

Northminster Presbyterian Church
Weekly Devotional
Week of December 21st – December 27th, 2008
4th Sunday in Advent

Scripture Readings

- 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
- Luke 1:47-55
- Psalm 89:1-26
- Romans 16:25-27
- Luke 1:26-38

Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 (NRSV)

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Devotional:

This passage lets us know that God is always with us. David thought he had to build for God a permanent home and God gently said no. Of course if you read the surrounding passage, you can find other explanations as to why God would not let David build his temple, however, God did not need a “real” home in order to be with the Israelites. He was with them all through history, he didn’t always give them what they thought they wanted, but he was always with them. Sometimes we think that the church building is where God dwells, but just as with the Israelites, God dwells in each of us. We are the church.

Also, this passage establishes an agreement between God and David that is realized in Jesus. Though David probably would have seen the promise to have a throne “established forever” as having a physical descendant on the throne throughout time, we have the benefit of seeing this promise through the New Testament, where we can match up prophecy and understand that the descendant of David is one man, Jesus, who will rule throughout time.

During this Christmas season, take time to reflect on the promises that God made to David, and the commitment that God will be with us always. Sometimes I forget that the baby we celebrate during Christmas is more than the Christ, who became obedient to death for each one of us, Jesus was also part of a promise to a man long ago. God keeps his promises.

Pastor Stacey