

the next verse is definitely future and describes the establishment of a king in power and security. The whole passage is easily understood if we consider the historic situation described in Isaiah 37-38. The armies of Sennacherib come into the land and threaten destruction to Israel and its neighbors. In this situation the prophet calls (in 16:1) upon the Moabites to send tribute and help to Hezekiah, the ruler in the mount of the daughter of Zion. He points out (v. 2) that Moab also is eventually to have her time of difficulty. Now she should help Judah which is facing danger from Sennacherib. Sennacherib overruns the greater part of the land of Judah and captures most of its fortified cities. The prophet calls upon the Moabites (vv. 3-4) to receive the outcasts and to give them help and protection. He assures them that the time of need will not last very long. Just as he assured Hezekiah in 37:30-35 that after a brief interval God would deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrian menace, so now he assures the Moabites that the oppressor will soon be consumed out of the land of Israel and the throne of Hezekiah established. When Hezekiah sits on his throne in truth in the tabernacle of David seeking judgment and hastening righteousness, he will be in a position to help Moab if Moab has done its part in Israel's time of need. Thus recognition of the historic situation enables us to understand the true meaning of these five verses and to see how every detail fits perfectly as each part takes its place in the complete picture.

Verse 5 gives a picture of what actually occurred after the driving away of Sennacherib, when Hezekiah reigned as one of the best of all the kings of Judah. There never was a king who was truer to God or one who exerted himself more to stand for the things of the Lord.

The passage has also a meaning for us today. It calls upon all who try to be neutral in the strife between goodness and wickedness to give their help to the good in the days of oppression and trouble. It seeks to assure them that extortion and oppression will eventually come to an end and that God's own Son will reign in the tabernacle of David and will judge in righteousness. How we will regret it then if we have opposed the progress of His plans, and have refused to help His people in their time of adversity. There is no neutrality