

Esther and Emmett: 'Looking for Jesus!'

Emmett: Hello Esther. Merry...day after Christmas!

Esther: Hi Emmett. Merry day after Christmas to you as well!

Emmett: Christmas sure was fun! We opened gifts in the morning and then we had a big supper.

Esther: I had a great Christmas too!

Emmett: Today I think I'll play with some of the toys I got for Christmas. Say, do you think Jesus played with his toys the day after Christmas?

Esther: Well, they didn't actually have Christmas when Jesus was born. It was years later when people decided to choose a day to celebrate Jesus' birth.

Emmett: I guess that's just as well. As I remember his gifts probably weren't much fun to play with – didn't he get gold, and ...some other stuff with funny names?

Esther: Gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Emmett: He got a Frankenstein?

Esther: No, it was frankincense – it's a kind of spice.

Emmett: I think I'd rather get a Frankenstein!

Esther: I'm sure that the day after Jesus was born, he was enjoying the love and attention of his parents, Mary and Joseph.

Emmett: Yeah, I guess so. Jesus probably got lots of gifts at other times because he was probably always a good child.

Esther: Well, the Bible doesn't really tell us about Jesus as a child...

Emmett: Probably because he was always a good child.

Esther: But there is one story in the Bible when Jesus caused Mary and Joseph to worry.

Emmett: Really! Jesus did?! I'd like to hear that story.

Esther: Well, this story took place when Jesus was 12 years old, and Mary and Joseph and Jesus went to the city of Jerusalem for a festival called Passover.

Emmett: Jerusalem was a big city, wasn't it?

Esther: Yes, it would have been a large city at that time, with some very large buildings and a large temple.

Emmett: A family trip to the big city.

Esther: They were going for the Jewish festival of Passover, so there were lots of people who went. Mary and Joseph and Jesus probably went with other family members and people from their village.

Emmett: Sounds like a bus trip!

Esther: They didn't have buses, so they would have walked. It's partly because they went with a lot of people that caused the confusion.

Emmett: Oh good, this is the part of the story I want to hear.

Esther: When it came time for all of them to go back to their home in Nazareth, Jesus wasn't with them!

Emmett: What do you mean he wasn't with them?

Esther: I mean that they were in one place, and Jesus was in another place.

Emmett: I know what it means that he wasn't with them! Why wasn't he with them?

Esther: Because he was someplace else!

Emmett: Maybe you should tell me the story!

Esther: Okay. Mary and Joseph off with everyone else from Nazareth, and they thought that Jesus was in that group, but was with someone else, a relative or a friend...but...he wasn't!

Emmett: Because he was someplace else!

Esther: Exactly, but they didn't discover that until they had travelled for a few hours away from the city of Jerusalem.

Emmett: Where was Jesus?

Esther: They figured he had stayed in Jerusalem, so they went back to look for him. They looked for three days!

Emmett: That's a long time to be missing!

Esther: And then they found him!

Emmett: Let me guess...was he ...let's see...somewhere in Jerusalem?

Esther: He was. Jesus was in the temple?

Emmett: The temple? You mean where people went to worship?

Esther: Yes. Jesus was sitting with teachers – people who studied the stories of faith and taught the stories and taught about God.

Emmett: Well, at least Jesus was doing something good. I like to hear stories about God and learn about God.

Esther: Mary and Joseph were happy to have found Jesus. They told him they had been worried and had been looking all over for him.

Emmett: Like you said before, they were worried.

Esther: Yes they were. When they finally found Jesus, he said that he thought they would know where to find him, because he would want to be somewhere talking about God.

Emmett: Well, I guess he WAS Jesus, so I guess it makes sense that if you want to find Jesus you might start by saying, 'Where would you go in this city if you were looking for God?' because that's likely where Jesus would have gone!

Esther: That's a good way to think about this story. Yes, we might expect Jesus to be where people learn about God...or, we might expect Jesus to be where people are sharing food...

Emmett: or...or...where people are helping each other and being kind to each other.

Esther: Right. So Mary and Joseph found Jesus and they all went back together to their home in Nazareth, where we're told that Jesus was obedient to his parents.

Emmett: I probably would be too if they had been looking for me for three days!

Esther: And Jesus continued learning about God, and when he was an adult he taught others about God.

Emmett: And that's why we have all these stories about Jesus in the Bible!

Esther: So we can also go where Jesus is, where God is, and we can love other people.

Emmett: Especially people who give us a Frankenstein for Christmas!

Esther: O Emmett!

Emmett: Let me guess...we should probably say 'Amen!'

Esther: Amen!