

JUBILEE RESTORES SIGHT TO THE BLIND

Contributed by Jim Jordal
Sunday, 05 February 2012

JUBILEE RESTORES SIGHT TO THE BLIND

By Jim Jordal

For the Lord has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep, and has closed the eyes of the prophets; and has covered the heads of the seers. …Therefore the Lord said, "Because these people draw near with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is taught by commandment of men, therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the understanding of their prudent men will be hidden."

Paraphrase of Isaiah 29:10-14

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised…

Jesus preaches Jubilee, Luke 4:19, KJV

Most Americans now agree (with the exception of the ultra-right) that the Washington political situation is inept and riddled with conflict almost to the level of total dysfunction. Congress is hamstrung by political intransigence, the judicial branch seems clueless as to reality, and the executive branch postures and promises, but with little result. And the electorate, with a few exceptions, seems incapable of understanding their true plight, preferring to spend their time and money on junk food, more "things" and vapid, mindless entertainment.

The prophet Isaiah described this situation in his own land as a deep sleep that had come upon the leaders of the nation as a result of the people having removed their hearts far from attention to God and to his will. Their religion consisted of teaching the precepts of men rather than the laws of God, with the result that a marvelous thing happened as the wisdom of the wise perished and the understanding of their prudent men was hid from public view.

Shades of today! Where on the political horizon do you hear true wisdom? Where do you see real vision? What the

nation usually hears is human wisdom couched in the form of universal economic, political and social panaceas that are riddled with error and even outright lies. Even honest people are thus deluded because they believe and teach doctrines that are misleading at best and utterly destructive at worst. Several current examples of these are the present shibboleths that the market always knows best, that corporations ought to be treated as people, and that tax cuts for the wealthy truly benefit all people

When you have the world's most powerful nation willing to recklessly plunge into vastly expensive military escapades, yet unwilling to provide jobs for its people, adequate education for its young and protection for common people from corporate malfeasance, you have to wonder what has happened to wisdom and vision among our decision makers.

Isaiah makes the cause clear: We have honored God with our lips, but have banned him from our hearts and the reins of our lives. We speak of his will, but refuse to do it. We are often taught by professional clergy who view their occupation less as a divine calling and more as a respected community podium from which to preach the "feel-good" gospel. And many of our doctrines and religious practices have arisen from human minds rather than the verities of Scripture.

So it's little wonder that we have clueless citizens and blind, conflicted, indecisive leaders. It's no wonder that pundits describe us as a people who have lost their way, or as a nation poised to descend into second-rate status. Or that most of the world fears our military might but disrespects us as a nation.

Jesus in his Jubilee-oriented first sermon promises "recovering of sight to the blind." He's speaking, not only of physically blind persons, but also of those who are spiritually blind to the realities of the suffering of the world's people under the pervasive domination system posed by corporate and financial power. When our leaders begin to realize that the purpose of government is not to enrich and protect the wealthy but rather to help people by doing for them what they cannot do for themselves, then perhaps there will be a general awakening from the passive stupor—*notwithstanding the Occupy Wall Street protest—that covers our land like a blanket of despair.*