

Moab's Proud Refusal

Isaiah 15:1 – 16:14

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Introduction

For the past few weeks, we have been looking at what the LORD said to the nations all around Israel in the 8th century BC through Isaiah the prophet.

- This extensive section in Isaiah's prophecy began in chapter 13 and runs all the way through chapter 27.
 - Even though it is often ignored, it is a very important part of God's Word and it is especially important for us today.
- Let me give you three reasons why these prophecies are so important...
 - First, because in these prophecies we are shown that the LORD is absolutely sovereign over all nations and disposes of them just as He pleases.
 - They rise and fall in accordance with what He has decreed.
 - Even when a wicked nation, like Babylon, becomes totally dominant, it is because He had raised them up as His instrument to judge other nations...
 - And even though He makes them attain such power that they seem invincible, He brings them down in a moment at His pleasure.
 - It is very difficult to read these prophecies and come away with any other view,
 - Yet, from the neglect of them, there are many Christians in our day that do not accept this doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty.
 - Secondly, these prophecies are important because in them we learn that no matter how small and weak God may cause the church to become.
 - Many times the Lord chastens the church to the point that it becomes very small and very weak in the world.
 - Such is the case today with the church in our land.
 - But we learn in Isaiah that even though nations around us may be stamped out, God will continue to preserve a remnant of His people.
 - His promises to preserve us are just as good when we are shut away in a prison camp as they are when nations are trembling before God's Word.
 - We may safely trust Him at all times—in strength and in weakness.
 - How many times His gracious promises are sounded in the midst of these prophecies about the destruction of the nations!
 - We learn to take our encouragement not from our present circumstances, but from the mercy and promises of God.

- Thirdly, these prophecies are important because they give us examples of many things that God hates and judges.
 - Many of the sins of the nations are spoken of and graphically presented to us—
 - pride, carnal security, pride, envy, pride, idolatry, pride, oppression of the weak, pride, luxury, pride and pride.
 - By showing us, in these prophecies, how God is going to destroy the nations because of these sins,
 - we learn of His glorious character as a God who hates sin,
 - and because we find the same sins in us,
 - we are taught of His great mercy in pardoning these sins for Christ's sake,
 - and we are taught to cry out to Him for grace to enable us to flee from these sins and to grow in our hatred of them.

TRANS> So you see how profitable it is for us to study these chapters in Isaiah.

- I know that it can seem a little tedious at times to have one chapter after another listing off woe upon woe on nations that in some cases are no longer even around,
 - but when you understand that these prophecies are written to instruct us about our God and the way He deals with us as His people,
 - It gives us a whole new perspective that ought to make us eager to dig deeply into these prophecies.

This week we come to look at what the LORD had to say about Moab in Isaiah's day.

- Moab was on the east side of the Jordan River—just to the south of the Manasseh, Ruben, and Gad.
 - It was a beautiful country, very lush and green, with fruitful fields and vineyards.
 - It was a comfortable place to live,
 - somewhat out of the way of danger when compared to Judah which was on the main route between the North and the South for nations going to war as the funnelled through Israel between the dead sea and the Mediterranean sea.
 - Moab was, as it were, off to the side.
 - It was a place of ease and prosperity—perhaps a bit like PEI in some ways, but without the harsh winters.
 - You will remember how Elimelech and Naomi went there with their two sons to get away from famine.

- The prosperity and quietness of Moab had the danger of causing the people to become falsely secure.
- Not only was Moab a place of ease,
 - It was also a people that were related to the covenant people of Israel...
 - You may remember that the Moabites were the descendants of Abraham's nephew, Lot.
 - When Lot escaped Sodom and Gomorrah, his wife was turned into a pillar of salt and his daughters escaped with him without their husbands.
 - In their zeal to have children, they got their father Lot drunk and had sex with him.
 - Moab was the son of the elder daughter, and Ben Ammi was the son of the younger daughter.
 - Moab is the father of the Moabites,
 - and Ben Ammi is the father of the Ammonites.
 - Because they were relatives of Abraham, God instructed His people Israel to show mercy to them...
 - Lot, for all his failings, was a righteous man...
 - Yet over the years the Moabites turned from God to worship idols...
 - and as they did, they became bitter enemies of God's people.
 - They were apostates who forsook the true God who was the God of their father.
- This means that you can think of Moab as representative of your relatives who once worshipped the true God,
 - but who have now forsaken him and turned to idols.
 - They are still your relatives, and you have a certain relation to them as those who are loved for the sake of their fathers,
 - you rightly have a special love for them because they are relatives,
 - but you are greatly saddened that they do not worship the true God.
 - You see them—sometimes even prospering more than you are in this world—but headed for destruction if they do not repent.
 - You will notice in this passage how Isaiah is strongly affected when he sees the judgement that will fall upon Moab.
 - He weeps when, in his vision, he sees how they are going to weep.

