
ISAIAH 15: 1 The burden of Moab: for in a night, Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to nothing; for in a night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to nothing.

Prediction of very heavy calamities about to fall upon the Moabites, Isa 15:1-9.

This and the following chapter, taken together, make one entire prophecy, very improperly divided into two parts. The time of its delivery, and consequently of its accomplishment, which was to be in three years from that time, is uncertain; the former not being marked in the prophecy itself, nor the latter recorded in history. But the most probable account is, that it was delivered soon after the foregoing, in the first year of Hezekiah; and that it was accomplished in his fourth year, when Shalmaneser invaded the kingdom of Israel. He might probably march through Moab; and to secure every thing behind him, possess himself of the whole country, by taking their principal strong places Ar and Kirhars. - L. The authorized Version which we have followed in the margin, places the prophecy in this chapter fourteen years earlier than that contained in the two preceding.

Jeremiah has happily introduced much of this prophecy of Isaiah into his own larger prophecy against the same people in his forty-eighth chapter, denouncing God's judgment on Moab, subsequent to the calamity here foretold, and to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar; by which means several mistakes of transcribers in the present text of both prophets may be rectified.

Verse 1

Because in the night - בליל beleil. That both these cities should be taken in the night is a circumstance somewhat unusual; but not so material as to deserve to be so strongly insisted upon. Vitringa, by his remark on this word, shows that he was dissatisfied with it in its plain and obvious meaning, and is forced to have recourse to a very hard metaphorical interpretation of it. *Noctu vel nocturno impetu; vel metaphoricè, repente, subito, inexpectata destructione: placet posterius.* Calmet conjectures, and I think it probable, that the true reading is כליל keleil, as the night. There are many mistakes in the Hebrew text arising from the very great similitude of the letters ב beth, and כ caph, which in many MSS., and some printed editions, are hardly distinguishable.

Admitting this reading, the translation will be, - "Because Ar is utterly destroyed, Moab is undone!

Because Kir is utterly destroyed, Moab is undone!"

ISAIAH 15: 2 They have gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, to the high places, to weep. Moab wails over Nebo and over Medeba. Baldness is on all of their heads. Every beard is cut off.

Verse 2

He is gone to Bajith, and to Dibon - עלה הבית alah habbayith, should be rendered, he is gone to the House, i.e., to their chief temple, where they practiced idolatry. Dibon was the name of a tower where also was an idolatrous temple; thither they went to weep and pray before their idols, that they might interpose and save them from their calamities. So R. D. Kimchi. Me is gone to Bajith and to Dibon: but Bishop Lowth reads Beth Dibon; this is the name of one place; and the two words are to be joined together, without the ו vau intervening. So the Chaldee and Syriac. This reading is not

supported by any MS. or Version: but some MSS., instead of ער ar, have עיר ir, a city, others have עד ad, unto, and some editions have על al, upon. But all these help little, though they show that the place puzzled both the scribes and the editors.

On all their heads shall be baldness, etc." On every head there is baldness," etc. - Herodotus, 2:36, speaks of it as a general practice among all men, except the Egyptians, to cut off their hair as a token of mourning. "Cut off thy hair, and cast it away," says Jeremiah, Jer 7:29, "and take up a lamentation." Τοῦτο νῦν καὶ γέρας ἰσὼν οἰζυροῖσι βροτοῖσι κείρασθαι τε κομῆν, βαλεῖν τ' ἀπο δακρυ παρειῶν.

Hom. Odys. 4:197. "The rites of wo

Are all, alas! the living can bestow;

O'er the congenial dust enjoined to shear

The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear."

Pope.

On every head. - For ראשי roshaiv, read ראש rosh. So the parallel place, Jer 48:37, and so three MSS., one ancient. An ancient MS. reads על כל ראש al col rosh. Five read בכל ראש bechol rosh, on every head, with the Septuagint and Arabic. And every head. The ו vau, and, is found in thirty MSS., in three editions, and in the Syriac, Vulgate, and Chaldee.

Cut off "Shorn" - The printed editions, as well as the MSS., are divided on the reading of this word. Some have גדועה geduah, shorn, others גרעה geruah, diminished. The similitude of the letters ד daleth and ר resh has likewise occasioned many mistakes. In the present case, the sense is pretty much the same with either reading. The text of Jer 48:37 has the latter, diminished. The former reading is found in twelve of Dr. Zennicott's MSS., forty of De Rossi's, and two of my own. A great number of editions have the same reading.

