

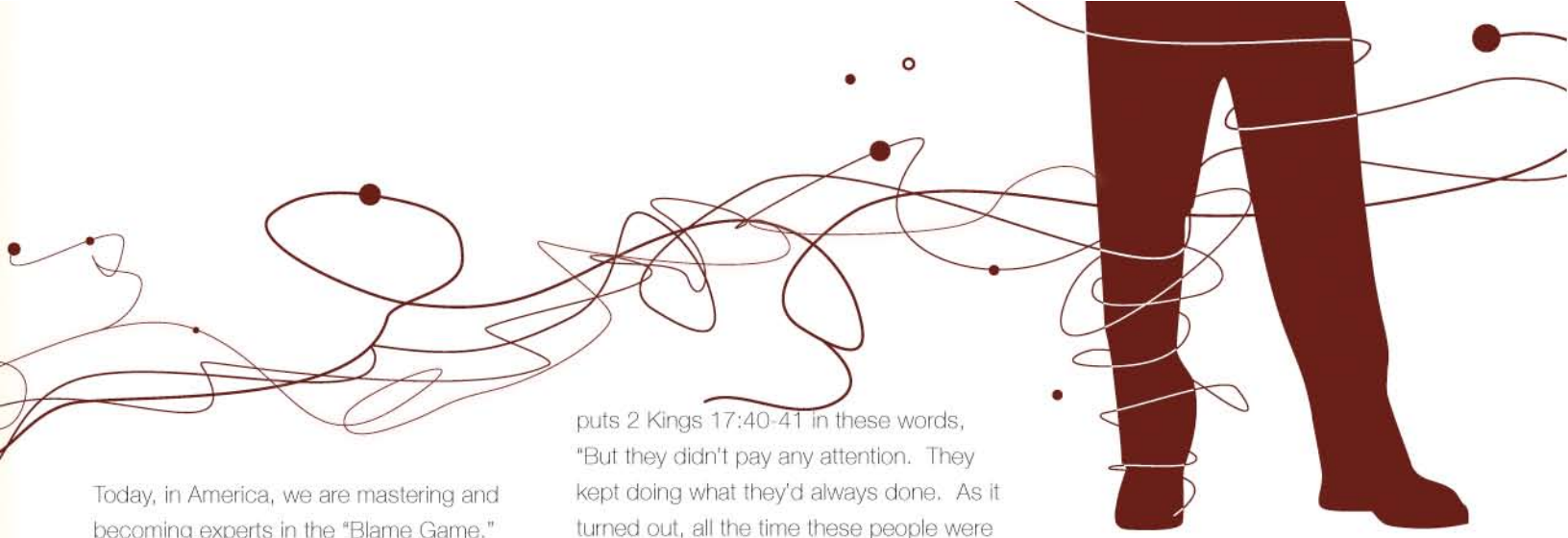
Like Father

By Rev. Adam Durso

Like Son



"They would not listen, however, but persisted in their former practices. Even while these people were worshipping the Lord, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did ("like father, like son" in The Message Translation). Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. He held fast to the Lord and did not cease to follow him; he kept the commands the Lord had given Moses" (2 Kings 17:40-18:6).



Today, in America, we are mastering and becoming experts in the "Blame Game." We blame each other for anything and everything, especially when things don't go our way, or as we anticipated. Think about it—someone trips on the sidewalk, and they automatically want to sue the city. Hot coffee spills on your clothing, and you want to sue Dunkin Donuts. We gain weight and we want to sue McDonald's. And yet, we wonder why it is a known fact that there are more lawyers in America today than in the rest of the world combined. We're busy pointing the finger at others before even thinking about any accountability or responsibility on our part.

Without even thinking about it, it can almost become an instinct to blame and put the fault on others. Why? It is simply as a result of our own fears and insecurities. How so, you might ask? Maybe because then we might actually have to admit that we were wrong. And so a cycle of blaming each other begins. We fail to realize that we are the way that we are, and we do what we do because of our past, what others have done, or what we haven't had the privilege to do.

Here is where we get latched into this never-ending cycle. We allow our past to dictate the present and the present to dictate the future, because of fears and insecurities. That's what the people of God did, as mentioned in the passage above. They persisted in their former practices, and to this day, their whole lineages follow

the same pattern. The Message

Translation

puts 2 Kings 17:40-41 in these words, "But they didn't pay any attention. They kept doing what they'd always done. As it turned out, all the time these people were putting on a front of worshipping God, they were at the same time involved with their local idols. And their still doing it. Like father, like son."

The excuse that the people back then took was that they did what they wanted, because their fathers did what they wanted. They blamed their forefathers, and they chose to do as they pleased, just as their forefathers did. In this case, the people chose to worship God and yet serve their local idols. What hypocrisy! And sometimes, if we're not careful, it can happen even in churches today because we allow previous generations to dictate our future.

Things changed, however, during the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, when Hezekiah son of Ahaz, at twenty-five years old began to reign in Judah. The Bible says, "He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father David had done. Hezekiah trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. He held fast to the Lord and did not cease to follow him; he kept the commands the Lord had given Moses" (2 Kings 18:3-6). Hezekiah came to rule and he brought everything that the past would dictate to a halt! In spite of everyone choosing to live as their fathers did in sin, Hezekiah stood up in the face of society, and he chose to hold fast to the Lord and did not cease to follow him. He stopped allowing his past, his environment, his present, or anything else to dictate his

future. He no longer allowed where he had been to dictate where he was going. I am sympathetic with young people who tell of stories of abuse and neglect but we cannot allow our past situations or circumstances to dictate our future. Don't allow what has happened in your past to hinder or even stop the great plans God has for you! In Him all things become new – give Him your past, your brokenness, your hurts, and He will give you hope and a future.

Because of the stand that Hezekiah made during his reign, the results were immense! The whole life of a nation and a generation were transformed! All because of one man! During his reign, high places were removed and demolished; sacred stones were smashed, as were all of the idols. And as the high places came down, worship and praise was lifted up. Who knows what God would do if we stop putting the blame on others, the blame on our past, the blame on the generations before us, and stand up for what is right in the eyes of the Lord! Who knows what God would do if the high places of our lives were torn down and praise was lifted up to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords—to Him who always was, always is, and always will be! D. L. Moody put it this way, "The world has yet to see what God can do with one man whose heart is totally surrendered to God. And I aim to be that man!" Even now, let's put a halt to the blame game and look to our Father in heaven for the great things He will do through us and our generation.