

# Isaiah 15:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My heart shall cry out for Moab; his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, an heifer of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction.

## Analysis

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Isaiah's "heart shall cry out for Moab" demonstrates the prophet's compassion despite being Israel's enemy. This reflects God's own heart—taking no pleasure in judgment (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11) yet remaining committed to justice. The refugees fleeing to Zoar (south of the Dead Sea, spared in Sodom's destruction, Genesis 19:22-23) seek any refuge from advancing armies. The vivid image of fugitives as "an heifer of three years old" suggests strength turned to flight, productive animals becoming refugees. The phrase "going up of Luhith with weeping" and "way of Horonaim" describe literal geographical ascents and descents, but also spiritual desperation. Reformed pastoral theology emphasizes that true ministers must combine unflinching proclamation of judgment with genuine grief over the lost—never celebrating others' destruction while maintaining conviction about divine justice.

## Historical Context

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Zoar's association with Lot connects Moab's origin and end—both linked to divine judgment. The geographical references (Luhith, Horonaim) describe mountain passes used by refugees, confirmed by archaeological surveys showing these as ancient routes. The comparison to "an heifer of three years old" references an animal in its prime before breaking to yoke—strong but untrained for hardship,

thus particularly distressed when forced to flee. Ancient Near Eastern warfare regularly produced massive refugee movements, documented in Assyrian annals and archaeological evidence of destroyed cities.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How can we maintain both conviction about God's righteous judgment and genuine compassion for those under judgment?
2. What does Isaiah's grief for Moab teach us about proper Christian attitude toward enemies?
3. Why is Zoar's connection to Lot's story significant for understanding Moab's end?

## Interlinear Text

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|                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |                             |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| לִבִּי               | לִמְזֹא בָּ          | יִצְעַק              | בְּרִיחַ בָּ         | עַד                  | צָעַר                       |
| <b>My heart</b>      | <b>for Moab</b>      | <b>shall cry out</b> | <b>his fugitives</b> | <small>H5704</small> | <b>shall flee unto Zoar</b> |
| <small>H3820</small> | <small>H4124</small> | <small>H2199</small> | <small>H1280</small> |                      | <small>H6820</small>        |

|                      |                           |                      |                               |                      |
|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| עַגְלַת              | שְׁלִשִׁי הָ              | כִּי                 | מַעַל הָ                      | כְּלֹוח יְתָ         |
| <b>an heifer</b>     | <b>of three years old</b> | <small>H3588</small> | <b>for by the mounting up</b> | <b>of Luhith</b>     |
| <small>H5697</small> | <small>H7992</small>      |                      | <small>H4608</small>          | <small>H3872</small> |

|                      |                            |                   |                      |                       |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| בְּבִכִּי            | יַעֲלָה                    | כִּי בְּזִ        | דְּרָה               | חֹרֵן יְמִ            | צְעַקְתָּ            |
| <b>with weeping</b>  | <b>shall they go it up</b> | <small>H0</small> | <small>H3588</small> | <b>for in the way</b> | <b>of Horonaim</b>   |
| <small>H1065</small> | <small>H5927</small>       |                   |                      | <small>H1870</small>  | <small>H2773</small> |

|                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| שְׁבָר                | יַעֲשֶׂרֶת:                |
| <b>of destruction</b> | <b>they shall raise up</b> |
| <small>H7667</small>  | <small>H5782</small>       |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 48:5** (Parallel theme): For in the going up of Luhith continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

**Jeremiah 4:20** (Parallel theme): Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment.

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