

# Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



Today 28<sup>th</sup> July 2018 speaker Philip Wells, Full-time Elder.  
This morning - "Problem solving"

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

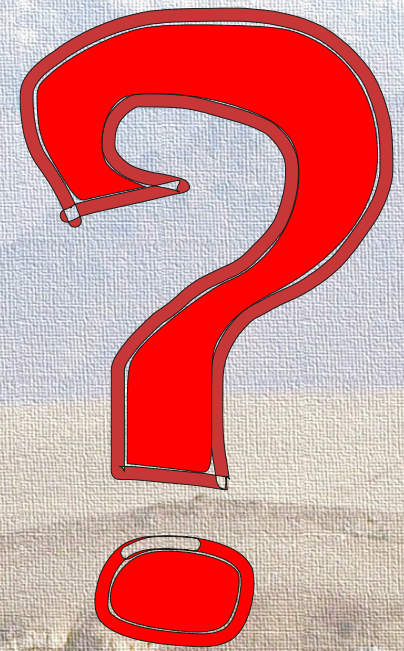
*[calvary-brighton.sermon.net](http://calvary-brighton.sermon.net)*



# Problem solving

## Problem solving -now

- In a world Created by God
  - God who is Personal, Infinite, Moral
- World with order
- World with relationship
- How to solve?
- e.g. sexual problems ... loneliness
  - Solved through pornography?
- e.g. mental problems ... anxiety, fear
  - Solved through alcohol? Substances
- e.g. financial problems ... debt?
  - Solved through theft? Cheating? (Smart?)



What about genuinely asking God for help??



