



How Will You Handle the Gap?

Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro

The biggest challenges in life call for the most intense relationship with Jesus Christ. Many fall into the gaps of challenge and are destroyed by those gaps. However, God is looking for people who will stand in the gap for Him.

Ezekiel 22:17-31 (NLT) ¹⁷ Then this message came to me from the LORD: ¹⁸ “Son of man, the people of Israel are the worthless slag that remains after silver is smelted. They are the dross that is left over—a useless mixture of copper, tin, iron, and lead. ¹⁹ So tell them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because you are all worthless slag, I will bring you to my crucible in Jerusalem. ²⁰ Just as copper, iron, lead, and tin are melted down in a furnace, I will melt you down in the heat of my fury. ²¹ I will gather you together and blow the fire of my anger upon you, ²² and you will melt like silver in fierce heat. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out my fury on you.’” ²³ Again a message came to me from the LORD: ²⁴ “Son of man, give the people of Israel this message: In the day of my indignation, you will be like a polluted land, a land without rain. ²⁵ Your princes plot conspiracies just as lions stalk their prey. They devour innocent people, seizing treasures and extorting wealth. They make many widows in the land. ²⁶ Your priests have violated my instructions and defiled my holy things. They make no distinction between what is holy and what is not. And they do not teach my people the difference between what is ceremonially clean and unclean. They disregard my Sabbath days so that I am dishonored among them. ²⁷ Your leaders are like wolves who tear apart their victims. They actually destroy people’s lives for money! ²⁸ And your prophets cover up for them by announcing false visions and making lying predictions. They say, ‘My message is from the Sovereign LORD,’ when the LORD hasn’t spoken a single word to them. ²⁹ Even common people oppress the poor, rob the needy, and

deprive foreigners of justice. ³⁰ “I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn’t have to destroy the land, but I found no one. ³¹ So now I will pour out my fury on them, consuming them with the fire of my anger. I will heap on their heads the full penalty for all their sins. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!”

This passage in Ezekiel says that the children of God had become worthless. They had left their love and allegiance for the Lord and had turned to the gods of the people that they had conquered. In verses 17-19 the Lord gives a fiery description of their fall. Then the following verses describes the gapping pit that they had fallen into. So great a gap that there was no resemblance of being the “children of God.” In this passage self centered corrupt actions seem to have dominated the rule of the leaders of Israel from the community leaders to the religious leaders.

If you were to look at this passage in comparison to current situations that are taking place in China, Iran, Russian, North Korea, and Venezuela, you will see many parallels between Ezekiel’s time and contemporary times. However, with all that is happening in the U.S., we might have to add our own country to that list above. By the way, this list is not an exhaustive list, because there are many other countries (especially in the Islamic world) that could easily be added to this list. This is only an illustrative list to



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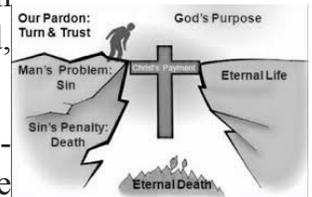
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How Will You Handle the Gap?

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show how the evil spirit that dominated Ezekiel's time is also dominating much of our world today.

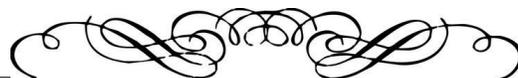
The heartache of the Lord is clearly seen in verse 30 where the Lord says that He looked for someone to rebuild and stand in the gap, but He could not find anyone. In this day I believe that the Lord is looking for someone and even a people who will rebuild and stand in the gap. My prayer is that the Lord, this time, will find someone or even some groups of people that will rise to God's call. I am praying that I and Valley Isle Fellowship will be a part of answering God's call. This will mean that we have to love the Lord like never before. Loving Him with such a love that will show that we are fully committed to Him. Loving Him so fully that we are distinctly different than the world around us. So different that they will desire to have what we have, an all loving and committed relationship with Jesus Christ. So powerful that many will come to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord, Master, and Savior.



In these days of COVID-19, economic distress, and with so much hatred and violence that is leading us to anarchy, there is a great need for someone to stand in the gap for the Lord. I believe that Valley Isle Fellowship is in a very unique and privileged position to stand in that gap. Please pray and then love and obey the Lord to be a people that will stand in the gap to bring glory and honor to the Lord and to bring Godliness to the community around us. We can do this because the Lord stands ready to provide everything that we need to accomplish this for His honor and glory and the joy and welfare of all. You can do it.

God bless you as we all rise to bring our Lord the respect and honor that He greatly deserves.

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Greetings and peace to all our brothers and sisters on Maui and beyond!

