

Esther and Emmett and Remembrance Day – November 8, 2020

Emmett: Hi Esther. I see that you are wearing a poppy.

Esther: Hi Emmett. I see that you are also wearing your poppy.

Emmett: Yes, because Wednesday is Remembrance Day. Did you know there is a poem about poppies? It's called "In Flanders Fields."

Esther: I know that poem. It was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae. The first verse says:

"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below."

Emmett: That's beautiful, but it also seems a little sad.

Esther: It is both beautiful and sad. It's about the red poppies that grew in fields in Europe after the First World War. The red poppies remind the poet of all the soldiers who died during the war.

Emmett: A lot of people die during every war. That is sad. On Remembrance Day we remember all of those who died, and we remember how much war affects everyone – and how people have always hoped that each war would be the last war.

Esther: I think we would all like a world without war... a new kind of world.

Emmett: I wonder what Jesus would say about that, about a new kind of world...probably he'd tell a story.

Esther: Maybe he'd tell the story of the people waiting for the groom to arrive for a wedding banquet.'

Emmett: People sure do seem to eat a lot in Jesus' stories. What happens in this story?

Esther: There are 10 bridesmaids who are waiting for the bridegroom to arrive for the banquet, but for some reason he is delayed until nightfall. Do you know what they did when it got dark?

Emmett: They turned on the lights! Wait...did they have lights back then?

Esther: No, but they did have lamps.

Emmett: Really? What kind of lamps?

Esther: The lamps were usually made of pottery and were kind of round and flat. They put oil in the lamp – often olive oil, then put a strip of linen into the lamp. The linen absorbed the oil, and then you could put a flame to the end of the linen strip and it would burn as a wick.

Emmett: So, they all lit their lamps when it got dark.

Esther: Yes, but their lamps would only burn as long as the oil lasted.

Emmett: So, when your lamp ran out of oil, you got an oil change?

Esther: Well, usually you brought some extra in a jar so that you could add oil when needed.

Emmett: I sure hope everyone in the story had extra oil.

Esther: No, they didn't. Five of them had extra oil, but five did not; and since the bridegroom was late arriving, five of them had to go and get more oil.

Emmett: I hope it wasn't far, because if their lamps were out of oil, they wouldn't be able to see in the dark!!

Esther: However far it was...guess who arrived while they were gone!

Emmett: Someone selling oil?

Esther: NO! The bridegroom arrived!

Emmett: Oh, oh. That's not good.

Esther: No, it wasn't good for them, because by the time they got back, the wedding party had started, the doors were closed and they couldn't get in.

Emmett: They probably wished they had brought more oil with them. I guess the lesson is "If your oil's well, it ends well."

Esther: I think the story reminds us that if we want a new world – a world of peace and of people caring about each other – we have to prepare for that world.

Emmett: I agree...how do we do that?

Esther: I think we have to love one another, respect one another – we're all different but all special. We have to share.

Emmett: Yeah, and make sure everyone had food, and a place to live, and clean water, and ... wow! There's a lot of things we can do to make the world better.

Esther: When I look at a poppy, it reminds me of all those who died in wars, and it reminds me to do what I can to make a better world without wars.

Emmett: A new kind of world... a Jesus kind of world!

Esther: Amen to that.

Emmett: Amen