

Standing in the Gap – Ezekiel 22:30

The sins that existed among God's people in the O.T. are common to every generation. Sin always separates from God. As we consider the similarities between Ezekiel's day and today we are also able to see the kind of instruction that is needed today, just as it was given back then. This is one passage that stands out to awaken God's people.

Why was God angry?

The Moral Condition of Judah (Ezek. 22:23-29)

Morality can be a gauge to spirituality

- a. 22:25, 28: False prophets
 1. They were preaching popular things and not the truth.
 3. Their motivation was money and popularity.
- b. 22:26: Unfaithful priests
 1. The priests were charged with distinguishing between clean and unclean, yet they failed to fulfill their charge.
 2. They were charged with teaching the people, but they were not teaching. Instead of upholding God's truth, they made everything ambiguous where there were no clear rights or wrong.
- c. 22:27: Corruption of the rulers
 1. Rather than executing justice, the rulers would seek financial wealth and political gain.
 2. They would accept bribes and oppress those who stood against them.
- d. 22:29: Oppression by the people
 1. The wealthier class of the common people would oppress those who had nothing.
 2. They would steal property from the helpless.
 3. They would oppress the poor and the widows instead of helping them.

II. Morality matters to God!

- a. God did not want the people to be destroyed (1 Tim. 2:4 – God desires that all men should be saved.”).
- b. He sought for a man to stand between Him and the people.
 1. When morality flourishes, so does God's mercy.

2. As morality declines, God's wrath increases. But that is not what the Lord wanted.

3. He sought for some man to stand in the gap to uphold God's moral standard and to shield the people from wrath, but there was no man in sight. He sought someone who cares enough to plead mercy for other people's lives

- a. As Abraham did for Sodom – Gen. 18:22-33
- b. As Moses did for the Children of Israel -
- c. Saved from God – the last thing the unrepentant sinner ever wants to meet on the other side of the grave is God.
 1. God is love; but He is also righteous.
 2. Jesus saves us from “the wrath to come” 1 Thes. 1:10

Stand in the Gap Today

- a. We are faced with the same challenges today as existed then.
 1. Peter's gospel sermon, Acts 2:40, “*Be saved from this perverse generation.*”
 2. Peter's warning for the future, 2 Pet. 2:12-15, “*...having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin...*”
 3. In addition, there are men who claim to preach the word of God who deliberately conspire to avoid preaching God's truth, just as there was in Judah.
 4. 2 Pet. 2:1, “*But there were also false prophets among the people, even as their will be false teachers among you...*”
- b. God is looking for men today to stand in the gap.
 1. Every generation needs a spiritual remnant that will rebuild and uphold the moral and spiritual foundations which popular culture and unfaithful Christians try to tear down.
 2. God is looking for men and women who will stand in the gap for their children, grandchildren, families, community... etc...

There is a gap in the wall!

Sometimes we don't see the decline as directly as we should because we are following too closely to it, blind to our own decline. But we can stand strong if there are men and women here who are willing to stand in the gap.

- a. GOD HAS ALWAYS HAD A PEOPLE!