

Jeremiah 46:1–28 — “The Lord’s Sovereignty over the Nations”

Introduction: When Nations Tremble

Throughout history, empires have risen and fallen—Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome. Each believed its power would last forever. Yet God has always had the final word. Jeremiah 46 reminds us that no nation, no army, and no ruler stands apart from His sovereign hand. When Egypt rose up “like a flood” (Jeremiah 46:8), confident in her strength, God declared her defeat before a single battle began.

This chapter teaches us that the Lord governs the rise and fall of nations, and it also gives comfort to His people who live among them. In times when the world seems unstable, we can rest in the unshakable truth that God’s purposes never fail.

1. The Word of the Lord Against Egypt (Jeremiah 46:1–12)

Jeremiah begins this sixth section of his prophecies—messages directed to the surrounding nations. Egypt, the first to be addressed, had once been a world power. The scene opens at Carchemish, where Pharaoh Necho’s army was crushed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

“Order the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle!” (Jeremiah 46:3).

Egypt’s soldiers prepared for war with confidence, but God had already decreed their defeat. The mighty army fled in fear. The prophet asks, *“Why have I seen them dismayed and turned back?”* (Jeremiah 46:5). The answer is clear—because “the Lord drove them.”

Egypt, once proud and self-reliant, could not heal herself. *“Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt... in vain you will use many medicines; you shall not be cured”* (Jeremiah 46:11). No earthly remedy could stop the hand of divine judgment.

Application:

Every person and nation that trusts in their own strength will eventually meet this same truth: God opposes pride. Whether it’s a nation that boasts of its might, or an individual who thinks they can live apart from God, the result is ruin. True security is never found in military strength, wealth, or wisdom—but in humble dependence upon the Lord.

2. Babylon’s Invasion of Egypt (Jeremiah 46:13–26)

The prophecy shifts from Carchemish to a later invasion when Babylon would march directly into Egypt. God calls out, “Declare in Egypt, and proclaim in Migdol... Stand fast and prepare yourself, for the sword devours all around you” (Jeremiah 46:14).

Egypt is described as “a very beautiful heifer” (Jeremiah 46:20)—prosperous, proud, and unaware that the butcher’s knife is at her throat. Her mercenaries would flee; her forests would be cut down by invading armies “more than the grasshoppers, and innumerable” (Jeremiah 46:23).

The Lord Himself declares, *“I will punish Amon of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods and their kings... and afterward it shall be inhabited as in the days of old”* (Jeremiah 46:25–26). Even in

judgment, God preserves a remnant. Egypt would not be wiped out entirely but would remain under divine control.

Application:

God alone determines the fate of nations. He raises rulers up and removes them according to His purposes (see Daniel 2:21). When kingdoms trust in idols—whether of stone or of human achievement—they fall. But when they humble themselves before God, they find mercy. The same is true for us personally. We must choose whether our confidence rests in worldly systems or in the living God who reigns over all.

3. Comfort for God's People (Jeremiah 46:27–28)

Amid this message of judgment, the tone shifts. The Lord turns to comfort His people Israel:

“But do not fear, O My servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar... Jacob shall return, have rest, and be at ease; no one shall make him afraid” (Jeremiah 46:27).

Even as He disciplines His people, God assures them of His continuing love and purpose. He will make “a full end of all the nations” where they have been scattered, but He will not make “a complete end” of Israel. His correction is measured, not destructive. His covenant promises stand.

Application:

God's discipline is not meant to destroy but to restore. If you belong to Him, He will not abandon you. He may correct you, but His goal is always redemption. When the world shakes, when evil seems to triumph, remember—God's people are secure in His eternal plan.

4. The Sovereign Lord of History

Jeremiah 46 shows us that God's authority extends beyond Israel; it reaches to all nations. History is not random—it unfolds under His direction. And the same God who judged Egypt also sent His Son into that same world to save us.

At the cross, Jesus bore the judgment that our sins deserved. When He shed His blood, He satisfied divine justice once for all. And when He rose from the dead, His resurrection declared that He is God, Savior, and Lord forever. The nations rage, but His kingdom will never end.

“For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet” (1 Corinthians 15:25).

A Challenge for Believers

This passage reminds us to live with reverent confidence. Our hope is not in governments or leaders but in the Lord who reigns over them all. When nations tremble, we should not. When others panic, we should pray. God's purposes will stand, and He has called us to be light and truth in a dark world. Are we standing firm in faith, or are we trusting in the strength of Egypt?

An Invitation to Non-Believers

If you do not yet know Jesus Christ, this same God who judges nations also extends mercy to you. The Bible says, *“It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment”* (Hebrews 9:27). But because Jesus died for your sins and rose again, you can be forgiven and made right with God today.

Come to Him in faith. Turn from your sin and trust in the One who gave His life for you. He promises, *“Whoever comes to Me I will by no means cast out”* (John 6:37).

Conclusion

Jeremiah 46 closes with two timeless truths: God will judge the proud, and He will preserve His people. Nations may rise and fall, but His Word endures forever. In the end, all prophecy—every act of history—points to Jesus Christ. Let us therefore trust Him, serve Him faithfully, and look forward to His coming kingdom where righteousness will dwell forever.