

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

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SPEAKERS

Daniel Lapin, Vusi Thembekwayo

TRANSCRIPT

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Daniel Lapin 00:00

Greetings, happy warriors. And the the shows a little bit different today. And let me tell you why that is. But first of all, as always, I have to ask you to please make sure you are subscribed. So to whatever platform you listen on, please go ahead and subscribe because that is something that does not harm you at all and helps us at the center. And we really are doing well, by the way, let me thank the many of you who have been acceding to my requests in earlier shows. Because guess what I just saw recently that, thanks to those of you listening on YouTube, and subscribing, we went past the 53,000 mark, which is terrific, thank you very much. Indeed, I am looking onwards and upwards to hitting 55,000 and then 60,000. So to any rate, if you're listening on, on YouTube, go ahead and subscribe. And if you're listened on any other platform, they will have an opportunity to subscribe, please go ahead and do exactly that. And Enrico, as you know, I am your rabbi dedicated to making you aware of how the world really works. And that's the focus of everything we do on the show, with an occasional exception. And I'm not sure this is even an exception really. And that is that I became aware of a South African born and based entrepreneur, who has built an international business, he is followed and listened to on many, many continents. And he he speaks very effective very effectively. And as you know, I retain a degree of emotional nostalgia for Africa, my birth continent. And I actually I mentioned the feelings that I experienced when I landed at Accra airport in Ghana a little while ago, first time back on African soil in many, many years. So the entrepreneurs name is Vusi timber choir. And Vusi timber coil is a very, very effective speaker, and an effective spokesman for business as you and I understand it. So I reached out to him for a conversation and we did have a conversation. And we barely started before I realized that I hadn't intended to something to share, I just thought through something I was going to enjoy. And we just about got started. And then all of a sudden I said to myself, This doesn't make sense, this should be recorded. And so we arranged to record it. And then we continue talking. And I'm very

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

pleased I did because I think that you will enjoy hearing our discussion or conversation. And we're going to do some more of this and perhaps Perhaps more focused specific interviews, and I'll share those with you as well. But what Unfortunately, one of the things I've been hearing about this about the fact that Eskom electricity supply commission is a company that was started in South Africa, early 20th century, I don't remember I'm gonna say the 50s, maybe the 60s. And it became the largest electricity generating utility in Africa. And it was an it was really a model people came from all over the world to see the operations of this enormous and reliable power generation facility that owned and operated many different generation plants, and tie it all together in the national grid on the southern tip of the African continent. Well, times have changed and Eskom is now a disaster, a cesspool of corruption and ineffectiveness and inefficiency. And the best indication of a third world country is power outages that tells you you're in a country that's headed in the wrong direction. So that applies, unfortunately, it will seem to South Africa now. And it also applies to California, by the way. Here we are in the middle of another summer, and without doubt that we're going to be brownouts and blackouts in California as well, as well as people being told not to charge their electric cars. So it goes. We, in addition to asking you to subscribe, I'm going to ask you to also visit the website at Rabbi Daniel lapin.com. Because we have a special right now on a wonderful book called buried treasure. And it's a book that exposes the marvels and the magic of the Lord's language into the eyes and hearts of people who don't know Hebrew. And here it is. It's a book that focuses in on about 30 examples of words that unpack their meaning intrinsically, right. In other words, in English, the word carpet tells you absolutely nothing unless you've been taught that a carpet isn't covering us on the floor, you wouldn't know what a carpet is. And if, if you happen to know the word car as a four wheeled conveyance powered by an engine, and you haven't heard the word pet, a domesticated animal, the fact that you know the word of caution, you know, the word pet wouldn't tell you anything about the word kaput. But none of these things are true in Hebrew. And Hebrew words reveal their meaning, sometimes by the numerical value of the letters, sometimes by means of forwards, backwards reversals, and many other interesting ways that I think help get get you a picture of just why it is that the fundamental book written in that language, the Hebrew Scriptures are, what they are, and why they've played the role they have in the development of civilization among humanity. So all of that is ready for you special deal, you can't lose. It's an absolutely wonderful opportunity to grab this and you'll see it at Rabbi Daniel lapin.com. Okay, look, let's, let's just dive in to the Rusi chamber choir discussion. And I'm not going to come back to you at the end, it's just going to end and that's it. But I will take this opportunity of wishing you a wonderful week of growth and progress, as you move onwards and upwards with your families and your faith, your finances, and your friendships and your fitness. Let's move ahead. Okay, there we go.

Vusi Thembekwayo 07:15

So, so what I wanted to know was not my superpower, I think is my ability to be really curious and ask questions. And just off the back of the, the kind of the way, you've approached books, I just want to know, of the principles you've discovered around what it is that the Jewish people are taught in the ancient text about their relationship with the world? And obviously, how it manifests for us, is there good with money, but it really is there good with a particular relationship with the world, what will be like two principles that in your mind, just stick out?

