

actually predicted the events -- that He is on the throne -- that everything is being worked out according to His will.

There is another possible interpretation of verse 14 -- that it does not describe the entire fulfillment of chapters 15 and 16, but only one great reverse which will come to Moab. The glory of Moab is to be brought into contempt; its multitude is to be cut down; the remnant is to be small and feeble. This is a terrible statement; yet it does not say how long the trouble will last, nor does it go nearly as far as the predictions in the earlier part of the chapter. It is reasonable to think that this was not the complete fulfillment, since, over a century later, Jeremiah gave a further denunciation of Moab (Jer. 48) in which some of the language of this passage in Isaiah is repeated. This would suggest that Jeremiah is pointing to much of what Isaiah describes as having been still future at this later time. Most likely, then, verse 14 does not describe the actual fulfillment of all that precedes but a partial fulfillment. It is a token indication that the whole prediction will eventually be fulfilled.

This is a phenomenon which we find occasionally in the prophets: a prophecy is given which relates to the distant future, and then a lesser one which relates to a nearer time, so that when the nearer prediction is fulfilled we have added reason for confidence that the later one will also come to pass. We find an interesting example of this in 1 Kings 13. There a terrible prediction is made against the altar which Jeroboam had set up before the golden calf. It is said that a king will come from the house of David, Josiah by name, who will pollute this altar by burning men's bones upon it. After this prediction is given, we are then told that the Lord will give a sign: "the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out." This sign was fulfilled very soon. The altar was rent and the ashes poured out. This was an evidence of the fulfillment of the greater prediction, which actually came to pass three hundred years later. Thus an immediate prediction is sometimes given to strengthen people's faith in the eventual fulfillment of the greater things that God has declared. It is very likely that this is the nature of these last two verses in chapter 16.

Our knowledge of the history of Moab is quite limited, and we do not have any way of checking the exact details of this