Help Wanted

**Read:** Ezekiel 22:23-30; Numbers 16:46-48

**Text:** Ezekiel 22:30 “And I sought for a man among them, that should

make up the hedge, and stand in the gap…”

Numbers 16:48 “And he stood between the dead and the living; and

the plague was stayed.”

**Introduction:** Perhaps your children are not like mine; mine present some challenges. Have you ever completed a task that you would like to assign to your children but you say something like this: “They will just do a sloppy job anyway so I might as well do it myself.” That is not good parenting even though I do it. In this scripture God is present-ing a problem and then He tells what He will need to fix the problem. The problem is complex but the fix is simple. He just needs a man to step up.

**I. The prequel to the story:** Israel was in the middle of compromise and backsliding. They were right in the middle of a sin fest and God was having none of it. He had been merciful and full of grace for years He had spoken through several good prophets but just as today there were many compromising priests and prophets that provided cover and comfort to their sinning congregants. Grace is no longer the order of the day for these willful rebels and God has put out the: “Help Wanted Poster.”

**II. The Preachers in the story:** The 25th verse says that there is a con-spiracy of the prophets. This indicates that they had met and discussed how they would deal with this sinning people. They had decided to-gether to allow the sinning people to keep on sinning. At their denom-inational conference they established a committee to determine what stand they should take about sin that God had already condemned. The verse indicates that they are responsible for the loss of souls and that they had taken bribes and graft for their decisions. Lives had been lost as a result of their conspiracy. When a called man of God leads people to disregard the scriptures he is held responsible for the results of that un-biblical counsel.

Secondly the priests were guilty of violating God’s law, of profaning what God called holy, and of so mixing the holy with the sinful that there was no longer any difference between the world and the church.

There are places that holy people should not go and there are things that holy people should not do. There are things that holy people should not look upon and there are things that holy people should not touch. When we add a little poison to fresh spring water we no longer have something good to drink. When we mix the world and the church we have a social gospel that will make people feel better but will not save the lost.

These prophets are accused of the most grievous sin a preacher can do. They gave their own opinion and said it following: “Thus saith the Lord.” when he had said no such thing.

**III. The Politicians in the story:** The KJV calls them “princes.” They are guilty of shedding blood and sacrificing souls for dishonest gain. They are oppressors, robbers, and have vexed the poor and needy. Does this sound like most of the folks in Washington DC?

**IV. The Person who can change the story:** In the 30th verse God reveals that He has a plan to change the situation. He began to get out the ingredients for His answer to this situation and discovered that He was missing the main ingredient. He says: “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.”

**Conclude:** Have you seen the poster? Have you heard the job posting on the radio? Has a friend told you about it? The Master is searching for someone to step up and say: “I’ll apply for the job! I’m willing to do it.”

Isaiah heard the call and he said: “Also I heard the voice of the Lord,

saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here

am I; send me.”

Aaron in obedience to Moses stood between the dead and the living

and stopped a deadly plague.