

CHAPTER 16

Peter Kharkov took a few moments to digest the news.

"There is another reason why I have come here - I am puzzled, some of the fields are showing signs of growth, others that we have prepared, they show no sign of growth. What is the explanation?"

Carl laughed.

"You ask a very direct question, Peter."

"And you know the answer!"

"I thank you for your confidence but I only know what I have been told."

"By this - King - who has spoken to you alone and whom no one else has seen - or did you read that also in your holy book?"

"Don't tell me that you still have doubts about the existence of our Firstling, Peter? I would be interested to know how you think it would be possible for your carefully cleared ground to show growth, if our Kingly-Priest doesn't exist! I can assure you that I didn't get up in the night and sow seed I don't possess!"

Peter gestured impatiently.

"We will not argue about your unseen adviser, my friend! Answer my question - why the first ground and not the other?"

"Because that was the bargain, Peter. The Firstling promised seed for the first cultivated ground, not for more. The seed for the new ground has to come from the first harvest. If there is one thing I have learned over the years - and the Holy Scripture is also full of such instances, it is that God does what He has promised but man has to do the rest. By all means, prepare the new

ground - that is what you are supposed to do. Sow it after the first harvest, you will have plenty of seed from the crop - and you will have a greater population to feed in the future."

"Yes, I am aware of your efforts in the city beyond the ridge!"

His visitor nodded and shrugged, then very casually, he asked.

"And how do you like your new quarters - and your new companion?"

"The new arrangement seems to work out fine for both of us."

"Tell me, Carl Steinbecker, what are you trying to do? Start another community out here?"

It was made to sound like a joke.

"Hardly that, Peter. I told you my reasons - we all needed breathing space. I haven't tried to win a population. Young Dar came of his own accord."

It looked as if the main reason for Kharkov's visit was satisfied, it wasn't long before the captain went back to his men. He didn't wait for Dar to return from the base of the cliff. The young man was equally casual in his response when Carl told him of the unexpected visit.

"I suppose he's trying to walk a tightrope between the opinions of some of his officers and what he can see happening around him, it can't be easy."

It wasn't easy - Peter Kharkov sighed with relief at the appearance of the first harvest. His stores were nearly exhausted and the predicted increase in population was taking place. Many were flowing in from the devastated city, as the news of the prosperity of the town reached them. They all had tales to tell of the appearance of strangers among them. Strangers who had healed their sick and wounded and others who had told them to seek out those who lived in the town below the lighthouse.

Carl watched the stream of refugees, day after day, walking along the road and toiling up the ridge from the direction of the city. In the evenings whilst the rations were doled out, he would sit quietly and listen to their stories of the visitation of the Firstlings and he would feel Peter Kharkov's eyes on him in the silent question. Why had they not received a visitation from these High Ones?

On the first evening of harvest, the question was answered, for into the midst of the rejoicing, stepped the Firstling. The thousands who now made up the population of the town, had converged on the cleared square, trying to glimpse the first gathering from the fields. Carl listened to the murmurs of awe at the sight that confronted them.

When the fields had first shown signs of life, there had been nothing to indicate what sort of crop they could expect. It was only after they had waited for a few days, that it became obvious that the expanse of uniform green shoots was developing into diverse plants. Not only was there a miraculous sowing but there was a wide range of different types of produce. The prepared fields took on the appearance of a market garden. As the month passed, it became obvious that the harvest was going to be enormous. There wasn't a plant that failed and all carried an extraordinary yield. It was this abundance that brought gasps of awe from those who came to see.

The Firstling emerged from out of the crowd. Carl dropped to his knees in a kind of reflex action. Dar saw him do so, hesitated and then decided that he had better do the same. The crowd grew silent and then some, those who had come from the city, followed the example. The Firstling said nothing and waited until the entire crowd were pressed down to their knees. The last to do so was Peter Kharkov, even Alexei Chernov, the atheistic mocker, preceded him. Carl looked across the open space and saw Martha and the Councilman.

The old man was kneeling with clenched hands, mouthing something and Martha knelt, staring at the manifestation of a young, slender man, who could command such a reaction. He gestured to them that they all should rise from their knees and sit on the ground. He waited until the shuffling died down.

"It is written that Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and before Him every knee shall bow. All the kings of the earth, all rulers and governors will surrender their authority unto Him. You too, have surrendered your power and authority unto the Lord. Your community is one of many who have amalgamated from many sources.

You have seen during the recent month, how necessary it has become for you to work in harmony, and that it made no difference from what source or tradition you originated. Some of you were once enemies. Some were even the instrument that caused death and suffering to be visited upon some of the others. Some of you were in conflict during the years when Satan ruled in the time of the Dragon. Some have murdered and pillaged. Your knees must bow in these matters also, for to surrender your previous authority means that you must also surrender the justification you believed you possessed to perform all of these acts.