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Daniel Lapin 07:51

I'm sure. So, uh, one of them is the, the integrated nature of everything, meaning that specialists fulfill a very valuable function. In, in, in running your business, you use them in running my business, I use them, I consult when when an issue comes up, I consult with our legal people. And, and their best advice would be for me to run no risk at all. And then I consult with the financial folks. And they're saying, But wait, we need to generate a profit and, and this deal is too good to pass up. And, and then I speak to the to our public relations experts, and they say their little thing. And at the end of the day, I am the CEO. And I have to make the decision. But I would never place a specialist in the CEO chair in any business over which I have influence. And so in terms of wisdom, in terms of understanding how the world really works, it's understanding the interaction of all these things. And so when it comes to money principles, it's very hard to isolate them entirely from marriage and family principles. Now, I'll give you an example of why that is. One, one explanation is, pardon me that one of the things that we obviously all need in business is an ability to to see into the future. That doesn't mean we can become profits. And it doesn't mean we'll always be right. But it means that we have an ear out for the sound of the soft footsteps of approaching events. and an audit,

Vusi Thembekwayo 10:03

I'm sorry. That's good. That's really good.

Daniel Lapin 10:07

And in order to heighten our sensitivity to that, we we have to avoid being orphans of time. An orphan of time is what I just define, as somebody who lives entirely in the present, has no understanding of the past, and no connection with the future. And it's very easy to live in the present. Because it's tangible. And I can touch it and eat it and drink it. It's, it's right there. But I also need to be able to watch the patterns of the past, because very often, it is the structure of the past that provides me with the most reliable format to visualize the future. You know, we know that with people, a person's track record is far more important to me than what his public relations people tell me. I gotta look backwards and forwards. One of the things that really helps being forward is being around children. Now, no one can say What's that got to do with anything? And and the answer is that if you are somebody, could you please help me move this heavy bookcase? And the person says, Well, I don't know. You know, I haven't been to the gym the last three weeks. And I say, Listen, I didn't ask for your schedule. I'm not interested in your history. I just want you to help me push the bookcase. He says you don't understand. If I'd been at the gym regularly, I would be supple and stronger. My muscles would be conditioned. He says I'm not sure the things I did, will have an impact on how effectively I perform now. And and similarly, there is a certain spiritual sensitivity to the future that comes from being around little children. It's one of the reasons that that being in a country or being in a neighborhood America, America has retirement neighborhoods. I don't know if you've ever seen such a thing, Mr. Thembekwayo. It's miserable. It's truly miserable. You go there, and it's only elderly people. Now, I've got nothing against eyes.

Vusi Thembekwayo 12:33

Yes. And I've got nothing against fresh ideas from and fresh inspiration and a new place.

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Daniel Lapin 12:40

These retirement communities that don't allow young people and don't allow children they reek of death.

Vusi Thembekwayo 12:50

Sure.

Daniel Lapin 12:52

But if you go to one of the reasons I like going to Israel is it's about outside outside of Africa, which is exactly the same. Israel is filled with kids. It regularly happens I stand at a traffic light waiting to cross the street. And, and some little five year old urgent sticks her hand in my hand, because her mother told her Don't cross the street without an adult never seen this kid before. She holds my entirely while we cross the street, and then she leaves going on runs off euro is there's little kids all over the place. And when I spoke in in Ghana, a little while ago, I had the same sense that a young people is vitality and, and that excitement. So yes. And if I would say to and I have said this even to young, technical and financial entrepreneurs, you know, single guys, single women, I said, Listen, you want my best advice on this topic, offered to babysit some little kids on a weekly basis? Because - what do you say?

Vusi Thembekwayo 14:05

Why?

Daniel Lapin 14:06

Because, because it will, it's like going to the gym. it infuses a freshness and vitality and a sense of the future that you can't get any other way. So, so that you know that's one aspect, one aspect of it another aspect of it is that you can't ever succeed no decent person can ever succeed at any activity that deep in his heart he considers to be morally reprehensible. And so if if you see making money as synonymous with taking money, and that your actions of making money have to correspond to other people losing money if that's your vision of economics, then you are condemning yourself to perpetual financial stagnation. Because if you're a decent person, you can't do it. And that's one of the reasons I've discovered that many people are uncomfortable naming their fee or their price. Because they feel bad, they feel that taking money. So

Vusi Thembekwayo 15:16

those are adding value to the world. They think they taking something from it.

Daniel Lapin 15:20

Absolutely they do. Yes. Yeah. So

Vusi Thembekwayo 15:24

that that sorry, let me interrupt you, because I, I don't have any data to back this up. But I kind of intuitively want to say that there might even be a link between that kind of mindset and poverty in

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

certain population groups. And I would even extend that to say poverty in certain nations. Because if you, if you criminalize the accumulation of wealth, it's typically because that's your understanding of wealth is that wealth is extracted, and wealth is manipulative by nature. And so if that is the case, then there's absolutely no way you're going to allow others to accumulate wealth in your society. So if you're not allowed to accumulate wealth, and wealth accumulation is criminalized, then we create the society where we're all equally miserable. Yeah. And we're wondering why there are people on the other end of the fence who are all equally happy, and all equally financially successful. And so what we begin to do is we create, you know, the ghost of these macro factors around a certain population grouping discriminatory, or a certain geography having advantage, or that we create these, you know, academically sound arguments, but actually, what it gets down to is, quite simply that our belief system is wrong, we believe.

