

God's Plan Prevails

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[0 : 00] Matthew chapter 2. We'll begin reading at verse 1 and read the entire chapter. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem and Judea during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews?

We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. When King Herod heard this, he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

In Bethlehem in Judea, they replied, for this is what the prophet has written. But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah.

For out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel. Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me so that I too may go and worship him.

[1 : 17] After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him.

Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. Get up, he said. Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.

So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet.

[2 : 25] Out of Egypt I called my son. When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled. A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping in great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead.

So he got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there.

Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, he will be called a Nazarene.

[3 : 48] Let's hear God's word preached. The Lord foils the plans of the nations and thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart, through all generations. Praise the Lord. God never works without purpose and plan.

And God never fails to accomplish his purpose and plan. For there is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord.

Proverbs 21, 30. And so from eternity past, God purposed to save a remnant of fallen, hell-deserving sinners.

And out of that purpose, he made a plan. He planned to save them by sending his own son and sending him as a man to die in their place.

[4 : 56] That was not a last-minute emergency plan on the fly, as it were. Revelation 13, 8 describes our Lord Jesus as the Lamb who was slain since the foundation of the world.

This has been in God's heart, God's purposes from eternity, the incarnation, the crucifixion, part of his purpose and plan from eternity.

And he's a God who works all things according to that plan, bringing it to pass. Now, to plan is one thing, and to accomplish it is another.

And that's what we're going to see this morning. Kids, many of you have probably seen the movie based on Dr. Seuss's novel, The Grinch That Stole Christmas, that bitter cat-like creature with a heart two sizes too small.

Tried to prevent Christmas from coming to the Who's of Whoville by stealing all their Christmas presents and decorations. But in the end, his plan was thwarted and Christmas went on in Whoville.

[6 : 13] Long before Dr. Seuss ever wrote his book, this book records for us another attempt to prevent Christmas from coming to the whole world, by which I mean to prevent the incarnation of God's own Son, His birth, and the salvation of sinners.

over all the earth, through Him. In fact, there were many attempts made over the years, not the work of a fairy tale creature like the Grinch, but the work of a real live creature called Satan, Apollyon, that ancient serpent, the devil.

He's opposed God's plan of salvation through the incarnation and the work of His Son, our Savior. And He's not worked alone. He's had the help of His hellish henchmen, the other fallen angels, referred to as demons in the Bible, and also those of the human race who have done His will and served His purposes.

Now, we must not think that Satan is omniscient. He does not know everything in the mind and heart of God. He does not know everything that God has planned.

But very early on in time, God revealed His plan. Didn't He? Indeed, He announced that plan to that serpent Himself just after He had succeeded in getting the first human beings, Adam and Eve, to fall into sin.

[7 : 57] And no sooner had they sinned than God came with His curse and He starts with this serpent, Satan. And He says, I will put enmity between you and the woman. You've succeeded in pulling her from my side over to your side.

I'm going to put enmity between you and her. And between your seed and her seed, He will crush your head. He, a male offspring of the woman, will crush your head and you will strike His heel.

Genesis 3, 15. This promise of a male, head-crushing seed of the woman is the earliest revelation of God's plan of salvation that He's making known to these fallen sinners.

to send a Savior to destroy Satan. And here, Satan and we learn that this coming Savior will be born of a woman.

He will be a real human being. Now that's God's purpose. That's God's plan. And He's here announcing it. But can He get it done? That's the question.

[9 : 07] Can He accomplish what He sets out to do? Because not everyone was happy about God's plan of salvation. All hell was set against it.

Satan and his hosts despised the idea of mercy for sinners. They didn't receive mercy. And they don't want anyone else receiving mercy.

So they work feverishly to see all men and women, boys and girls, damned forever. That's Satan's purpose and plan.

So the battle lines are drawn, aren't they? God and Satan at war. Whose purpose will prevail? Whose plan will be thwarted?

And who's accomplished? That's the whole drama of the Bible, isn't it? And the picture is set for us right there in Genesis 3.15.

[10 : 10] Well, the further you read in the Bible, the more details are given about God's plan and about this coming Savior and seed of the woman. So we've started right at the root of the whole family tree with the woman, Eve, the mother of all the living.

He's going to come from Eve, the woman. But then when we get to Genesis chapters 12 through 17, we learn he will be the seed of Abraham.

