

1. We are going to continue this week with our study of **2 Kings chapter 6**.
2. Just to catch you up to speed. Beginning in verse 24 we find the story of the siege of the city of Samaria. Samaria was part of the nation of Israel.
3. A siege is normally a military operation where enemy forces surround a town or building, with the purpose of cutting off essential supplies, so that those inside the town or building will surrender.
4. What a powerful picture of what is happening in our world today.
5. I feel so cut off from the world around me.
6. I am so thankful that we can at least see each other today, but I long for so much more than just seeing others.
7. Let me share the entire story with you, and then I want to come back and break down just a couple of verses.
8. The army of Aram surrounds the city of Samaria, and as a result of the food supply being cut off, there is a severe famine that overtakes the city.
9. People are hungry. So hungry in fact that they become desperate.
10. One day as the king is out surveying the circumstances surrounding them, a lady approaches with an unthinkable problem.
11. Two neighbors, both of whom had a small child, made a pact with one another in an attempt to try and survive.
12. They eat the first lady's child one day, with the promise they will eat the second child the day after that, but the second mother reneges on the agreement, and won't allow her son to be eaten.
13. When the king hears this, he is absolutely distraught. Not only can he not believe it, there is nothing he can do about it.
14. But his distress doesn't last for long. In just a little bit his distress turns to anger, and his anger turns to blame, and his blame causes him to want to do things that are completely irrational.
15. But at the lowest depth of their despair, God promises to intervene. And in fact, through a series of miracles, God does turn the situation entirely around and works the circumstances out for their good.
16. So last week we asked the question. **Where is your trust?**

17. Is our trust in people or things? Or is our trust in the Lord.
18. We said last week that trusting in anyone or anything besides the Lord is a foolish pursuit. Why?
19. Because **the value of things can change in a heartbeat**. Before the famine, a donkey's head was worthless, but in the siege that same donkey's head cost \$1,600.
20. Before the siege, a cup of seed cost \$.07. but in the middle of the siege that same cup was selling for \$100.
21. The value of things can change in a moment. And not only are values unreliable, **as humans we have the tendency to assign the wrong value to things in the first place.**
22. We tend to put our trust in places that really cannot save or help us.
23. In Psalm 33 David said an army can't save a king. Strength can't save a warrior. It is only the Lord Jesus Christ who can save us.
24. Times like these, though stretching us thin mentally and emotionally actually serve a very good purpose.
25. Times like this expose where we have placed our trust. How do we know where we have placed our trust? Our trust is identified by where we place our hope.
26. The only source of true hope is Jesus Christ. He is the only one who will never let us down. He is the only one who will never leave or forsake us. He is the only one who does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
27. Where is your trust?
28. This week I want us to move on.

TEXT: 2 Kings 6:26-31 As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, "Help me, my lord the king!" **27** The king replied, "If the LORD does not help you, where can I get help for you? From the threshing floor? From the winepress?" **28** Then he asked her, "What's the matter?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give up your son so we may eat him today, and tomorrow we'll eat my son.' **29** So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give up your son so we may eat him,' but she had hidden him." **30** When the king heard the woman's words, he tore his robes. As he went along the wall, the people looked, and they saw that, under his robes, he had sackcloth on his body. **31** He said, "May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on his shoulders today!"

TITLE: The Blame Game.**INTRO:**

1. What we find here is a perfect example of what happens when our trust and hope is in the wrong place.
2. When our hope and trust is in anyone or anything besides the Lord, any change in circumstances, no matter how large or how small, can immediately plunge us into desperation and panic.
3. And when we start to live out of a place of desperation and panic, we begin to act in irrational ways.
4. The king is out surveying how terrible things are when a woman approaches him for help.
5. My neighbor lady and I made a pact to cook and eat my son yesterday and her son today, but now that my son is dead, she refuses to give up her son.
6. When the king heard this desperate, panicky, irrational story, he tore his robes.
7. In the bible, the tearing of the cloths or robes was a sign of desperation and deep grief. One commentator in describing this scene said that the king's tearing of his robes was probably an act of horror.
8. The king was horrified at what he had heard.
9. He could not believe that two mothers, who normally would never have acted in this way, had resorted to killing, cooking, and eating their own children.
10. To the king it made absolutely no sense. But I have to tell you there is still no shortage in 2020 of desperate, panic filled behaviors.
11. In 2020, those whose trust is in anything or anyone besides the Lord are just as likely to do irrational things and make horrific decisions.
12. Not placing our trust in the Lord actually causes a bad situation to become worse.
13. How many times have we seen a person, in a state of panic or desperation, follow up a bad decision with an even worse decision?
14. How many times have I been the one to follow up foolish behavior with utterly stupid behavior? More times than I want to count.

