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Birth of John the Baptist

Based on Luke 1:5-25

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In the days when Herod was the King of Judea, there lived an old priest named Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth. They had no children because Elizabeth was not able to have children.



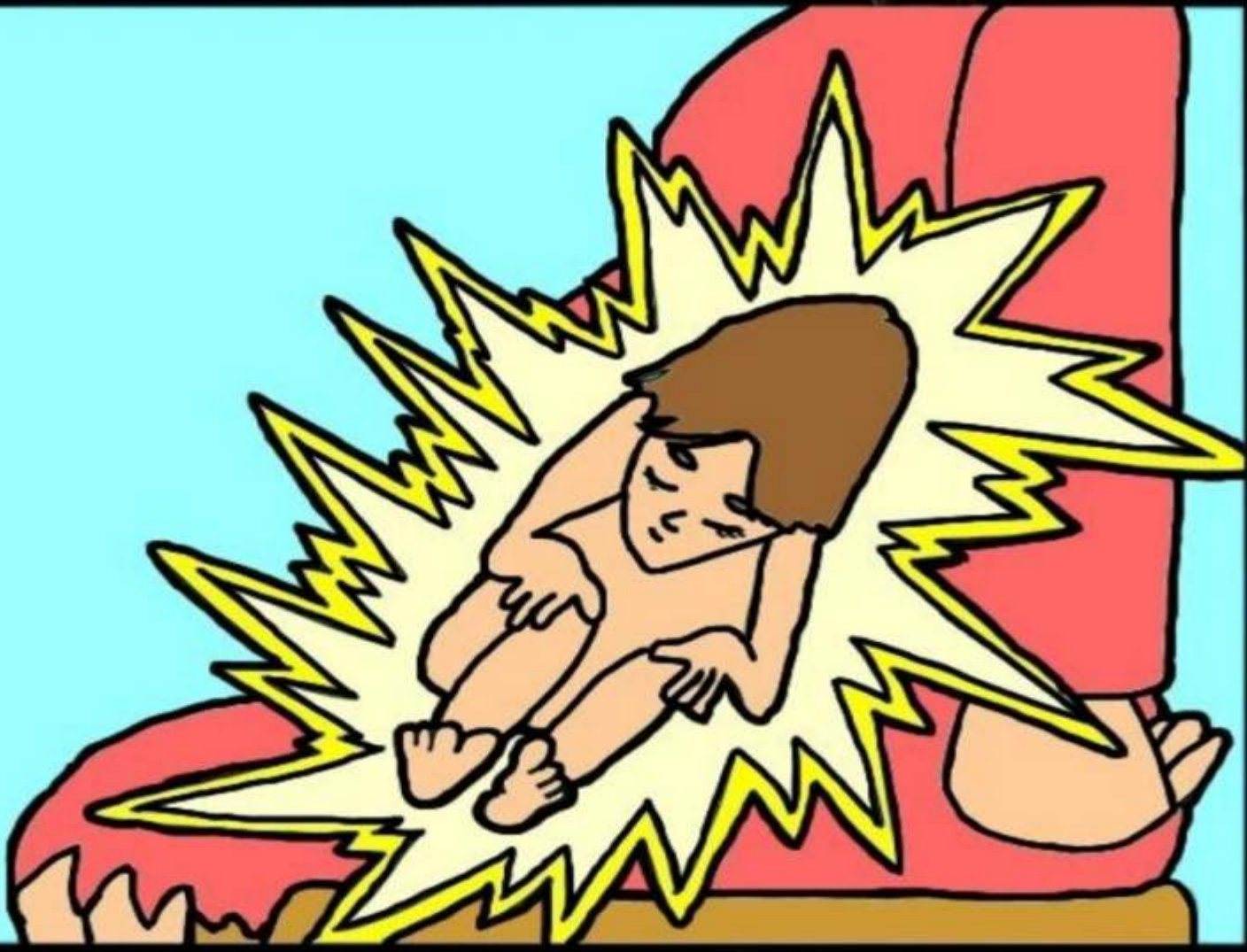
As Zacharias was doing his work serving God, it happened that it was his time to go into the temple and burn incense. (Incense is spicy stuff. It has a sweet smell when it burns slowly.)



All the people were outside praying, but Zacharias was alone. As he stood beside the altar suddenly angel Gabriel appeared to him. Zacharias was very afraid when he saw the angel.



"Don't be afraid Zacharias, because your prayer is heard and your wife Elizabeth will have your baby boy and you will call his name John. You will be so happy when he is born and everybody will rejoice.