The seed of Abraham. Blessings will flow to the nations, to all nations on earth from a son of Abraham, from one of the seed of Abraham. So that's narrowing.

Not only is he going to be coming forth from the woman, but it's going to come from this major trunk in the whole family tree, the trunk of Abraham.

He will come as a son of Abraham, the father of the Jews. Then a couple hundred years later, we're told in Genesis 49 and verse 10 that God's Savior will be a son of Judah.

[11 : 21] He will come from the tribe of Judah, a great-grandchild God of Abraham. So again, we're narrowing the focus as we're being told more and more about this seed of the woman.

And then a thousand years later, in 2 Samuel 7, we're told that this Savior will be a son of David and that he will sit upon the throne of his kingdom and rule over all of God's people forever and ever.

And all of this information was not hidden from Satan. It wasn't kept under his radar. It's something that he had access to as well.

And he sought with all of his might to thwart God's plan of bringing the Savior into the world. Let me give you three of his failed attempts to thwart God's plan of salvation through this coming seed of David.

His attempts to prevent Christmas, the incarnation, and the work of salvation by God's own Son who, as to his human nature, will be the son of David.

[12 : 31] We begin back in 2 Kings in chapter 11. After David died, kings from the line of David continued to reign one after another.

Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, they were all the seed of David. But when Ahaziah died, his mother, Athaliah, tried to pull a fast one.

And we read in 2 Kings 11 in verse 1, when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family.

Now this was a power grab to gain the queenship and rule for herself as queen.

And that was a common enough practice of the day that if you wanted to steal the throne, well, you needed to kill off all those who had a rightful claim to the throne.

[13 : 35] And that's exactly what she did. She proceeded to destroy the whole royal family, all those in the line of David.

verse 2 begins with an important but. There are many important buts in the scriptures. This is one of them. But.

You see, the problem with Athaliah's plan is that her plan crossed God's plan. Because God had planned, hadn't he? We just reviewed that.

God had planned for a son of David to sit on the throne and reign forever over his people. That was not only his hidden purpose and plan in his heart and in his mind, but he had revealed that plan by way of promise to David and to his people.

Athaliah planned and proceeded to destroy the whole line of David. Her plan crossed God's plan. Her purpose was at cross purposes with God's purpose.

[14 : 36] And we can't help but hear the hiss of the ancient serpent in all of this. behind this murderous plot to keep the son of God from coming into this world.

Doing all he could to keep the saving king of David from being born. But, verse 2 and 3, but Jehoshabab, the Lord always has servants to bring his will to pass.

But Jehoshabab, the daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the royal princes who were about to be murdered.

She put him and his nurse in a bedroom to hide him from Athaliah, so he was not killed. He remained hidden with his nurse at the temple of the Lord for six years while Athaliah ruled the land.

Here we see the evil one's attempt to thwart God's plan of salvation. And the evil one was now working out his plan through Athaliah's plan.

[15 : 47] She's on a power-hungry grab to become queen herself. And that's the thing that Satan is using to work out his plan. And she's able to pull off her plan to destroy all the royal seed except for one.

Except for one. A little one-year-old baby Joash hidden away in the temple by his aunt. And so God's whole plan of salvation through a king from David's line you see it's now hanging by a single thread.

A thin thread of a baby whose next breath if it's cut off will be the end of God's plan.

If he dies God's plan dies. But what looks like a thin thread to man is really an unbreakable cable to God. In Whistler, Canada you can take the peak-to-peak gondola that will take you from Whistler Mountain all the way over to Blackcomb Mountain.

It spans a distance of nearly two miles and for a long time it was the world's largest span spanned by a cable car. Well, we bought tickets for the next day and decided to spend that day just hiking down in the valley and lower down in the lower parts of the mountain.

[17 : 21] and as we looked up we could see those gondola cars just kind of swaying in the breeze and making their way across the valley.

Those cables appeared to us as thin threads hardly visible. The next day we took the ride ourselves and found that they were in fact strong cables and indeed at the top of one of the peaks there was a museum and something of a museum and it showed you a slice of the cable it was about the diameter of an orange or a tennis ball and it was made out of the strongest metals and just hundreds of strands in that cable leave it to the Swiss designers to span nearly two miles with a cable three cables is what it was but what appeared from the ground to be such a fragile thin thread was in fact an unbreakable cable.