Daniel Lapin 16:44

That is exactly right. And the evidence that you asked for evidence. Evidence, is that one of the phrases that sickens me I mean, I, I truly have a visceral reaction against it. You keep hearing it, whenever a philanthropist makes a gift, some commentator on television says, Isn't it wonderful to see him giving back to society?

Vusi Thembekwayo 17:07

As if he took away from?

Daniel Lapin 17:09

You got it exactly. While he was making the money?

Vusi Thembekwayo 17:14

Sorry. I've never thought of that.

Daniel Lapin 17:17

But it's right, isn't it, if he's now giving back to society while he was making the money in the first place he was taking from society, obviously.

Vusi Thembekwayo 17:27

So what you're telling me is that one of the beliefs in the community is that making money and adding value to society are not mutually exclusive. That in fact, a big part of how you add value to society is measured in your ability to make a return from the value add to society.

Daniel Lapin 17:48

I would agree with that. 100%, I think you expressed it better than I do. That's exactly right. Very, very powerful. So in other words, is it important to give charity, and a lot of people will say, Well, we expected because those who have great wealth was given much know, when you made the money in the first place you were already giving, because nobody forced me at the point of a gun to buy your goods or to avail myself of your services. And therefore I did those things, I bought your goods,

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

because I wanted to they improve my life. So you were already improving everybody's lives before you give a penny away to charity.

Vusi Thembekwayo 18:34

That's so good.

Daniel Lapin 18:35

So that's really important. So

Vusi Thembekwayo 18:39

I'm curious. Just lastly, on this, I'm curious about is there is there is there a value, whether perceived or real, in a community, seeking to make wealth and create wealth as a community rather than the individual? That's the first question. And the second question is, is that a more sustainable way to create value in the long term? Or do you not have a view on that?

Daniel Lapin 19:11

And so the, the idea is, I think that collective activity works best by contract. So in other words, if if you and I decide to go into business, we might agree that our proposed venture will be good, shall we? Let's say we wanted to do something in Africa, a big good for Africa, we might decide it's even good for the world. But in the final analysis, the real question, and this is not a selfish thing at all, this is a sustainable thing. The real question is, will this be profitable to both of us. And if so, let's establish a contractual relationship that defines each of our responsibilities. And, and defines the division of the of the company and of the benefits. And we have to do that because the only way to really make sure that we are helping other human beings is if they are willing to pay for it. And one of the dangers of politics is that politicians very often arrive at the arrogant presumption that they know better than individuals and better than the people, they represent what is good for those people instead of letting those people decide for themselves. And money is just this wonderful tool that allows each person to make his own voting for whatever he wants.

Vusi Thembekwayo 20:54

Because every day when you're in the market, the customer has to vote for you by buying your product. Yeah,

Daniel Lapin 20:58

that's exactly right. So the the, the only other aspect of the question you raised is that our success is very much a function of the number of people who know us who like us, and who trust us. And so obviously, you don't have I have I lost you at all - [broadcast interrupted briefly]

Vusi Thembekwayo 21:21

waiting for our alternative energy to kick in.

Daniel Lapin 21:25

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Oh, my, where about are you speaking from?

Vusi Thembekwayo 21:29

In South Africa at the moment?

Daniel Lapin 21:31

Yeah. Yeah, I'm so sorry to hear about that. I've been hearing about increasing numbers of power failures.

Vusi Thembekwayo 21:42

A true a true testimony, what you were talking about earlier, you know, the, one of those one of those things about if you if you think good, leadership is overrated, try bad leadership. And then very quickly, you'll realize the true cost of of leadership, right. So South Africa, sadly finds itself in in in the millennia of leaders whose performance is not tethered to the reality of their people. And so, and, and frankly, in part, people who have not yet developed a robust relationship of accountability with their leaders, and so, in this part of the world, politicians, for whatever reason, are cherished. And, and, and it's changing a bit now. It's changing a bit now, but it's not great. Anyway, that's what happened.

Daniel Lapin 22:38

I'm sorry to hear it. Very. I should probably, here we are in the middle of a fascinating conversation, briefly interrupted by a power outage, but I should at least introduce you to the audience that I'm hoping will be able to share this with. And I'm talking to a global business leader and well known international speaker, Mr. Vusi, tembec Wyo, who is in South Africa right now as we speak. And I'm, of course in the United States, but I've been fascinated by your dedication to bring in sound money principles and increasing the financial capabilities of people worldwide. But, but notably, in in what we think of today as the Global South, that would be the true description of your passion, right.

