

Isaiah 15:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence;

Analysis

The burden of Moab. Because in the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence. The Hebrew word *massa* (burden/oracle) introduces divine judgment pronouncements. Moab, descended from Lot's incestuous union (Genesis 19:30-37), maintained a complex relationship with Israel—sometimes ally, often adversary. The repetitive structure "in the night...laid waste" emphasizes sudden, unexpected devastation. Ar and Kir, Moab's principal cities, represent the nation's strength and pride. Their simultaneous destruction "in the night" suggests divinely orchestrated military conquest, likely the Assyrian invasions under Tiglath-Pileser III (732 BCE) or Sargon II (715 BCE). God's sovereignty extends beyond Israel to judge all nations according to His righteous standards. The prophet's compassion for Moab (verses 5, 9) demonstrates that divine judgment brings no pleasure to God (Ezekiel 33:11), yet His holiness demands response to sin.

Historical Context

Moab occupied the plateau east of the Dead Sea, a fertile agricultural region. Historical enmity existed since Israel's wilderness journey when Moab refused passage (Numbers 22-25) and hired Balaam to curse Israel. By Isaiah's time (740-700 BCE), Moab existed as an Assyrian vassal state. Archaeological evidence from Dibon and other Moabite sites shows destruction layers from this period. The Mesha Stele (c. 840 BCE) demonstrates Moab's proud defiance of Israel, boasting

of victories over Israel's King Omri. This prideful nationalism made Moab's humiliation especially significant.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's judgment of nations outside Israel demonstrate His universal sovereignty and justice?
2. What does the prophet's compassion for enemies (Moab) teach us about combining truth and love in confronting sin?
3. In what ways does sudden judgment "in the night" warn against presuming on God's patience?

Interlinear Text

מִשָּׁא	מוֹאָב	כִּי	בַּלַּיְלָה	שָׁדָד	עַר	מוֹאָב
The burden	of Moab	H3588	Because in the night	is laid waste	Ar	of Moab
H4853	H4124		H3915	H7703	H6144	H4124
נִדְמָה:	כִּי	בַּלַּיְלָה	שָׁדָד	קִיר	מוֹאָב	
and brought to silence	H3588	Because in the night	is laid waste	Kir	of Moab	
H1820		H3915	H7703	H7024	H4124	
נִדְמָה:						
and brought to silence						
H1820						

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 11:14 (Parallel theme): But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

Numbers 21:28 (Parallel theme): For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath consumed Ar of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon.

Isaiah 16:7 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations of Kir-hareseth shall ye mourn; surely they are stricken.

Isaiah 16:11 (Parallel theme): Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.

Isaiah 25:10 (Parallel theme): For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.

Isaiah 14:28 (Parallel theme): In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.