Well God's plan you see under Athaliah's rule now appeared to be hanging on a thin thread just a baby but it was a thread woven together with God's promises and with the sovereign power of the almighty God and there's nothing more sure and stable than God's plans and purposes so for six years Athaliah's plan appeared to succeed but then seven year old Joash of the seed of David was brought out of hiding and was crowned king queen Athaliah was killed her purpose and plan was foiled and God's purpose and plan was fulfilled for the Lord foils the plans of the nations he thwarts the purposes of the peoples but the plans of the Lord stand firm forever the purposes of his heart through all generations Psalm 33 10 and 11 well there was another attempt that's number one another attempt to thwart

God's plan of the incarnation of his son this came 400 years later during the time of Esther there's no more Davidic kings on the throne Israel is no longer a free nation they have been subjected first by the Babylonians now by the Persians they're under Persian rule the king is Xerxes and it all came about this way Queen Xerxes Xerxes queen wife Vashti refused her husband's order to appear at his banquet to have her beauty put on display before his well watered guests and this led Xerxes to reject her as queen and to select a new queen which in the providence of God turned out to be the beautiful Jewish Esther though it was not known that she was a Jew her cousin Mordecai had adopted and raised her since her father and mother had both died well

King Xerxes exalted a certain wicked Haman as his top man in all the kingdom he's number two to the king himself and Haman when he received this honor just was as proud as a peacock and when he came through the entrance there into the king's palace well he expected everyone to hit the ground you see and to bow in front of him Mordecai wouldn't bow and that so enraged Haman from that day he started to plan to murder Mordecai but finding out that Mordecai was a Jew he was not happy just to murder Mordecai no his plan would be to to murder the whole Jewish nation throughout the whole empire so he has to sell this idea to King Xerxes and he tells

[21 : 50] Xerxes that he has a people dispersed throughout his kingdom that are troublesome their ways are different and they don't obey your laws King and so it would be in your best interest to have them destroyed all of them and Haman says I'll take care of that for you if you'd like and Xerxes goes along with it for my interest okay do it and he gives him his signet ring to do all that he pleased and Haman has letters sent to every region of the empire 120 provinces stretching from India to Egypt and these letters are written in different languages in the name of King Xerxes with his own signet ring seal upon the letters and inside the letters is the order given to destroy kill and annihilate all the Jews I'm not adding those words that's what the letter said not just to kill them but to destroy kill and annihilate all the

Jews young and old women and little children included and then to plunder their goods and it's all to happen on a single day the 13th day of the 12th month it was open season on the Jews destroy kill and annihilate them and then have at whatever their possessions were so the purpose of Haman is clear his plan was well laid and backed by the king's authority the date was set by an irrevocable decree and Haman had already had the 75 foot gallows built on which he was going to hang Mordecai the Jew but again there's one problem isn't there Haman's plan crossed God's plan because it was these very Jewish people that God had planned to keep alive and to bring forth a savior one day from these

Jewish people and specifically from the line of David so again Satan is attempting to steal Christmas to prevent the incarnation of God's son to thwart his salvation plan this time not just by annihilating the line of David but annihilating the whole people of the Jews all of them but there is no wisdom no insight no plan that can succeed against the Lord and in a most exquisite turn of events the rest of the book of Esther reveals how the Lord rescued his own plan from being thwarted I'm not going to take the time this morning to tell you the story you can read it the ten chapters in less than a half an hour it's the most exciting reading you'll find anywhere in the world of literature it never grows old why Hollywood hasn't made millions on this storyline is beyond me it has everything a thriller could want the tension the unexpected twists and turns of the plot the irony the surprises the way the tables are turned so that justice prevails at just the right time the exquisite timing of the events and how the whole outcome turns on tiny things like a king's sleeplessness one night and the reading material that he chooses to pass the time it's wonderful literature it's an uninventable story and best of all it's its real history it's his story it's

God's story of rescuing his own plan of salvation from being thwarted when all the powers that be seem to be united to frustrate it and so in the end you find Haman hanging on the very gallows that he had built for Mordecai and we find Mordecai and the Jews not only alive and well but actually exalted now Mordecai has the position that Haman used to have and the Jews they were feared and revered their enemies dead and we read that many people of other nationalities of all these nations that were in the Persian empire many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them and in the end we find an annual festival of Purim established in Israel of feasting and rejoicing and giving of gifts to one another to remember the time when the

Jews got relief from their enemies and when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning was turned to celebration it's still celebrated by the Jews in March of each year feasting sending of gifts and reading of the book of Esther whenever the name Haman arises in the reading of the book of Esther the children and the adults start booing and hissing and pounding their fists and stomping their feet to blot out the name of Haman for the Lord foils the plans of the nations he thwarts the purposes of the peoples but the plans of the Lord stand firm forever the purposes of his heart through all generations!

