

Esther and Emmett: 'The Dove of God'

Esther: Hi Emmett.

Emmett: Hi Esther. How was your first week of the year 2022?

Esther: It was kind of quiet. I mainly stayed in the house. It's so cold outside.

Emmett: It sure is. It's probably too cold for any doves to fly down and land on our heads.

Esther: I don't think doves usually land on people's heads...especially in Manitoba.

Emmett: I don't know about that. I mean, I've never seen a dove land on someone's head, but I think it could happen.

Esther: Why do you think it could happen?

Emmett: Because God might do it.

Esther: God might send a dove to land on someone's head?

Emmett: Well, it wouldn't be the first time.

Esther: Why do you think that, Emmett?

Emmett: Because, during the first week of the year 2022, while it's been so cold outside, I have stayed inside, and some of the time I have read stories in the Bible.

Esther: And you read a story about a dove landing on someone's head?

Emmett: Yep, I sure did. Although the Bible doesn't say that the dove landed on someone's head. It says that the dove 'descended' on the person. Can you guess who that person was?

Esther: It was Jesus!

Emmett: Say, have you been reading the Bible too?

Esther: I know that story. It's the story of Jesus being baptized by John the Baptizer.

Emmett: Yeah, that's right. John was out there in the wilderness baptizing people in the river.

Esther: And lots of people came to listen to John and to be baptized.

Emmett: That was kind of weird, wasn't it? I mean, John was baptizing adults, not babies, and John wasn't in a church, he was just out there in the wilderness and the river.

Esther: John was baptizing before Jesus had started teaching and healing, and before Jesus had gathered disciples, so there was no Christian church at that time.

Emmett: But John was baptizing?

Esther: Yes. John was a Jewish prophet and he was baptizing people by submerging them under the water and then bringing them back up out of the water.

Emmett: Sounds like he was giving them a bath!

Esther: In a way he was. That way of baptizing people was a way of saying that they were being washed in order to start a new day. It was like they were becoming babies who were being born into the world.

Emmett: That is weird!

Esther: John was telling people that God wanted people to help God make a new kind of world, a world in which everyone cares for others, a world in which everyone has food to eat, a world in which everyone knows that they are a child of God.

Emmett: That's why God has the doves!

Esther: Now THAT sounds weird.

Emmett: Well, Jesus came to get baptized, right?

Esther: Right.

Emmett: So, Jesus would have gone into the river and come out of the river, and been all wet, and been thinking about helping God make a new kind of world, right?

Esther: Right.

Emmett: So, Jesus was there in the wilderness, all wet, and he was praying...that's what the story in the Bible says.

Esther: That's what the story says...and then the story says that the heaven was opened!

Emmett: Yeah. It sounds like one of those sports stadiums with a retractable roof! Say, do you think the sky is really a retractable roof?

Esther: Oh Emmett! No, the sky is not a retractable roof. The story in the Bible says the heavens opened as a way of saying that there is no barrier between us from God. Saying the heavens opened is kind of like saying that God opened God's arms to welcome us.

Emmett: I like that. God is giving the world a hug...and a dove!

Esther: And a dove. The story says that a dove descended upon Jesus.

Emmett: Just like I said. God sent a dove to land on Jesus' head.

Esther: The story doesn't actually say that the dove landed on Jesus' head!

Emmett: Well, no, it doesn't, but I figure the dove had to land somewhere...and why did God send a dove, anyway?

Esther: Do you remember the story of Noah and the ark? When Noah wanted to find out if they could leave the ark, he send out a dove, and the dove came back carrying an olive branch.

Emmett: Oh yah, then they knew that they could leave the ark. God must really like doves.

Esther: I think that in the Bible, doves remind us that we live in God's world and that God loves us.

Emmett: That's what the dove meant for Jesus. When the dove landed on Jesus' head...

Esther: It didn't land on his head!

Emmett: Well, wherever it landed, the dove wasn't the only thing that came out of heaven. There was also a voice..I think that means that God spoke...and the voice said to Jesus, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Esther: God told Jesus that Jesus was God's child, that Jesus was loved by God, that God wanted Jesus to help God make a new kind of world.

Emmett: That's what Jesus did! He fed all those people who were hungry...and he healed people...and he told everyone else that they were also a child of God.

Esther: Yes, he was like a voice from heaven saying to everyone, "You are the Beloved of God."

Emmett: So, if God loves everyone, God might send doves to land on everyone's heads.

Esther: Well, I guess God could do that...or God could have Jesus tell how much God loves us and then we could tell everyone else how much God loves them.

Emmett: That's probably better than having doves land on people's heads. Although, it is a dove-ly story about the dove of God!

Esther: It's a lovely story that reminds us to love people the way God loves people.

Emmett: I'll say 'Amen' to that idea!

Esther: Amen!