Small Group Guide

"Sovereign Over Nations" | Jeremiah 46-49

Overview

In this message, the pastor walked through Jeremiah 46-49, examining eight divine judgments spoken against eight surrounding nations. The central theme is that God is sovereign not only over Israel but over every nation on earth. The discussion that follows will help your group wrestle with what that truth means for how we live, vote, pray, and engage with the culture around us.

Key Takeaways

- God is the supreme ruler over the whole world, not just over Israel or the church.
- God can and does use pagan nations to chastise other nations according to His purposes.
- God holds a moral expectation for secular and spiritual nations alike.
- National righteousness and national wickedness do not escape the eyes of God.
- Christians have a responsibility to promote godliness in public life and to participate in the civic process.
- As we ask God to bless our nation, we must also ask whether our nation is blessing God.

Discussion Questions

Section 1: God's Sovereignty Over All Nations

1. The pastor opened with the question: Is God sovereign over all nations or only over Israel? How would you have answered that question before this message? Did anything you heard today shift or sharpen your thinking?
2. Read Psalm 24:1 and Psalm 9:8. What do these verses tell us about the scope of God's authority? How does that authority extend beyond the walls of the church or the borders of Israel?
3. The pastor noted that as Western readers of a largely Israel-centric Bible, we can subconsciously forget that God is active among other nations. Have you ever found

yourself thinking of God's activity as limited to the church or to "religious" settings? What reinforces that kind of thinking, and what corrects it?

Section 2: The Eight Judgments

4. Several of the nations judged in these chapters -- Egypt, Moab, Philistia -- were sources of the very idolatry that corrupted Judah. What does that pattern suggest about the relationship between the company a nation keeps and the spiritual health of that nation? How might that apply to our culture today?
5. The pastor pointed out that Moab was known as "the people of Chemosh" -- a god worshiped through child sacrifice. He drew a direct line between that kind of national identity and the judgment that followed. What do you think defines the national identity of the United States today? Is that something we should be comfortable with?
6. Two of the nations judged -- Moab and Elam -- were given promises of future restoration alongside their judgment. What does that tell us about the character of God? How does the coexistence of judgment and hope shape the way you think about God's dealings with nations today?

Section 3: Implications for Us as Christians

7. The pastor said, "Christian silence at the ballot box is a neglect of our Christian influence in the world." Do you agree or disagree with that statement? What hesitations or objections do you think people raise against that idea, and how would you respond to them?
8. The pastor listed several areas where a biblical worldview should shape a Christian's engagement in public life -- marriage, the sanctity of life, human dignity, gender, sexual ethics, care for the poor, and others. Which of these do you find it easiest to speak up about? Which do you find most difficult, and why?
9. The message closed with this challenge: as we pray "God bless America," we should also ask whether America is blessing God. What would it look like practically for your family, your neighborhood, or your workplace to be a place where God is being blessed -- honored, acknowledged, and obeyed?

Practical Applications

Choose one or more of the following to discuss as a group or to commit to individually this week:

1. **Pray specifically for your nation.** Set aside time this week to pray not just that God would bless America, but that America would turn toward God. Pray for your elected officials by name, whether or not you voted for them.

2. **Engage your civic responsibility.** If you have not yet voted in the current election cycle, make a plan to do so. Encourage others in your group to do the same. Discuss how a biblical worldview should inform the way you evaluate candidates and issues.
3. **Identify one area of cultural engagement.** Pick one of the issues the pastor mentioned -- care for the poor, defense of life, promotion of honest speech, reconciliation across racial lines -- and identify one concrete step you can take this week to live out your convictions in that area.
4. **Examine your own household.** Before asking what God should do for our nation, ask what God is doing in your home. Are the values you want to see in the culture being practiced at your own table, in your conversations, and in the content you consume?
5. **Share the gospel.** The pastor reminded us that judgment is not the final word -- the gospel is. Identify one person in your life who does not know Christ and commit to praying for them daily this week. Ask God for an opportunity to share the good news.

Close in Prayer

Pray as you are led and ask the Father to lock in the principles that we learned this week.