[28 : 20] up and see all these attempts that were made as Satan sought to thwart the purposes of God he used this king and this nation and this person and things that weren't put in the Bible and things that we've never heard of we will learn of how God thwarted their plans and kept His plans right on track this third attempt is perhaps the most well-known.

It's the passage that was read to us from Matthew 2. Not an attempt to keep the Son of God from being born, for he is already born, but Herod's attempt to kill the newborn king of Israel, thereby thwarting God's purpose of salvation through this baby.

So the Jews again are in subjection. They've been in subjection to foreign empires for nearly 600 years without a king of their own on the throne, let alone a Davidic king.

Indeed, in the language of Isaiah chapter 11, the royal family tree of David has been chopped down and is a mere stump in the land.

Not much expected out of that stump, but then according to promise, a shoot sprang up from the stump of Jesse. A king in the line of David was born, just as God purposed and planned and promised, just as was announced to the angels, or by the angels to the shepherds.

[29 : 57] Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ, the Lord. Well, when word of the birth of the king of the Jews came to King Herod from the wise men, he wasn't a part of those happy people that Pastor Jason talked about, that people were happy about the Lord's birth.

This is an exception to the rule. He was disturbed by this troubling news. He wanted no challenge to his throne, and so at once he hatched a secret plan to murder this newborn king.

But he put his best face on, and he pretended to have a sincere interest in this child king. He asked these top Jewish scholars where this Messiah king was to be born, and they had no trouble coming up with the answer from Micah chapter 5, But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.

So he knows the place. Now he wants to know how old this king is, so he secretly asked the wise men when the king's star appeared to them that he might date it back to the birth of this king.

And he learned the age by what they taught him. And so knowing both the age of this newborn king and the place of his birth, he sends the wise men to Bethlehem to find this king, to report back to him so that he can go and worship this king too, intending all the while to send his henchmen to murder him.

[31 : 44] Well, Satan had not succeeded in stealing Christmas. Satan had not succeeded in his plan to prevent the incarnation. This son of God, this son of David, had been born in Bethlehem.

But as Revelation 12 records in form of vision, this enormous red dragon stood in front of the pregnant woman who was about to give birth so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.

So Satan cannot prevent the incarnation of God's son. He will do all that he can, pulling out the stops to thwart God's plan of salvation through this son of God and David.

So, again, working through his instruments, now it's the power-grabbing, jealous King Herod. This devilish plan is hatched to kill the Lord Jesus.

And it's interesting that just as in the time of Josiah, God's saving plan hangs by the thread of a tiny baby.

[32 : 53] Just one. For there is no other name by which we must be saved. Just one. The whole plan of salvation, that grand and glorious scheme of saving a multitude of sinners that no man can number, of changing the whole universe and making it new, it all hangs on one baby again.

This time, the son of Mary, the son of God. And all the powers that be were opposing him, so whose plan will prevail?

God's or Herod's? You know the story when the star led the wise men to the child Jesus. They bowed down and they worshipped him. It was another historic event marked again by the giving of gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And God who rules over men's minds warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod, and so they went back home another way. But when King Herod realized he had been outwitted by the wise men, he was furious, just as Haman was furious.

And dropping all pretense about worshipping this Christ child, he now sends soldiers with the orders to kill all boys, two years old and younger, in Bethlehem and the surrounding area.

[34 : 30] All in accordance with the time that he had learned from the wise men as to the birth of the Christ child. But God who knows the hearts of all, who considers everything they do, had revealed to Joseph in a dream that Herod was going to search for the child to kill him.

And so he instructs Joseph to escape to Egypt with the child and his mother. And they got up that very night and left for Egypt where they stayed until the death of Herod.