# Problem solving

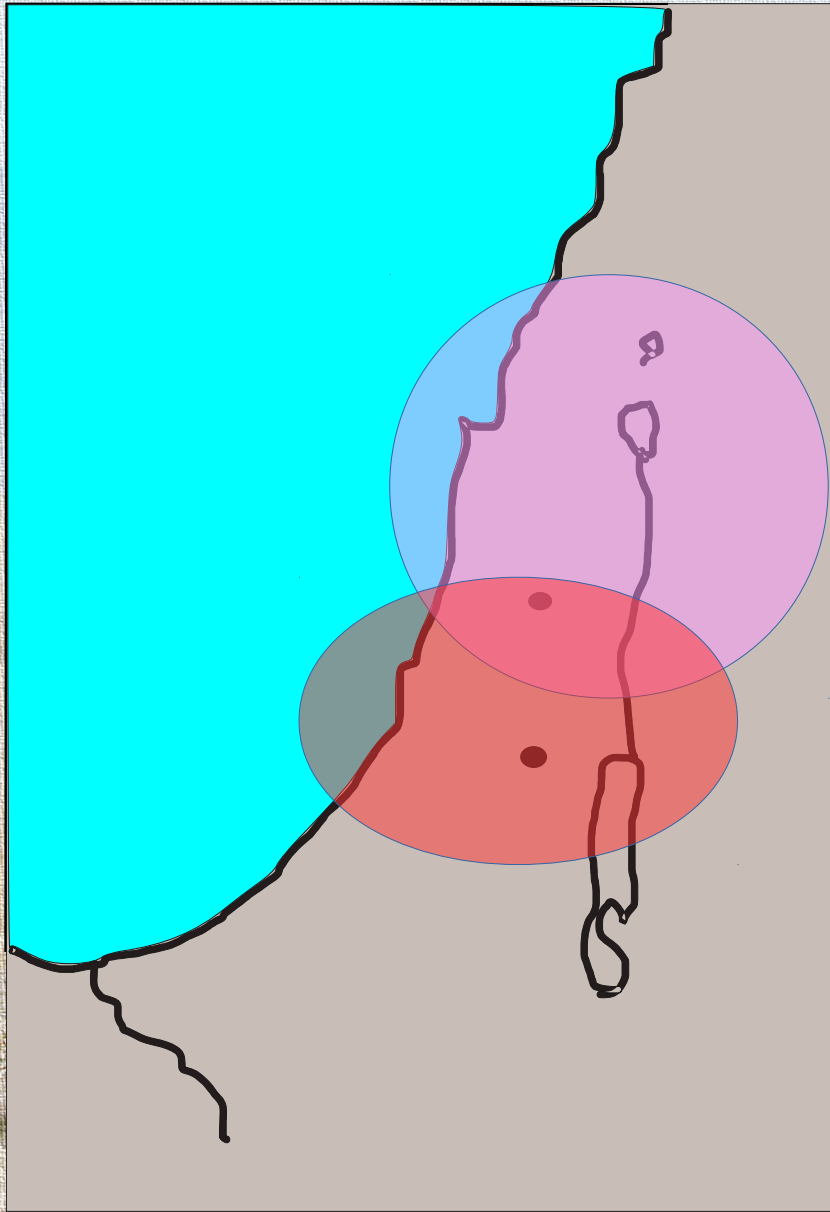


## Problem solving - then ... Old Testament

- In a nation created and redeemed by God
  - God who is Personal, Infinite, Moral
- Nation with right order ("justice", "mishpat")
- Nation with relationship I.e. clearly stated promises and commitments from LORD God ("covenant")
- How to solve?
- e.g. military/ political problem
  - By partying - alcohol
  - By planning - "smoke-filled rooms" - intelligence
  - By ignoring
