

Jeremiah 49:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men.

Analysis

I will make thee small among the heathen (נָתַתָּךְ לִבְאֹרֶת, qaton netattikha)—The perfect tense indicates God's settled decree. Edom's pride in their rocky fortress and strategic trade routes will be inverted into insignificance. The verb natan (give/make) emphasizes divine causation—Edom's diminishment is not natural decline but supernatural judgment.

Despised among men (בָּזָעֵי, bazuy)—The participle conveys permanent contempt. Where Edom once dominated caravan routes and extracted tribute, they would become a byword for desolation. This reversal of fortune demonstrates the principle: those who exalt themselves will be humbled (Luke 14:11). Edom's archaeological record confirms their near-total disappearance from history after Nabonidus's campaign.

Historical Context

Edom's territory stretched from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, controlling vital trade routes. Their capital Bozrah and fortress city Petra seemed impregnable. Yet by the 4th century BC, Edom had been displaced by Nabatean Arabs, becoming 'small' indeed.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise to 'make small' challenge modern notions of national and personal greatness?
2. In what ways might Christians fall into Edom's sin of pride based on strategic advantages or resources?
3. What does Edom's historical disappearance teach about the temporal nature of earthly power?

Interlinear Text

בָּן הַנּוּן | קָטָן | נָתַת יְהֹוָה בְּגֹויִם בְּנָהָרִים
H3588 H2009 thee small For lo I will make among the heathen and despised
H6996 H5414 H1471 H959

בְּגֹויִם:
among men
H120