

Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



Today 4th November 2018 speaker Philip Wells, Full-time Elder.
This morning - "Crisis time for the King" Isaiah 36-39

www.calvary-brighton.org.uk

calvary-brighton.sermon.net

What's Christianity all about?

it's all about "faith"

- *Faith is knowing enough about the trustworthiness of the object that you are prepared to trust them*
 - *When you can't see how it's going to work out*
 - *When you can't see how it will end up*

Versus

- *Rationalism = I will only trust when I can see the whole explanation myself*
- *Mysticism = I will only trust if it feels right (so Luke Skywalker)*
- *Moralism = it is about doing the right rituals, and keeping the right rules*

N.B. Christians are justified by faith

N.B. Christians walk by faith (and not by sight)

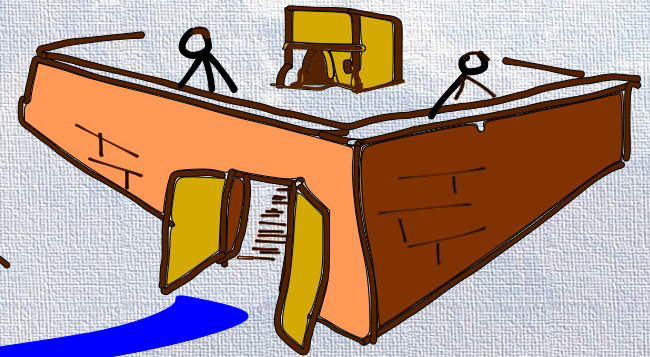
=> if we don't feed our faith on God's word, we shall fall!

Plan

- 1. Tell the story*
- 2. 4 things you should know*



The Assyrian threat - chapter 36



As the vast Assyrian army have defeated the ring of fortified cities around Jerusalem ... (36:1) the Assyrian field-commander (+2 + army) approaches Jerusalem itself

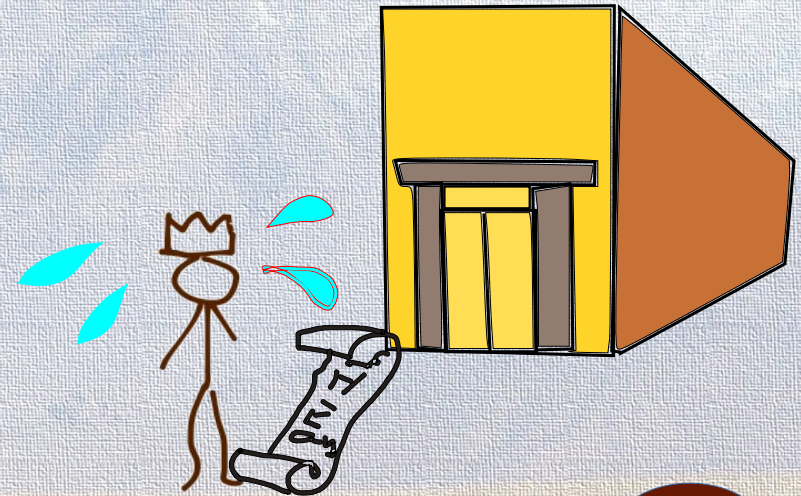
- The place ... near upper pool (36:2)
- Met by 3 of King's officials (36:3)
- Speech #1
 - "what are you trusting in? (36:4)"
- reply - please speak in Official Language (36:11), not ordinary Language
 - Answer: "ordinary people will be eating their poo" (36:12)
- Speech #2
 - Assyrian is the great King - don't trust Hezekiah + LORD
 - Submit to me (v.16)
 - How can the LORD deliver Jerusalem? (v.20)
- Appalled - Silence and torn clothes
- ==> pretty frightening!



Chapter 37 - Hezekiah prays:

Hezekiah

- Goes to the temple, torn clothes = sad/serious
- Sends the 3 to Isaiah the prophet
 - They are ridiculing the living God (v.4)
 - Please pray for people left (v.4)!
- ==> good reaction and spiritual perception



Isaiah:

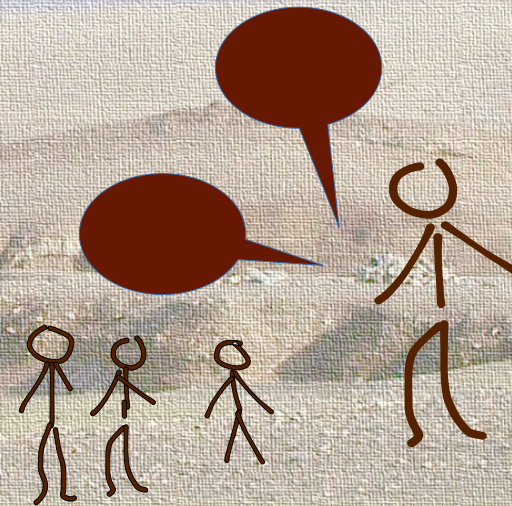
- Do not be afraid, he blasphemed me, I will send him back, I will have him killed (v.7)

Sennacherib

- Gets diverted, but sends a threatening letter

Hezekiah show the letter to LORD and prays

- "you are enthroned! .. let the kingdoms know that you are God"
- ==> good prayer!



