

Sermon for Christmas Day (II)
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Holy Nativity, Plano
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In our reading from Isaiah, we have the Lord himself making a promise. He has put watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem. And they are told never to let him rest until he “establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth.” God’s love toward his people will never end. And he even appoints other beings to remind him of the promises he will never forget.

Of course, we have more of the story than Isaiah had. Today, we celebrate God’s faithfulness in fulfilling his promises. Many centuries after Isaiah spoke of the salvation of God’s people, God himself came to earth as one of us. There in the manger on that first Christmas morning, the “goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared”. And he saved us, not because we did anything good, but because of his own mercy.

But there is more salvation to come. He has saved us, and he is still saving us. And people who are being saved still have work to do. God says through Isaiah, “Go ... prepare the way ... build up the highway”. As God saves us, we are to make the way clear, with his help. By trusting him to keep his promises to us, by clearing our hearts of all idols, by loving God and each other; we build up the highway and clear it of stones. And God’s grace and mercy will flow unhindered in our lives.