

## The Blame Game

*John Isaac Edwards*

James taught, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (Jas. 1:13-15). A lot of people today are engaging in “the blame game” — blaming someone or something else for their shortcomings and sins. The blame game has been going on for a very long time!

1) **Adam.** Adam, the first man, was the first person to ‘pass the buck.’ After eating of the forbidden fruit, God asked the man, “...Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” Notice God assigned blame to Adam with the use of *thou, thee, and thou*. His answer: “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat” (Gen. 3:11-12). Adam blamed Eve, his wife, and even included God in his finger-pointing!

2) **Eve.** “And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?...”

Again, notice God held Eve personally accountable for the tree-eating as He did Adam, with the word *thou*. “...And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat” (Gen. 3:13). So, she shifts blame to the devil!

3) **Aaron.** As Moses was in the mount receiving the commandments of God, the people of Israel came to Aaron saying, “...Up, make us gods, which shall go before us...” (Ex. 32:1). Observe Aaron’s actions: “Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings...and bring them unto me...” (v. 2). “...he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool...” (v. 4). “And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the Lord” (v. 5). Now notice Aaron’s response, when he is questioned about his actions: “Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us...And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this

calf” (vv. 22-24). Instead of saying, “I have sinned”, Aaron blamed the people! He seemed to have forgotten that he *received, fashioned, saw and built!*

4) **Moses.** Who can forget the occasion when Moses “... spake unadvisedly with his lips” (Ps. 106:33) saying, “Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?” (Num. 20:10). The Lord said, “... Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them” (Num. 20:12). Yet, in his plain speech, Moses blames the people! “And the Lord was angry with me for your sakes...” (Dt. 1:37). Again, “But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes...” (Dt. 3:26). And again, “Furthermore the Lord was angry with me for your sakes...” (Dt. 4:21).

5) **King Saul.** Remembering what Amalek did unto His people, the Lord commissioned Saul to “...go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Sam. 15:3). Verse 9 reports,

“But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the failings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them...” When Samuel confronted Saul about his disobedience, Saul said, “Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord...But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief things which should have been destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord...” (v. 21). Who did the king blame? The people!

6) **King Ahab.** During the divided kingdom era, Ahab of Israel was one of the wickedest kings to ascend the throne. When the king met the prophet Elijah, Ahab said unto him, “... Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” (1 Ki. 18:17). Ahab was quick to ascribe to Elijah the trouble that had befallen Israel. But he had the ‘shoe on the wrong foot’! Elijah is quick to put the ‘monkey on his back’ — “...I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim” (1 Ki. 18:18). How many today are like Ahab of old, when they pervert the gospel of Jesus

Christ and accuse those standing for truth of troublemaking! (Gal .1:6-9).

7) **Job’s Friends.** Job struggled to understand the cause of his suffering. Though God recognized Job as “...a perfect and an upright man...” (Job 1:8), his friends were swift to attribute blame to Job. Eliphaz said, “But now it is come upon thee...Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent?...” (Job 4:5-7). Bildad declared, “If thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee...” (Job 8:6). Zophar uttered, “If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away...” (Job 11:14-15, 17). It’s no wonder then that Job referred to his friends as “...miserable comforters...” (Job 16:2) and “...physicians of no value” (Job 13:4). The Lord vindicated Job saying to his friends, “...ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath” (Job 42:7).

We must realize that each individual is accountable for his own actions. “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the

fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin” (Dt. 24:16). “The soul that sinneth, it shall die...” (Ezek. 18:20). “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12). “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). “But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons” (Col. 3:25).

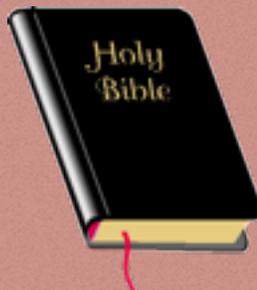
We need to quit playing the blame game, and admit responsibility for our sins. “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Prov. 28:13). A good example is David who said, “I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin” (Ps. 32:5). Like the prodigal, we just need to have the courage to say, “...I have sinned...” (Lk. 15:21).

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