Isaiah sends message

- Assyria boasts, I the LORD planned, you will survive
- This is the city of David (v.35)

Result: 185 thousands killed

- Sennacherib killed back home
- ==> praise LORD who fulfils his promise and defends his people!

Chapter 38 - Hezekiah's illness (earlier? Or later?)

Hezekiah is about to die
(38:1)

Isaiah tells him to get
ready (v.1)

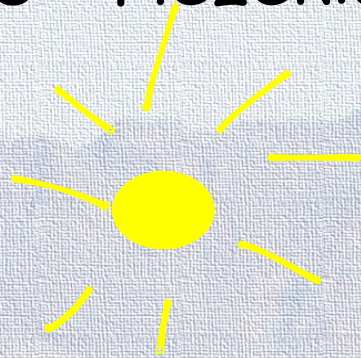
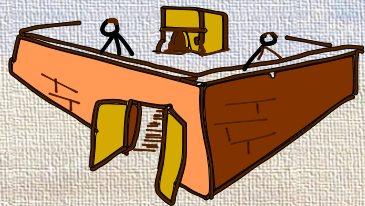
Hezekiah prays and
weeps

Isaiah says:

- *LORD will add 15 years*
- *I will defend this city*
- *There is a sign (v.7)*

Hezekiah's song

=> thanks for grace v.17



Footnote (almost): the Babylonian fact-finders

Babylon - Merodach-Baladan

- Ancient irredeemable enemy, land far away.
- "we're so please to hear of your recovery" +gifts

H. shows off his gold (boastful, foolish??)

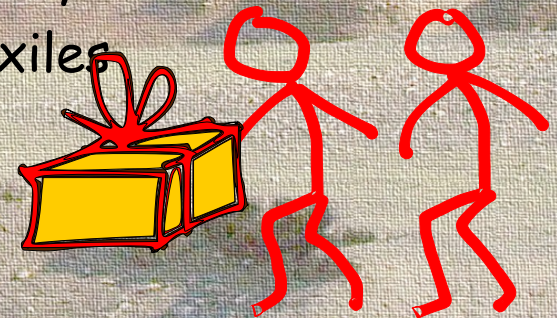
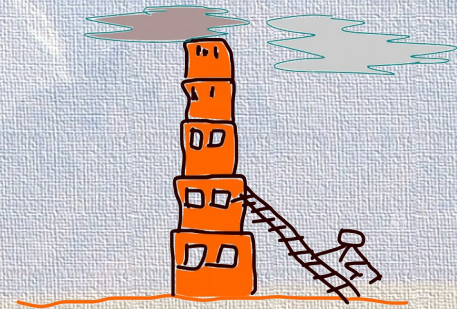
Isaiah asks- what? Where? (39:3,4)

Isaiah says:

- It will all be carried away to Babylon
- The royal family will become exiles and fruitless

Hezekiah says

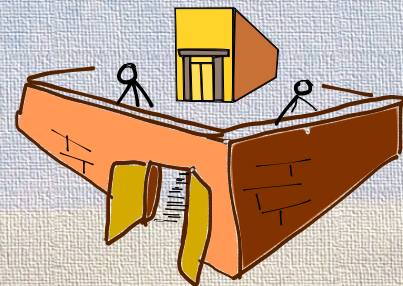
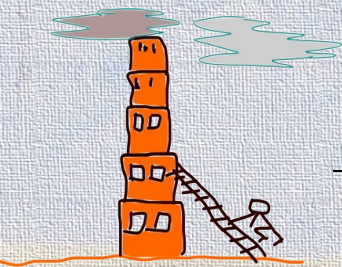
- Says "good"
- Thinks "peace and security in my lifetime"
- ==> even the best of men is limited!



Some other things you should know ...

