

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 • Read Isaiah 15–16

Questions from the Scripture text: Against whom is this burden (15:1a)? When does what happen (v1b–e)? In what other places (v2)? Causing what responses (v2–4)? And in what other places (v4)? What is the Lord's response (v5a)? What seven reasons for this are explained by the word "for" (v5–9)? But Who is the One bringing this judgment over which He weeps, and how much will there be (v9b)? To whom is Moab told to send a lamb as tribute (16:1)? What are the Moabites like at this point (v2)? What will they ask Judah to do (v3)? How would the Lord respond to such a plea for help (v4–5)? What abrupt explanation is given for Moab's unwillingness to make this plea (v6)? What will the result be (v7)? How will this wailing come about (v8)? Who else will grieve over this judgment (v9)? How intensely (v9a, 9b, 9c)? And how deeply (v11)? But what will Moab keep trying (v12) in response to what (v10)? How do we know that this is not a new offer to Moab (v13)? When will this occur (v14)?

What do we learn from the Lord who judges, even as He weeps? Isaiah 15–16 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these twenty-three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **pride is a soul-destroyer, because it hinders us from accepting the Lord's gracious invitation to be saved by Him.**

The invasion. The burden against Moab begins with a nighttime attack on a border town (Ar, v15b) that is either repeated the next night or so swiftly successful that the central city of Kir is destroyed in the same night (v15d). Even as the destruction continues, and the nation begins to grieve, there is a hint at why in v2a–b: Moab's houses and high places of idolatry.

The sympathy. The passage takes a marvelous turn in v5. The intense mourning of vv3–4 is joined by YHWH Himself: "My heart will cry out for Moab" (v5a). Seven times, some aspect of the destruction is introduced by the word "for" in vv5–9. The number is intentional, and the picture is of the Lord seeing all that comes upon His creatures, even by their own sin and folly, and weeping everywhere He looks. It is difficult for us to comprehend the greatness of God's mercy and the greatness of His justice, but in Him there is no tension or difficulty. The same God Who will surely and rightly destroy us apart from repentance and faith still pleads with us not to die, because He takes no pleasure in it (Eze 18:23, 18:32, 33:11; Hos 11:8). The justice of the Lord must be satisfied, and so if there is not repentance, the weeping God "will bring more" (v9b).

The offer of saving mercy. With 16:1, the scene changes, and the Lord is giving advice, as if in the council room of the Moabite nobility. Tellingly, they are gathered at Sela, far in the south, as the invasion traced throughout chapter 15 is almost complete. He is telling them to send a lamb as tribute to Jerusalem. The daughters of Moab, who are risking to cross the Arnon (v2c) to escape the horrors of the invasion may yet have, with the daughter of Zion, the safety that comes from the Lord's holy hill (v1c). And what a safety it is! They would be as safe in daytime as if covered by darkness (v13). Moab is invited into full union, where Moab cares for Judah, and Judah cares for Moab (v4a–b), but especially where the Lord cares for them all (v4c–5)! The invasion will be defeated (v4c–e), and a Son of David will rule over them all in righteousness (v5).

The greater invasion: pride. The prophetic poem doesn't even relate the rejection of the offer. It goes straight for the reason: "the pride of Moab" (v6a), "very proud" (v6b), "haughtiness and pride and wrath" (v6c), but v6d reminds us that whatever one may tell himself in rejecting God's offers for mercy in Christ is just "empty bragging" (more literal than "lies," v6d). So, there is a second round of weeping and wailing, as the destruction is completed (v7–8), this time self-inflicted by not just their idolatry to worship other gods but their pride to refuse salvation from the one true God.

The continued sympathy. There is something marvelous about vv9–11. After Moab rejects His salvation, the weeping of the Lord is even deeper. "Bewailing" (v9a). "Drench you with My tears" (v9c). Inner parts resounding for Moab like a harp (v11a). Inner being for Kir Heres (Kir Hareseth, one of their great cities, v11b).

The warning to all of us. At this point, v12–14 tie the episode with Moab into the movement of the whole of Isaiah. Babylon's, Assyria's, and Philistia's imminent destructions were warnings that sin will bring destruction, and there will be a great day coming of which these other day's of the Lord tell us. Pride, in particular, has featured in each of them. Now, the Lord sets a date upon Moab's destruction. Within three years, it will come. And they will be another example of how urgent it is that we would humble ourselves and receive the offered salvation of a sympathetic Savior. That we would find refuge under the King, the Son of David.