  - By rituals, superstitions
- BUT NOT by listening to God's word
- WOE! = judgment, emotion, sympathy



# Problem solving



## Northern Kingdom

- Called Ephraim
- Or Israel
- Broke away from King David, and temple and adopted idol worship
- Lush farming
- Was overrun by Assyria

## Southern Kingdom

- Called Judah
- HQ = Jerusalem / Zion
- Had city of David, temple

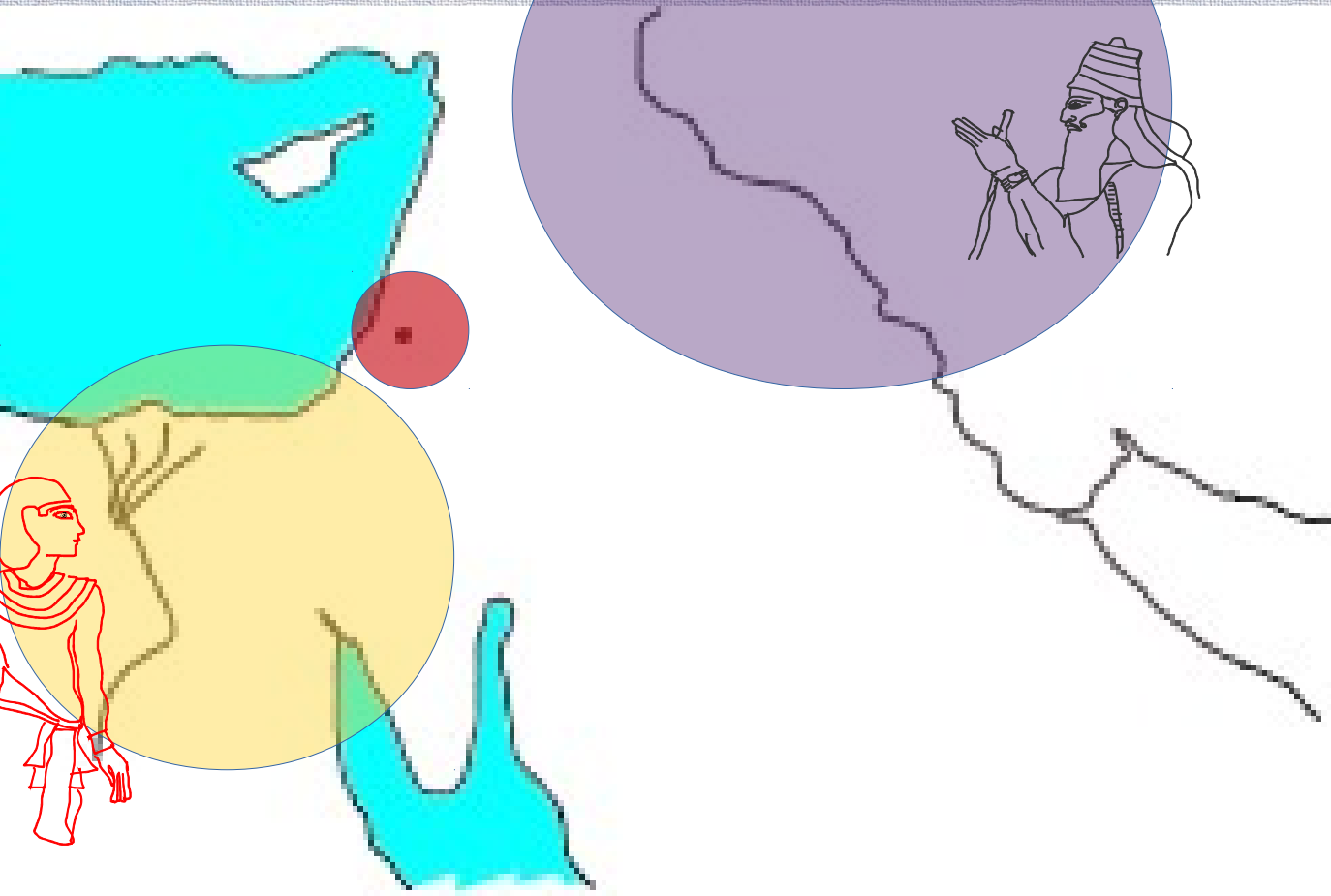
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# The problem of the surrounding nations