- You ought to have the same attitude of tenderness toward your relatives who are going to fall under God's judgement...
 - knowing that but for the grace of God, we would be with them.
 - Indeed, we ought to be tender toward all who are headed for God's judgement, but especially toward our own relatives.

It is not certain,

- but it is very likely the case that Isaiah completed this prophecy in 718 BC, three years before Sargon, the King of Assyria's, defeat of Moab.
 - This would have been after the fall of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) to Assyria in 722 BC,
 - but before the invasion of Sennacherib into Judah which was brought to an abrupt stop in 701 BC when, as you will remember, the Lord struck 185 thousand Assyrian soldiers dead in the night.
- In this particular prophecy concerning Moab,
 - Isaiah first passionately warns Moab about the destruction that is coming to them...
 - This is found in chapter 15...
 - And then in chapter 16, he begins with an admonition to them to repent and turn to the Lord...
 - But then declares that Moab is too proud to repent and will surely be brought to ruin within three years.
- We are going to look at all three of these things and how they relate to us...
 - First, at the Lord's passionate prophetic warning to Moab...
 - Second, at the Lord's gracious advice to Moab...
 - And third, at Moab's proud rejection of God's counsel and its consequences.
- And as we look at these three headings, I want you to remember that in principle, this warning, this advice, and this rejection very much applies to apostates in our day.
 - It applies to those modern day Moabites (if you will) who, in past generations, knew the way of God, but have now forsaken it.

TRANS> Okay, so first of all,

I. Look at the Lord's passionate prophetic warning to Moab.

A. You see here that He warns of coming destruction that will be swift and complete!

1. He gets straight to the point in verse 1:

- a. He tells us that Ar of Moab, which was the principle city of Moab, and Kir of Moab, which was the only fortress in Moab, are both destroyed.
 - This is a way of showing that the destruction is complete...
 - The only two places that might have held out are destroyed.
 - Verse 9 says that the river Dibon (here called Dimon to make it sound like the Hebrew word Dam which means blood)
 - is filled with blood from all the carnage—
 - This is reminiscent of the mirage of blood that the Lord caused the Moabites to see when they warred with Israel some years before...
 - only now, it truly is filled with blood—
 - it is filled with the blood of the Moabites!
 - b. And we are told that this destruction happens in a single night...
 - It happens quickly and it happens when Moab was not expecting it...
 - They were flourishing, they were laying up an abundance for themselves as verse 7 indicates...
 - and suddenly, everything is wasted!
 - Judgement can fall so quickly!
 - In a moment, everything can be turned completely around.
2. Moab's sorrow is shown to be both extensive and great (wide and deep)....
- a. It is so wide-spread that weeping and wailing is said to fill the whole country.
 - 1) It is so wide that it reaches all the way to the borders Moab in every direction (verse 8)
 - Places that were so remote and insignificant, that their locations are unknown to us are mentioned as crying out in anguish.
 - 2) It is so wide, that there is said to be wailing and bitter weeping on the flat roofed house tops as well as in the streets and the temples...
 - The houses of religion, the roads, and the private homes are all affected.
 - No kind of place is exempt...
 - Verse 9 says that even those who escape from the invasion meet with new perils...
 - As they run away from the invading armies, they run into the dangers of the wilderness, even lions.
 - 3) And look, Isaiah shows the judgement extending even to vegetation (v. 6)
 - He says that the grass, once so green, is withered away.

