

# Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



Today 18th February 2018 - speaker Philip Wells, Full-time Elder.

This morning - "the city of God and its future"

[www.calvary-brighton.org.uk](http://www.calvary-brighton.org.uk)

*Sermons and talks - [calvary-brighton.sermon.net](http://calvary-brighton.sermon.net)*

# What would you write

When life as we know it has completely collapsed?

When the world order is shaken ... the stock market collapse  
look like a tiny wobble

When the Christian consensus seems to be on the losing side

When Christians are suffering

= now??

= actually: sack of Rome 410 by the Visigoths

Augustine (pastor of a seedy seaside town) wrote "The City of  
God" - Christian Classic

- To explain to his people why this present life was always going to be flawed
- To motivate his people to keep going on
- To put fire in their hearts and iron in their blood

And where did he get this idea from?? Ans (part) = Isaiah

# Plan

1. the judgment on City - **leaders and people**  
(3:1-15)
2. the judgment on the City - **the daughter of Zion** (3:16-4:1)
3. **the beauty of the city** (4:2-6)
4. But how??

# The original audience

"Judah and Jerusalem in time of Kings  
Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah" 1:1

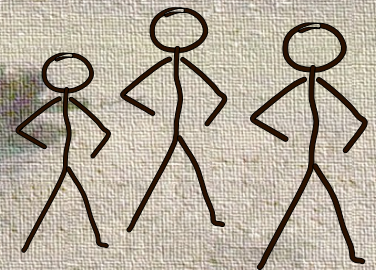
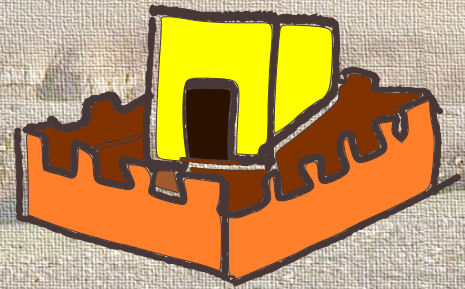
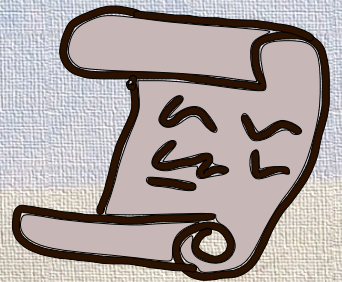
N.B. Jerusalem aka Zion

City of nation = God's chosen (by grace)  
nation, redeemed from slavery in  
Egypt, given the laws of God, the city  
of the great King

= time of ease and prosperity (??)

– Uzziah, Jotham

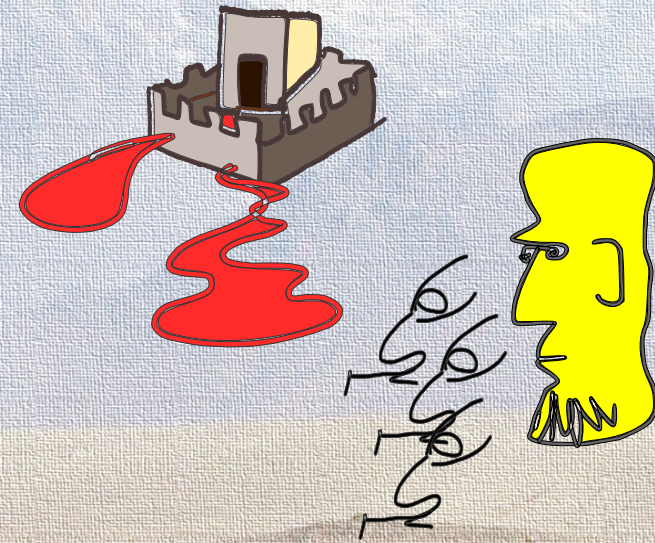
= City with its best and most glorious  
days still in the future!!