Isaiah 7:1 "... king of Israel marched against Jerusalem"

2 Kings 16:7 "Ahaz sent messengers to ... king of Assyria ... I am your servant ... come up and save me ... took silver and gold from temple and sent it as a gift to the King of Assyria"



Jerusalem  
= God's HQ

Egypt = Exodus  
rescue from  
slavery, and  
tempting ally

Assyria = Rising  
aggressive  
super power -  
offers security,  
but turns into  
deadly enemy



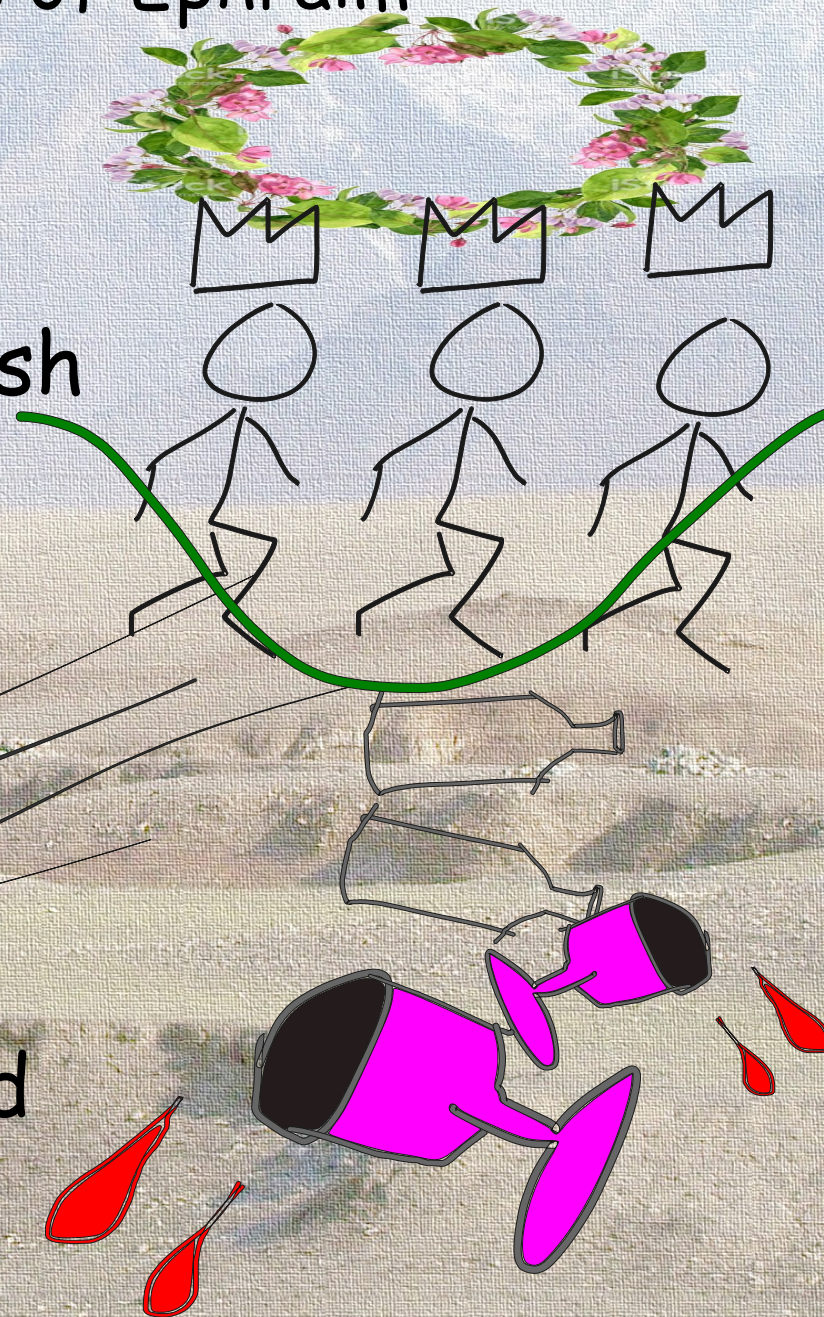
# Problem solving - the party animals of Ephraim

## Woe

- the leaders, the garland
- the city at the head of a lush valley
- laid low by wine

the LORD has

- Hailstorm, wind
- Rain, flood
- the garland will be trampled





# Problem solving - the redeemer of Ephraim

## IN THAT DAY

- the LORD will be the garland
- for a remnant
- Spirit of justice ("mishpat")
- strength in battle





# Problem solving - the spiritual leaders of Ephraim

They too are made stupid by alcohol

- They stagger
- When making decisions
- They vomit





Problem solving - but they reject LORD's word

They say "who is Isaiah talking to?"

- Does he think he is talking to babies?? (we're grown up!)
- His talk is simplistic ("do,do,do")

Trust me!

God says

- If you won't listen when I talk to you in our own language
- Then the only talk you will get is the chat of foreign soldiers
- When people don't believe and hear gobbldygook it is [a sign of] God's judgment

&&££ ##~~





# Problem solving - rejection of God's word

N.B. incomprehensible language in the New Testament

- 1 Corinthians 14
- God says
  - The church is edified when people talk truth from God in a way that people can understand
  - The outsider becomes a worshipper when ...
  - BUT when the unbeliever hears gobbledygook it is a sign to him [of judgment]



God says:  
Trust me!



