

## Without a Vision People Perish

*“Without a prophetic vision, the people throw off all restraint; but he who keeps Torah is happy.” (CJB)*

*“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth (shomer) the Torah, happy is he.” (Prov. 29:18)*

I/we need a vision (a revelation from *Adonai*) to know the when, where and what to do great exploits for Him. Quite often circumstances are against us, thus we need a vision to keep us going, regardless of circumstances. If we can obtain a fresh vision, we'll be able to accomplish the work He has willed for us. A refreshed vision means we will be able to serve Him in a happier and more successful way.

### **1. The first step is to get a clear vision from the Lord**

I want to highlight and underscore the words “from the Lord.” I am sure that you have heard the wise saying that a vision is “caught not taught.” I only partially agree with this adage because I know that if I am to impart a vision to my people, it has to be taught, and taught, and taught, and taught again. Yet at some point there has to be a “catching” of the vision. It is then that the proverb becomes true when that vision is finally caught and not just taught. This is when something extraordinary happens in our heart at a very specific point in time.

When I say “*a clear vision from the Lord*” I want to make a distinction between a “good” idea and a “God idea.” Messianic Judaism is not just a “good idea” it is a “God idea.” Do you agree with me? There is not one single individual that came up with this revelation we call Messianic Judaism. To be sure, there are pioneers in this movement—a movement that is only about 40 years old. However, there have been messianic fathers and godly men on duty since the first century and they have paved the way for us. Nevertheless, men have heard from G-d in our generation and received a “God idea,” not just a “good idea.” We all need to ask ourselves: “Is Kol Simcha (our congregation) a good idea or a God idea?” Is this congregation something that God has truly called you (and me) to? “Has God called you (me) to this movement and to this congregation?” Do you think Kol Simcha a good idea or a God idea? The first principle to turn our vision into reality is to do a reality check. Is being here something God has spoken to you about?

Abraham found himself in many difficult situations but he knew that in Gen. 12 God called him “*♪ to a land that I will show you ♪*” We must then necessarily ask “*Is being here your idea? Have you called yourself to do this place? Has God called you into this ministry and has God given you a Messianic vision?*” This is the very first place to start because you(I) will never turn a vision into a reality if you don't have the calling and the anointing of God to do so. We can anoint ourselves but unless *God “builds the house they labor in vain who build...”* We need to ask ourselves with respect to any vision (any directive, purpose, goal or calling from G-d to accomplish a specific thing for Him) is this something God has breathed into me? Has He truly spoken to my spirit about it or not? Because if the answer is no, then you can be sure that in your own strength you cannot turn any vision into reality.

I believe the starting point for all of us here is Kol Simcha is that God has called us to a Messianic vision. This is what separates us from the rest of the Body of Messiah. In one sense our calling is partially defined for us and that makes things a bit easier since we have a head start. We understand that we are called first and foremost to our own people. We should strive to bring the Jewish Messiah to our people in a way that they can understand. We want to say to them that it is Jewish to believe in the Jewish Messiah.

### **2. Develop a plan.**

According to experts, this is where most people miss it. If we get a God-breathed vision, we need a God-breathed plan in order to accomplish and fulfill the vision. Again in Genesis 12 *Adonai* said: “*(Lechi Lach) Go to the land that I will show you.*” This is very interesting because the verb is in the future tense. ‘*Avram you need to get up, pack up and leave your father's house*’ and indeed this is *Avram's* first step. God gave it to him! So what

did he do? *Avram* loaded the moving van and when the driver asked ‘*where are we going*’ *Avram* responded ‘*I don’t know, just drive.*’ Can you imagine! This means that *Avram* every day or at least every other day would have to get up early in the morning and ask the Lord, ‘*Now where do you want me to go today?*’ Don’t ask like Microsoft windows: ‘*Where do you want to go today?*’ Ask ‘*Where do you (Lord) want me to go today?*’

When I read this passage it makes me think of the verse: “*the steps of a righteous man are ordered by the L-rd.*” Some people get a vision from the Lord and they say “*Lord I want to know Tav*” when the question ought to be “*L-rd I want to know Beit.*” We are not going to get to *Tav* unless we go in order: “*Beit, Gimmel, Dalet, etc.*” Why? Because if He shows us *Gimmel* instead of *Beit* we are not ever going to go to *Beit*, let alone *Tav*!