# We are reading these clashing chapters (1-6)

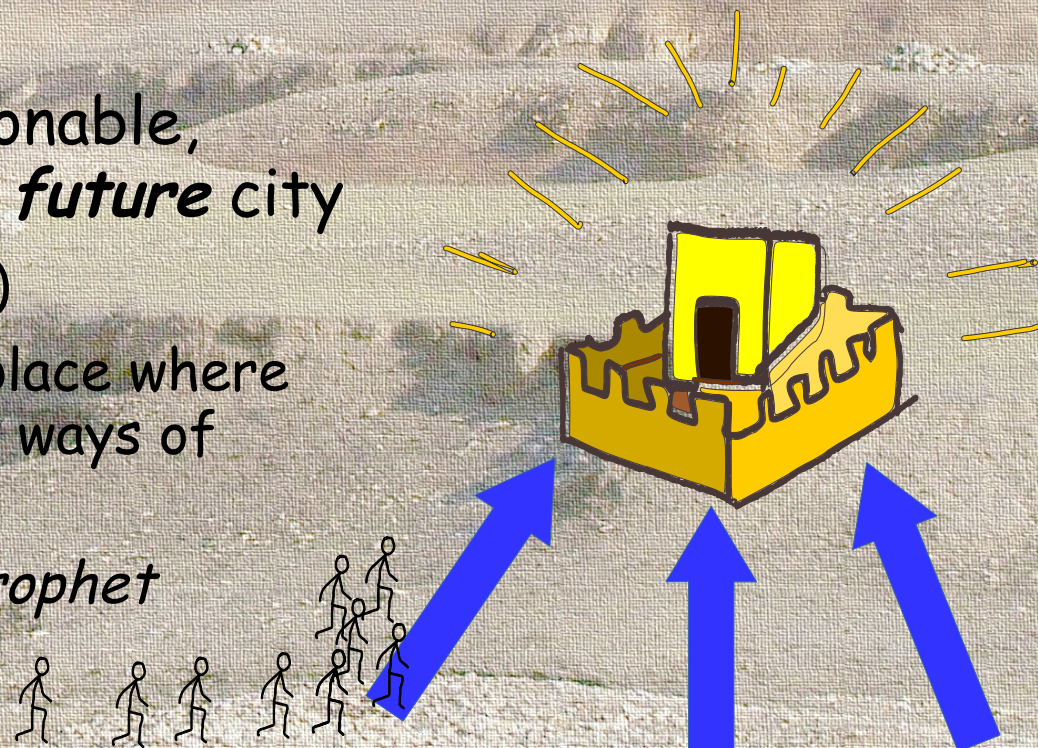
1. There is fierce accusation, and declaration of **future** judgment on the actual **present** city

- e.g. 2:6-22 (see previous sermon)
- Against Israel learning the ways of the nations
- *Up to chapter 6 - Isaiah the prophet*



2. There are extravagant, unreasonable, determined promises about the **future** city

- e.g. 2:1-4 (see previous sermon)
- The glorious Jerusalem is the place where the nations come to learn the ways of LORD
- *Up to chapter 6 - Isaiah the prophet*



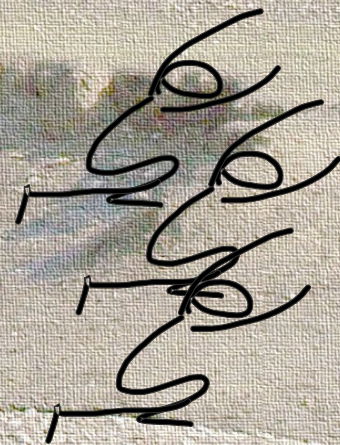
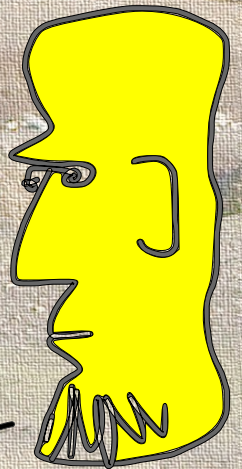
## 1a. 3:1-15 Against the leaders of Israel