- The spring is said to be dried up—perhaps stopped up by the invaders...
- Drought and famine was very common in ancient warfare—
 - The fields are left unattended and the invaders often trample the fields with their horses and footmen.

TRANS> So you see that the anguish reaches far and wide.

b. And how great this anguish...

- 1) So great that verse 2 shows that the mourners have torn out their beards and the hair of their heads...
 - This was a way of showing extreme grief in those eastern countries...
- 2) So great that even the soldiers have joined in the mourning and wish they could die— see verse 4...
 - They have despaired of trying to defend the place.
- 3) So great that the fugitives desperately try to gather up at least something from the abundance they had laid up...
 - It is much harder to have been rich and lose it all than to have never been rich at all...

B. From all this we are painfully reminded that the way of the apostate is going to be very hard!

- Isaiah saw in a prophetic vision the weeping and wailing of the Moabites,
1. We must remember what is in store for our relations and friends who have forsaken the Lord as it is revealed to us in God's Word...
 - Their destruction will come with great force and great suddenness.
 - They may well be prospering and seeming to get along quite well today,
 - but if they are without the repentance,
 - all that will change—and it may change in a single night!
 - They can only flourish for so long without the Lord...
 - and then judgement will fall!
 - There will be such weeping and wailing and all without remedy.
 - Everything they have will be lost in a moment.
 - Everything they have lived for.
 - Everything they have treasured.
 2. Look at how Isaiah responds to his own prophecy—
 - a. He sees the Moabites ruined and weeping under all this destruction,

- and he also weeps!
 - In verse 5 he says:
 - Isa 15:5: “My heart will cry out for Moab”
 - He laments for them from the heart!

- b. Is there any way that you can look into the future and see what will become of your apostate relatives and not cry out in anguish for them?
 - Yes, brothers and sisters, if you believe that God’s judgement really is going to overtake them,
 - you cannot be dispassionate about it!

 - I would submit to you that even our LORD Himself cries out for them...
 - Even as He in His justice pours out His wrath, it is with great sorrow for His creatures...
 - Is the speaker of verse 5 who says
 - “My heart will cry out for Moab”
 - not the same who says in verse 9
 - “I will bring more upon Dimon”
 - Is this not the voice of the judge of all the earth, even our Lord Jesus, in both places?

 - Is He not the one who teaches Jonah of his sorrow that would have come in the destruction of Nineveh if they had not repented?
 - Jonah 4:10-11: But the LORD said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"

 - Is He not the one who weeps over Jerusalem when He considers that judgement that is to fall on them?

 - Is He not the same who has compassion on the multitudes because they are as sheep without a shepherd?

 - Is He not the one who says in Jeremiah 31:20:
 - Jer 31:20: “*Is* Ephraim My dear son? *Is he* a pleasant child? For though I spoke against him, I earnestly remember him still; Therefore My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, says the LORD.”

- c. This is the way of our dear Lord Jesus, and you are to be like Him...

- He is working in you to give you love like His love and compassion like His compassion.
 - We have seen that we are to glory in the destruction of God's enemies in as much as we see the beauty of God's justice revealed...
 - and because those who oppose the establishment of His righteous kingdom are brought down...
 - but we are not rejoice for the sake of those who suffer!
- Even as we, like Isaiah, look to the future and to what God has revealed concerning them,
 - let us weep and lament, and pray earnestly for God's deliverance!
 - It is so painful to see the ones that we love going on heedless of God's judgement—
 - going on as if there is no judgement when we know that there is!

TRANS> But the Lord does not leave Moab with out appealing to him...

- He appeals to them, even as Daniel appealed to King Nebuchadnezzar before judgement fell upon him...
 - Do you remember that?
 - Daniel, speaking for the Lord, said to the King:
 - Dan 4:27: Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by *being* righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.
 - The Lord appeals to Moab in a very similar way,
 - telling them what to do in view of the coming judgement that they might obtain mercy...
 - This brings us to the second thing I want to look at this morning...

II. Look at the Lord's gracious appeal to Moab in their apostasy.

A. First, He calls them to come under the authority of the throne of David.

1. You can see in chapter 16, verse 1, that He instructs Moab to send up the lamb to the ruler of the land... to the daughter of Mount Zion.
 - a. Now of course Mt. Zion was where the temple was and where the Davidic king had his throne.
 - By sending up a lamb to the ruler at Mt. Zion,
 - the Lord is instructing Moab to come under the authority of the Davidic king in order that they might partake in the protection and care of the Lord for His people through David's son.