God says:  
&&££ ##~~



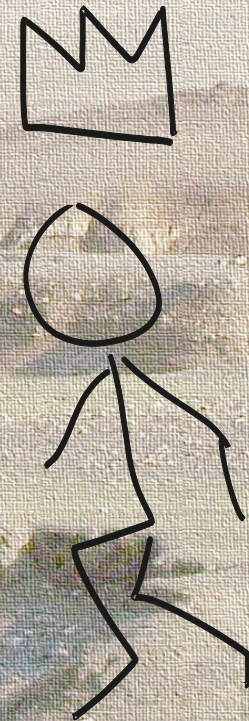
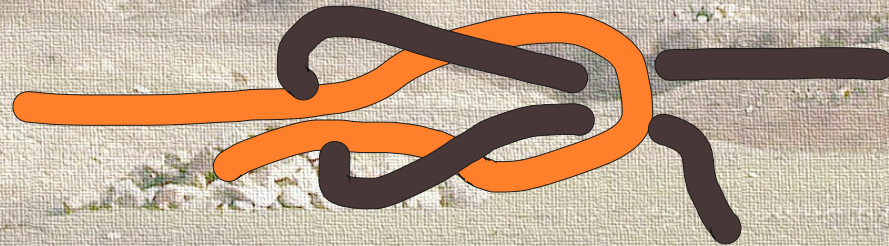
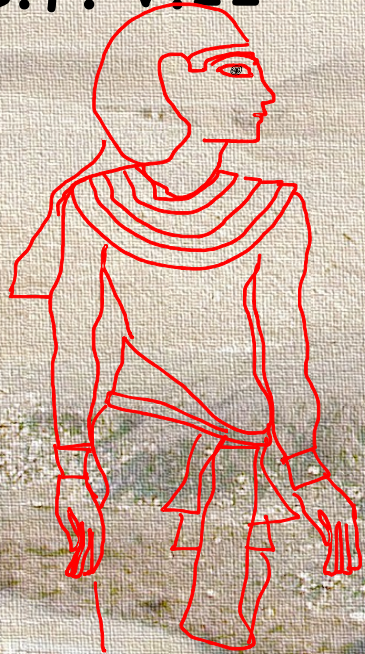
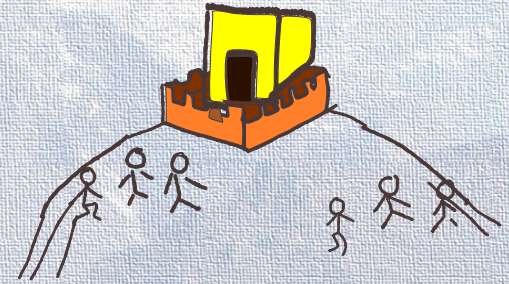
Problem solving in Jerusalem - planners and policies