So when the soldiers showed up in Bethlehem and carried out their killing spree, the Savior Jesus was already gone. And by the end of Matthew chapter 2, we find King Herod is the one dead.

And the baby Jesus he sought to murder is alive and well and God's plan of salvation through him is right on track.

For the Lord foils the plans of the nations and he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

[35 : 39] Now why? Why? Why do we have these records? Both of the attempts to thwart God's purpose of the incarnation and salvation of sinners of his son and the salvation of sinners through him and also the end of those attempts and what happens and how God thwarts those purposes and maintains his own.

Why are they in our Bibles? Several strands of application come to mind. Number one, that we might worship our sovereign God of unthwartable plans and purposes. That we will bow and worship this God that exists, this real God who is really sovereign, really rules over all things.

Nothing so demonstrates God's sovereignty as his being able to bring about all his purposes and plans. He says, I'm going to do this. And we say that, so what's the big deal?

Well, he does it. That's the difference, you see. And if he is able to always do what he sets out to do, well, that means then that all the variables that you and I don't have control of and why we don't always fulfill our plan, all those variables are under his governance and his rule so that nothing can thwart his purpose and plan but that he always fulfills it.

Though opposed, his plan always prevails. Now, you've got to deal with that. What does that tell you? It tells you he's sovereign. He controls the hearts of kings and directs them like a water course wherever he will.

[37 : 32] He has ways of doing that. Ways of doing that without violating that king's own will but he does it. He has a power to do that. And he's never sinning in what he does but he's able to control all the variables so that his plans always are fulfilled.

Bow and worship. Bow and worship this God. Though all hell sought to stop him. of this grand plan for the incarnation and salvation through Jesus Christ.

It all happened just as he planned and just as he promised it would. He becomes, the son of God becomes as to his human nature a son of David born of the woman.

a human being born of the line of David with a real human body that he might lay that body out on the altar of Calvary and be a sacrifice for man's sin.

The seed of the woman the seed of Abraham the seed of Judah the seed of David has come and he's crushed the serpent's head winning the decisive battle at Calvary and rising victorious over death in the grave.

[38 : 52] Mission accomplished. in the face of all that Satan could stir up to oppose it. This is the relentless tenacity of God's love that nothing will stop him from his plan to sending his savior into the world and bringing redemption to sinners.

Love caused thine incarnation. Love brought thee down to me. That love was stronger than all that hell could throw up against it. Though this great plan has been accomplished and this promised savior has come and died and risen that will do you absolutely no good if you don't stop going your own way and turn around and come and trust in this savior to save you from your sins.

All of this think of it all that God did to accomplish this plan that the kings the nations his intervention his rule over all of it so what so that this baby could be born so that this savior could come so that he could go to the cross and die in the place of sinners rise victorious so that you might be saved and you ignore him you neglect him there's no greater sin in the world but this savior this plan of God to send his son will do you no good unless you come in sweet surrender of faith and trust in him to save you from your sin how will you escape if you neglect so great a salvation you see the greatness of it his plan he's bringing it to accomplishment come and worship this Christmas at the feet of this sovereign God and savior surrendering your heart in faith to him secondly

God not only brings about his grand plan of salvation but also his individual purposes and plans for you child of God not just the big plan that we've been looking at this morning but the individual plan for each one of his children he does have such individual plans David knew it Psalm 139 16 all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be he's got plans for me for all my days he's had them before I was even born so he's able to say in Psalm 138 the Lord will fulfill his purpose for me does he have purpose he will fulfill them those purposes for me not just for the grand scheme of salvation but for me he is the God who works all things out according to the purpose of his will so you might not understand what those plans are you may even wonder could such a great God have individual plans for me individual purposes for me yes he's called you according to his purpose

Romans 8 28 says he's got a purpose and he's called you to himself according to that purpose and as Job said he knows the way that I take so he knows his purposes and plans for you even when you don't and he knows how to bring those purposes and plans to pass honor your sovereign Lord then by trusting him who will fulfill his purpose for you and then there's another line of application and it's just that these things were written for our eternal encouragement and good hope for our eternal encouragement and good hope you see this this same God has some unfulfilled plans has some plans that are yet incomplete not yet accomplished we've read in here of some plans that are still waiting to be fulfilled part of

