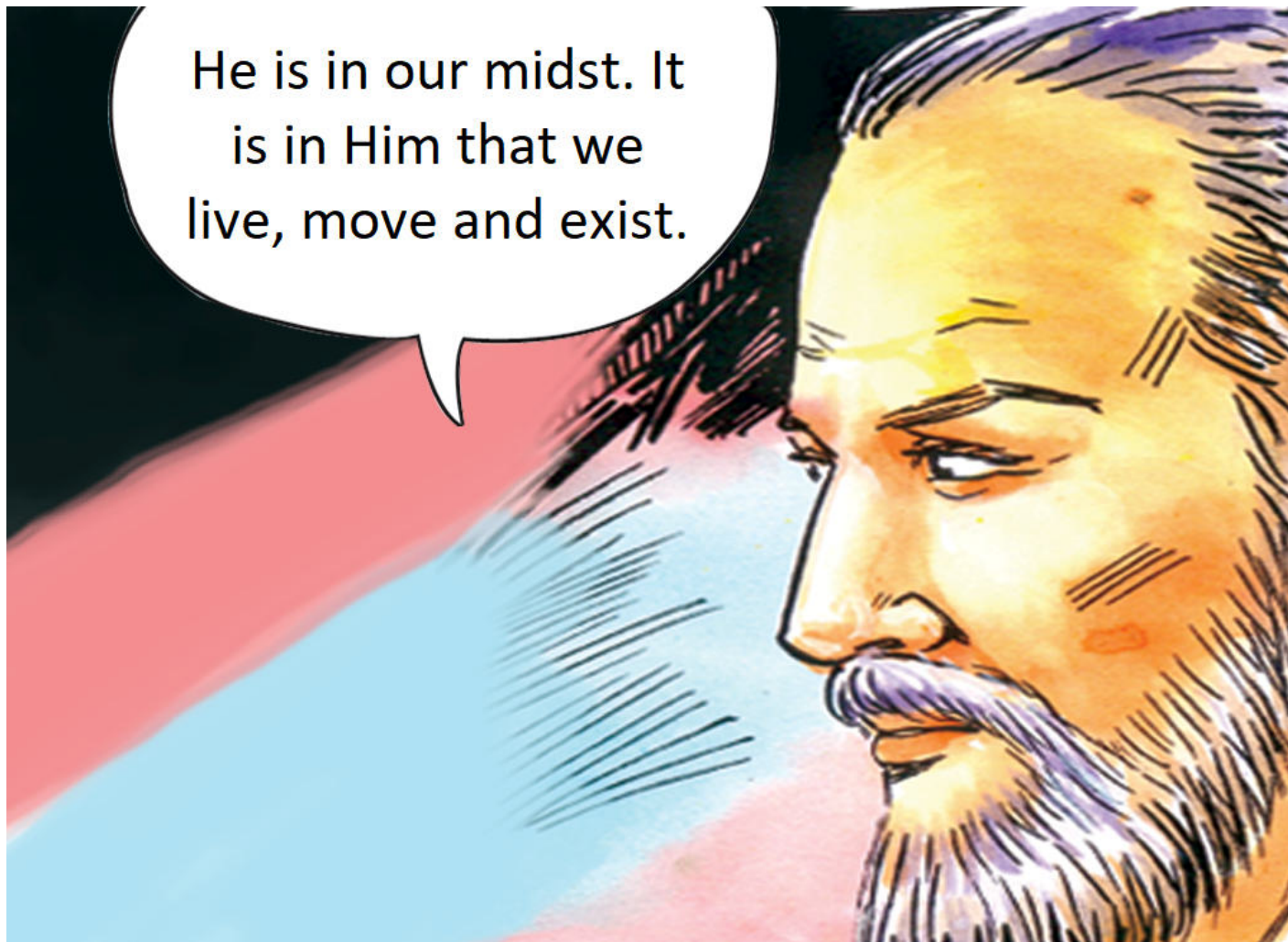
As I strolled around I saw an
Altar inscribed "To an
unknown God". It is that
God I speak of.



God who made the world
does not make homes in
shrines and statues.



He is in our midst. It
is in Him that we
live, move and exist.