In what ways do you tend to trust in your own efforts for safety, instead of in God's provision in Christ? How does God's response to Moab's danger move you to faith? How does God's response to Moab's pride warn you against self-righteousness? How do you know that you will be safe in the Great Day?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for Your great sympathy to Moab and to us all. Your grief over us moves us. But we confess that we are hard-hearted, often unwilling to be delivered if it must come with being ruled. Forgive us, for the sake of Christ, and grant us humility by Your Spirit, that we might delight to be under You through Christ, in Whose Name we ask it; AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH505 "My Sins, My Sins, My Savior!"

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit hpwl.org/hah

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Isaiah 15-1 through 16 14. These are the words of God. The burdened against moab. Because in the night are of Moab is laid, waste destroyed. Because in the night here of moab is laid waste and destroyed. Is going up to the temple and de-bond high places to eat.

Moabble well over nevo and over. On all their heads will be baldness and every beard cut off. And in their streets, they will clothe themselves with sack wall. On the tops of their houses, and then their streets, everyone, well weeping bitterly. Hessman and the layer lover, look cry out, their voice shall be heard.

As far as you has. Therefore, the arm soldiers of Moab will cry out. His life will be burdensome to him. My heart will cry out for Moab. This fugitive stuff leaked as a r like A three-year-old heifer for by the ascent of lavit they will go up with weeping for in the way of our annihan, they will raise up a cry of destruction, for the waters of memory will be desolate for the green grass is withered away.

The grass fails. There's nothing green. Therefore, the abundance, they have gained what they have laid up. They will carry away to the brook of the willows. For the cry, has gone all around the borders of Moab. It's wailing to a glorian. And it's wailing to bear ealing, a lean.

For the waters of demand will be full of blood, but this eye will bring more. On demand. Lions upon him who escapes from Moab. And on the remnant, Of the land. Send the land to the ruler of the land from Selah to the wilderness. To the mount of the daughter of zion.

VirtualB is a wandering bird thrown out of a nest. So shall be the daughters of Moab at the forge of the armament, take council execute judgment. Make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day. Hide the outcasts. You're not betray him who escapes, let my outcasts dwell with you on Moab.

Your shelter to them from the face of the spoiler. For the extortioners at an end devastation ceases, the oppressors are consumed out of the land and 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.

We have heard of the pride of moab. He is very proud. Of his haughtiness and his pride and his rock. His lies shall not be so, Therefore, moab shall wail for moab everyone? So well. For the foundations of care, how to set, you shall more? Surely, they are stricken for the fields of esion languish and the vine of sigma.

The lords of the nations have broken down. Its choice, plants. Which i've reached geyser. And wandered through the wilderness. Her branches are stretched out. They are going over the sea. Therefore, i will be well the vine of sigma with the weeping of yasar I will drench you with my tears of Ashland and delayah For battle, cries have fallen over your summer.

Fruits harvest. Gladness has taken away. And joy from the plentiful field. And 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. Therefore, my heart shall resound. Like a harp for Moab. And my inner being for care harassed.

And it should come to pass when it is seen. That moab is weary on the high place that you will come to his sanctuary to pray. But he will not prevail. This is the word, which you always spoken concerning. Moab since that time. But now, you always have spoken saying, Within three years as the years of a hired man.

The glory of moab will be despised with all that great multitude. And the remnant will be very small. And feeble.

Oh, my dear family. How dangerous and enemy? Is our own pride. At the beginning of chapter, 15. The picture is of a nighttime surprise attack by the Assyrians. Entering Moab from the north going from From one city to another. So quick, is the destruction by the plan of the attack and the location and the time.

That they're able to take multiple cities in one night in verse 1 and The destruction moves rapidly. South. The, the warriors of moab are Uh, left. Well, impotent powerless. And, You get to the end of verse 4 and Moab is in the ruins. And they're strongest men are helpless and hopeless and crying out.

And then we have this wonderful surprise, it's only a surprise to us because We don't know the greatness of the mercy of our god. But this interruption, Where y'all himself is saying my heart. Will cry out from Moab. And he describes how great the devastation is. Through the end of chapter 15.

And then he gives them advice. So, send the land. A lamb to the ruler of the land from sailor to the wilderness. So now they're all the way down in sailor. Yeah. The the remnant whatever's left of Moab is stuck in the lowest part of the nation, almost to the border with israel.

He doesn't say, send it to ephraim. Ephraim is Um, in their own. Mess as we'll be hearing. And next week, lord willing 17 and 18. And they're alliance with Syria. It says. Send the lamb. To the mount of the daughter of zion. And the picture in verse 2 is, The, the iron, which is the big river in moab and they're crossing at the place where the, where the the amon is most crossable trying to get over to Judah.

Trying to get over. To their new alliance. With this small and despised people. Who have an infinitely great and exalted god. Now alliance would do it does not sound like the best military strategy. But an alliance with the daughter of zion. There's an alliance with the anointed of abort.