- scoffers (at God) v.14

"we have entered a covenant with  
~~Egypt Assyria~~ [ death] " v.15

- [lie] refuge, hiding place v.15

- c.f. v.11





# Problem solving in Jerusalem - the stone

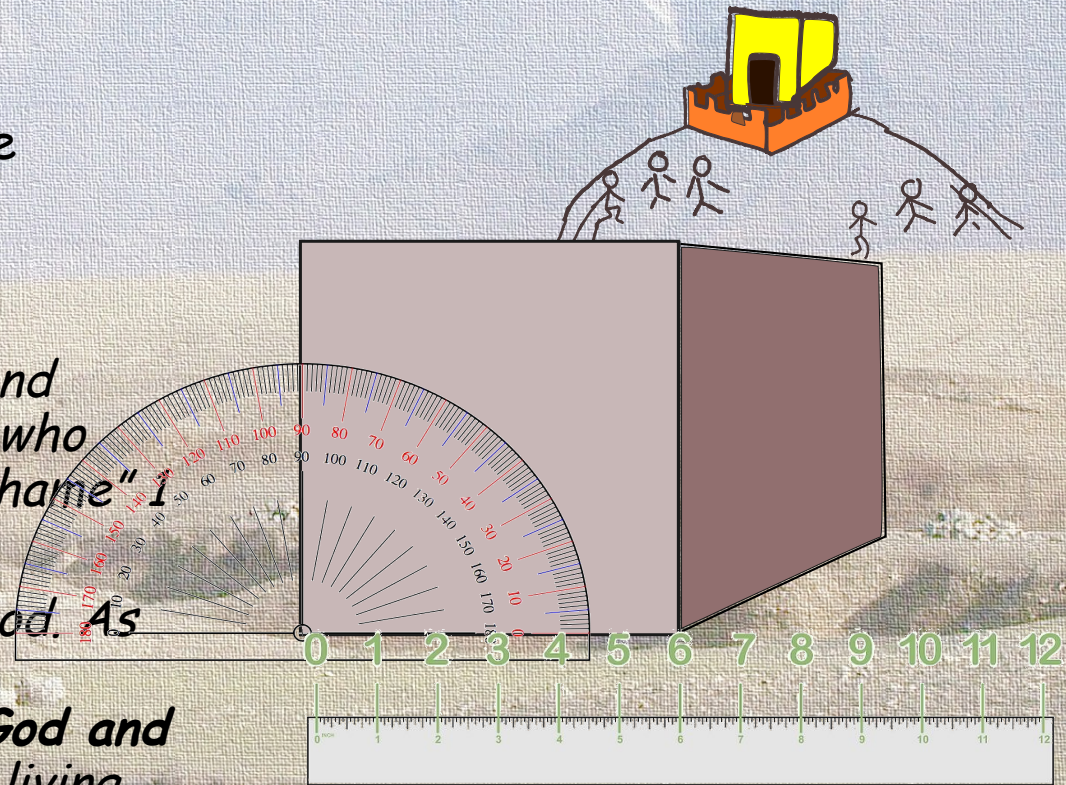
[God's precious problem solving method]

## See I place a stone in Zion

- Tested stone, precious corner, sure foundation
- Who trusts in him NOT put to shame
- "mishpat" is the measuring line ...

## Who is he?

- *"see I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame"* 1 Peter 2:6
- *"you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, the living stone - **rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him** - you also are like living stones, are being built up into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood ... to you who believe this stone is precious"* 1 Peter 2:4
- Do we come? Shall we come? Is he precious to us as he is to God?



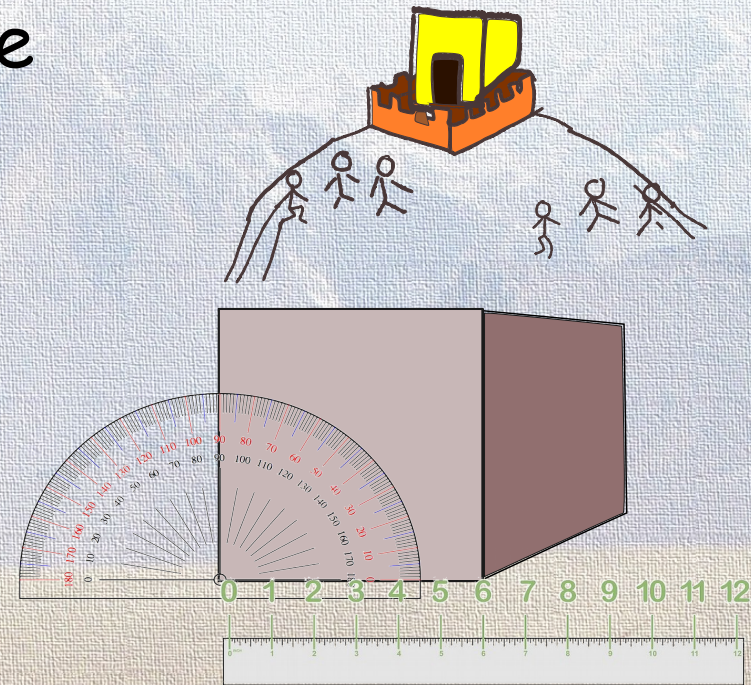


Problem solving in Jerusalem - the lie

[God's precious problem solving method is the stone]

"Your refuge / lie will be swept away" (28:17-21)

- God against Zion (28:21)
- His strange work! (v1.22)

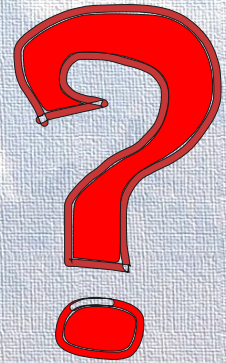




Problem solving - plans of the powerful are stupid

Even the simple peasant farmer

- knows what to plant
- God teaches him "mishpat" v.26



Even the peasant farmer

- Knows how to treat his harvest
- From the LORD wonderful in counsel and wisdom



[But you Kings and Priests haven't got a clue!]