15. When our trust is not in the Lord, then our only hope is in what we think we can make happen, and the vast majority of the time, what we make happen is a bigger mess than the one we had in the first place.
16. Another thing that happens when we don't put our trust in the Lord is that we get caught in the "Blame Game".
17. **2 Kings 6:30-31** When the king heard the woman's words, he tore his robes. As he went along the wall, the people looked, and they saw that, under his robes, he had sackcloth on his body. **31** He said, "May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on his shoulders today!"
18. So, the king hears this horrific story, he tears his robes in anguish, and then he immediately looks for someone to blame. In this case, the person he blamed was the prophet Elisha.
19. What I find interesting about the king's response is that on the surface, we might be tempted to think that he was really was trusting in the Lord.
20. After all, when the woman comes to him and asks for help in verse 26, he responds in verse 27, if the Lord doesn't help you, where can I get help for you.
21. Then, in response to the story, he engages in what appears to be mourning and repentance.
22. But his act of seeking someone to blame, especially the man of God who had a great reputation of being honest and true, and the depth of his anger and blame, tell a different story.
23. He doesn't just want to blame Elisha. He wants to cut off Elisha's head. He wants to wipe him off the face of the earth.
24. This is so much your fault Elisha that you don't deserve to continue living.
25. He king wasn't trusting in the Lord. He was being led by his sin nature.
26. What do you mean pastor, being led by his sin nature?
27. What I mean is that getting wrapped up in the blame game was one of the very first things mankind did when they originally sinned.
28. In Genesis chapter 3, after Adam and Eve had disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit, the very first thing they did after trying to cover up their sin was to blame someone else.

29. God says Adam. Who told you to eat that fruit? Adam responds that woman you put here with me, she told me to eat it. Blame.
30. God looks at the woman, what is this you have done? The serpent deceived me, and I ate the fruit. Blame.
31. Adam and Eve, in the face of difficulty, look for someone else to blame. And I must tell you. Mankind has not change much since the beginning of time.
32. In John chapter 9 the disciples come across a man who was blind. They look at Jesus and this is what they ask. Who sinned? This man or his parents.
33. In other words, who is to blame.
34. It is part of our human, sin nature to want to find someone to blame. Mankind is no different today.
35. None of us like to take responsibility, we want to dump the responsibility on someone else by blaming them for our problem.
36. So, here's the thing. If we know that a part of our sin nature is to want to blame others, we have to guard our hearts and our minds and our mouths from getting into the blame game.
37. If I've seen an example of the blame game once as it relates to Covid-19, I've seen it a thousand times.
38. Whose fault is this virus? Where did it come from?
39. Why is the president and the governor putting these restrictions on us and taking away our freedoms?
40. They are going to kill the economy.
41. Where is my stimulus check? Are they trying to starve me to death?
42. How come unemployment is taking so long? These people just don't care.
43. Or my personal favorite. (just joking). Come back to work and get paid? I was making more on unemployment than I was actually working. What is the matter with you?
44. I have to tell you the blame game is alive and well in 2020.

45. I hope you haven't been caught up in the blame game. I'm not putting you down if you have because it is actually easier to blame than it is to not blame. But here is the thing.
46. It is absolutely impossible to be involved in the blame game and be trusting in the Lord at the same time.
47. Let me repeat that. It is absolutely impossible to be involved in the blame game and be trusting in the Lord at the same time.
48. How could that be pastor? Because every moment we spend blaming someone else, our eyes are fixed on the problem and not on the one who can fix the problem.
49. You and I cannot be caught up in blame, and be focused on the Lord at the same time.
50. Listen to what Jesus said in response to his disciples in **John 9:2-3** His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" **3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned,"** said Jesus, **"but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him."**
51. Jesus. Who is to blame for this man's blindness? No one is to blame. This has happened so that god might display his mighty power.
52. The disciples were focused on blame, but Jesus was focused on fixing the problem.
53. Now I want to clarify something here. I'm not saying we should ignore the problem.
54. I'm not suggesting we should bury our head in the sand and pretend like everything is ok when it isn't ok.
55. What I am saying is, when faced with the problem, we have to make a choice.
56. Am I going to focus only on the problem by finding someone to blame for the problem?
57. Or am I going to focus on fixing the problem by looking to and trusting in the only one who has the power to put my problem into proper perspective?

Conclusion:

1. When our response to our problem is to blame, we remain a victim.

2. But when our response to our problem is to look to the Lord and trust him, we move from victim to victor.
3. Victory doesn't come by whining, complaining, and finding someone to take the blame.
4. Victory comes by praising, thanking, and trusting in the only one who is able to take what Satan means for evil and turn it into good.
5. I place before you a choice this morning.
6. Do you want to continue to be a victim?
7. Or do you want to be victor?
8. Let's make that choice together this morning.
9. I'm not asking you to ignore the affects that Covid-19 have had on your life. I'm asking you to choose to worship God and trust God anyway.
10. Let's begin by praising him right now. All of us together.
11. You're not praising him because you have no problems; you are praising him because he is bigger than your problem.
12. If you need to; repent of falling into the blame game. Lord forgive me of all the time I have spent complaining and blaming.
13. Lord Jesus, by your Spirit, give me the strength to trust, when everyone else around me is blaming.
14. Give me the strength to chose to trust in you.