So certainly is the best strategy. And so he says, take council execute judgments. Let my outcasts well with you. Oh, Moab. I'm bringing this on them too. But you can be joined to my people. And you can suffer together and you can be restored together. And he describes the restoration, and Um, The end of the trouble in verse 4 and the restoration and verse 5, the extortioner is at an end devastation ceases.

The oppressors are consumed out of the land. So the trouble ends and then the restoration verse 5 in mercy, the throne will be established in one will sit on it in truth in the tabernacle of david. Now we read it that way. Because we know who sits on the throne and the tabernacle of David, it's the lord jesus, of course, But if you are mobile, you'd be like in the tabernacle of david.

And so there's an implied rejection between verse 5 and verse 6. One will sit on that in truth and the tabernacle of david judging seeking justice and hastening righteousness. But Moab rejects the proposal out of hand. And verse 6 through 12 really is A lament. Of the lord over moab.

Because he has been invaded by something much worse than Assyria. Who's been invaded by his own pride. Which kept him from trusting of the lord. We've seen this several times, of course, pride is what destroyed the devil. And Babylon, and Syria and philistia, and And last week's reading. Pride was ahaz's big problem.

When when the lord told Ahas, That. Uh, you know, offered to as the sign that he would be. He has a savior, but he has was already trying to form an alliance with Assyria and Tiglith police are. And the lord described himself as The the stumbling stone that has laid in zion.

That a has stumbled over. Because, You wanted to trust himself, not in the lord. Whenever we think we are going to make up for our sin, we are going to fix our life. We are going to take away our guilt. We are going to fix our situations. We are going to That's our pride.

Invading and pride as a worse invader than Assyria. And so here, the lord has made moab this wonderful offer. To be joined with judah and Zion under the ruler who sits in the throne. Of the tabernacle of David. And mercy. And they reject it. And so you have the lament over, Moab we have heard of the pride of moab verse 6.

He is very proud. But his And the word new king, james translates, it lies. It's empty words. There's empty words, shall not be. So all the things that he tells himself about What, he's Going to be able to do. He says, therefore moab shall will from Moab But the lord himself.

Mourns over him. Therefore, i will be well. The vine of sigma. Etc. Who says? I have made their shouting cease, therefore, my heart. So resound, like a heart promo admin, my inner being for tear hairs. And you see this, Sympathy. Of god. This love for god. Grieving now not just over israel.

We're accustomed to that. Right. Ezekiel y, will you die of israel? Do i have any pleasure in the death of the wicked? But that you would turn from your sins and live. Or jesus weeping over jerusalem. But here it is with Moab. First Timothy 2 god. Desiring that. Non-parish, but also Come to the knowledge of the truth.

All the The horrible pride of man that refuses to be saved the mercy of god. That. Sympathize us here, pictured as weeping and Waiting, even as he is righteously, punishing them. And of course, the righteousness of that punishment comes out in verse 12. Because what does moab do? It goes from one of his worship, places to the other from the High place of worship to the house of worship the temple.

And of course, these worshipping what are not gods and those can't help them. And basically the gist of verses 13 and 14. Is verse 13. That this isn't the first time the lord has warned. That the lord has been faithful and warning. About what the lord is doing. Now is similar to what he's done in other parts of the prophecy of isaiah so far.

He's given a time soon. Yeah, sometimes he gives a time and amount of years, sometimes he gives it, you know, before the child is weaned and those kinds of things here, he gives it exactly within three years as the years of hired, man. But what is a hired man?

Do he comes down the day, it's right, he knows the exact amount of time. And so when it comes exactly on the schedule, Then everyone knows to see what the lord does to Moab. As a Warning from the lord. There's an example. And warning. Not to be destroyed. By our own pride.

For pride is a worse, invader. Than the Assyrian army. That's the point. Of these two chapters may the lord help us to see. As mercy. And have our pride humble. So, that pulling our trust. We will be restored under king jesus and will be happy to be under him.

Instead of too proud to be ruled, Spray. Our gracious gardener heavenly Father. We thank you. For your faithful and consistent warnings, too. All peoples everywhere. And especially to us. Where you're warnings are. So clearly spelled out in your word, which you have caused us to hear, And we thank you and praise you for Displaying to us.

Compassion and even grief over the very ones whom you punish That we might know your love that, we might know your mercy. Even in the midst of judgment and never doubt. The justness. Of your judgment. Save us. Oh, lord, from pride. It does so much damage to our lives in so many ways and The best of us have more than More than enough to harm us.

Left in us. So please forgive us and help us. We ask In jesus name.