So where do you want me to go today Lord? The answers from the Lord to this daily question become the plan. In Prov 29:18 Scripture tell us: “*Without a prophetic vision, the people throw off all restraint; but he who keeps Torah is happy.*” What is the connection here between perish (casting off restraint) and happy? The word vision, Vision is the prophetic revelation, the daily manna, given by God, which will keep the congregation and the community vibrant and healthy as opposed to decaying and dying. This is daily time with Lord. Here is where we soar. And this is what we are talking about when we say, “*developing a plan.*” It is the daily prophetic revelation we receive from the Lord as we spend time with Him, and without it there is a “perishing” or “casting off restraint” of the vision. A vision requires prophetic revelation, daily prayer and more often than not it requires that we change. We cannot become rigid. We must be fluid (a day by day willingness to turn “*withersoever He goeth*”) in a step-by-step God-inspired and directed plan. It seems so simple. It is!

### **3. Communicate the Vision.**

In Habakkuk chapter 2 Scripture tells us: “*Then ADONAI answered me; he said, "Write down the vision clearly on tablets, so that even a runner can read it. For the vision is meant for its appointed time; it speaks of the end, and it does not lie. It may take a while, but wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay.*” The principle is this: make the vision clear by communication. Make it plain and crystal clear inside our being. Then make it: ‘Simple, clear, and precise, so we (no they) can run with it.’ We cannot do it ourselves! Say it with me, “*I cannot do it (by)myself.*” Again, “*I cannot do it (by)myself.*” First of all we need the Lord, but we also need people. The way a vision is imparted is “*it is caught via regular teaching.*” We are to keep the vision before the people. It has to be taught but it has to be clear and simple. Here is the principle: “*faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*” The principle is that in order to activate faith (*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*) it has to come first into the heart! This is because with the “*heart we believe.*” The verse contains two “hears,” this hear (as I point to my right ear) and this “hear” (pointing to my left ear). We need to hear (*sh’ma*) the Spirit with our natural ear as we hear it over and over and over again. Rabbi, why do you repeat it so much? We understand it! No you don’t. You and I will never understand it until we do it! (This is what *shema* means (to prove that you heard by doing it), and I believe the Scriptural use of ‘hearing’ is the root word *shema*.)

In 2 Timothy 2 we read: “*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*” We repeat and repeat and repeat our vision for this congregation and for this community so that you will be able to teach it to others. We need to teach “the vision of the house.” This vision is to be a dividing line: “*this is our vision and you need to decide if God has called you to this because a house divided against itself will not stand.*” You are either part of the vision of this house or you are not. Those that catch the vision are those that will run with it. This is simple stuff that you already know, but it is good to hear it again.

### **4. Implementation of the Vision.**

A little math helps here: *vision minus plan minus action equals dream.* However, *vision plus plan plus action equals fulfillment.* Three faces to the vision: (1) the dream that God gave me, (2) a plan that has to be fluid, step-by-step, and (3) communication which includes action. We need to learn to delegate. *Moshe* delegated.

*Yeshua* delegated. We are to find anointed and available people. If we don't have them, let us pray them in. What is like building a congregation? It is like building the tabernacle. God said to Moses here is the plan etc. But then He also said "*Here is Shim'on, I have anointed him for this work...*" Do you get it! We are to wait for God's anointed people for each job in the congregation. God will send them! He has his anointed ones ready somewhere. If they are not here, then let us pray them in. We do not want to just grab anybody.

### **5. Apply Trust (Faith) Principles.**

In implementing a vision we must exercise the faith principle: take a step so that God will show us the next step. Faith requires corresponding action (cf. *Faith w/o works is dead or with the mouth we believe but with mouth confession is made unto salvation.*) This is a Biblical principle, faith and trust that move us to action.

Since God always pays for what He ordains, then it is good to realize that finances follow and never precede the vision. This does not mean going into debt or using credit. But it does mean that God must first ordain in order for the finances for that thing to appear. This is where we confess, "*My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory, here a little there a little.*" Finances follow vision. Scripture tell us in Romans 4:17: "*This accords with the Tanakh, where it says, 'I have appointed you to be a father to many nations.' Avraham is our father in God's sight because he trusted God as the one who gives life to the dead and calls nonexistent things into existence.*"

I don't know where you are but let me share with you that God is doing a new thing! Be encouraged today, you and I can do it. Not by your power and by your might but by His Spirit. It is accomplished by His empowering and by His anointing. Stand with me and pray for someone next to you. Ask them: "*What would you have me pray for you?*" Then pray for them and my God shall answer!