

Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



Today 4th February 2018 speaker Philip Wells, Full-time Elder.

This morning - "What makes God impassioned?"

This evening Jon Bickley - "Forgive us our trespasses ..."

Wednesday evening 7.45pm Church Prayer Meeting

www.calvary-brighton.org.uk

Sermons and talks - calvary-brighton.sermon.net

Question: What makes you impassioned?

Politically

- Tory cuts?
- Left-wing bonkerness?

Football

- Up and shouting!

Wrong things in national or international life

- "austerity"
- Fat cat salaries
- Carrie Gracie & gender pay gap?

Q: What gets God impassioned?

Q: does God get like that

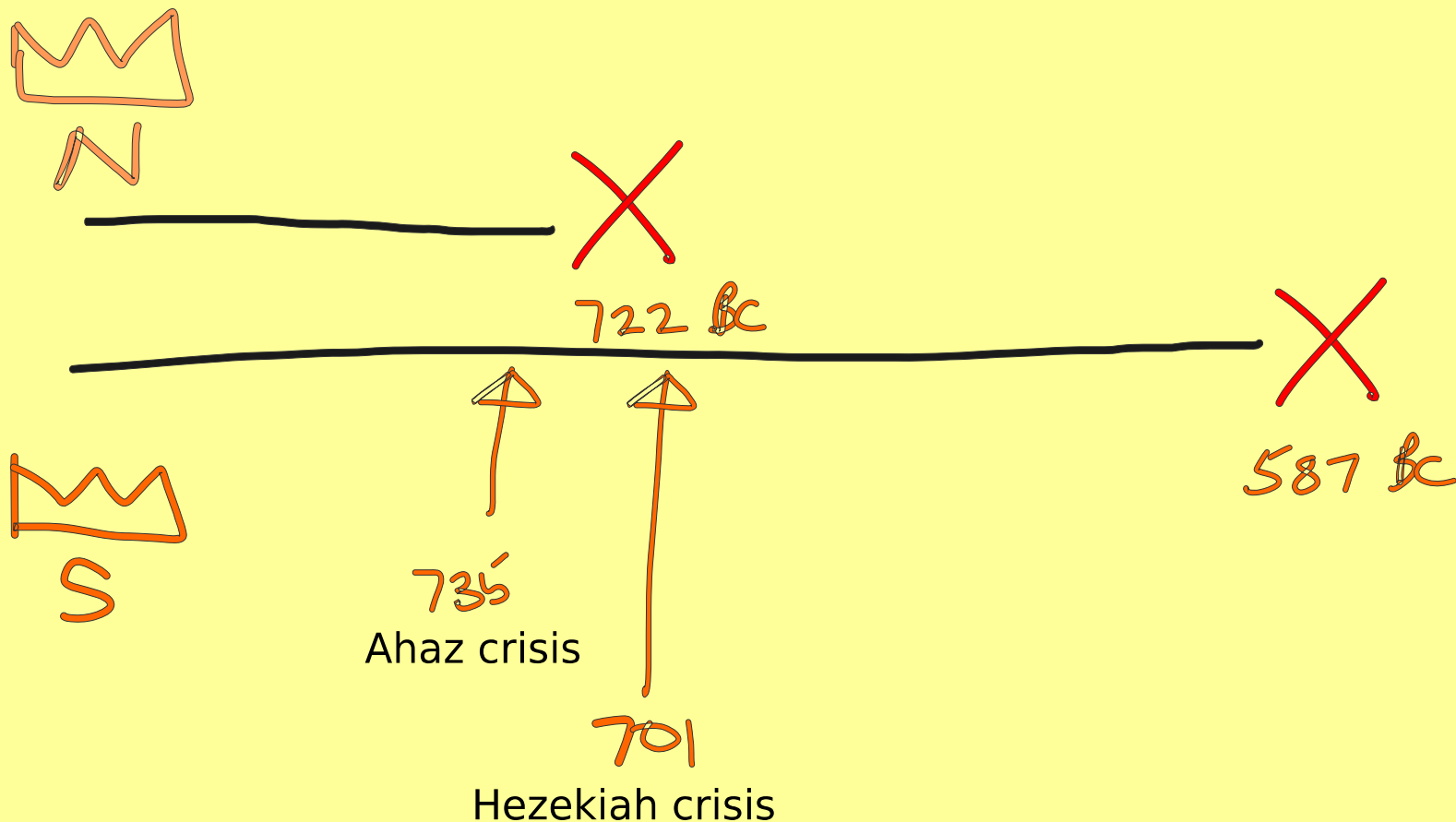
- "without body, parts or passions, immutable"
- (nothing outside himself which controls his emotions)

Let's see what the God of the bible says ...

