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Watching the Fig Tree
For Signs of the Times 03

Lesson 10: Judgment

Obadiah 1:15 ESV For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head.

All of the deeds against Israel are going to return on the heads of those nations. It's happening now. There's one criteria for nations to be judged as nations, and it is how they treated Israel. Nations and individuals can repent. In the Nuremberg trials at the end of World War II there were not many defendants who were repentant.

The Nuremberg Trials

Telford Taylor, *The Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials*

In 1945, the Allied nations agreed on a judicial process, rather than summary execution, to determine the fate of the Nazis following the end of World War II. Held in Nuremberg, the ceremonial birthplace of the Nazi Party, the British, American, French, and Soviet leaders contributed both judges and prosecutors to the series of trials that would prosecute some of the most prominent politicians, military leaders and businessmen in Nazi Germany.

... The chamber is reduced to silence when an SS officer recounts impassively that his troops rounded up and killed 90,000 Jews, and panic overcomes the head of the German State Bank as it becomes clear that he knew his institution was receiving jewels and other valuables taken from the bodies of concentration camp inmates.¹

Esther's Prophecy Fulfilled at Nuremberg

The Persian government had their own "Nuremberg trial." They're going to put all of these wicked ones—Haman and his sons and the people that helped them—to death.

Esther 9:1–13 ESV

Esth. 9:1 Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's command and edict were about to be carried out, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, the reverse occurred: the Jews gained mastery over those who hated them.

Esth. 9:2 The Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm. And no one could stand against them, for the fear of them had fallen on all peoples.

Esth. 9:3 All the officials of the provinces and the satraps and the governors and the royal agents also helped the Jews, for the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them.

¹ Telford Taylor, *The Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials*, (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2013), Back Cover.

Esth. 9:4 For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces, for the man Mordecai grew more and more powerful.

Esth. 9:5 The Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and did as they pleased to those who hated them.

Esth. 9:6 In Susa the citadel itself the Jews killed and destroyed 500 men,

Esth. 9:7 and also killed Parshandatha and Dalphon and Aspatha

Esth. 9:8 and Poratha and Adalia and Aridatha

Esth. 9:9 and Parmashta and Arisai and Aridai and Vaizatha,

Esth. 9:10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, but they laid no hand on the plunder.

Esth. 9:11 That very day the number of those killed in Susa the citadel was reported to the king.

Esth. 9:12 And the king said to Queen Esther, "In Susa the citadel the Jews have killed and destroyed 500 men and also the ten sons of Haman. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what further is your request? It shall be fulfilled."

Esth. 9:13 And Esther said, "If it please the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be allowed tomorrow also to do according to this day's edict. And let the ten sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows."

King Ahasuerus could not have granted Esther's request for so far in the future.

Kive Schmidt, "10 Sons of Haman," Sefaria

According to the Sages, every time **King Ahasverus** is mentioned by name in the *Book of Esther*, the reference is to him; when the word **the King** [hey-mem-lamed-kaph (המֶלֶךְ)] appears on its own, it refers to God.

Esther was therefore not addressing her request to **Ahasverus**, but to **God** - who granted her request:

"And the King commanded it be done." (*Esther 9:14*).

... [If] The 10 son[s] of Haman [were] already [dead] why bother hanging them?

On the word "tomorrow", in Esther's request

"There is a tomorrow that is now, and a tomorrow which is later."

In other words, Esther was asking that the hanging of Haman's ten sons not remain an isolated episode in history, but should recur in the future, as well. Yet, if this is the case, surely King Ahasverus was in no position to accede to such a request. Only God could make and keep such a promise. ²

² Kive Schmidt, "10 Sons of Haman (Sections 1 and 2)," sefaria.org, August 9, 2002. Accessed June 5, 2004.
<https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/8376?lang=bi>

The Hebrew Scriptures Listing of the Ten Sons of Haman

Rabbi Avi Shafran, "Fighting Iron With Irony: A Contemporary Purim Thought," Torah.org

... The Book of Esther recounts how Haman's ten sons were hanged in Shushan. An eleventh child, a daughter, committed suicide earlier, according to an account in the Talmud. At Nuremberg, while eleven men were condemned to execution by hanging, only ten were actually hanged. The eleventh ... Goering, died in his cell only hours before the execution; he crushed a hidden cyanide capsule between his teeth.

