

## Is It Still Wonderful?

Job 41:10b Sunday AM, December 24, 2023

**Prelude Choir: Highland Carol Scripture: Job 41:1–10** “Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook? Or press down his tongue with a cord? <sup>2</sup> “Can you put a rope in his nose Or pierce his jaw with a hook? <sup>3</sup> “Will he make many supplications to you, Or will he speak to you soft words? <sup>4</sup> “Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him for a servant forever? <sup>5</sup> “Will you play with him as with a bird, Or will you bind him for your maidens? <sup>6</sup> “Will the traders bargain over him? Will they divide him among the merchants? <sup>7</sup> “Can you fill his skin with harpoons, Or his head with fishing spears? <sup>8</sup> “Lay your hand on him; Remember the battle; you will not do it again! <sup>9</sup> “Behold, your expectation is false; Will you be laid low even at the sight of him? <sup>10</sup> “No one is so fierce that he dares to arouse him; Who then is he that can stand before Me?

And so we come to the Christmas message and Pastor Jahn will look at the familiar in an unfamiliar way based on a line from Job. Why Job? Not so much for the sake of novelty as much as wondering if we are still able to wonder. Amazement and wonder FILL the accounts of Jesus birth: Zacharias’ encounter with the angel shut his mouth for months, Mary and Joseph’s separate encounters with angels—my soul MAGNIFIES the Lord—or the glorious appearance of the angels to the shepherds, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.” Do you sense the shepherd’s excitement to go straight to Bethlehem to see this great thing which the Lord had made known to them—they came with haste. But surrounding all this amazement and wonder was quiet and oblivion—carrying on with other joys and conflicts. On which side do you find yourself—wonder and amazement, or quiet and oblivious, focused elsewhere? We are not asking if you are excited about Christmas, but are you filled with wonder, with amazement at the incarnation? But for now, we are here to worship. So stop focusing on where you are for a moment and catch the excitement of those right at the center. Sing the song of Emmanuel!

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): Sing We the Song of Emmanuel**

After the angels had gone, after the shepherds finished glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, there is plenty of time to further process—WHAT happened? First, It DID happen. It WAS an event just as real as you being here today. But there is a back story to this real event. And the more you uncover, you recognize that there WERE plenty of signs pointing not only to the event, but to the glory of God’s dealings toward mankind. Trust not only God’s dealings, but His trustworthy word. He said there would be One to crush the serpent’s head. **But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.** Join her.

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): Who Would Have Dreamed**

**\*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn**

**Choir: Joy! Joy!**

**Scripture: Luke 1:57–79** Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her. <sup>59</sup> And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him Zacharias, after his father. <sup>60</sup> But his mother answered and said, “No indeed; but he shall be called John.” <sup>61</sup> And they said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name.” <sup>62</sup> And they made signs to his father, as to what he wanted him called. <sup>63</sup> And he asked for a tablet and wrote as follows, “His name is John.” And they were all astonished. <sup>64</sup> And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God. <sup>65</sup> Fear came on all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea. <sup>66</sup> All who heard them kept them in mind, saying, “What then will this child turn out to be?” For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him. <sup>67</sup> And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: <sup>68</sup> “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, <sup>69</sup> And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant— <sup>70</sup> As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old— <sup>71</sup> Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; <sup>72</sup> To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, <sup>73</sup> The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, <sup>74</sup> To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, <sup>75</sup> In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. <sup>76</sup> “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; <sup>77</sup> To give to His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, <sup>78</sup> Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high will visit us, <sup>79</sup> TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace.”

**Offering: \*Doxology:**

There was a back story. Zacharias had plenty of time to ponder what the angel told him as his mouth was closed because of his disbelief of the angel’s words. By the time of the baby’s birth, there was no doubt that the boy’s name would be what the angel told him it would be. His name is John. But listen to Zecharias’ first words when his tongue was loosed, **“Blessed be the Lord God of Isreal, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people.”** He has shown mercy toward our fathers and remembered His holy covenant, “The oath which He swore to Abraham our father.” Not only is God delivering us as He promised, but He did so with a purpose—**“to grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.”** Worship God for the thousands of years of working to show us His trustworthy word and care for us.

**\*Hymn #160: Lo! How a Rose E’er Blooming**

As Pastor Jahn prepares to preach more of a topical message entitled “Is it Still Wonderful?,” you must take what you know of Christ and look around it, under it, before it. It relates to you, but when you start gazing at all you find, you will have your attention taken FROM you to the One who is glorious. To wonder, you must look WAY beyond yourself, WAY beyond even the pieces leading up to Christ’s birth. There is ALWAYS more. <sup>7</sup> “Can you fill his skin with harpoons, Or his head with fishing spears? <sup>8</sup> “Lay your hand on him; Remember the battle; you will not do it again! <sup>9</sup> “Behold, your expectation is false; Will you be laid low even at the sight of him? <sup>10</sup> “No one is so fierce that he dares to arouse him; Who then is he that can stand before Me? Learn this song with me

**\*Hymn (Powerpoint): Before the Skies**

**Message: Is It Still Wonderful? Job 41:10b**

**\*Hymn #145: O Come All Ye Faithful**

**\*Prayer**