1. This city and this king has been the subject of multiple previous promises and warnings

- God called **Abraham** ... through you will all the nations be blessed
 - + “he was looking forward to a **city**” Hebrews 11:10
- God founded a nation through **Moses**
 - Blessings to the appreciative obedient nation
 - Curses upon the disobedient nation
 - Including warning of **exile to a foreign country** Deuteronomy 28:64
- God founded Zion as the city of King David
 - David's throne for ever
 - City of holiness for ever
- BUT this earthly city had already failed in many ways
 - e.g. “full of idols” 2:8. like the pagan nations (2:6)
- ==> according to **God's eternal plan**. Like us (“he chose us before the creation of the world to be holy ...” Ephesians 1:4)



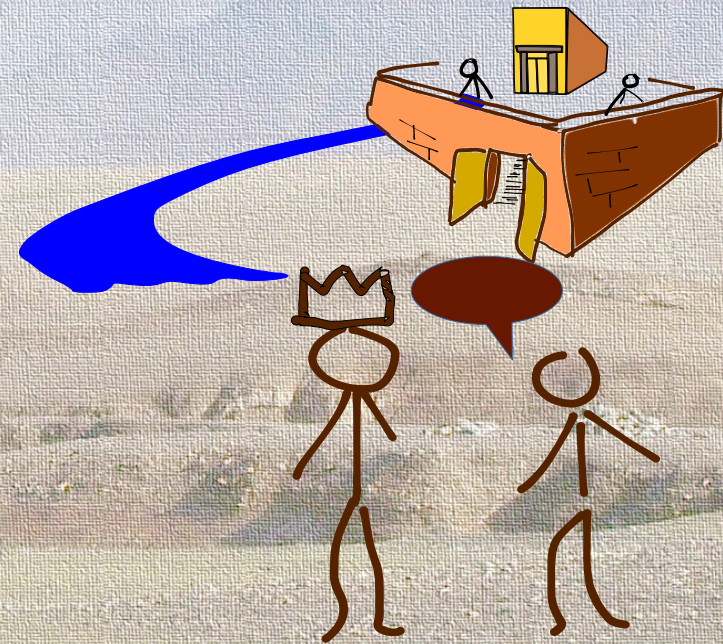
Some other things you should know ...

2. This is a re-play of a generation previously (Isaiah 7:2)

- *King Ahaz (Hezekiah's father)*
- *Similar threat 7:2*
- *Same place 7:3*
- *Told to trust in LORD (7:9)*
- *Offered a sign (7:10)*
- *Warned that Assyria would be poison not protection (7:17)*

This time round:

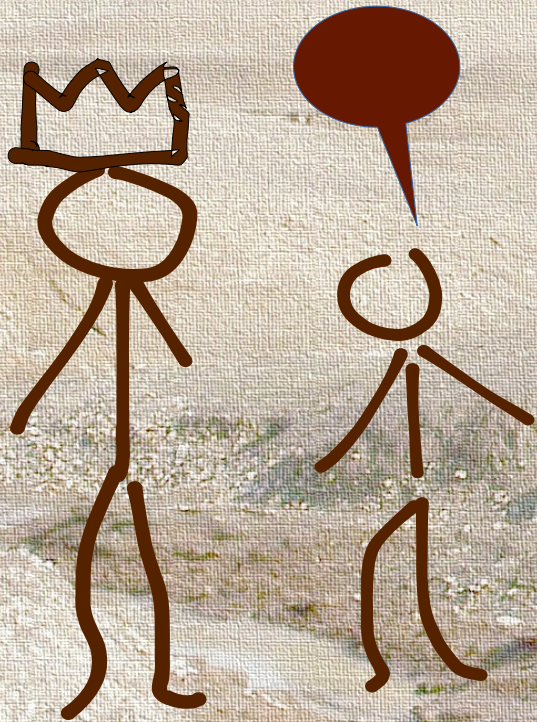
- Hezekiah prayed ... trusted
 - It worked!
- ==> if LORD is truly Almighty, faith is a realistic option!



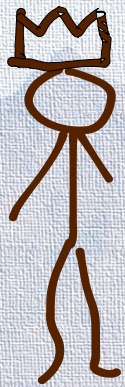
Some other things you should know ...

3. This was a triumph of faith

- Against fear (threats)
- Against theological deception ("LORD told me")
- Against temptation (e.g. Egypt's offers of security)
- IT WORKED!
- ==> *Christians need to learn to walk by faith, to see things by faith, to value things by faith, to act out of faith*



Some other things you should know ...



4. This was a failure of hope (?)

Hezekiah still isn't the Saviour

- "the virgin will conceive and bear a son and will call him Immanuel" 7:2
- "a shoot from the stump of Jesse [= David's father] the Spirit of the LORD will rest on him" 11:1
- **IT'S NOT Hezekiah, ... he sends his people into exile**
- **The best earthly King is still flawed**
 - Even though he defied death ... temporarily, not permanently
 - He could not redeem the terrible sins of the next generation
- **BUT Jesus IS THE PERFECT SAVIOUR**
- They looked forward to HIM
- Aren't we pleased he came!