Something even more striking was noted by the late Belzer Rebbe. In scrolls of the Book of Esther, the names of the ten sons of Haman are unusually prominent; they are written in two parallel columns, a highly unusual configuration. Odder still is the fact that three letters in the list, following an unexplained halachic tradition, are written very small, and one very large. The large letter is the Hebrew character for the number six (Hebrew letters all have numeric values); the small letters, added together, yield the number 707. If the large letter is taken to refer to the millennium and 707 to the year in the millennium, something fascinating emerges. ... The year 5707 the 707th year in the sixth millennium was the year we know as 1946, when ten sworn enemies of the Jewish people were hanged in Nuremberg, just as ten others had been in Shushan more than two thousand years earlier.

The Book of Esther, (9:13), moreover, refers to the hanging of Haman's sons in the future tense, after the event had been recounted, presaging, it might seem, some hanging yet to happen.³

Brim Note: The following is an eyewitness account of the hangings that resulted from the Nuremberg trials.

Nuremberg Hangings—October 1946

Kingsbury Smith, "The Execution of Nazi War Criminals," umkc.edu

Nuremberg Gaol, Germany

16 October 1946

International News Service

... The author of this account, Kingsbury Smith of the International News Service, was chosen by lot to represent the American press at the executions.

Julius Streicher made his melodramatic appearance at 2:12 a.m.

While his manacles were being removed and his bare hands bound, this ugly, dwarfish little man, wearing a threadbare suit and a well-worn bluish shirt buttoned to the neck

³ Rabbi Avi Shafran, "Fighting Iron With Irony: A Contemporary Purim Thought," Torah.org, February 19, 2004. Accessed June 6, 2004.

<https://torah.org/interest/irony/>

but without a tie (he was notorious during his days of power for his flashy dress), glanced at the three wooden scaffolds rising menacingly in front of him. Then he glanced around the room, his eyes resting momentarily upon the small group of witnesses. By this time, his hands were tied securely behind his back. Two guards, one on each arm, directed him to Number One gallows on the left of the entrance. He walked steadily the six feet to the first wooden step but his face was twitching.

As the guards stopped him at the bottom of the steps for identification formality he uttered his piercing scream: 'Heil Hitler!'

The shriek sent a shiver down my back.

As its echo died away an American colonel standing by the steps said sharply, 'Ask the man his name.' In response to the interpreter's query Streicher shouted, 'You know my name well.'

The interpreter repeated his request and the condemned man yelled, 'Julius Streicher.'

As he reached the platform, Streicher cried out, 'Now it goes to God.' He was pushed the last two steps to the mortal spot beneath the hangman's rope. The rope was being held back against a wooden rail by the hangman.

Streicher was swung suddenly to face the witnesses and glared at them. Suddenly he screamed, 'Purim Fest 1946.'

The American officer standing at the scaffold said, 'Ask the man if he has any last words.'

When the interpreter had translated, Streicher shouted, 'The Bolsheviks will hang you one day.'

When the black hood was raised over his head, Streicher's muffled voice could be heard to say, 'Adele, my dear wife.'

At that instant the trap opened with a loud bang ...⁴

The Judgment of the Nations

See my minibook, *The Judgment of the Nations for How They Treat Israel*.

We are seeing and will see more judgment as unrepentant nations draw the Lord's pronounced judgments upon themselves.

⁴ Kingsbury Smith, *The Execution of Nazi War Criminals*, umkc.edu, Accessed July 25, 2021, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/nuremberg/NurembergNews10_16_46.html
