

August 6, 2023

Supply Lines: Vision Casters (Judges 4)

Find your Vision Casters and unleash God's dreams for your life!

Greetings, Notes, Connect

Hook – Exit Plan (5min)

- I love backpacking (not for everyone, I know). I love the challenge of it and the beauty of the wilderness. It also emphasizes self-reliance because you are carrying everything on your own back. So when my dad told me he wanted me to carry an emergency GPS, I thought he was paranoid! “I don’t need that, I am a tough, rugged, American man!” Boy would I learn...
- One year, Ben and I had backpacked four miserable days at high altitude (over 10,000 feet) through snow, hail, thunderstorms, and rain – and we were soaking wet. Our feet were in bad shape, and we wanted out. But we were 30 miles from our exit. BUT – there was an exit just 4 miles away. How could I contact Hannah? The GPS.
- I sent a text to Hannah, and she and the girls drove 7 hours—each way—through the mountains to get us. Talk about support! She never once complained...but she did make coasters so I would never forget about the importance of support!!
- We all need support, and the BEST leaders have a LOT of relational support in their lives.
 - o Support doesn’t take away your work but helps you dream bigger and overcome problems.
- Today talking about Vision
 - o *Find your Vision Casters and unleash God's dreams for your life!*
- First – look at Moses and the misunderstandings that hold us back from seeking support.
 - o I had misunderstood support. I bet you do too.
 - o Let’s look at Moses and Deborah and hear what God has for us today.

Prayer

Misunderstandings About Support (10min)

- *Numbers 20:1-13 (p.130)
- Context
 - o Moses is one of the world’s greatest leaders, authors, and liberators. He led the people of God out of slavery in Egypt to receive the Lord’s Torah and cross the wilderness to the doorstep of the Promised Land.
 - o He also had a lot of support in his life – Aaron, Miriam, Jethro, Zipporah, Joshua, Hur, the elders, and others.
 - o But as he got older, he did not seek out new support (a common mistake). This led to a big mistake.

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¹ In the first month of the year, the whole community of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Zin and camped at Kadesh. While they were there, Miriam died and was buried.

² There was no water for the people to drink at that place, so they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The people blamed Moses and said, “If only we had died in the Lord’s presence with our brothers! ⁴ Why have you brought the congregation of the Lord’s people into this wilderness to die, along with all our livestock? ⁵ Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible place? This land has no grain, no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and no water to drink!”

- His sister, one of his biggest Supply Lines, died. His wife had died. His brother was about to die (v.28). Moses was grieving and had almost no relational support.
- Many great leaders think – I need more support, but I am doing OK for what is on my plate.
 - o *But what about when the crisis or criticism comes?*

⁶ Moses and Aaron turned away from the people and went to the entrance of the Tabernacle, where they fell face down on the ground. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to them, ⁷ and the Lord said to Moses, ⁸ “You and Aaron must take the staff and assemble the entire community. As the people watch, SPEAK to the rock over there, and it will pour out its water. You will provide enough water from the rock to satisfy the whole community and their livestock.”

⁹ So Moses did as he was told. He took the staff from the place where it was kept before the Lord. ¹⁰ Then he and Aaron summoned the people to come and gather at the rock. “Listen, you rebels!” he shouted. “Must WE bring you water from this rock?” ¹¹ Then Moses raised his hand and STRUCK the rock twice with the staff, and water gushed out. So the entire community and their livestock drank their fill.

¹² But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!” ¹³ This place was known as the waters of Meribah (which means “arguing”) because there the people of Israel argued with the Lord, and there he demonstrated his holiness among them.

- ***Bad Business**
 - o In 1977 the executives at 20th Century Fox signed over all merchandising rights for any and all Star Wars films to George Lucas. Lucas had vision, and the executives didn’t. They sold the rights for \$20,000. Star Wars merchandise has sold over \$29 BILLION. This is the largest deal in history ever made by an individual and a studio.
 - o The executives lacked vision.
 - o They also didn’t consult anyone – toy makers, other film makers, etc.
 - o *Lack of support can lead to big mistakes.*
 - There are so many misunderstandings about support – a whole chapter in my book.
 - o Let’s cover three of them.
 - o ***I have covered these with business leaders and teams, too.***
- ***Seeking support does not mean you are weak but wise.**
 - o Wrong thinking – seeking support means I couldn’t figure it out on my own.
 - Correction – support saves time, gets you better ideas, and makes you more productive. That hour invested can save you three.
 - o I have seen leaders with less raw talent accomplish more than highly gifted people – because they sought out support.
 - Support won’t automatically show up – you must seek it out and cultivate trust.