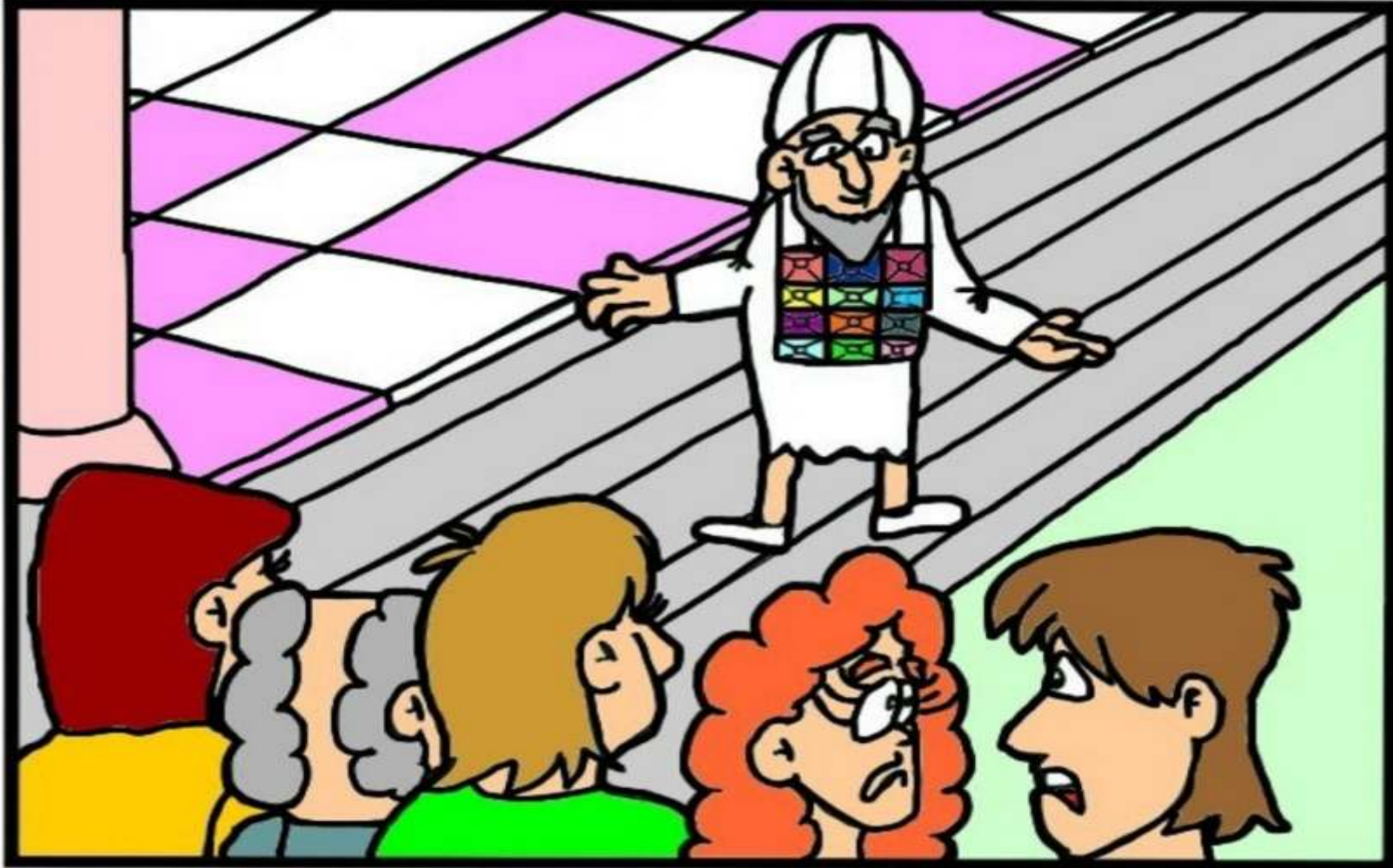
He will be great in the Lord's sight. He won't drink any wine or alcoholic drinks and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even when he is inside his mom's tummy.



He will turn many of the people of Israel back to God. He will go before the Lord. He will cause fathers to love their kids, disobedient people to become wise and he will make people ready for the Lord.”



"How will I know that all this will happen?" asked Zacharias. "I'm an old man and my wife is old too." "I stand in God's presence," answered Gabriel. "Now you won't be able to talk until the day that these things happen because you did not believe my words which will happen at the right time!"



"Why is Zacharias staying so long in the temple?" asked all the people outside. When Zacharias came out he could not speak to them. He was making arm motions trying his best to tell them what happened. "He must have seen a vision in the temple," said the people at last.



Zacharias went home to see his wife. Just as the angel had said, Elizabeth became pregnant. "I'm having a baby!" exclaimed Elizabeth. "The Lord had his eyes on me and now I won't seem strange to people anymore because I didn't have any kids!"



Lord, help me to be quick to believe what you say, **EVEN** if it seems impossible.