

Week of January 29-February 4

CHILD-SIZED PACKAGE

Scripture Reading: Read Matthew chapter 21

Note: *A number of years ago, I preached a sermon for one of our family celebration Sundays that was drawn from Matthew's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Today's devotional is based on this message.*

Each of the four gospels includes Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. For both Matthew and John, his entrance on a colt was seen as a fulfillment of prophecy in Zechariah 9:9 regarding the coming of the Messiah. The cries of the crowds, "Hosanna" and "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" were also seen as fulfillments of OT Scripture, in this case, Psalm 118:25-26. When Jesus arrived at the temple, he cleaned house and removed any distractions for prayer. With the temple cleaned out, there was room and a place for the blind and lame to come for healing. The wonders of God were everywhere.

Sadly, the chief priests and teachers of the law were so hardened in their opposition to Jesus that their eyes were blinded from seeing the wonders. And, when they heard the children in the temple area shouting out, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they had seen and heard enough. They wanted Jesus to shut the show down and quiet the children up. Jesus refused. He heard something in the children's cries that the teachers of the law and the chief priests had missed. Where they could only see children mimicking the shouts of the crowds, Jesus heard truth and praise. Jesus saw Scripture being fulfilled, "From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise." The children got it whereas the religious leaders did not. They knew who Jesus really was!

This certainly wasn't the first time, however, when children picked up on truth that adults missed. The childlike faith and trust often makes children more open than adults are. For example, in the Old Testament, the high priest, Eli, had grown old and complacent. God found a young boy named Samuel who was willing to listen instead (see I Samuel 3). When all Israel was frightened by a giant named Goliath, God raised up a young shepherd boy by the name of David to take him out with a slingshot and a stone (see I Samuel 17). God loves to take the so-called foolish things of the world to make a point (see I Corinthians 1:27-31).

There have a number of times in my own life where I have been stopped in my tracks by the wisdom of the Lord coming out of one of my children's mouths. If I had shut them out and thought that "I'm the adult. I know better" then I would have missed out on God's direction. If children could speak the truth and be praised by Jesus in the 1st century, it makes sense that they could still speak truth and be praised by Jesus in the 21st century. Let's be open to his message coming in a child-sized package.

Action Step: For the next seven days, be alert to the Lord's message coming to you through the mouth of your child(ren)

Prayer Focus: That you would be open to hear the Lord speak to you through unexpected sources this week.

Take-a-way: *A God-sized message often comes packaged in a child-sized mouth.*