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- A guy once told me, “I don’t have a lot of support, but if something really went wrong, I know my friends from school would be there for me.” Then crisis came. He didn’t reach out because he said, “I don’t want my first call in years to be a big problem.”
- *Support does not stop every problem – it is a shock absorber.
 - Support prevents many problems, but it will not take them all away.
 - In fact, sometimes your problems come from your support people!
 - But overall – relational support helps you solve problems faster, with less emotional toll, with much better ideas put into action.
 - Support systems work best before crisis comes.
 - “I am not a touchy-feely person.” I have heard men and women say. Until...life or work start to hit a wall. Then they want a lot of space to process.
 - Your car has a spare tire. The flat will still slow you down, but you can overcome it in much less time.
 - Too many of us are driving without a spare. You will make it, but it will take much longer.
 - **“If we do not share our vulnerabilities in settings of support, they will be exposed in settings of stress.” (p.36)**
- *Support does not remove your responsibility or guarantee results – it is a recharge and resource.
 - Imagine you needed to clean your windows on the second story. You would at least get an extension pole, and maybe a ladder. Even better would be to get someone to spot the ladder, and maybe another to help with the spray and rags.
 - You are still working – but now you are working much faster, and the work is more enjoyable.
 - AND – with support you start to realize you could get much more done.
 - *You begin to dream.*
- ***Find your Vision Casters and unleash God’s dreams for your life!**

Deborah (13min)

- *Judges 4:4-16 (p.206)
- Background
 - 1200 BC – 200 years after Exodus, 150 years after King Tut, and same time as Trojan War
 - God called her to be Judge (final decision for entire nation) and Prophet (speaking the Word of God for the people of God – see ch.5 for her poem).
 - Problem – oppressed by Sisera who had 900 iron chariots (4:3)
 - For 20 years!

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- Towns had been conquered, people were afraid to travel, and lots of oppression was happening.

⁴ Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophet who was judging Israel at that time. ⁵ She would sit under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites would go to her for judgment. ⁶ One day she sent for Barak son of Abinoam, who lived in Kedesh in the land of Naphtali. She said to him, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, commands you: Call out 10,000 warriors from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun at Mount Tabor. ⁷ And I will call out Sisera, commander of Jabin’s army, along with his chariots and warriors, to the Kishon River. There I will give you victory over him.”

- *Vision Casters spark God-sized dreams.
 - Deborah spoke a word from the Lord.
 - It was big and audacious – 10,000 warriors are no match for 900 chariots.
 - Will you follow the God-sized dream?
 - Vision Casters ask, “Why not?” and “What if?”
 - They are not “why” people but “why not” people.
 - They help you see the big things God is up to (even if you are a Vision Caster).
 - I was meeting with a church planter who met for six months – and then was shut down because of the pandemic. Met online for two years, then back in person. He was discouraged and momentum was low. I listened and we prayed, but then I asked him, “If you could start a church over, what would you do differently? How many people get that chance?” He got excited! We took the next 30 minutes talking, with him writing out a ton of his ideas.
 - You have dreams – for your life, work, finances, marriage, kids, singleness, faith, ministry.
 - Your dreams become WAY bigger in the hands of God!

⁸ Barak told her, “I will go, but only if you go with me.”

⁹ “Very well,” she replied, “I will go with you. But you will receive no honor in this venture, for the Lord’s victory over Sisera will be at the hands of a woman.” So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ At Kedesh, Barak called together the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, and 10,000 warriors went up with him. Deborah also went with him.