Paul proceeded to talk about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

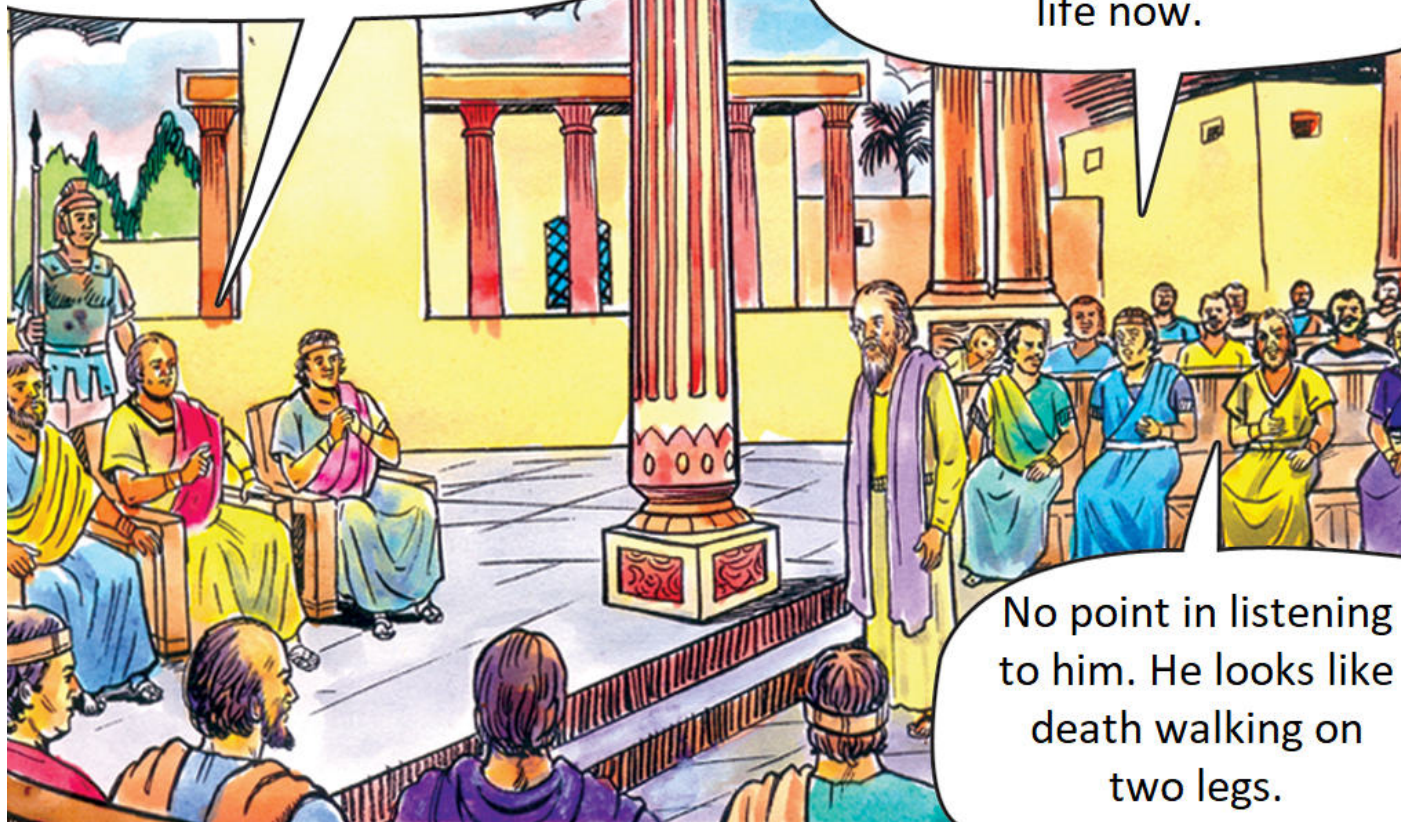
The dead live
through worms.

He is a fool. Why
bother to punish him.



You can go. We shall hear
about the resurrection
another time.

Who cares what happens
after we die. What we are
looking for is ways to enjoy
life now.



