

Story for All – August 16, 2020

Esther and Emmett:

Emmett: Here sheepy, sheepy. Here Sheep. Baa. Where are you sheep?

Esther: Hi Emmett...? Are...you...looking...for sheep?

Emmett: I sure am, Esther. Here sheep. Aw, come on sheep, just come here.

Esther: I didn't know you had sheep.

Emmett: I don't. These are the sheep of the house of Israel!!

Esther: (quizzically) The sheep of...the...house...of Israel.

Emmett: Yep...wait, is that a small sheep? Nope, just a bit of lint. Yes, the sheep of the house of Israel. I'm helping Jesus.

Esther: You're helping Jesus?

Emmett: Yep. In today's Bible story Jesus tells a woman that he was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Well, I figured if those sheep are lost, I could help Jesus find them.

Esther: I think that's a good idea.

Emmett: To find the lost sheep?

Esther: To help Jesus.

Emmett: Does he often need help?

Esther: Sometimes. Like in today's Bible story.

Emmett: Like in today's Bible story...(pause) maybe you could remind me how Jesus needed help in that story.

Esther: In the story, a Canaanite woman came to Jesus...

Emmett: A Canaanite woman? What's a Canaanite woman?

Esther: Well, a Winnipegger is someone who lives in Winnipeg, and a Canadian is someone who lives in Canada, so a Canaanite is someone who lives in Canaan.

Emmett: Well, when you put it that way, it certainly makes sense.

Esther: At the time of Jesus, the Canannites were a group of people.

Emmett: Did they have any sheep?

Esther: Probably, but they didn't have the sheep of Israel, because they were not part of the people of Israel...so they would not have been 'the sheep' of Israel!

Emmett: (somewhat puzzled) Say, I'm starting to think that we might not really be talking about sheep in this story!

Esther: People who wrote the Bible talked about God being like a good shepherd, so they referred to the people God loved and cared for as 'sheep.'

Emmett: So...the sheep of Israel...would be the people of Israel?

Esther: Yes...but the people of Israel were not the people of Canaan, which brings us back to our Bible story.

Emmett: About the Canaanite woman...she was from Canaan, you know.

Esther: Yes, but she came to Jesus asking him to heal her daughter. Jesus said that he couldn't do that because his task was to help only the lost sheep of Israel..."

Emmett: Not the lost sheep of Canaan!

Esther: Yes. So the woman asked him again to help her. Jesus said it wouldn't be fair to give food meant for children to the dogs. In other words, you don't give someone something that belongs to someone else.

Emmett: Does that mean he didn't help her?

Esther: No, because she reminded him that there were always leftovers, even crumbs, that could be given to the dogs. She reminded him that God's love is so big that, even when God has fed some people, there is always enough food left over to feed others.

Emmett: Hey, that sounds like the story where Jesus' disciples had just a few loaves of bread and few fish, but they fed 5,000 people and still had some leftover!!

Esther: Exactly! The woman helped Jesus remember that God could love the people of Israel and still have enough love for the people of Canaan and for everyone else.

Emmett: So, we're all a little sheepish (ha, ha).

Esther: And so, Jesus healed the daughter of the Canaanite woman.

Emmett: She was from Canaan you know!

Esther: And, like all of us, she was a child of God and loved by God. AMEN

Emmett: AMEN