[43 : 14] God's plans that haven't come to pass yet that were won for us by this baby Jesus who grew up and lived a perfect life for us and died an atoning death and rose again victorious and now reigns in heaven for us there's some things that he has won for us that have not yet been fulfilled some plans that are incomplete like the funeral of our indwelling sin that hasn't happened yet like the end of all temptation with the destruction of Satan and his angels in the lake of fire like the last judgment and the removal of all that is defiled all who have not obeyed the gospel like the last enemy death being swallowed up in victory like the resurrection of the body and the reunion with loved ones who died in the

Lord like war ceasing to the ends of the earth such that nations will not study war anymore not practice for war anymore the end of the curse with every tear wiped from our eyes along with every cause of the tears gone where there's no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away and behold all things have been made new a new heaven a new earth a new body perfected soul a world of perfect love best of all in the presence of the one who bore the nails and took the curse for us and saved us from the coming wrath and won a place for us at his side to be with him face to face forever will be joy unspeakable and full of glory eternal pleasures at his right hand all of our sorrows turn to joy all of our mourning turn to celebration eternal celebration

I don't have to tell you that hasn't happened yet but it's planned we only know about it because God has revealed his plan that's what a promise is it's God's plan revealed if he hadn't promised it we wouldn't know it but in the heart of God he planned and purposed it and there are some of his plans and purposes that he's revealed by way of promise and so here we are looking at some of these incomplete plans and when and while the plan is in this stage of being incomplete unfulfilled and while the troubles are so real and our faith is so weak and the enemy is so strong God's plan can seem to hang by a thread we can wonder will it really be and God knows that he knows that about us and so he's come alongside to give us eternal encouragement and good hope how?

by putting these records in the scriptures read about my plan and all that was piled up against it to keep it from being fulfilled and how I fulfilled it that we might wait patiently for the Lord with the strongest assurance with the most confident expectation that his plans indeed will stand firm forever his purposes through all generations and so we begin at the manger just seeing the God man in the manger ought to fill us with encouragement and good hope God fulfills his plans as you peer into the manger as it were in your mind this Christmas and you think about these things that ought to fill you with hope because the same God who planned that has other plans yet unfulfilled But those plans are as safe and secure as that plan that is already fulfilled it's in the same hands of the same plan fulfilling

God the same sovereign of the universe God that thin thread what seems to be a thin thread of God's purposes being accomplished is really that unbreakable cable reinforced with the promises of the faithful God the power of his sovereign God who does all that he says and that's a lesson that suffering saints need especially it's one that Job needed to learn indeed it's one of the takeaways of the whole book it comes at the end of the!

[48 : 16] and at the end of his trial chapter 42 and verse 2 I know that you can do all things that no plan of yours can be thwarted that's a takeaway that suffering tried servants need to hold on to God has a way of teaching it to us doesn't he taught Job so Job says oh this God that I I heard about now I've come to see him with greater insight none of his plans can be thwarted it's the lesson that the Israelites in long captivity needed down in Babylon God reveals to them in Isaiah 46 I make known the end from the beginning from ancient times what is still to come I say my purpose will stand and I will do all that I please from the east I will summon a bird of prey from a far off land a man to fulfill my purpose what

I have said that I will bring about and what I have planned that I once again bringing hope confident expectation that this plan that was set into motion that first Christmas even with the incarnation and then the birth of the Savior that that plan will go on in its fulfillment until it has accomplished all that God meant for the Savior to do so let's wait in hope for the Lord the Lord who pulled off the incarnation the crucifixion and the resurrection just as he had planned and against all odds is the same Savior whose plans and purposes and promises to come again and to finish what he's begun let's pray our sovereign

Lord we bow in your presence we worship you as the one true and living God the eternal the infinite the unchangeable God of purposes and plans thank you for the Bible that in this book you've revealed some of those plans to us indeed every plan that we need to know about for godliness and for life for new life in Christ and for hope eternal hope thank you that you're a god who has demonstrated your determination to bring your plan to pass and even shown us that nothing can stop it so give us that strength of faith this morning from your word that our faith would grow and that we would realize this is the god who has us and our times in his hands make us clay on the potter's wheel and help us then we might wait and hope for the lord for he is our help and our shield in him our hearts rejoice for we trust in his holy name may your unfailing love lord rest upon us even as we put our hope in you we do so in Jesus name amen