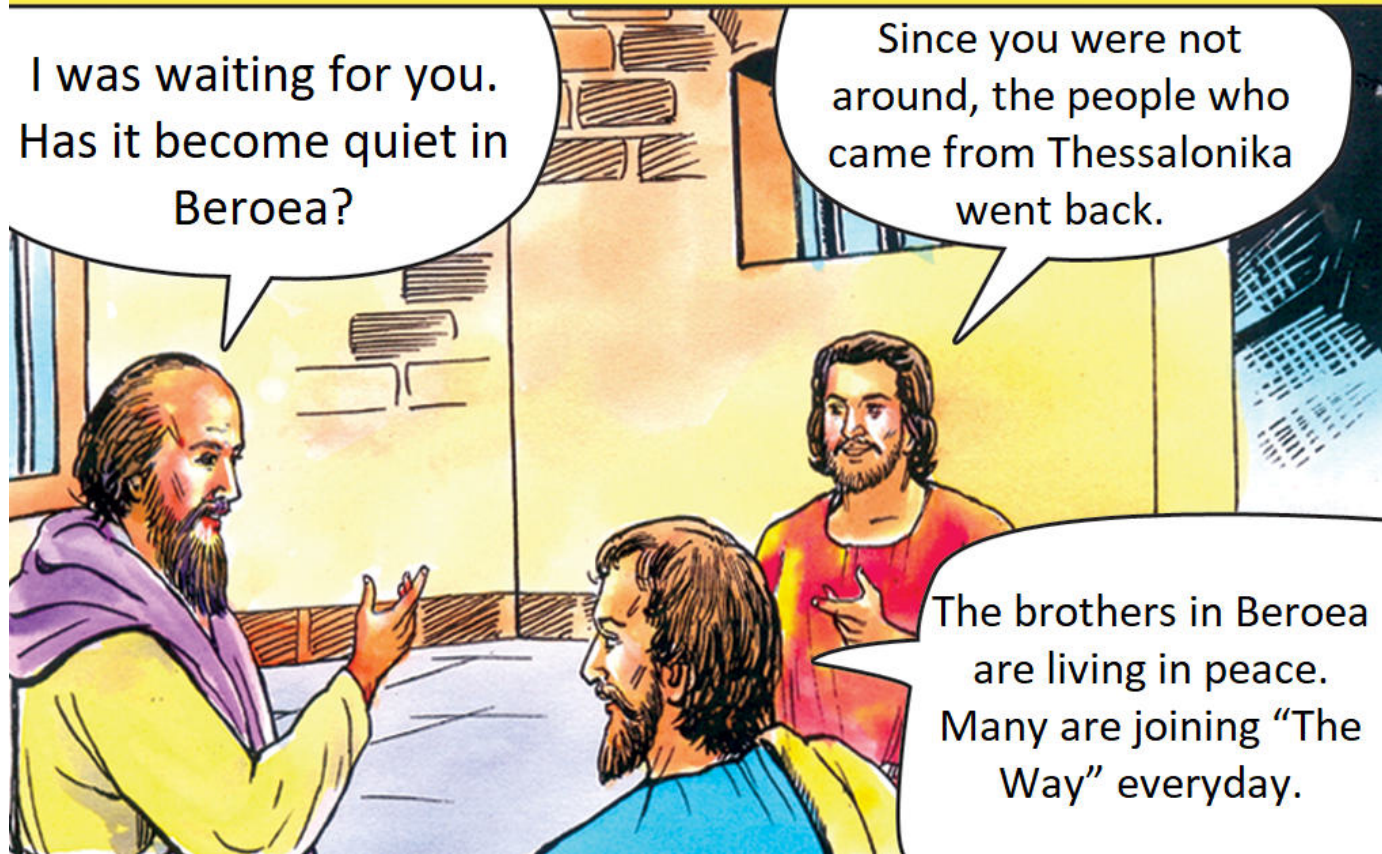
No point in listening
to him. He looks like
death walking on
two legs.

They laughed at him and sent him off. Some believed in Jesus.
Timothy and Silas reached Athens.

I was waiting for you.
Has it become quiet in
Beroea?

Since you were not
around, the people who
came from Thessalonika
went back.