Jesus once gave a teaching to the multitude who had gathered to listen to Him. His fame had reached far out beyond the limits of the country into which He was born. Sufferers of every kind of illness and infirmity and even those possessed by devils, were brought to Him - and he cured them, then he began to teach them. You also had many illnesses and infirmities of the flesh and many of you have been possessed by devils who have left their mark on you. Your flesh is already cured and so also, will be your spirit.

I will remind you of the teaching of Jesus, for this is His Kingdom and His teaching is eternal and these words particularly apply: 'How blest are

those who know their need of God; the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. How blest are the sorrowful; they shall find consolation. How blest are those of a gentle spirit; they shall have the earth for their possession. How blest are those who hunger and thirst to see right prevail; they shall be satisfied. How blest are those who show mercy; mercy shall be shown to them. How blest are those whose hearts are pure; they shall see God. How blest are the peacemakers; God shall call them His sons. How blest are those who have suffered persecution for the cause of right; the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs'.

It was with these words that Jesus began his first great teaching, they will never lose their potency. Apply them in your conduct from this time forward for they are the basis of your well-being in the Kingdom of Peace and they are the law under which you will live. It was this gentle law which forged the nature of the Bride of Christ, we the Firstlings.

Pass no judgement and you will not be judged. For as you judge others, so you will yourselves be judged, and whatever measure you deal out to others will be dealt back to you.

Jesus continued on the subject of judgement: 'In times past, our forefathers were taught: "Do not commit murder; anyone who commits murder must be brought to judgement." I emphasise the words of Jesus: 'Anyone who nurses anger against his brother must be brought to judgement. If he abuses his brother he must answer for it to the court; if he sneers at him he will have to answer for it in the fires of hell'.

These words reminds us that it is an easy matter to be accountable before the Throne of God, to be judged as you judge others. 'Fear the Second Death, the eternal separation from God, remember the words: But as for the cowardly, the faithless, and the vile, murderers , fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars of every kind, their lot shall be the second death, in the

lake that burns with sulphurous flames'.

Follow the precept: 'Do not set yourself against a man who wrongs you. If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn and offer him your left. If a man wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well. If a man in authority makes you go one mile, go with him two. Give when you are asked to give; and do not turn back a man who wants to borrow'. In the Kingdom of Peace, it will be easy to love your enemies, for a man will have no enemies, you will have no persecutors but learn to subdue the wilfulness of your own hearts.

This great harvest is the proof that you can put away anxious thoughts about food and drink to keep alive, and clothes to cover your body. Surely life is more than food, the body more than clothes?

It will truly be the case in this Kingdom: 'Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

You look at the harvest and marvel - The Lord has sown for you but you have reaped the reward. He has not sown the fields for His benefit but for yours. All will share in this bounty, no one will be excluded, even if some of you have not laboured. It was not your labour that brought this harvest, it was the bounty of your Father."

The crowd was utterly quiet, the Firstling paused and then turned to Peter Kharkov.

"You entered this town as a last act of conquest and you have established a governorship. That is not a basis that can apply in the Kingdom of Peace. Your knee has bowed and you have acknowledged the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, whose Kingdom this is. I know your heart and I

know the questions and conflicts which still exist. I know your doubts and your struggle to reconcile opposing viewpoints. I know you will be a good leader for these people but I have already provided you with a helper."

The Firstling's gaze turned to Carl and his smile increased a little

"We cannot escape our destiny, brother - remember Jonah!"

He turned back to the crowd.

"Let us look to other things. By your own efforts, you must restore this town and improve it. For your own well being, you must observe the rules laid down in scripture, when tens of thousands of the People of Israel journeyed through the wilderness and were given the instructions to take care of sanitation and the other necessities of life to keep their community healthy. The Lord has spoken once on these matters, He does not have to repeat it.

Remember always to be thankful to the Father who blesses you. Take one tenth of the seed of each component of this and future harvests. Take the first tenth and offer it to the Lord with prayer and thankfulness. He will bless the sincerity of your offering a thousand fold. You will then sow the seed you have reserved for thanksgiving and He will fulfil the age old Law of seedtime and harvest. In each month you will do this. You will offer, you will sow and you will reap.

You will eat no flesh. You will have no need to do so. This is the Kingdom of Peace and even the animal creation, beasts, birds and fishes must rejoice. Adam was given the fruits of the earth to eat, it is not recorded that he ate flesh in the first Paradise and you will not eat flesh in this. I will remind you of the words in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: 'The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord'.

If the lion can eat straw like the bullock, then man can abstain from flesh. He will plant vineyards and orchards and eat the fruits thereof. He will plant the abundant seed and gather his harvests in each month. You shall not hurt nor destroy in this holy kingdom.

You ask: 'Where are the animals, the birds and the fishes?' I will remind you again that scripture is the authority. We will look at the words in the Book of Revelation, for they provide the answers. Remember these words concerning the angels with seven trumpets: 'The first blew his trumpet; and there came hail and fire mingled with blood, and this was hurled upon the earth. A third of the earth was burnt, and a third of the trees were burnt, all the green grass was burnt.

The second angel blew his trumpet; and what looked like a great blazing mountain was hurled into the sea. A third of the sea was turned to blood, a third of the living creatures in it died, and a third of the ships on it foundered.