### *Judgment by removal of leaders*

- *3:1,2 a list of those removed*
- *3:4 the substitution of childish leaders*
- *3:5 chaos in society*
- *3:6 no-one wants to be leader*

### *Charge: They are anti-LORD*

- *Words and deeds against face of LORD*
- *Shameless*
- *=self-chosen disaster (v.9)*



# 1a. 3:1-15 against the leaders of Israel

## *Incompetent leaders*

- v.12 - children, women oppress/rule
- v.12 guides who lead astray

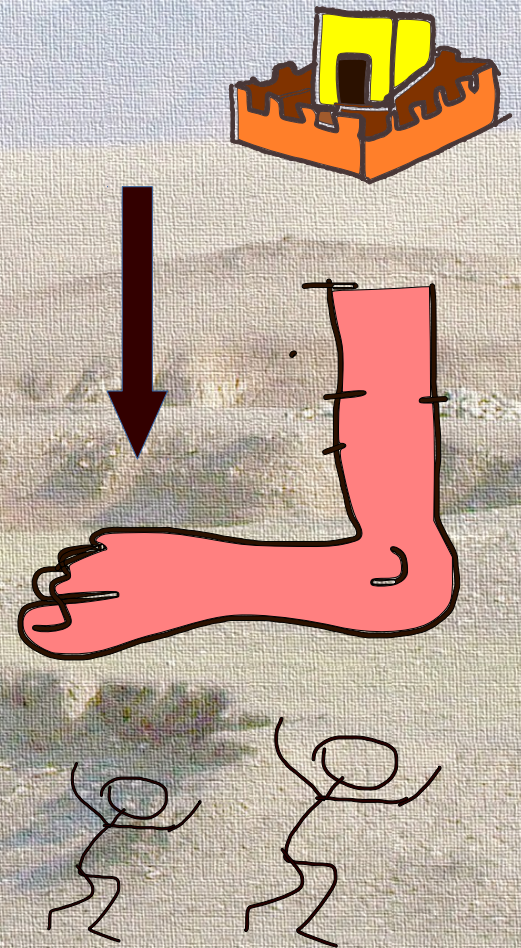
## *the LORD as judge v.13. v.14*

- Judges "people" and "elders and princes"
- Ruined vineyard
- Poor plundered
- People crushed
- Faces ground

## *Says LORD of hosts*

*i.e. a social structure of corruption and oppression.  
Everyone exploits the weak for financial gain.  
(e.g. South Africa??)*

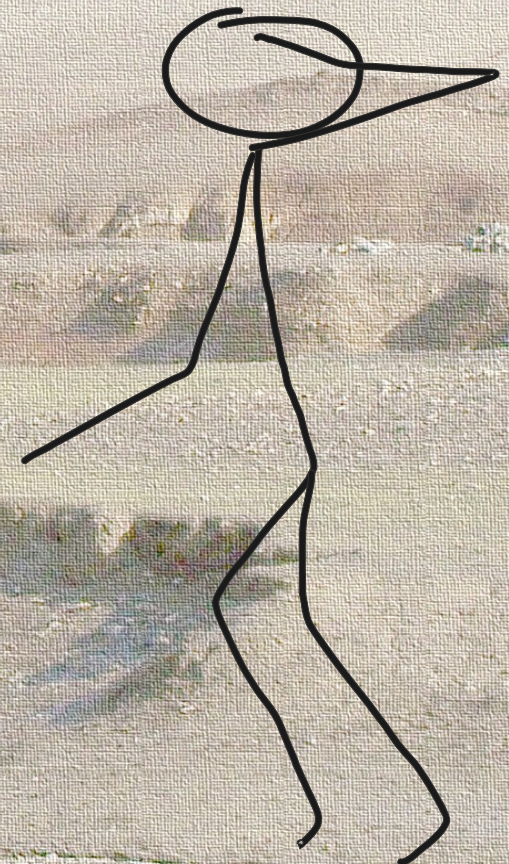
- ==> leaders are a gift from God
- ==> people get the leaders they deserve (??)
- ==> removal of leaders is judgment
- ==> incompetent leaders is judgment
- ==> LORD hates power hungry, self-serving leaders



