

404: MAN NOT FOUND

A Father's Day Devotional

Ezekiel 22:30

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.” — Ezekiel 22:30

You’ve seen the message. Everybody has. You click a link, the screen loads, and up comes that cold little line: 404. Page Not Found. Now here’s what most folks never stop to notice. When you get a 404, the website is working just fine. The server’s online. The connection’s strong. The lights are on, the power’s flowing, everything is humming along like it should. There’s only one problem. The one thing you actually came looking for... isn’t there.

Hold that thought, because I want to tell you about a man. His server’s up. He’s online every single day — pays the bills, drives the carpool, shows up on Sunday, smiles in the lobby. By every visible measure, everything is functioning. But somewhere behind the screen, the man himself returns just one quiet message: Not Found.

Twenty-six hundred years ago, God ran a search for exactly that man. Ezekiel 22:30. “I sought for a man... but I found none.” The oldest 404 in history. And this Father’s Day, I want to ask you to sit with that search a while — because Heaven is still running it.

One: God the Seeker

“I sought for a man... but I found none.” — Ezekiel 22:30

There are moments in Scripture where God doesn’t speak as Judge first. He speaks as a Seeker. And that ought to stop you in your tracks, because God does not seek for lack of information. He seeks because He wants relationship. Response. Partnership.

In Eden, He comes walking in the cool of the day asking, “Adam, where are you?” — not because He’d lost track of Adam, but because Adam had lost track of Him. In Ezekiel, He says, “I sought for a man,” actively looking for someone willing to stand with His purposes, to intercept judgment with intercession. And in the Gospels, Jesus says, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.” God in the flesh wears the title “Seeker” right out in the open.

Ultimately the Judge — yet always the Seeker. He is never confused about where you are. But in His mercy He walks through our generation, not as a cold Judge with a clipboard, but as a holy Seeker carrying a burden, looking for someone, anyone, who will say, “Here am I; send me.”

Now let me throw in a little West Texas mercy for the single ladies in the room. Even God ran a search for a man and came up empty — so don’t feel too bad. He hasn’t given up the

search, and neither should you. Just don't confuse a gap-filler with a time-waster. If a man can't lead himself to church, don't let him lead you to dinner.

But Ezekiel isn't handing out dating advice. He's delivering a divine indictment. God looked out over a whole land full of males and said, "I cannot find a man." Edwin Louis Cole said it plain: "Being a male is a matter of birth. Being a man is a matter of choice."

And notice who God was not looking for. Not an influencer. Not a celebrity. Not somebody with a ring light, a podcast, and a bio that says "thought leader." God said, "I was looking for a man."

Here's the tragedy of the verse. It isn't that God searched. It's that God searched and came up empty. "I sought for a man... but I found none." That may be one of the most haunting sentences in all of Scripture. Heaven conducted a search and nobody showed up.

He looked over a nation full of priests, prophets, princes, politicians, businessmen, soldiers, fathers, and leaders, and said, "I cannot find one person willing to stand in the gap." Jerusalem still had its buildings, but the foundation underneath had cracked. They still had religion, but no righteousness. They still had songs, but no surrender. They still had prophets, but they were selling comfort instead of speaking truth. They still had leaders, but they were using people instead of protecting them.

And God said, "There is a breach in the wall. Judgment is coming. Is there anybody who will stand there?"

Beloved, this is not just ancient Israel. This is America. This is the Church. This is the family. This is the fatherless generation, the distracted household, the compromised pulpit, the believer who knows something is wrong but keeps hoping somebody else will deal with it.

Not clap at the gap. Not complain about the gap. Not post about the gap. Stand in it.

And hear the good news folded inside the indictment: God isn't looking for perfection. If He needed perfect people, nobody in the Bible would ever have gotten hired. Noah got drunk. Abraham lied. Jacob manipulated. Moses had a temper. David fell. Peter denied Him. Paul had a past. God is not looking for flawless people. He is looking for available people — and availability is more dangerous to hell than ability.