- b. This particular way of saying it... “sending the lamb to the ruler”... refers to what Moab had done when she wanted protection from Israel...
 - Some years before, while the Northern Kingdom of Israel or Ephraim still stood (remember that it fell in 722 to Assyria),
 - Moab had paid tribute to Israel by sending lambs to them.
 - We are told of this in 2 Kings 3:4 where it says:
 - “Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepbreeder, and he regularly paid the king of Israel [Ahab was the king] one hundred thousand lambs and the wool of one hundred thousand rams.”
 - This was a way of buying Israel’s protection and of staying off an invasion from them.
 - This was done under duress,
 - in fact, the passage I just read in 2 Kings 3 is actually about Moab stopping the payments when Ahab’s son became king.
 - They thought they could get away with it now that Ahab was dead.
 - c. But here in Isaiah 16:1, the Lord is actually calling upon Moab to do this to Judah voluntarily.
 - Moab is to recognise that the salvation of the world comes out Zion,
 - and in recognising that, Moab is to support and come under the authority of the government that God has established at Mt. Zion.
 - This is God’s counsel to Moab.
2. How does this apply to modern Moabites?
- a. It is an appeal to them to come under the authority that God has established for His covenant people today.
 - Namely, to support the worship of God with their tithes and to come under the care and discipline of the church.
 - In the New Testament, as soon as the gospel was preached,
 - this is what all those who believed did...
 - They were baptised and were added to the church, and as it says in Acts 2:41-42,
 - Acts 2:41-42: Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

- They came under the government that God has established for His people.
- b. The importance of this is often ignored in our day.
- We want to pretend that Christ never established a church and that we can serve Him independently from His church.
 - The question is not whether it is theoretically possible for someone to serve Him outside of the visible church that He has appointed...
 - The point is that this is what He has ordained for us.
 - If we refuse to come under the authority of those He has appointed to represent Him,
 - then we refuse to come under His authority.
 - Moabites, both old and new, are counselled to submit themselves to the authority of those Christ has appointed to teach and govern and care for His people.
 - In our day, that is the ministers, elders, and deacons who speak and act in accord with the words of the Scripture,
 - and are established in the office to which Christ has called them according to the pattern taught us in scripture.
3. If the daughters of Moab do not come under the care of the daughter of Zion,
- the Lord tells them (in verse 2) that they will be like a wandering bird thrown out of its nest—
 - They will have no true home—no true place of refuge or of safety.
 - That is what is so sad about those who refuse to come under the care that Jesus has so carefully set up for His people.
 - This is not to say the church is perfect...
 - It certainly was far from perfect when Isaiah wrote these words concerning Moab!
 - But it is still what God has appointed for His people,
 - and those that are too proud to submit to it are proud to their own hurt.

TRANS> But that is not all that Moabites are instructed to do...

B. Secondly, Moabites are commanded to love the inhabitants of Zion.

1. For Moab in Isaiah's day,

- that involved offering asylum to God's people during their time of trouble.

- We have seen that in Isaiah's day,
 - Israel had fallen under God's hand of chastisement.
 - The Northern Kingdom of Israel had already fallen to Assyria and the people were scattered far and wide.
 - Some of them had gone to Moab for refuge...
 - And here the Lord is saying to Moab...
 - "Take care my outcasts!"
 - Look at the words in 16:3-4:
 - Isa 16:3-4: Take counsel, execute judgment;
 - Basically, that means, "Listen to what I tell you and do the right thing!"
 - Make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day; Hide the outcasts, Do not betray him who escapes.
 - The idea here is that Moab is to hide God's oppressed people from their enemies, not turn them over to them...
 - Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; Be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler.
 - They are to take care of them and provide for them, for they are their brothers.
2. This is the counsel that God gives to all those who want to be blessed by Him.
- a. He calls them to love His people that He has chosen for Himself!
 - From the very day that God first called Abraham He gave this promise to him:
 - "I will bless those that bless you and will curse him the curses you."
 - And that has been the rule ever since...
 - When Jesus came, He commanded those who had been set apart to Him to love one another even as He had loved them...
 - And made promises like this promise in Matthew 10:41-42:
 - Matt 10:41-42: "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."
 - Essentially, that is the same promise that God gave to Abraham.