A. Context - the history

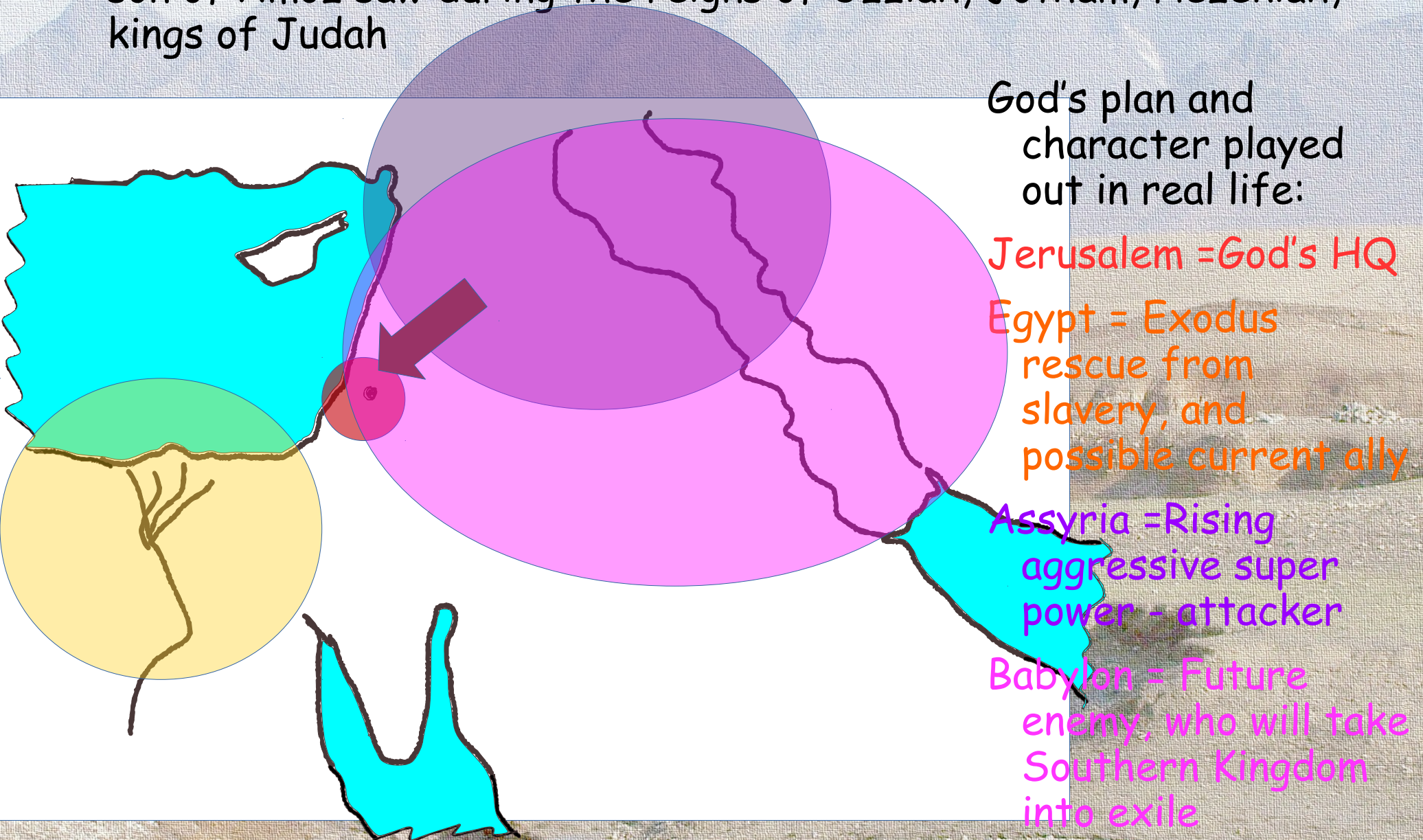
Isaiah 1:1 "the vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, kings of Judah-

- the North and South kingdoms were split
- after various crises of faith both kingdoms were destroyed



A. Context - geography - zoomed in

Isaiah 1:1 "the vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, kings of Judah"



1. Impassioned complaints

v.3 He calls heavens and earth to hear!

