

Isaiah 16

Isaiah Chapters 15 and 16 are specifically about the judgements against the nation of Moab. Chapters 15 and 16 remind us about underlying patterns playing out over generations of men. This is where we find our message. We previously discussed how Moab is the lineage of Lot, and follows suit as an agricultural society living in the rolling hills. They were known to be sheep grazers and grape growers. Lot himself was a wool grower and he enjoyed wine.

Moab became estranged from their more godly cousins in Israel and eventually became antagonistic and envious towards Israel. There was a power struggle between the two nations. King David of Israel eventually placed Moab under tribute. Their annual payment came in the form of sheep.

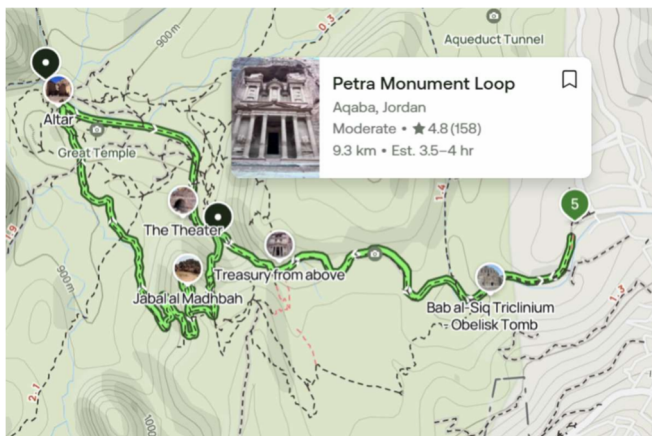
² David also defeated the Moabites. He made them lie down on the ground and measured them off with a length of cord. Every two lengths of them were put to death, and the third length was allowed to live. So the Moabites became subject to David and brought him tribute. (2 Samuel 8)

⁴ Now Mesha the king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and he used to make tribute payments to the king of Israel of a hundred thousand lambs, and the wool of a hundred thousand rams. ⁵ However, when King Ahab died, the king of Moab broke with the king of Israel. ⁶ So King Jehoram left Samaria for battle at that time and mustered all Israel. ⁷ Then he went and sent word to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has broken away from me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?" And he said, "I will go up. Consider me yours, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." ⁸ Then he said, "Which way shall we go up?" And he answered, "The way of the wilderness of Edom." (2 Kings 3)

The Moabites captured Jews fleeing the Babylonian invasion and sold them. Ironically, Babylon next, turned and captured and killed the Moabites. It was almost immediately after the Moabites had captured fleeing Jews. This was poetic justice.

Another day is coming when the inhabitants of Jerusalem will have to run for their lives, as the nations of the world converge on Jerusalem. Many of them will flee to

Petra, in Jordan. Petra's steep and narrow rocky fortress in the hills will someday protect the fleeing Jews.....instead of capturing them.



Read Isaiah 16

The Apostle Paul studied the Old Testament and came away with repeating themes and underlying truths found in these accounts. Like Paul, we need to look for these patterns in interpreting scripture. What pattern is playing out over and over?

*That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done,
And there is nothing new under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 1:9)*

The focus of this chapter is about Moab, specifically the city of **Sela**, in what is currently Jordan. Sela is also known as **Petra** (in Greek) or **Bozrah**, Jordan. How does this city connect with Israel and its history of **sheep growing, wine** and a place of **a rock protective fortress**?

Petra is the Greek word for *rock fortress*. Bozrah means *sheepfold*. Sela is found throughout scripture, especially in Psalms. It is inserted to *stop the music and contemplate* what was just discussed. The best way to understand scripture is to read it, and then stop and prayerfully contemplate it. How is it fitting that the same place, known for its safe refuge in the rock highland canyons is also the same place to hold sheep, as well as the same place to contemplate what is going on here...based on its history and its future prophetic purposes?

We are told that this old Moabite fortress of solid rock will not be permanently inhabited after Moab is sacked by Babylon.

¹³ For I have sworn by Myself," declares the Lord, "that Bozrah will become an object of horror; a disgrace, a wasteland, and a curse; and all its cities will become permanent ruins." ¹⁴ I have heard a message from the Lord, And a messenger is being sent among the nations, saying, "Gather yourselves together and come against her, And rise up for battle!" ¹⁵ "For behold, I have made you small among the nations, Despised among people. ¹⁶ As for the terror you cause, The arrogance of your heart has deceived you, You who live in the clefts of the rock, Who occupy the height of the hill. Though you make your nest as high as an eagle's, I will bring you down from there," declares the Lord. ¹⁷ "Edom will become an object of horror; everyone who passes by it will be appalled and will hiss at all its wounds. ¹⁸ Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with its neighbors," says the Lord, "no one will live there, nor till anyone of mankind reside in it. (Jeremiah 49)

Bozrah was also once associated with Edom, the land of Esau. Bozrah was originally associated with Edom, but later became associated with Moab. So, it draws from the history of Esau and Lot. Esau did one good thing in his life. He provided **safe passage for Jacob**, as he returned from Haran. Once again, this same ancient place will serve the same purpose.

When the nations of the world attack Jerusalem, many Jews will escape to Bozra/Petra/Sela. Most people mistakenly say that Jesus will return first to the Mount of Olives. He will surely return there in the same way, but he has one other stop first. The Jews will be in desperate need of deliverance in two places (Petra and Jerusalem). Many of the sheepfold are hiding in Petra. The rest are in Jerusalem. I wonder if this next verse inspired the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Grapes of wrath being stomped are the souls of wicked men.

Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I, the One who speaks in righteousness, mighty to save." ² Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the wine press? ³ "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no one with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My clothes. ⁴ For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. ⁵ I looked, but there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. ⁶ I trampled down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk with My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth." (Isaiah 63:1-6)

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many crowns; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. ¹³ He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written: "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Revelation 19:11-16)

This chapter describes Petra as the hiding place from the destroyer. Many Jews will hide there for the final 3 ½ years of the tribulation.

²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. ²² For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written

may be fulfilled. ²³ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ²⁵ “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (Luke 21)

³ Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven crowns. ⁴ And his tail **swept* away a third of the stars of heaven and hurled them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her Child. ⁵ And she gave birth to a Son, a male, who is going to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her Child was caught up to God and to His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she **had* a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for 1,260 days. (Revelation 12)

We too are God’s sheep who come to him for refuge and safe keeping. There is a wolf seeking to destroy us all, whom God will deal with.

There are parenthetical comments about this coming son of David who will bring peace to his people. The name Jeru-salem means *foundation of peace*.

In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Heb. YHWH Tsidkenu). (Jeremiah 23:6)

God will take the strength of the prideful Moabites and use it to protect his people.