

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

The distress of Moab pathetically described by the son of the prince, or ruler of the land, being forced to flee for his life through the desert, that he may escape to Judea; and the young women, like young birds scared from their nest, wade helpless through the fords of Arnon, the boundary of their country, to seek protection in some foreign land, Isaiah 16:1, Isaiah 16:2. The prophet addresses Sion, exhorting her to show mercy to her enemies in their distress, that her throne may be established in righteousness, Isaiah 16:3-5. Exceeding great pride of Moab, Isaiah 16:6. The terrible calamities about to fall upon Moab farther described by the languishing of the vine, the ceasing of the vintage, the sound of the prophet's bowels quivering like a harp, etc., Isaiah 16:7-13. Awful nearness of the full accomplishment of the prophecy, Isaiah 16:14.

Verse 1

Send ye the lamb, etc. - Both the reading and meaning of this verse are still more doubtful than those of the preceding. The Septuagint and Syriac read *eshlach*, I will send, in the first person singular, future tense: the Vulgate and Talmud Babylon, read *shelach*, send, singular imperative: some read *shilchu*, send ye forth, or *shalechu*, they send forth. The Syriac, for *car*, a lamb, reads *bar*, a son, which is confirmed by five MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi. The two first verses describe the distress of Moab on the Assyrian invasion in which even the son of the prince of the country is represented as forced to flee for his life through the desert, that he may escape to Judea; and the young women are driven forth like young birds cast out of the nest, and endeavoring to wade through the fords of the river Arnon. Perhaps there is not so much difficulty in this verse as appears at first view. - Send the lamb to the ruler of the land, - may receive light from 2 Kings 3:4, 2 Kings 3:5: - And Mesha, king of Moab, was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs with their wool, and one hundred thousand rams: but when Ahab was dead, the king of Moab rebelled against Israel. - Now the prophet exhorts them to begin paying the tribute as formerly, that their punishment might be averted or mitigated.

Verse 3

Take counsel - Impart counsel - The Vulgate renders the verbs in the beginning of this verse in the singular number, So the Keri; and so likewise sixty-one MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's have it, and nineteen editions, and the Syriac. The verbs throughout the verse are also in the feminine gender; agreeing with Zion, which I suppose to be understood.

Verse 4

Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab - Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn with thee, O Zion - Setting the points aside, this is by much the most obvious construction of the Hebrew, as well as most agreeable to the context, and the design of the prophet. And it is confirmed by the Septuagint *ἐν τῇ πόλει σου ἡμεῖς οἱ ἐκτὸς*, and Syriac.

The oppressors - The oppressor - Perhaps the Israelites, who in the time of Ahab invaded Judah, defeated his army, slaying one hundred and twenty thousand men, and brought the kingdom to the brink of destruction. Judah, being now in a more prosperous condition, is represented as able to receive and to protect the fugitive Moabites. And with those former times of distress the security and flourishing state of the kingdom under the government of Hezekiah is contrasted.

Verse 5

In mercy shall the throne be established - May not this refer to the throne of Hezekiah? Here we have the character of such a king as cannot fail to be a blessing to the people.

1. He sitteth on the throne in truth - He does not merely profess to be the father and protector of his people: but he is actually such.

2. He is judging. He is not a man of war or blood, who wastes his subjects' lives and treasures in contentions with neighboring nations, in order to satisfy his ambition by the extension of his territory. On the contrary, his whole life is occupied in the distribution of justice.

3. He seeketh judgment. He seeks out the poor distressed ones who cannot make their way to him, and avenges them on their oppressors.

4. He hastens righteousness. He does not suffer any of the courts of justice to delay the determination of the causes brought before them: he so orders that the point in litigation be fairly, fully, and speedily heard; and

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With the weeping אֶל־עִי as with the weeping אֶל־עִי - For אֶל־עִי־אֶל־עִיTM (bibechei), a MS. reads אֶל־עִי־אֶל־עִיTM (bechei). In Jeremiah 48:32, it is אֶל־עִי־אֶל־עִיTM (mibbechei). The Septuagint read אֶל־עִי־אֶל־עִיTM (kibeki), as with weeping, which I follow.

For thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen • And upon thy vintage the destroyer hath fallen• -
x•xœ xšx|x™x”xš x”x™x“x“ x xœœ (veal ketsirech heidad naphal). In these few words there are two great
mistakes, which the text of Jeremiah 48:32 rectifies. For xšx|x™x”xš (ketsirech), it has x’x|x™x”xš (betsirech);
and for x”x™x“x“ (heidad), x©x“x“ (shoded); both which corrections the Chaldee in this place confirms. As to
the first,
•Hesebon and Eleale, and
The flowery dale of Sibmah. clad with vines. •

were never celebrated for their harvests; it was the vintage that suffered by the irruption of the enemy; and so read the Septuagint and Syriac. **חחחחח** (heidad) is the noisy acclamation of the treaders of the grapes. And see what sense this makes in the literal rendering of the Vulgate: super messem tuam vox calcantium irruit, **עעעעע** upon thy harvest the voice of the treaders rushes. The reading in Jeremiah 48:32 is certainly right, **חחחחח** **חחחחח** (shoded naphal), **עעעעע** the destroyer hath fallen. The shout of the treaders does not come in till the next verse; in which the text of Isaiah in its turn mends that of Jeremiah 48:33, where instead of the first **חחחחח** (heidad), **עעעעע** the shout, we ought undoubtedly to read, as here, **חחחחח** (haddorech), **עעעעע** the treader.

Verse 10

Neither shall there be shouting – An end is put to the shouting – The Septuagint reads x"x©x"a (hishbeth), passive, and in the third person; rightly, for God is not the speaker in this place. The rendering of the Septuagint is IēIµIēI±...I.,I±I' I'±I• I'±IµI'±IµI...Ifî¼I± , æthe cry ceaseth;æ which last word, necessary to the rendering of the Hebrew and to the sense, is supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. II., having been lost out of the other copies.

Verse 12

When it is seen that Moab, etc. – “When Moab shall see,” etc. – For x^xx^x (nirah), a MS. reads x^xx^x (raah), and so the Syriac and Chaldee. – “Perhaps x^xxTM x^xx^x” (ki nirah) is only a various reading of x^xxTM x^xx^x (ki nilah). – Secker. A very probable conjecture.

Verse 14

Within three years - x'x©xœx© (beshalish) x©x©xœx© (keshalish), according, or in or about three years, is the reading of nine of Kennicottâ€™s and De Rossiâ€™s MSS., and two ancient editions.

But the present reading may well stand: "Now, the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling." It seems as if this prophecy had been delivered before, without any time specified for its fulfillment; but now the time is determined "in three years, as the years of a hireling" - for, as a hireling counts even to a single day, and will not abide with his employer an hour beyond the time agreed on; so, in three years, even to a day, from the delivery of this prophecy, shall destruction come upon Moab. This is the import of the present text; but if we take כֶּשָׁלִישׁ (keshalish), AS in three years, or in about three years' time, the prophecy is not so definite.

These three years, says Calmet, are mentioned from the death of Ahaz, see Isaiah 14:28, and end the third year of Hezekiah, three years before the taking of Samaria by Shalmaneser. This conqueror did not ruin Moab so completely as not to leave a man in the land; the final desolation of Moab was reserved for Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the taking of Jerusalem.

Feeble – And without strength – An ancient MS., with the Septuagint, reads **xox** (velo), and not.