

celebrated the regaining of its independence by putting up a monument which was discovered by a German missionary in 1868. This monument, known as the Moabite Stone, was for a time our earliest known writing in ancient Hebrew letters. We see from it that the language of Moab was very similar to that of ancient Israel. It celebrates the victory of Mesha, king of Moab, as he gained his independence from Israel, and mentions a number of cities whose names occur in our present chapters. Today the Moabite Stone is in the Louvre in Paris.

All these matters which we have mentioned -- the proximity of Moab to Israel, its relationship to Lot, its connection with Ruth, its providing one of our earliest and most interesting Palestinian archaeological discoveries -- all these combine to add importance to the effort to interpret Isaiah 15 and 16.

Although these two chapters contain only 23 verses, as against 54 in chapters 13 and 14, they include a far greater number of place names. This is quite natural in view of the fact that Moab was just across the Jordan from Judah and these places were quite familiar to the people of Judah.

An interesting contrast between this section and the burden of Babylon is the fact that this section contains only one verse of criticism of the nation with which it deals. Much is said about the terrible fate that is coming to them, their suffering, their destruction and their misery, but only one verse (16:6) contains statements derogatory to their character. Most of this verse deals with the pride and haughtiness of the Moabites. It will be recalled that in the burden of Babylon the wickedness of pride was greatly emphasized. The Moabites had far less to boast of than the King of Babylon, but in both cases Isaiah singles out the sin of pride for particular criticism.

It is unfortunate that among Christians in general the terrible nature of the sin of pride is not sufficiently realized. We are apt to think of grosser sins as being worse, but in God's sight there is nothing comparable to the sin of pride. In God's sight the arrogance of the human heart -- exaltation of the human being as over against God -- is far worse than any of the sins of the flesh. Alas, how easy it is for us to become like the Pharisees, to gather our skirts around us and praise God that we are better than our neighbors. God will