

# Numbers 21:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh: he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites.

## Analysis

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**Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh** (כִּמּוֹשׁ, Kemosh)—Chemosh was Moab's national deity (1 Kings 11:7), here mocked for inability to protect his worshipers. **He hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon**—The false god delivers his own people to defeat, reversing expected divine protection. This taunt exposes pagan deities' impotence.

Jeremiah 48:46 later repeats this woe when Babylon conquers Moab, proving the ongoing validity of prophetic judgment. Chemosh's failure contrasts with Yahweh's faithfulness—Israel's God actually delivers, fights, conquers. The comparative theology is pointed: worship determines destiny.

## Historical Context

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Chemosh worship involved child sacrifice (2 Kings 3:27) and ritual prostitution. Archaeological finds include the Mesha Stele (Moabite Stone), where King Mesha credits Chemosh with military victory over Israel—demonstrating that Moabites attributed political-military outcomes to their god, just as Israel attributed victories to Yahweh.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. What false 'gods' in contemporary culture promise protection but deliver captivity to those who trust them?
2. How does comparing Yahweh's actual deliverance with idols' empty promises strengthen your faith?
3. Where might you be tempted to trust functional 'Chemoshes'—career, reputation, wealth—that cannot ultimately save?

## Interlinear Text

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אֹיִ	לְךָ	מוֹאָב	אַבְדָּתְךָ	עַם	כִּמּוֹשׁ	נָתַן
Woe	H0	to thee Moab	thou art undone	O people	of Chemosh	he hath given
H188		H4124	H6	H5971	H3645	H5414
בְּנֵי יוֹ	פָּלִיטִים	וּבָנוֹת יוֹ	בִּשְׁבִי יֵת	לֶמֶלְךָ	אֲמֹרֵי	
his sons	that escaped	and his daughters	H7628	king	of the Amorites	
H1121	H6412	H1323		H4428	H567	
סִיחֹן:						
unto Sihon						
H5511						

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 48:46** (Parallel theme): Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken captives, and thy daughters captives.

**2 Kings 23:13** (Kingdom): And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of

Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile.

**Judges 11:24** (Parallel theme): Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the LORD our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.

**Jeremiah 48:7** (Parallel theme): For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into captivity with his priests and his princes together.

**1 Kings 11:33** (Parallel theme): Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.

**1 Kings 11:7** (Parallel theme): Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.