- Like a cosmic courtroom

His children are ungrateful v.2

- And rebellious

Unlike stupid animals v.3

- Who know where they get their food

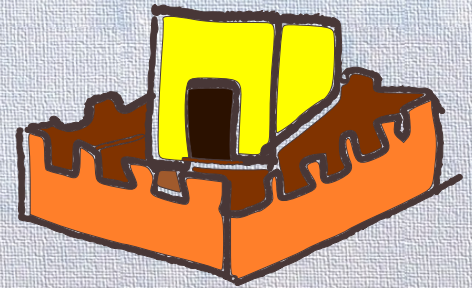
They are ~~misguided~~, ~~disadvantaged~~

- Guilt, evil, corrupt
- Actively going in their own direction

Insist on fighting on without medical help

=> what about us?

- Not ancient Israel
- But: ungrateful? Self-destructing? Evil? Trying to find our way without God
- Cosmic courtroom has other cases to try!



1b. Impassioned complaints

For them the result was military defeat

= undoing of safety

"stripped" - removal of all that is rich and worthwhile

"laid waste" - order and beauty becomes chaos and ugliness

"by foreigners" - their privileges despised

"left like a rickety shed in an allotment"



=> the only way forward is if God spared a few people who didn't deserve to be spared

=> Romans 9:29 - God spares some by his grace!

2. Impassioned confrontation

Sodom and Gomorrah were notoriously wicked cities in the ancient world - which God overthrew.

"But that would never happen to us ... we are very observant!"

- lists

- types of animals
- Types of meetings (total timetable)
- Lots of religion

LORD calls it

- Burden
- He hates from the bottom of his heart
- He hides his eyes, and blocks his ears
- There is blood on their hands! (v.15)

Q: what's the problem?

- Very active!
- Very compliant (as far as we can see)

=> unsettling question for "successful" churches!

3. Impassioned invitation

"Come now let us reason together" v.18

= wonderful invitation to put things right!

- "washing" = getting rid of dirt (v.16)
- "stopping" / "starting" (v.16,17)
- REPENTANCE - saying sorry and turning back
- Caring about the things and people that God cares about
 - Right, justice,
 - Weak and vulnerable (i.e. not just the praiseworthy, glamorous, powerful)
- God meets us in this
 - Sins scarlet ... white as snow
 - You will eat good ... not be eaten (v.19)

=> come now!

- Bogged down in ... relationship that does not please God
- Chasing after yourself and money/sex/power
- Bogged down in religion!
- IT CAN BE PUT RIGHT

4. Defiant indignant vision

Look how things are now:

- Faithful love → sex for sale (v.21)
- Justice (mishpat = rightness), righteousness (sedeq)
- Precious bright silver → mouldy dross, Fine wine → tasteless
- Money ... but not by God's methods
- The vulnerable ... ignored

Look at what the LORD will do for his city

- Foes ... I'll get comfort, Enemies ... I'll pay back
- Turn against you
- Melt away dross ... impurity
- (re)turn your judges (shaphat - people)
- THEN YOU WILL BE CITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
- Redemption with justice (mishpat)
- Those who (re)turn with righteousness (sedeq)

Q: is this friendly? Or hostile?

Q: how can such a change be brought about? Not easily!

For Israel = the horrors of being treated as God's enemy, the fires of exile

For Jesus redemption came via ... drinking God's wrath ... separated and forsaken

5. Impassioned about destination

e.g. Mrs May vs Jacob Rees-Mogg on Brexit

"where are we heading for??"

"how can we know the next steps?"

God's people headed for Zion - the future of the world is God's glorious city!

Rebels against God headed for

- Brokenness (v.28), perish (v.28)
- Shame (v.29) for the places of current delight and security
- Dry fruitlessness (v.30)
- the mighty man + his work = Unquenched fire (v.31)

=> do you understand what God is saying to us/you?

=> do you understand that the road you tread now will lead to one future or another?

=> God is offering a way back, a way out, a way forward

=> why would you not come and reason with him?