

Lent begins for Esther and Emmett:

Esther: Hi Emmett!

Emmett: Hi Esther! Would you like to borrow something?

Esther: Would I like to borrow something? I don't think so...

Emmett: Are you sure? I could lend you a pen...or a book....or some shoelaces....I could even lend you some hangars, or some dishes.

Esther: Emmett, I don't need to borrow anything!

Emmett: Really...because I have gathered lots of stuff together than I can lend to someone. Oh, I guess I should ask you to lend me something, too!

Esther: Emmett, why are you talking about lending things?

Emmett: Because that's what we're supposed to be doing from now until Easter.

Esther: it is? Who said that?

Emmett: I heard it at church. The minister said that before Easter it is the season to lend.

Esther: Oh Emmett! This is the season of Lent!

Emmett: Right! When we get to Easter we can tell everyone what we did before Easter. We can say, "I lent a pen to one friend, and I lent my bicycle to another friend and I lent a book to my neighbour. That's what I did during the season of Lent!"

Esther: Oh Emmett!

Emmett: If you want to tell someone about the season of Lent, you can tell them what I just told you. I will lend you my ideas.

Esther: You certainly have good ideas...but there is something you may not know about the season of Lent.

Emmett: Really...then please lend me what you know about Lent!

Esther: Well...when we talk about the season of Lent, we are not talking about lending things to other people.

Emmett: It must be about lending things...otherwise, why would anyone call it Lent?

Esther: It's because the word Lent used to mean 'long' because Lent comes in March and April when the days get longer during spring.

Emmett: So I don't have to lend stuff to people or do anything special

Esther: Well, I didn't say that!

Emmett: So, I should lend stuff to people?

Esther: You should do...something...

Emmett: Well, that certainly narrows it down!

Esther: For Christians, Lent is the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter. It's a time when Christians think about what it means to be a companion of Jesus.

Emmett: Easter is great! We get to sing "Jesus Christ is Risen Today!" and say 'Hallelujah'. I like saying that: 'Hallelujah!'

Esther: Some people use Lent as a time to do something different – maybe they read from the Bible every day, or to say an extra prayer every day, or to make a donation, or some people choose during Lent to give up eating a certain kind of food – like meat or like chocolate.

Emmett: Really! Why do they do that?

Esther: Well, the church often begins Lent by reading the story of Jesus in the wilderness. He went 40 days without being able to have the food he usually ate. During that time Jesus was tempted.

Emmett: What do you mean he was tempted?

Esther: In the story, Jesus was hungry, and he wondered if he should turn stones into bread so he could eat; and he wondered if he should become the ruler of all the nations; or if he should jump off a high building so that God would send angels to catch him and then he would know that God would always keep him safe.

Emmett: What a weird story.

Esther: Why do you think it's weird?

Emmett: Well, I guess it would be nice for Jesus to do all those things – to never have to be hungry; or to be in charge of everything; or to know that nothing could ever hurt him...but...but....

Esther: But???

Emmett: But Jesus did get hurt. And sometimes he must have been hungry and sometimes I think he was disappointed when his friends didn't understand what he was saying or doing...

Esther: Yes, I don't think life was always easy for Jesus.

Emmett: I think that's why I want Jesus to be my friend.

Esther: What do you mean?

Emmett: Well, sometimes I feel hurt and hungry and disappointed, and I think Jesus understands how I feel because he felt like that. When I am having a rough day, what helps me are the friends who just care about me, and let me know they love me even though I am having a rough day.

Esther: Hmmm...maybe Lent is about lending something...

Emmett: You think so?

Esther: Yes. God loves all of us, so maybe at Lent we are reminded to 'lend' God's love to one another, to lend others our hearts, our care, our concern, our friendship.

Emmett: Yeah, and we return the loan by lending God's love back to them and to others.

Esther: Maybe when we are having a rough day we can borrow some love and some hope from our friends.

Emmett: And then we can all be friends of Jesus and we can all share God's love.

Esther: And we can all say, 'Amen!'

Emmett: Amen!