- The way we treat the people that God has called to be His own is the way we treat God...
 - What we do to them, be it good or evil, He counts us to have done to Himself...
 - On the day of Judgement, Jesus will say,
 - Matthew 25:45: ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’
 - John explains this in His first epistle...
 - He explains that a person who claims to love God and does not love His brother is a liar—
 - because he does not keep God’s commandment and because He does not love the one that God loves and gave Himself for.
- b. But it is a characteristic of Moabites that they hate God’s people.
- They hate them and they oppress them whenever they can because God’s people constantly remind them of the true God.
 - And Moabites hate the true God.
 - Moabites have chosen to worship in their own way...
 - They worship idols.
 - And it spoils the delusion in which they want to live when those who worship God in truth are around.
 - They don’t want to help these persons and they rejoice when they see them oppressed or brought down.
 - They are just like Edom whom God rebukes in Obadiah verse 13-14:
 - Obadiah 13-14: “You should not have entered the gate of My people In the day of their calamity. Indeed, you should not have gazed on their affliction In the day of their calamity, Nor laid *hands* on their substance In the day of their calamity. You should not have stood at the crossroads To cut off those among them who escaped; Nor should you have delivered up those among them who remained In the day of distress.”
 - If they have genuine faith, they will be like Rahab who is described in Heb 11:31 for doing just what Moab is called to do here in Isaiah:
 - Heb 11:31: By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

TRANS> But you can imagine that Moab might look at Mount Zion and say,

- but wait a minute,
 - Mount Zion is not all that much better off than we are!

- Why should we put ourselves under their government?
- Why should we go out of our way to show kindness to them?
- And the answer is because it is to Zion that Messiah will come...
 - And when He comes, He will bring salvation to the world—to all those who take refuge in Him.
 - Has Isaiah not already promised that even though the Lord will bring His people very low in His chastisement of them,
 - that a virgin will conceive and bear a son and call His name Emanuel, which means, God with us?
 - And has He not promised to His people that despite all the gloom that will come in the next years that the day will come when they will be able to say:
 - Isa 9:6-7: “For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever”?
 - Could anything be more wonderful than to be a true subject of the kingdom of David’s promised Son?

C. Look at how the Lord describes the Messiah and His reign to Moab!

1. In the second half of verse 4, He explains what the final outcome of His reign shall be:
 - He says:
 - Isa 16:4-b: For the extortioner is at an end, Devastation ceases, The oppressors are consumed out of the land.
 - Yes, the Lord chastens His people in this world and He calls them to suffer for His sake as the Lord Jesus has suffered...
 - But all this will come to an end.
 - Christ will reign until He brings every last one of His enemies under His feet and then there will be no more extortioner, no more devastation, no more oppressor!
 - There will perfect peace and righteousness!
 - His people will love one another even as He has loved them, and all their enemies who are of a contrary mind will be cast into the Lake of Fire!
 - Can you imagine what it will be like my brothers and sisters?

- to have no more taking advantage of each other, no more harming of each other, no more wrongdoing at all?
 - only love like the love of our Lord Jesus who in love went to the cross to bear God's curse for His people?
- Tell Moab that this is what the Lord has promised to them that love Him... to them that trust Him and look to Him for salvation!
 - And don't just tell Moab, but tell each other!
 - This is what God has promised!
 - Yes, there will be tribulation in this world—but King Jesus has overcome the world and we will share in the perfect victory!
2. You see in verse 5 that He is described as the one who will establish God's kingdom in perfect righteousness...
- Isa 16:5 says: In mercy the throne will be established; And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness."
 - It is because of Jesus that perfect peace and righteousness will come!
 - In *mercy (hesed)* His throne will be established...
 - *Hesed* is that wonderful word that speaks of God's covenant love—
 - His faithful love that He has for His people...
 - His love that extends so far that it goes to the cross to redeem them.
 - It is by this marvellous covenant love that Christ will reign!
 - If the people from Moab will come to Him
 - He will take away all that defiles them,
 - He will pardon all their sins,
 - He will give them a new heart that delights in His ways,
 - He will at last perfect them in holiness to love as He loves!
 - He will destroy all their enemies and give them peace
 - This is what God is doing for His people through the coming Son of David,
 - and this is what He will do for all those who join themselves to Him in faith and who love His people.
 - He will do this for Moabites both in Isaiah's day and in our day!