- *Vision Casters raise your expectations.
 - Barak was wise to ask for support – so many people don’t do this!
 - Deborah was clear on what to expect – a woman will take the honor.
 - Barak cared more about God’s victory than his honor (and he received plenty of honor).
 - Problems

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- **We all have dreams. Here's the problem...there are problems. (p.76)**
- Problems are opportunities.
- Entrepreneurs see problems as business opportunities – if you can solve the problem well, you can make money.
- **“Jesus was not focused on what people were like. He was focused on what they could become.” Ray Johnston.**
 - What can your kids become? What can your ministry become? What can your marriage become? What can God do in your singleness?
- Your current problems aren't the problem—renewed vision sees opportunity in the problems (p.77).
- Vision Casters help you see beyond the problems to the opportunity God has for your life.

¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite, a descendant of Moses' brother-in-law Hobab, had moved away from the other members of his tribe and pitched his tent by the oak of Zaananim near Kedesh.

¹² When Sisera was told that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, ¹³ he called for all 900 of his iron chariots and all of his warriors, and they marched from Harosheth-haggoyim to the Kishon River.

¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, “Get ready! This is the day the Lord will give you victory over Sisera, for the Lord is marching ahead of you.” So Barak led his 10,000 warriors down the slopes of Mount Tabor into battle. ¹⁵ When Barak attacked, the Lord threw Sisera and all his chariots and warriors into a panic. Sisera leaped down from his chariot and escaped on foot. ¹⁶ Then Barak chased the chariots and the enemy army all the way to Harosheth-haggoyim, killing all of Sisera's warriors. Not a single one was left alive.

- Rest of story – Sisera fled to the tent of Heber the Kenite, woman invited him in, he took a nap, and she drove a tent spike through his head. The oppressor was dead.
- ***Vision Casters point us to something bigger.**
 - What we can piece together is that the Lord sent a flash flood, the chariots got stuck in the mud, and God's people were set free.
 - If they had not taken to the field that day, they would not have gotten their freedom.
 - This was GOD'S victory, yet they played a part.
 - Deborah would write a poem about the Lord Himself (and the stars) coming to fight for them (5:4, 20) – this is the bigger picture!
 - **God doesn't just want to fix your problem. He wants to fix your gaze on Jesus.**
 - This is the bigger picture.
 - Think of your life, relationships, leadership, ministry – can you see part of the bigger picture of what the Holy Spirit is doing?

- Vision Casters make a big difference!

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Making It Happen (7min)

If a leader as great as Moses struggled with this – don't assume it will just happen.

- ***Get connected – Life Groups, Ministry Teams, Mentoring**
 - Talked about this last week – these are the outer circles of your relational support (mentoring is a closer circle).
 - Events – just had two great ones. Missio is next. Don't know what it is? Go anyway.
- ***Find people who share your chair – pastors, parents, single, etc.**
 - They need to be available.
 - Good ideas become great ideas when filtered through wise experience.
 - Pastors and executives are notorious for attending a conference or reading a new book and making a ton of changes – throwing their teams into high-anxiety mode. With Supply Lines, you bounce the ideas off your Vision Casters first, refine the ideas, then wisely roll out changes.
- ***Coffee and Questions (true Vision Casters on next level)**
 - Ask good questions – value people's time. Be hungry and humble.
 - If it goes well, ask to meet again.

Punch – Joan of Arc (5min)

- Joan of Arc was born in 1412 in France. Her country has been devastated by the Black Death and the Hundred Year's War. The country had been basically reduced to one city. Joan was a 13-year-old farmgirl who received a vision from God, telling her to overthrow the invaders and help Charles VII become king.
- At 17, she went to the king who was willing to send her to the front lines. The general wanted her out of battle, but eventually conceded. Joan, compelled by her vision, wanted to attack. They did – and they won. They won again and again. At 18, she stood at the side of Charles as he was crowned king.
- Joan was captured by the English, who demanded that she say her visions were not from God. She would not, so she was burned at the stake at 19 years old. Yet her vision lived on, and 22 years later, the English were drive out of France. Joan of Arc day is celebrated every year in France.
- *Vision matters!*
- ***Find your Vision Casters and unleash God's dreams for your life!**
- We are not all in positions of leadership, but we are all leaders – parents, waitress, influence people around us.
 - Leaders who struggle always lack relational support.
 - The best leaders get a lot of support – it unlocks big dreams!
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