Vusi Thembekwayo 23:39

Yeah, I mean, I think you've you've absolutely nailed it, I'm, I'm, I am intrigued by imbalance would probably be the best way to put it. So anything where there is no, where there is no balance, it just naturally fascinates me. And I kind of step into the breach and go right into the into the crucible of what it is that creates that imbalance. Because I think once we understand certain imbalances at at the, at the, at the results, and were able to change behaviors on the input side. And, and we live in a world where people don't like to understand imbalances they like to, to moan to complain to argue, but not to try and understand the imbalances. So, you know, my quest to try and understand how value is created, how wealth is created, and how certain population groups just seem to land on their feet has been driven by this quite simple quest to really understand what what drives what drives imbalances

Daniel Lapin 24:52

and how would you encapsulate the the the most critical and noteworthy imbalances, shall we say, in in Africa today,

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Vusi Thembekwayo 25:07

Wealth is probably the most important one. And it's the most important one, because for this particular generation of Africans is the one that's the most material. young Africans are. And I, I dare I have and presume upon myself, the right to speak on their behalf, but my reading of it is that the average young African, is quite concerned with them, the material state of their world and their material state in the world, right. And then they don't accept that they, that they belong to some, you know, third world construct about which they can't, within which they can thrive. So so that would be the first. The second is that, you know, yeah, Africans have proven themselves very capable, we, we go to the top universities in the world, we study all of the most advanced subjects, and and we are able to hold our own with our counterparts from the rest of the world. So we're pretty good, pretty clear that we're capable. And I think the question that now beckons is if we are capable, then how does that capability translate into our ability to compete in the world? So, so yeah, so that's been my it's been my it's been my fascination, my subject of study. And it's, and it's and it's, it's led me down this interesting path of trying to understand the cultures and population groups in the world that we look at and revere. What what is it that they have in common look, one person observed something, it's a single person's observation. Two people observe it, then maybe they're, you know, they're in collusion. But when something becomes an unspoken truism, then there's something that that needs to be studied. And I'm just the guy was going, I need to understand why this is. And and so yeah, that's, that's why.

Daniel Lapin 27:07

You know, when apropos your point that Africans are, are demonstrating capability. Africans who emigrate or spend time in the United States dramatically outperform the native population, both black and white. That's, it's a, it's a sociological observation that is inescapable and very disturbing to many people. But yes, it's a reality.

Vusi Thembekwayo 27:47

There's something there, right. And I think that if you think about the rise of migrant nations, these are nations whose economies are built off the back of migrant talent, right? And there, many of those around the world nations who, if you think today about how many nations have got these specialists, work visas, and these golden, it's because they've recognized and understood and I think that the, the underlying answer to your question is that if if, if, if I grew up in a desert country, and I arrive in a country that is flush with water, right, my relationship with water is very different to the people who grew up in that country. That's right. And true to if I grew up in a country where, you know, there are challenges around corruption, and state infrastructure and state resources are not evenly distributed or efficiently managed. Opportunities are either monopolized or corrupted. And all of a sudden arrive in an environment where if, even if that is the case, it's nowhere near as pronounced as the place I come from. And there is better access to opportunities, state resources, or more efficiently and more optimized, then I'm going to thrive because I've survived in a hostile environment. I'm definitely going to kick ass in this new environment. And I think that's a big part of the reason why a big part of the reason why you see that kind of migrant outlier result in terms of how different population groups are able to contribute when they move to different countries.

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Daniel Lapin 29:25

And yet there must be profound cultural differences. Look, I'm I have an emotional connection with Africa. I sometimes joke with people here in the United States by saying I may be one of the most genuine african americans you're likely to meet today.

Vusi Thembekwayo 29:50

Oh, dear. That's

Daniel Lapin 29:55

and yeah, so yes, I I'm American, but I'm I will say African. And I think that I think that there is there are aspects of a very healthy culture Ultra in Africa. Sure. And I contrast that, you know, we were talking about immigrants from all parts of Africa, to the United States who, who typically just do really, really well. But at the same time, France has just come out of a period of intense rioting and civic unrest. A billion dollars worth of damage on the streets of France. Several 1000 People in police detention. And, and this is making France question, the wisdom of importing millions of immigrants, who were mostly North African origin and Muslim have of religion. In general, I think it's fair to say that when you look at France, Germany, Sweden, Norway, and Italy, this particular group has not been that effective at integrating have not been particularly effective in, in enjoying the water in being able to seize the economic opportunities that present themselves. So I think you've got to start off with the right culture, I'm not sure that everybody is equivalent in the same in this respect.