ISAIAH 15: 3 In their streets, they clothe themselves in sackcloth. In their streets and on their housetops, everyone wails, weeping abundantly.

Verse 3

With sackcloth - שק sak. The word is in the plural שקים sakkim, sacks, in one of De Rossi's MSS.

ISAIAH 15: 4 Heshbon cries out with Elealeh. Their voice is heard even to Jahaz. Therefore the armed men of Moab cry aloud. Their souls tremble within them.

Verse 4

The armed soldiers "The very loins" - So the Septuagint, ἡ ὀσφυς, and the Syriac. They cry out violently, with their utmost force.

ISAIAH 15: 5 My heart cries out for Moab! Her nobles flee to Zoar, to Eglath Shelishiyah; for they go up by the ascent of Luhith with weeping; for on the way to Horonaim, they raise up a cry of destruction.

Verse 5

My heart shall cry out for Moab "The heart of Moab crieth within her" - For לבי libbi, my heart, the Septuagint reads לבו libbo, his heart, or לב leb; the Chaldee, לבו libbo. For בריחיה bericheyha, the Syriac reads ברוחה berocheh; and so likewise the Septuagint, rendering it εν αυτη, Edit. Vat: or εν εαυτη, Edit. Alex. and MSS. I., D. II.

A heifer of three years old "A young heifer" - Hebrew, a heifer three years old, in full strength; as Horace uses equa trima, for a young mare just coming to her prime. Bochart observes, from Aristotle, Hist. Animal. lib. 4 that in this kind of animals alone the voice of the female is deeper than that of the male; therefore the lowing of the heifer, rather than of the bullock, is chosen by the prophet, as the more proper image to express the mourning of Moab. But I must add that the expression here is very short and obscure; and the opinions of interpreters are various in regard to the meaning. Compare Jer 48:34.

Shall they go it up "They shall ascend" - For יעלה yaaleh, the Septuagint and a MS. read in the plural, יעלו yaalu. And from this passage the parallel place in Jer 48:5 must be corrected; where, for יעלה בכי yaaleh bechi, which gives no good sense, read בו יעלה yaaleh bo.

ISAIAH 15: 6 For the waters of Nimrim will be desolate; for the grass has withered away, the tender grass fails, there is no green thing.

ISAIAH 15: 7 Therefore they will carry away the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have stored up, over the brook of the willows.

Verse 7 "Shall perish" - אבדו abadu or אבדה abadeh. This word seems to have been lost out of the text: it is supplied by the parallel place, Jer 48:36. The Syriac expresses it by עבר aber, praeteriit, "he hath passed;" and the Chaldee by יתבזזון yithbazezun, diripientur.

To the brook of the willows "To the valley of willows" - That is, to Babylon. Hieron. and Jarchi in loc., both referring to Psa 137:2. So likewise Prideaux, Le Clerc, etc.

ISAIAH 15: 8 For the cry has gone around the borders of Moab; its wailing to Eglaim, and its wailing to Beer Elim.

ISAIAH 15: 9 For the waters of Dimon are full of blood; for I will bring yet more on Dimon, a lion on those of Moab who escape, and on the remnant of the land.

Verse 9

The waters of Dimon - Some have Dibon, others have Ribon and Rimon. St. Jerome observes that the same town was called both Dibon and Dimon. The reading is therefore indifferent.

Upon him that escapeth of Moab, etc. "Upon the escaped of Moab, and Ariel, and the remnant of Admah" - The Septuagint for עריה aryeh, read אריאל ariel. Ar Moab was called also Ariel or Areopolis, Hieron. and Theodoret. See Cellarius. They make אדמה Admah, also a proper name. Michaelis thinks that the Moabites might be called the remnant of Admah, as sprung from Lot and his daughters, escaped from the destruction of that and the other cities; or, metaphorically, as the Jews are called princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, Isa 1:10. Bibliothecque Orient. Part v., p. 195. The reading of this verse is very doubtful; and the sense, in every way in which it can be read, very obscure. - L. Calmet thinks there may be a reference to 1Chr 11:22, where it is said, "Benaiah slew two lion-like men of Moab," or the two Ariels of Moab, and would therefore translate, "I will bring down the remnant of Moab like Ariel, (which Benaiah smote), and them that are escaped like Admah." They shall be exterminated, as were the inhabitants of those two cities. Ariel was a double city - the river Arnon dividing it in two. This is the two Ariels of Moab - not two lion-like men, much less two lions. See Calmet on this place.