TRANS> This is what God calls Moabites to come to!

- It is a splendid thing if they will come!

III. But look at how pride becomes the ruin of Moab

- There is this wonderful counsel from the Lord to come to Him for life...

A. But Moab's pride will not allow him to turn to the Lord.

1. Isaiah begins by saying, (v. 6)

- Isa 16:6: We have heard of the pride of Moab—He is very proud.
- Moab's pride is a thing well known...
 - It is pride that permeates the whole human race, fallen into sin...
 - Is the pride that says,
 - "I can get along find without the LORD. I will make my own way. I can work things out for myself."
 - "I do not need to repent—there is nothing wrong with me—
 - the problem is with this world and with my troubles."
 - "I do not need God to tell me what to do—I will decide for myself."
 - "I do not need to be reconciled to the Lord—He just needs to mind His own business and leave me alone."
 - "I don't need a Saviour to die on the cross for me, I don't need the Holy Spirit to change my heart, all I need is for God to leave me alone."
- Pride is such a harmful thing because it makes a man oppose Christ.
 - It makes Him just the opposite of what he needs to be to come to Christ.
 - Instead of being empty and needy so that Christ may fill him,
 - He is puffed up and inflated so that he will have none of Christ.
 - He, in fact, disdains the very idea of coming to Christ.
 - the very idea of submitting to His government and of reaching out to His people in their oppression.

2. You see that in addition to pride, Isaiah mentions anger...

- He speaks "of his pride, of his haughtiness and of his wrath."
 - Wherever there is pride, you can be sure that wrath is not far away.
 - The two always go together...
 - Right from the beginning of the world, Cain despised his brother Abel because Abel was righteous and was accepted by God through faith.
 - In pride, Cain wanted God to accept him on his own terms,
 - and because the Lord did not, Cain hated his brother!

- For him it was a matter of works...
 - God ought to accept him because of his deeds...
 - He did not like the idea of gaining favour only on the basis of grace.
 - He could not accept such terms and he could not accept anyone who came to God on such terms!
 - And so he murdered his brother.
3. Isaiah rounds out the description of Moab's character by telling us that Moab's pretensions are vain...
- The NKJV says, "His lies shall not be so."
 - More literally it is "Vain (or empty) are his pretensions."
 - He is living in under illusions of greatness...
 - under the pretence that God's judgement will not reach him...
 - that somehow he will be able to escape it.
 - that he need not listen to God's counsel.
 - There are so many proud lies like this in the world—desperate lies—lies that will destroy men and women, boys and girls, as long as they hang on to them.
 - Don't you see—lies and pretensions will ruin you!
 - You must come to Jesus who is the truth and believe...
 - You think lies will make you free, but Jesus said that the truth will make you free!
 - It is not by denying your sin, but by dealing with it.
 - Don't you want to be free?
 - Aren't you tired of your bondage?

B. Look at what Moab's pride and lies get him...

1. All that wailing and all that sorrow that we have already seen in chapter 15!
 - a. verse 7 says,
 - Isa 16:7: "Moab shall wail for Moab, everyone shall wail..."
 - This is the final outcome for all those who reject the Lord's Christ.
 - Jesus Himself says they will be cast into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.
 - A land where weeping and wailing is the order of the day.