1a. 3:1-15 against the leaders of Israel

## *Reflection: on the "now" call v.10*

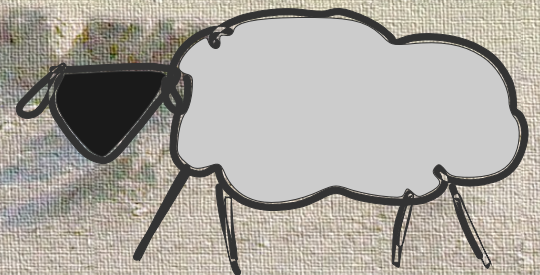
- *"tell the righteous it will be well with them. For they will [eat] the fruit of their deeds"*
  - *Not all are corrupt and false*
  - *The [remnant] are righteous = right with God*
  - *There is good for them*
  - *There is a future matching reward for them*
- *=> it's worth pressing on ... labour in the Lord is not in vain*
- *N.B. Christian worker!!!*



# 1a. 3:1-15 against the leaders of Israel

## *Reflection: on New Covenant leadership*

- *The great Leader is Jesus*
- *Called Shepherd, Overseer, Saviour, Friend, Lord*
- He gave up glory to serve by suffering "let his mind be in you" (Paul's letter to the Philippians)
- e.g. Paul - postpones glory to serve
- e.g. Timothy - "rare" "takes a genuine interest in your welfare ... not just his own interests" Phil 2:20
- Likewise church's people, AND servants AND overseers
- ==> "look out for the interests of others"



# 1a. 3:1-15 against the daughter(s) of Zion

N.B. daughter of Zion = woman

N.B. daughter of Zion = citizens / population (1:8)

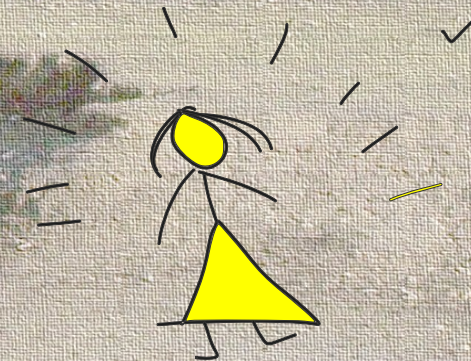
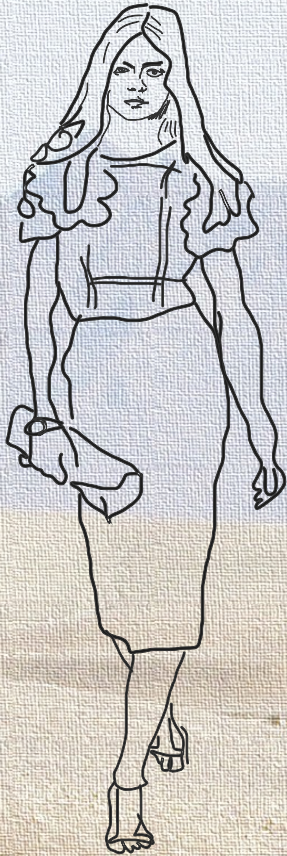
- *List of attractive poses, the catwalk*
  - → LORD will bring sores removal of glory
- *List of "accessories" cosmetics etc*
  - → turned into refugee/ POWs
- "Attraction of" turns into "scramble for":  
breadwinner (= soldiers), protector, = state of shame

= the city as a destitute, shamed, widow. Catwalk turns to breadline

=> N.B. right sexual differences - the woman as the glory, the nurturer, the mother

=> "I saw the Holy City prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband, Now the dwelling of God is with men ..." Rev 21:2