It has been a busy time for the Crain's: packing, selling, giving, unpacking and giving away more stuff! We are finally settled in our retirement home although not completely retired. God has given us so much goodness and grace! We have enjoyed visiting relatives here in the Prescott Valley area. We Do not plan to travel again until October when we will visit Valley Baptist Church in Yuma.

Some praises and requests for prayer: Katie got a job at an animal clinic just 2 miles from home! Kathy is preparing to home-school Solana and Sam will be distance learning with the local High school until they open. Solana is visiting her grandmother on her father's side for a few days and we miss her, but it

is very quiet here. Our son in law, John O. is fixing up the trailer on the property for he and Sam to live in. The living room will be full of musical instruments! No one we are in contact with has COVID-19 and we feel very safe and mostly healthy here. Chet sits on the porch every morning to enjoy coffee and cool weather!



MISSION NEWS

NAMB Missionary Spotlight:

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|  | <p>JONATHAN AND YESENIA SANTIAGO</p> <p>Send Relief Puerto Rico Ministry Center P.O. Box 1720 Juncos, PR 00777 ✉ jsantiago@sendrelief.org</p> <p><i>Pray</i></p> <p>God continues to protect us and our volunteers as we seek to minister in the hard soil in Puerto Rico.</p> | <p>Send Relief</p> <p>NAMB's compassion ministries aim to be a movement of churches demonstrating God's love by meeting significant human needs while sharing Christ.</p> <p>Send Relief comes alongside churches to minister in the areas of poverty, refugees and internationals, foster care and adoption, human trafficking and crisis response. There are millions of people in need, and many of them are in the shadow of your church's steeple. Pray for churches to meet these needs and share the hope of the gospel. Pray for your church as it reaches out into the community.</p> |
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International Mission Board

Connecting in Prayer

<https://www.imb.org/pray/>

* Southeast Asian Peoples

Jack* is a believer in a small, closed country in Southeast Asia. A couple of years ago, he experienced a huge encounter with God and became a completely new person. He is attending a Bible college in a nearby country that is more open to the gospel. On one of his trips home, he met Ted* and presented him with the gospel, and Ted became a believer. After Jack went back to college, Ted would go back and forth between his old life and his Christian life. Another believer in his home city, Abe,* took responsibility for helping to disciple Ted. There were times when Ted seemed to be on the right track. He joined the church, was baptized, and began attending church regularly. But then, Ted would avoid any attempts at discipleship. Because of the coronavirus, Jack came home for an extended time and tried to renew his relationship with Ted. Ted was continuing to attend church but avoided discipleship from either men. Both Jack and Abe have become frustrated and want to wash their hands of Ted. Pray that Ted will come to understand the importance of discipleship and want more than just a superficial Christianity. Pray that Jack and Abe will have the patience to continue to try and walk with him until he is able to walk on his own. Pray that they will see how Christ has been patient with them and that they will extend that same patience toward Ted. (*names changed)

* Theological Education in Toumodi, Cote d'Ivoire

(too-moh-DEE) - Please pray for all the seminary professors, staff, and students, asking that their love will increase more and more in all knowledge and spiritual intelligence so they can discern God's will during these uncertain times (Philippians 1:9-10). The economic impact of the COVID-19 virus, limited dormitory arrangements, crowded public transportation, and current restrictions on travel from the city of Abidjan to the rest of the country pose a challenge to restarting the seminary classes anytime soon. Pray that this time will be well used to deepen their relationship with the God who holds all things together.

* South Asians in Continental Europe

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Jose* decided to join an online service that was streaming in his city. After hearing the gospel, he prayed to commit his life to Christ. Now, he is meeting regularly with an online discipleship group to study the Book of Philippians. Pray that Jose will continue to grow in his new faith and share with those around him as the streets of Europe slowly begin to open up again. (*name changed)

A Warning From the Lord

Pastor Stephen Kaneshiro

Matthew 7:1-6

I. _____ . – *Matthew 7:1-2*

- A. _____ others.
- B. _____ of others.
- C. _____ of treatment.

II. Deal with _____ before _____. – *Matthew 7:3-5*

- A. Dealing with the _____.
- B. _____ of the log.
- C. _____ with the log.
- D. _____ others.

III. Don't be _____. – *Matthew 7:6*

- A. Don't waste your _____.
- B. Don't waste your _____.
- C. Evaluate your _____.
 - 1. Develop a _____ with the Lord.
 - 2. Seek for the Lord's _____.
 - 3. Spend your time _____ and _____ the Lord.
 - 4. Don't waste your _____ and _____.