- b. verse 8 shows that everything lovely will be taken away by God's judgement.
 - Moab was a beautiful land!
 - It was a land that God richly blessed with grain and wine and many green things—
 - a place of growth and fruitfulness where the goodness of God refreshed the hearts of men and women!
 - All this beauty will be taken away from Moab and enjoyed no more...
 - Isa 16:8: For the fields of Heshbon languish, And the vine of Sibmah; The lords of the nations have broken down its choice plants, Which have reached to Jazer And wandered through the wilderness. Her branches are stretched out, They are gone over the sea.
 - c. Where there used to be gladness and singing, there will only be weeping and wailing.
 - Look at verse 10—
 - Isa 16:10: Gladness is taken away!
 - How sad!
 - Isa 16:10: Gladness is taken away, And joy from the plentiful field; In the vineyards there will be no singing, Nor will there be shouting; No treaders will tread out wine in the presses; I have made their shouting cease.
 - All the happy sounds are replaced by sounds of mourning.
2. Once again, our Lord Himself mingles His own tears with those of Moab...
- Look at verse 9
 - Isa 16:9: Therefore I will bewail the vine of Sibmah, With the weeping of Jazer; I will drench you with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh; For battle cries have fallen Over your summer fruits and your harvest.
 - Look at verse 11
 - Isa 16:11: Therefore my heart shall resound like a harp for Moab, And my inner being for Kir Heres.
 - Our Lord knows very well the pain of the curse—especially now that He has come—because He Himself has borne it for all of His people...
 - He has already experienced what Moab will soon experience if she continues to reject His full and free salvation!
3. Everything is lost for Moab because of pride!
- Pride that will not allow Moab to come to the one and only true Saviour!

- Oh yes, Moab will resort to idols and to false gods...
- You see in verse 12—
 - Men will be very religious in times of trouble,
 - they will try to get god in their idolatrous ways to look at their condition and change it...
 - They will, as verse 12 says, “weary themselves in the high places”
 - They will pour out ardent prayers,
 - but they will not prevail at last because they have changed the truth of God into a lie—all to preserve their pride!
- They will not have a God that calls them to repent and that came to bear the curse for them.
 - That is too much for God to have to do in their opinion.
 - They are willing to ask for his help, but they are not willing to have that much help!
 - That is why they fashion their own gods—or even look at the creation itself as their maker...
 - but in the day of judgement, these gods will not help them, no matter how devoted they may be to them.
 - Moab will not prevail with these gods, as it says at the end of verse 12.
 - It will be just as it was in the days when the king of Moab, Balak, hired Balaam to curse Israel...
 - Three times the effort was made and three times Moab did not prevail.
- People will tell you that they are trusting in God and that they are praying to God,
 - But unless it is the God who is the Father of Jesus Christ—
 - the God who can only be approached through the shed blood of Jesus Christ—
 - they will not prevail no matter how much they may weary themselves.

C. In the last two verses of this prophesy, the Lord tells Moab that the judgement He has pronounced from long before on them will fall upon them within three years!

1. Isaiah refers to it as “within three years as the years of a hired man.”

- That means “exactly three years,”
 - because if you hire a man for three years, you can be sure that he is going to watch the clock...

- He is not going to work more than the three years for which you have paid him.
 - Moab's destruction is sure to come—it is put in concrete terms...
 - Jonah told Nineveh that destruction would come to that great city in 40 days, but they repented and the Lord did not bring the destruction.
 - Moab is given three years, but Moab does not repent.
2. You are not given an exact time frame as to when your life will be over and you will be shut up to God's judgement...
- But God knows...
 - It may be before this day is out—it may be in twenty years—it may even be in 80 years...
 - but you do not know...
 - and so is it is for you to put away your pride and come to Christ...
 - Come and unite with His people...
 - Come and love His people...
 - Come and rest in the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ.
 - If you will not have Him,
 - one thing is certain—you will be brought into a land that is filled throughout with weeping and wailing that will never cease.
 - If you want to keep your pride now,
 - you will have wailing at God's appointed time...
 - But if you will forsake your pride and come to Jesus Christ,
 - you will have complete joy in His glorious Kingdom.
3. You who know the Saviour...
- Rejoice in the sure hope that you have,
 - but weep when you consider what is befall your relations who go on in their pride...
 - Weep for them and plead for them before the throne of grace...
 - if perhaps God will have mercy and turn them to Him.
 - You see at the end of verse 14 that there is to be from Moab a tiny remnant, very small and very feeble.
 - Give thanks to the Lord who is able to break the hardest heart.
 - Pray that He will do it for the ones that you love.