=> "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy ... to present her to himself as a radiant church" Ephesians 5:25



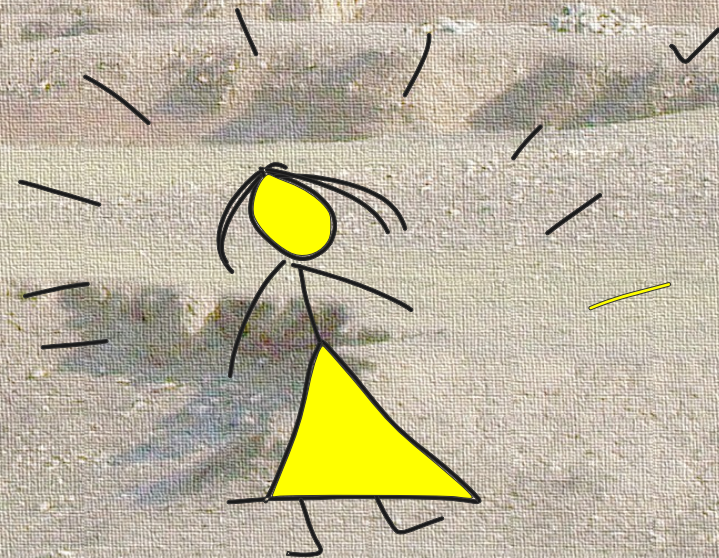
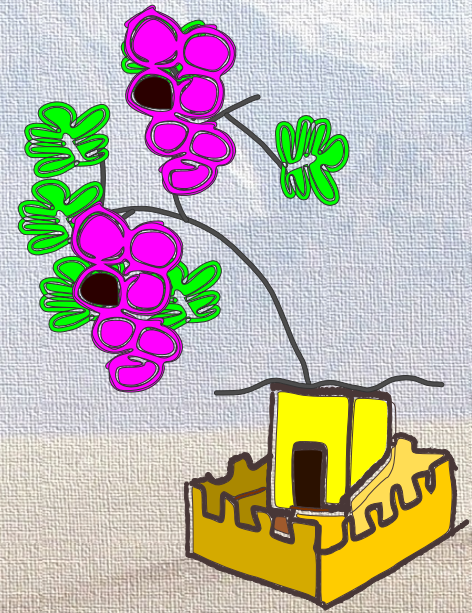
## 2. Unreasonably generous firm decision for future city (4:2ff)

In that day [the beautiful thing will be]...

- Branch of the LORD (1 or many)
- Fruit of land
- Surviving people
  - Adornment, glory, pride, beauty
- Holy, the LORD will wash
  - Cleansed powerful spiritual fire
- LORD's new creation:
  - God's presence (like exodus)
  - Canopy = marriage chamber
  - *Shelter, safety*

= the assembly of God (church)

- in/of/with the LORD
- Beauty, security
- ==> what a privilege to belong, be part of!
- (even now in her "work in progress" state)
- ==> how to pray for the city of God
- ==> to look forward to... through Jesus Christ



### 3. the question that remains ..

How do we get from *judgment* to this *glorious city*?

1. it's not hinging on merit of adequate performance
  - ~~"do enough good"~~ xx
  - "unless the LORD had left us survivors we would have been ..." 1:9, 4:2
  - "remnant by grace"
2. It is hinging on the strong promises of God of future action
  - "I will" / "the branch will" / "those will" / "The Lord will"
  - i.e. future for them ... but some for us past
  - i.e. "it is finished" "I have finished the work you gave me to do"
  - **Promises to depend on**
3. There's a lot about "fire"
  - 1:25 melt away dross, 4:4 Wash ... by fire
  - ==> an unavoidable firestorm of judgment somewhere!
4. The LORD personally requires willingness
  - Unwillingness: "their words and deeds are against the LORD"
  - "if you are willing and obedient" 1:19
  - Will you have this city to be your city?
  - Will you take this God of Israel, the LORD, to be your husband?