

# Psalm 136:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:

## Analysis

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**To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:** The creation account continues with celestial luminaries, sun and moon, serving humanity. "Made great lights" (לעַשָּׂה אֹרֶם גָּדְלִים /le'oseh orim gedolim) celebrates God's formation of sun and moon (Genesis 1:14-18). These "great lights" (אֹרֶם גָּדְלִים /orim gedolim) governed day and night, regulated seasons, and enabled life on earth.

In ancient Near Eastern cultures, sun and moon were deified—Egyptian Ra, Mesopotamian Shamash and Sin. Israel's neighbors worshiped these luminaries as gods. Against this idolatry, the psalmist declares: Yahweh "made" (עָשָׂה /asah) them. They aren't deities but created objects, tools fashioned by the true God for humanity's benefit. Genesis 1:16 similarly de-divinizes sun and moon, calling them "lights" rather than by name, refusing to honor pagan designations.

The refrain "for his mercy endureth for ever" connects even celestial mechanics to covenant love. Sun rising daily, moon cycling monthly—these reliable patterns reflect God's unwavering chesed. Jeremiah 31:35-36 uses sun and moon's faithfulness as guarantee of God's covenant loyalty to Israel. As long as sun gives light by day, God's promises stand firm.

## Historical Context

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Solar and lunar worship pervaded ancient Near Eastern religion. Temples oriented toward sunrise, festivals timed to solstices and equinoxes, and priests calculated

calendars by celestial movements. Israel, surrounded by these practices, constantly faced temptation toward astral worship (2 Kings 23:5, Jeremiah 8:2). Psalm 136's assertion that Yahweh made the great lights combated this idolatry, reminding Israel that creation serves Creator's purposes. The lights that pagans worshiped are merely lamps God hung to illuminate His world and regulate time for His people.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. What modern 'great lights'—created things that people worship or prioritize above God—might you need to dethrone in your life?
2. How does the regularity of sun and moon (daily sunrise, lunar cycles) witness to God's enduring mercy and faithfulness?
3. In what ways can observing the natural order cultivate gratitude for God's provision and awareness of His sustaining love?

## Interlinear Text

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לְעֹשֶׂה	לְעֹזֶל	לְעֹזֶל	לְעֹזֶל	לְעֹזֶל	לְעֹזֶל	לְעֹזֶל
<b>To him that made</b>	<b>lights</b>	<b>great</b>	<b>endureth for ever</b>	<b>for his mercy</b>		
H6213	H216	H1419	H3588	H5769		H2617

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