He can use a grandmother with a prayer closet. A father who decides, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." A teenager who refuses to bow to the spirit of the age. A businessman who won't sell his soul for profit. A pastor who'd rather lose the applause than

lose the anointing. One church that says, “We are not here to entertain a city. We are here to contend for one.”

So the question was never whether there’s a gap — there is. The question was never whether God is looking — He is. The question is this: when God searches your generation, will He find you?

Two: Who Will Stand in the Gap

“The people of the land have oppressed with slander... they have afflicted the needy and the poor.” — Ezekiel 22:29

Read the verse just before our text and you’ll see what broke God’s heart — violence, injustice, corrupted leadership, spiritual compromise. The hedge of protection had been broken. The gap of vulnerability had been exposed.

In an ancient city, a breached wall meant certain invasion. No wall, no safety. No hedge, no covering. And God said, “I looked for someone to rebuild the wall and stand in the breach.” Every broken wall whispers the need for an intercessor. Every gap cries out for a mediator.

That gap isn’t just ancient stone. It’s the space between sin and judgment, between a culture and its collapse, between what is and what God intended it to be. And here’s our peculiar problem: we live in a generation with more platforms than ever, and fewer people willing to stand. We post, but we don’t pray. We react, but we don’t intercede. We analyze the culture, but we don’t absorb the burden. It’s like having five hundred friends online and not one who’ll show up when your car breaks down at midnight.

Understand this: a land does not fall because of sin alone. It falls because no one will stand against it.

And if you’ve ever lived through a moment where everything was caving in — a family crisis, a leadership breakdown, a moral failure — then you already know the difference one person makes who steps into the middle of it and says, “Not on my watch.” God is still looking for that person.

Abraham stood for Sodom. Moses stood for Israel. Esther stood for her people. Nehemiah stood for a broken city. And ultimately, Christ stood in the gap for us all.

Yes, standing in the gap is costly. But you don’t have to become somebody else to stand. You don’t need a title to stand. You don’t need a microphone to stand. You just have to be willing.

Three: The Revival That Begins With One

“Here am I; send me.” – Isaiah 6:8

God found none. But all of history shows us what happens the moment He finds one.

One Moses can shift a nation. One Esther can redirect a genocide. One prayer meeting can awaken a city. One surrendered life can change a generation.

So let me ask you some honest questions on this Father’s Day. What if the gap in your home exists because you were meant to stand in it? What if the gap in your church exists because you were meant to fill it? What if the gap in this culture is waiting on someone who simply refuses to stay silent?

We keep waiting on movements. God is waiting on individuals. We keep expecting fire without a spark. But revival has never begun with a crowd. It begins with ignition — and the ignition usually starts quietly. A decision. A prayer. A single moment where you whisper, “God, if You’re looking for someone... don’t pass me by.”

Because deep down you already know the truth: neutrality is no longer an option.

A Final Word

The hedge is broken in homes. In marriages. In schools. In pulpits. In government. In the hearts of men. But God is still seeking.

He is seeking fathers who will bless their children. Mothers who will pray through the night. Leaders who will speak the truth. Young people who will walk clean. Believers who will quit playing church and start carrying fire.

This is not the hour for casual Christianity. Not the hour for spiritual spectators. Not the hour to outsource your burden to somebody else. This is the hour to stand.

Stand when it is unpopular. Stand when it costs you. Stand when your knees are shaking and your voice trembles. Stand when nobody claps — because Heaven is watching.

For one person in the gap can delay judgment, release mercy, protect a family, shift a city, and change a whole generation. The system is online. Don’t let the man come back Not Found.

For Reflection This Week

Where is the breach you keep hoping someone else will fill — in your home, your family, your church, your community?

What would it cost you to stop clapping at the gap and step into it instead?

Today, will you pray the prayer of Isaiah — “Here am I; send me” — and mean it?

— Pastor Carl
