

Lesson 8: “Lights Out for Edom”

Objective:

👍 **To show you that the poetic language involving light is common in Scripture and even in our every day language.**

- Prominent athletes and entertainers are called “stars”.
 - One who has come to understand a truth is said to have “seen the light”.
 - If good days are ahead, the future looks “bright”.
 - The middle ages are sometimes called the “dark ages”.
 - Smart people are considered “bright”.
 - On the American flag, the states are represented by stars.
 - In hieroglyphic writing, countries and empires are represented by the sun, moon and stars.
 - In Joseph’s dream, his father, mother and brothers were represented by the sun moon and stars.
 - When a boxer is knocked out we say that it is “lights out” for him.
 - Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 is a familiar passage that is full of metaphors describing miseries of old age. The author describes the good days of youth as a time when **“the sun, moon and stars are not darkened and there are not clouds.”** (vs. 2)
1. Let’s briefly review: History does not record the sun and stars going dark when the Medes defeated Babylon. Since Isaiah uses a lot of imagery and since his prophesy, that the Medes would destroy Babylon, has been fulfilled, isn’t it obvious that when he said that the sun and stars would go dark, he was simply saying that it is going to be “lights out” for Babylon?
 2. Let’s briefly look ahead: we are discussing poetic language, especially language involving the sun going dark and the stars falling because we will encounter that same language in Jesus’ Olivet Discourse.
 3. Edom is a land south of the Dead Sea that was occupied by the descendants of Esau. I will ask you to read all of Isaiah 34 because it is a metaphor-loaded prediction of Edom’s doom, but not yet. Scripture directs many harsh words at Edom so I will give you a brief summary.
 - In Psalm 137:7 we see the writer asking God to **“remember”** how the Edomites encouraged the Babylonians in the destruction of Jerusalem. (This Psalm refers to weeping by the waters of Babylon and calls for vengeance, so if it was written by David as some claim, then it is a spectacular prophesy. If it was written after Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians then someone else wrote it. Regardless of the author, my point still stands, it calls for vengeance against Edom.)

- Jeremiah 49:7-22 predicts that the cities of these people who dwell in cliffs (Petra) will be uninhabited (vs. 13, 16-18).
 - Ezekiel 35 is a prophesy against Edom. The land is to be desolate, the cities empty.
 - Ezekiel 25:12-14 specifies the extent of the desolation.
 - Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament is a prediction of the imminent **“Day of the Lord”** for Edom.
4. Please note that these prophecies have been fulfilled; the land of Edom is desolate exactly as described in Ezekiel 25:13. The capital city, Petra, is a spectacular, deserted tourist attraction and the Edomite people have disappeared from history.
5. Please read Isaiah 34. Notice the poetic language in this prophesy against Edom:
- The earth can hear (vs. 1). This is personification.
 - The **“mountains are melted with the blood”** of the slain (vs. 3 KJV). This is hyperbole.
 - God will use his own **sword** to kill the Edomites, (vs. 5,6 KJV). This is poetic language because I don’t think that God was actually swinging a sword on the day that He took vengeance on Edom.
 - God’s sword drinks blood (vs. 5,6 ESV). Apparently it is difficult to translate poetic language. Half of the English versions say “drink” and half say something else. Check it out [at www.blueletterbible.com](http://www.blueletterbible.com).
 - In any version, God is using vivid, poetic language to describe a **“great slaughter in the land of Edom”** (vs. 6).
6. In the various English versions of verse 4, we read words indicating that the skies/heavens will be **“rolled up like a scroll”** and **the host of heaven/the stars will be dissolved or fall to earth**. Obviously, these things have not happened, but the prophecy has been fulfilled, so this is more poetic language. Isaiah was not saying that the stars would literally fall because life goes on after the stars fall; the desolate ruin is to be occupied by wild animals **“from generation to generation”** (vs. 10-17). Isaiah is using poetic language to say: “lights out for Edom”.

An aside...

At the beginning of this study I said that I would not gloss over the tough topics; but I must confess that I am going to do that here... when an author or speaker asks me to refer to a passage of Scripture, I always read a few of the preceding verses and a few of the following verses. I do this to be sure that I agree that the point being made is valid. I asked you to read Psalm 137:7 to make a point. If you read to verse 9, the point remains valid; but you will be disgusted by the sentiment expressed there... I don’t know what to do with this verse except to say that God allows the authors of Scripture to express pure human hatred... I’m not going to follow this rabbit trail and try to analyze that issue here.