Vusi Thembekwayo 31:59

Yeah, and I think that I mean, Far be it for me to comment on matters of immigration, it's by No, by no means my, my area of expertise. But if I were to offer a layman's thought and perspective on this, I think that one of the challenges many parts of the world face is when they don't make the terms of immigration clear. Right. So, you know, I, I, I, I am based both in South Africa and in the Middle East. And I remember when I, you know, you know, really kind of embedded myself in, in, in the Middle East, in the, in the Emirates, they were very clear about who they are. And they were very clear about who they are not. And they were very clear about the terms of living, existing and contributing in this society, are very arid. And you don't hear the rest of the world going, well, you know, they racist because they're not a you don't hear the rest of the world say, Well, you know, they are discriminatory, because they're not what they are, is abundantly clear on the values that they hold dear as a society, the structure of a society that works for them. And, and the various contributions the moving parts of that society are allowed to make. So what they're saying is, you can come here, but you don't believe where you're leaving, get to come here, because you've seen what we've done, and then want to change it. That's right. You like where you've come from, stay where you've come from. Right? But if you like what we built here, then you honor what it is that we built here. In fact, a good friend of mine who's high up and in the offices of, of the government, I'll never forget, he said to me, when I was getting my, my, my residency card, he said to me, this residency card has a couple of terms with it, one of them is that you stay out of our politics. So and you know, they are you know, they're a monarch, right. And so what he was saying was, Don't come here with those crazy ideas of, we don't do that stuff here. You keep that way. If that works, stay there. But if you want to get out here, you can work here you can contribute

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

here, you can create wealth here, and you can enjoy our society, but you enjoy our society. You don't get to change our society to reflect the society you come from. Sorry, let me just finish with this. And I do think that the pendulum of tolerance can swing too far. I know that's not a popular message in today's world of Kumbaya and we're we're all in this together. Yeah, yeah. Tolerance is can swing too far. We can be so tolerant of everything that we stand for nothing. And, and if you don't make terms abundantly clear, then people are going to push against, against The the way of life as you have it, because you've not made clear that certain things are immutable, that they're immovable, and that those are embedded values of your of your culture.

Daniel Lapin 35:14

Sadly, you are very accurately describing circumstances in the United States today. But what you were talking about in the, in the, in the Middle East and in the Gulf states in which you operate, it's back to contracts, isn't it? Yes, here's the deal. Here's what you may do. And here's what you may not do. And if you follow our rules, here are the benefits you can expect. And if you don't, we are letting you know that that will not be an option.

Vusi Thembekwayo 35:51

I mean, I think that the US and you know, I'm, I'm a, I'm a distant, YouTube student. So let me disqualify myself. Immediately before I make the statement. I'm a distant YouTube students of US politics. But I think one of the Fascinations is one of the founding doctrines of the United States has given me liberty or give me death. Right. And what we are learning today, or perhaps what the US is learning is, it can't be liberty at all costs, that there is a price too far to pay for this idea of Lady Liberty. And what the US is, I suppose being forced to ask itself, and I was what is the cost that we're willing to pay? When we say, you know, we are the land of the free, you know, you can't be free of you. If you have freedom of choice, you can't be free of consequence. And I mean, I hasten to, you know, I hesitate to share this, but I do think that the, the US is experimenting with things that parts of the world have experimented with and found not to work, right. And she's testing it. And it's a very, very dangerous game. I think that it's a counterintuitive message in today's world. It's not a popular message in today's world, but a leaders role is not to be popular to be effective. And a society's role is to preserve itself. For the, for the safety of its children. That's the role of society. And society should replicate a set of values that ensures that its offspring have the best opportunity at life. Yeah, that's the role of society. And, and I hasten to say that the US is toying with both of those. And it's a very dangerous game. But again, you know, I'm a, I'm a distant YouTube student of watching what's happening? Well, a distant

Daniel Lapin 37:43

YouTube student is also allowed to be 100%. Correct? In my view? And yeah, if I can add just one thing to what you're saying, back to something we discussed earlier, being an orphan in time, when you cut people off from their societies past, destroy statues and monuments of the past. One of the reasons this is such an effective tool of tyrannical regimes, is that when you isolate people from their past, they turn to you to shape their future.

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Vusi Thembekwayo 38:19

Right, right. Which is why dictators don't want their citizens believing in God because they want to be God.

Daniel Lapin 38:26

No, that's exactly right. And they also have to harm family. Because people, people who have the strength of family have less dependency on centralized government, away from these depressing topics.

Vusi Thembekwayo 38:44

to you on this very, very quickly, that yeah, in addition to that, I think you're 100% on the money. And I think that I think one of the one of the, one of the lessons of our modern day is that the old things are true. And it's a it's such a silly lesson to learn, but the old things are true, the things your grandfather taught you were true. The values your grandparents raised you with what true, right? They are, what sustained Homo sapiens, whether you believe in the theory of evolution or not, they are what has sustained us over over the extinction of many other species. We're still here. It's because they were values that have been passed down, generation to generation, civilization, civilization, culture to culture, nation, state to nation state that have held true across time. And what we are doing again, today is where we're pulling at the at the elastic of these old things. And sadly, you know, sometimes it's using pseudo science to say things are what they are not. And, and the most insidious thing I'll say to you right away that opinions this, it's that for whatever reason, we vices become virtue. It's You know, those who are so invites hide behind the virtue of victimization, and then say, well, we're the victims here. No, no, you don't get to start a fight and then call yourself a victim. Yes, that's right. Yeah, that's like the way that that works. Right, it that's gaslighting. So yeah. And even in the marketplace, I'm finding more and more that it really is up to those of us who hold a view, who to be clear about what that view is, and what the what what it is that we believe should be shaping the world, and how the world should be shaped around around the future, in particular for the future of our children. So it's a very interesting time to be alive. No doubt.

