

## God's Plan Made Manifest

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The Season of Advent, a joyful period of anticipation invites us to be people of hope, trusting in the steady guidance and providence of God. This season of preparation can also be called a time of realignment. Car mechanics advise us to align periodically the wheels in our vehicles. Doing so, the mechanical integrity of our vehicle is preserved, minimizing exposure to needless car accidents or costly damage. In today's scripture readings, we are invited to align our own plans with that of the Lord. Human plans, regardless how lofty and strategic, are incomplete without God's intervention. We even say, "Do your best, God will do the rest." Do we really invite God into our life to guide us on the journey of our faith?

In the first reading, King David had a lofty idea, to build a temple, a permanent place for the Ark of the Covenant. Initially, Prophet Nathan applauded David's plan and encouraged with his temple building project. However, God inspires Nathan that David's plan to build a temple is not in alignment with the Divine plan. Regardless how obedient was to God, David must have been disappointed by Nathan's intervention to abandon his plan. For David this was not only a disappointment, but it was also an embarrassment too. King David must have had consulted with his elders and architects about his temple building plan in details even when to start and complete it. Going back to the elders and architects, telling them he has abandoned his temple building plan as embarrassing as it is, also needs courage and discernment. The spiritual director of King David, Prophet Nathan spoke truth to power and King David obliged with humility. Prophet Nathan gives an enduring hope to King David that God's love and promise endures forever.

Today's scripture readings reveal to us the permanence of God's love, assuring the fulfilment of his promise. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading St. Paul reminds us of God's mystery of salvation, a road map for the revelation of God's glory in Jesus Christ in whom the laws and the prophets are fulfilled. God's sense of humor and mystery is contrary to the human logic. The Kingdom of David had been disrupted several times over since the prophecy of Nathan's promise. Yet God fulfills his promise by choosing a young girl to be the vehicle of his salvation, fulfilling the promise to King David. A poor girl from Nazareth, literally from social and geographic periphery. God's favor rested upon this young girl from the periphery; upon hearing the word of Angel Gabriel, once she received satisfactory explanation why she was chosen she aligned her personal plan with the Divine plan saying, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." As we get closer to celebrate the feast of Christmas, how ready are we to realign our plan, bringing Christ to Christmas? The choice is ours, but we cannot do it alone.

Merry Christmas!!!