# Problem solving - "Ariel" the ritualistic planner

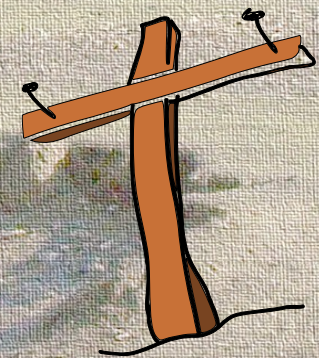
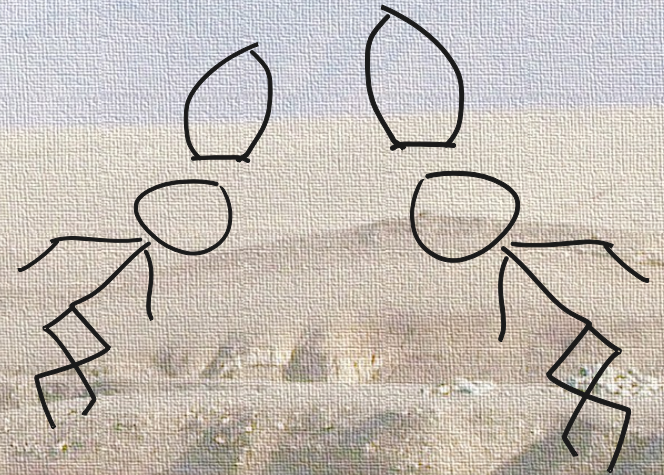
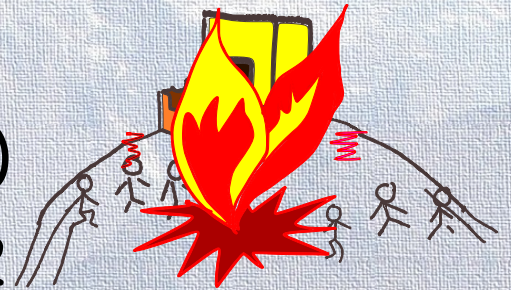
## WOE to Ariel (= Jerusalem v.8)

- //"altar hearth" they have lots of rituals (v.1)
- God send the attacker, make her a hearth v.2

BUT God will repel the attacker v.6

- Zion staggers (not wine)
- sleep ... blinded ... deaf
- she also cannot hear God's voice
- she talks the talk, but her heart is far away from God (v.13)
- her clever plans will be frustrated (v.14)

*1 Cor 1:19 - they never really understood, because they didn't understand the cross*





# Problem solving - "Ariel" the ritualistic planner

WOE to those who plan and  
hide it from the LORD

- it's like a pot saying that the  
potter has no knowledge  
(Romans 9:20)

- BUT God will

- Make the field fertile (v.17)
- Make the deaf hear
- The blind see
- The humble rejoice
- The ruthless disappear





# Problem solving - summary

## The party animals of Ephraim

- Be trampled

## The priests and prophets

- Stupid with wine
- wouldn't hear → couldn't hear

## The rulers of Jerusalem - covenant makers

- Their covenant with death
- God against them (strange work)
- N.B. even farmers learn better than them

## Ariel - full of ritual

- Sozzled by religion = blind, deaf

## The despised word we need to hear

## The stone - the basis for all solutions

- Trust in him is the fundamental
- He is precious
- He is wisdom, and power, in his cross
- He is Jesus

Make him the foundation of your life!