Daniel Lapin 40:44

It's a wonderful time to be alive, and also a wonderful time to be in a position as you are of significant influence. And in that context, let's let's try a thought experiment. If it if it doesn't get any traction between us, we'll we'll we'll drop it. But the thought experiment 20 families come to you. And they say we each have a teenage child, shall we say 13 years old. We would like to leave them under your tutelage for the next 10 years, with the proviso that when they're 23, in 10 years time, they are already on the road to successful living. Right. What do you do? You're in charge now.

Vusi Thembekwayo 41:56

So so let me see if I frame the question. So I'm given carte blanche over raising children. And the idea is that almost raise them for the single outcome of what of

Daniel Lapin 42:10

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

successful happy living as adults when they hit 23. And their parents will agree to do any aspect of this that, that you stipulate at the age of 23, they have to be in a position to live happy, fulfilling successful lives.

Vusi Thembekwayo 42:31

The first thing I would do is I would make it abundantly clear that the foundational element of any meaningful life is serving a purpose. And that the only true way to connect to the purpose you serve is to connect to your true God. That's it. So so none of this atheist nonsense. And I feel very strongly about this is a somebody I know who passed away recently, and one shouldn't speak ill of the dead, but this particular person was an atheist and had confessed themselves to be so they enjoyed a public platform, which to me was problematic, because that you then you then begin to share that with the rest of the world. Right. In any event, they passed away quite suddenly. And at the memorial service, somebody was talking about how they have a send it to her and I said no, they're gonna send it anywhere. I couldn't send it to myself, and it's safe for them to send anyway, you kind of sent to something you don't really you don't get to opt in and out. This is not a sort of casino. It's not a carnival, you know, it's not an arcade, you know, there's no three lives and then you die from the game of Pac Man. Right. So the first thing I would do is I would make sure that there is a foundational understanding of God. foundational understanding of God. And don't

Daniel Lapin 43:48

you? I think that much of of your audience would be shocked that that is your first prescription. You've got caught munchie there's so many things that I think that your international audience, I think many people would be shocked to hear that from you. I'm even a bit surprised. Look, I think you're right. And so first thing I would introduce as well, I don't know if we'll be on the same track moving through the rest of the program. But I would do that as well. But I would have thought most people would have said, well, the first thing he would say you got to do is make sure they didn't get a job or, or learn finance.

Vusi Thembekwayo 44:26

No. And the reason you want and the reason you want to stop there is because when men and read here, please gender agnostic, I'm talking man species. When man lives only for his own self man is dangerous. We've proven this. If there is a single lesson we learned from history is that man who lives for himself, he's dangerous, he's directionless. He has no value to society. He doesn't pass on a set of values to the next generation. And he tends to be extractive in his relationship with the world. Right so So, it is it is, it is only in the fulfillment of a mandate that man has, that man begins to add value to society, that's literally what gives your life meaning. And so to raise children outside of the search of what that mandate is, is an incredibly dangerous social experiment. Right. And I know there are parts of the world that are toying with it, it will not end well. Right. There must be a theme, and then reverence of, of, of, there must be a fear, a reverence and a love of something greater than just your individual self. So that's why for me, I would stop,

Daniel Lapin 45:34

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

we starting off, we starting off with spiritual awareness as a, as a, as a word to just encapsulate everything we've been talking about.

Vusi Thembekwayo 45:45

The second thing I would, the second thing I would then do is I would focus I will truly focus them on learning the value of small tasks done exceptionally well. He's not popular now. But you know, Will Smith, in his book, will talks about this, this particular extreme experience he had with his dad, his father was running, running an ice cream shop, and a wall had collapsed in. And his father said to him, fix the wall. He was like, but it's a wall. And he was a kid, you know, I think as nine or 11 years old. And he says that, how do I fix a wall and his dad said, one brick at a time. And, and that's a truism. That's a truism for how you build anything sustainable, the Great Wall of China was built one brick at a time, the Pyramids of Giza were built one brick at a time, all the architectural marvel that we have in the world were built one brick at a time. And so one of the values to teach children I think, living in the world today is that this formula of instant gratification is incredibly dangerous, because you don't get to see the brick being laid every single day. It's about small tasks, done with incredible diligence, and a dedication to the outcome, and painstaking attention to detail every single day, all day. That's what excellence is, right? It's, it's not one big feat, it's the small thing done every day, consistently, diligently. That's what the outcome that you want.