The brothers in Beroea
are living in peace.
Many are joining "The
Way" everyday.



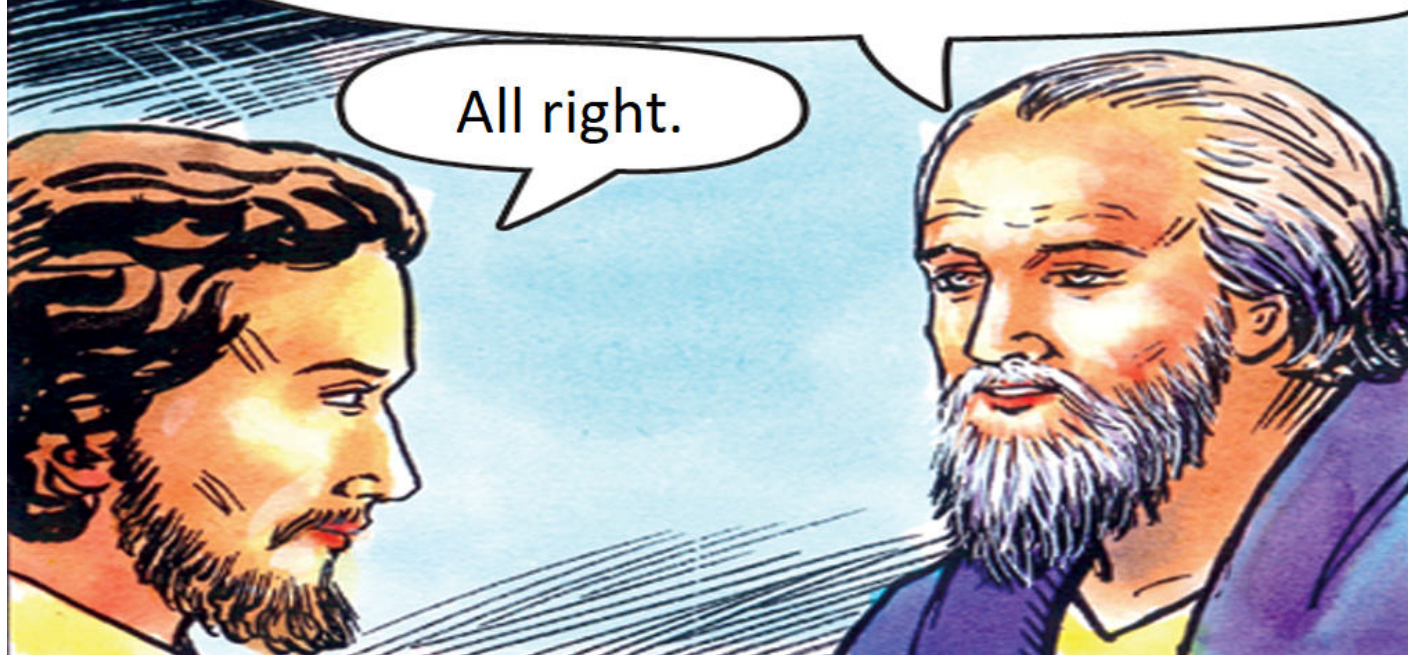
I am worried about the brothers in
Thessalonika? Can they withstand the
persecution?

They will be strong.



We must make Sure. Timothy,
would you please go and see how
they are? We shall meet in Corinth.

All right.



SECOND JOURNEY OF PAUL



TO SPREAD THE
WORD TO THE ENDS
OF EARTH

NEXT STORY

LIBATION

Questions

1. Who is the apostle of the gentiles? Why is he called so?
2. Where was the name “Christians” first applied to the disciples of Christ?
3. From where did Paul start his missionary journeys?
4. Paul cursed a man at Paphos. Why?
5. Give a summary of Paul’s talk at Antioch of Pisidia.
6. Narrate Paul’s experience at Lystra.
7. Explain the background of the Jerusalem Council.
8. What is the relevance of the Jerusalem Council today?
9. How did persecution help the growth of the Church?
10. What was the Athenians’ response to Paul’s sermon?

Memorize: **“Believe in the Lord Jesus, you and your family will be saved.”** (Acts 16,31)

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