Daniel Lapin 47:17

And whether it's building a business or being an effective parent and raising a family, it's not the once every nine months, or once every year, huge, flamboyant heroic gesture, but it's getting up every single morning and doing it right every day,

Vusi Thembekwayo 47:34

you got to signal and the third thing I would teach them as the value of money. Hard thing to teach, by the way, but I think that when when, when one is able to connect effort to to an particular outcome as it relates to money, it changes their relationship with it. So So I would, I would, I would seek to find a way to teach them the value of money, whether it be you know, by getting them to do something through which there is an incentive system. And through that incentive system, they get points and through the points, they accumulate some money, and then they get to buy the things that they want, right, some sort of holistic, outcomes driven process approach that helps them understand every single dollar and every single cent as a weight in sweat, when you see your mom or your dad or your grandparents having \$100 in in their pocket that is weighted quite physically by the sweat of their brow. It didn't just appear. It was it was it was effort. In fact, money of itself, paper currency is valueless. What truly gives money value is the effort it takes to create the value through which we extract in that in that in that money. I must tell you is such a hard in principle on this that this is what's in my office today. It's given to me by a client and it's a gift. I'll bring that close to you. And it's Oh, it

Daniel Lapin 49:06

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

says Zimbabwe it's a that's a real that's a real Zimbabwean banknote. That's right. And trillion dollars. Yes. That that's what happens when a government abandoned its primary responsibility of guarding the integrity of the currency.

Vusi Thembekwayo 49:25

Just oppose that then would you with this 100 Zimbabwean dollars

Daniel Lapin 49:35

that goes back.

Vusi Thembekwayo 49:38

Exactly and then consider that the distance between these two was about a decade. Gosh. And, and and I challenge anybody, anybody who who, you know, as I said earlier, wants to experiment with dangerous things like socialism, because they don't think they understand what they're doing. And I do think those of us who see ourselves as, as operators in the marketplace who understand the true value of creating value, need you, we need to call that stuff out because it's incredibly dangerous. So that will teach my children the value that there was a time the \$100 could buy more than than a trillion dollars. And, and, and the difference between those two was just our relationship with time and money, as people watching this video in the comment section say, Yeah, but it was politics and sanctions. Yes, yes, yes. But at the heart of it, it gets down to leaders in charge will make a set of decisions within a given context, not recognizing what the consequences of those decisions are, as I said earlier, you have freedom of choice, you don't have freedom of consequences. That's right. And, and and that that is true of a person who constantly jumping into the swimming pool as it is of a president who can lead seeking to run for office. Yes.

Daniel Lapin 51:01

Yeah. Yeah. Uh, you spoke. And I don't remember if this was a speech or if it was a program. But you spoke about the the difference between discipline and motivation. Is that ringing a bell?

Vusi Thembekwayo 51:25

Yes. Yes.

Daniel Lapin 51:29

Yeah, I'd, I'd love to hear you develop that a little bit, if you don't mind?

Vusi Thembekwayo 51:35

Sure. So motivation, motivation is necessary. But it's not sufficient. Right. So. So and the way I think of it in the way I explain it, is the motivation is understanding the motive behind the actions you take. Right? So motivation, what is the motive behind the actions you take? And and

Vusi Thembekwayo 52:08

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

but, again, my obsession studying leaders and communities that outperformed their time has been just trying to understand why do some ...

Vusi Thembekwayo 52:25

there was a point in, in their journey where there was either no motivation, or motivation did not matter. Right. And the reason you know that to be true, was because the set of forces that were against was so pronounced, that they would have to, they would have to mount an order of magnitude the efforts to generate the motivation required to deal with those forces. I think here about Mahatma Gandhi fight fighting for the freedom of the people of India, I think care about which then became India and Pakistan. I think you're about Nelson Mandela, who birthed our own true democracy, there's just a point where motivation is not what's getting you to wake up in the morning and do the thing you need to do. Discipline is not sexy, it's not cool. It's not the thing that makes people feel good. But it's actually the thing that matters. It's it's, it's the commitment to act, regardless of how you feel. That's discipline. Whereas motivation is the action because of how you feel. Now, I think it was Kip trogon, earlier, CryptoKey, who said, discipline is true freedom, because any person who lives by and acts against the whims of their emotions as a slave, your slave to your emotions, I feel great today I do this, I don't feel great tomorrow. I don't do it. Discipline is not about how you feel. It's about what you committed to doing. And getting it done. I mean, I want you to picture a Nelson Mandela, who spent 27 years 26 years in some months behind bars fighting for the liberation of his people who it was quite possible, you know, would have been sentenced to capital punishment and death. And, and because they didn't want to make him a martyr. They then said, well, we'll put you in jail for the rest of your life. You know, we talk about Nelson Mandela spending 27 years in prison, but it's not like they sentenced him to 27 years in prison. I want people to be clear on he was sentenced to life in prison. Yeah, it was indefinite prison. So so it's not like you woke up every day going home one more day, and I've got 27 I've got you know, I'm one day it was 27 years. That's not what happened. He didn't even know when the end of the suffering would come. In fact, he didn't know if there would be an end of the suffering in his lifetime. But he was committed, committed. So the question we must ask ourselves is How committed are you? Not how do you feel the students will pass? How committed are you to the resolutions you've made the decisions you've made the commitments that you've made about yourself? of how committed are you, most of us fail at life. Because we don't simply have the integrity to honor the commitments we make to ourselves. That's really what it comes down to. And so what we do is, you know, like a sugar high, we're constantly searching for the motivation. So it's the next tick tock video. What's the next Instagram video? What's the next YouTube video? It's the we're constantly trying to throw in the sugar high of motivation, where it's actually what's required is diligence. And consistency, and discipline. Like I said earlier, the old things are true, right? The old things are true.

Daniel Lapin 55:36

It's true, not only for for money and business. But exactly what you described is equally true to marriage. I am not true to my wife, because I love her. I'm true to her because of commitment, a promise and discipline. Sure, the love is a natural and inevitable consequence of that. But here in the United States, more and more young people are turning their back on building marriages and families, because they don't feel like it.

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

Vusi Thembekwayo 56:25

Yeah, and they don't as I said, Yeah, I think living by the whims of your feelings is incredibly dangerous. And that's what it is you're doing in life. It's very dangerous. Yeah,

Daniel Lapin 56:34

yeah. Yeah. Right. Look, I could talk to you for much longer. Electricity power supplies allowing.

Daniel Lapin 56:48

But and I hope we'll have an opportunity to continue the conversation. We've really just scratched the surface. There are so many, so many areas. My my list of things I wanted to ask you, we've barely got through the first few lines of it. So. So I hope well, let's,

Vusi Thembekwayo 57:08

let's let's do a follow up. And we're certainly doing one on my platform as well. I'd love to have you on this. I think that I'm fascinated by religious men and men of religion, I'm fascinated by how you straddle the world, when it seems as if the world, it seems to me, Rabbi like, there is a fight for the Soul of the World. If I just and I like to consider myself fairly young and sub 40, I'm 38 years old, I'm old enough to remember the very first digital device I ever owned, young enough to remember when there were no cell phones around, not ubiquitously available. But I also am fairly, you know, fluent in, in migrating the streets of the digital, some cool, I can live in both worlds. But if there is a single thing for me, that worries me about the season, we find ourselves in as humanity, I do think that there is this fight for the Soul of the World. And, and I think that it is naive of us to believe that that fight exists only in the physical. I think that that fight exists in the spiritual. And I think that those of us who operate in the marketplace, can't divorce ourselves from that fight. Because that fight requires resources that we generate in the marketplace. And so, a an operator and a leader in the marketplace, was either devoid of their spiritual self or doesn't understand the context of the moment is actually an incredibly dangerous tool that can be used for that I'd love to, I'd love to get into your mind and understand some of the value use that the everyday ordinary human being can live by some of the principles and some of the truisms to become an effective and value adding member of society in the world we're in today, where we're being honest, and being truthful is just not in vogue. It's not cool. It's much better to be pleasant to them, to be honest, it's much better to be polite than to be purposeful. It's much better to be truthful, appeal and to be perceived. That's exactly right. Much better to be popular than to be perceived to be, to be honest. And that I think that this is a moment that calls for that.

Daniel Lapin 59:31

No, I think that's right. And I also think that that it's not even a challenge to straddle the two worlds because they integrate very tightly. A purely materialistic and atheistic outlook would say that you and I are nothing more than about \$10 worth of common chemicals put together in some cunning way. And then

Vusi Thembekwayo 1:00:02

The Rabbi Daniel Lapin Podcast

Episode: *A Conversation: S. African Business Leader Vusi Thembekwayo*

Date: 07/28/23 **Length:** 1:02:14

[laughing] Biden and dollars too.

Daniel Lapin 1:00:06

Right No, right. And, and and that therefore every aspect of our lives is biologically and evolutionarily deterministic. But the problem is, that's not reality. When when people make buying decisions, they are using their irrational spirit as much as they're using their biological logic. And so somebody buys a shirt with some fancy designers name on the lapel. That's not a utilitarian decision. It's a decision based on spiritual factors. It's not logical, it's not providing you better shelter from the elements. It's not using your resources to acquire. But but you're doing it anyways, every time you buy a brand item, you are expressing your spiritual essentially your spiritual nature. I love that. And there's so there's so many examples of instances like that. So so to me, it's not even a case of straddling two worlds, it's integrating the two worlds for a complete and accurate understanding of how everything really comes together and everything really works.

Vusi Thembekwayo 1:01:26

I love that Thank you Rob. I would love that. So I'm going to set that up I'm gonna have you on my platform won't have that conversation.

Daniel Lapin 1:01:31

We shall continue and until then, I wish you much success and and and happiness as you move onwards and upwards with all the many different orbits of your career in so many different parts of the world. So thanks for all you do. I'm very, very grateful because you're bringing truth and effectiveness and and value into your audience. So great to be talking with you today. And I do look forward to next time Thembekwayo, thank you.

Vusi Thembekwayo 1:02:11

l'chaim.