The third angel blew his trumpet; and a great star shot from the sky, flaming like a torch; and it fell on a third of the rivers and springs. The name of the star was Wormwood; and a third of the water turned to wormwood, and men in great numbers died of the water because it had been poisoned.

The fourth angel blew his trumpet; and a third part of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that the third part went dark and a third of the light of day failed, and of the night.'

And a little further we can read more: 'So the four angels were let loose, to kill a third of mankind'.

That was how scripture recorded what was to happen. You have experienced the reality. It also answers your question. Only a third proportion of the beasts, birds, fishes, trees and the covering of the earth, has been

destroyed - and only a third part of man. There will be a recovery and one day, an animal will wander into your fields and eat of the crop you have sown, and then others. Birds will reappear in the sky and feast on your corn. You will not prevent them, for there is enough for every creature.

As it was in the time of Noah, man will once again spread across the earth. Each man will understand another, for there will be no diversity of languages. Only one tongue will be spoken in the Kingdom of Peace.

The greatest number of casualties during the destruction, took place in the heavily populated cities and areas. Mankind is now thinly spread across the earth, it will take time for them to find each other, but you will have that time, for the Father has given another wonder."

Again, the Firstling paused and contemplated the crowd. Carl was conscious of his heartbeat, it seemed loud in the quietness, so loud that he felt sure it could be heard. Their King continued:

"The lifespan of mankind will be restored as it was in the beginning. This will have a profound effect on the way you will conduct your lives and many traditions and habits will alter. Even those who are now quite old, will live many more years in contentment in the Kingdom. You will have less need for cemeteries and even the fact of death will not cause the degree of grief to which you have become accustomed. The surety of life after death is now yours. You need no longer to have faith in the concept, for it has been proved. Death will be to you, what it has always been to the faithful, it will be no more than a parting.

Those born in these early days of the Kingdom, can expect to live a thousand years and those of you who have already lived a certain percentage of your former life expectancy, can now look forward to the possibility of hundreds of years of life. Again, the prophecy of Isaiah is the

guide: 'There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that have not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed'.

You ask: How can this be? I will answer: Is such a thing impossible for the Father? Was it not the plan of God that Adam should not see death? If he had not committed the sin of disobedience in the Garden, Adam would have lived eternally. He was fashioned by the Father to do so, even though he was made of flesh and blood and bone. This immortality became mortality because of the sin in the garden, Adam lived for nine hundred and thirty years instead of eternally. The eroding nature of sin even shortened his natural lifespan. We can read of the high ages of his descendants. The oldest man, Methuselah, lived for nine hundred and sixty nine years and the Book of Genesis shows that he lived through the lifetime of his son, Lamech and during the time of his grandson, Noah and that he lived into the year of the Flood.

In the benign conditions of the Kingdom of Peace, where sin, disease and strife have been banished, it will be possible to enjoy the same and even better conditions than those that existed earlier in the Divine Plan - but remember, a sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. The 'accursing' will be associated with a reduction in the extended lifespan.

Sin remains your greatest enemy and death still remains the wages of sin. Satan is bound but the will of man is not bound and it will still be possible for a man to sin from out of his own heart. The consequence of sin is death and those who sin will be accursed, for they will experience a shortening of their lifespan and at the end of the thousand years, they will have to account before the Throne of Judgement.

You ask: Will such longevity lead to over population? I answer: Read

the fifth Chapter of Genesis. It reveals the secret, for each of these long lived descendants of Adam reached maturity slowly and the following generation was begotten at what we would consider an extreme high old age, but what would have been for them, the flower of their manhood. The citizens of the Kingdom will find that they will take a long time to attain maturity and will maintain their youthfulness for hundreds of years and that the decline into high old age will be gradual. 'For a child shall die an hundred years old'.

I have told you many things and many of you will chew hard on these matters and some will doubt my words in their hearts. Remember, 'The doubter receives nothing'. The Father wishes to bless you and ensure that you enjoy the fruits of His wonderful Kingdom. He wants to prepare you for the time when Satan shall be released for a while. When you will be tempted and then will have to account for your actions before God your Father.

Now rejoice in your harvest and remember the benefits that accrue to a thankful heart."

The crowd parted as he walked through them and out of the square. Carl strained to see where he went but it was impossible. Suddenly, he found himself the centre of attention. The low buzz of conversation swelled to a gabble of voices, as each tried to put his own interpretation on what they had heard. Carl saw Peter Kharkov elbowing his way through the throng and coming in his direction. He was closely followed by Alexei Chernov, who looked as purposeful as his commander. Carl asked hopefully, as they reached him.

"Are you going to call another Town Committee meeting?"

"The time has passed for Town Committee meetings! The people want answers, otherwise we might not be able to keep the lid on the - excitement - that's building up. You must provide some answers!"

Carl retreated a few steps in protest.

"Me? Why me? You heard what he had to say. Some of it is news to me too!"

Kharkov's jaw set in thrusting determination.

"You have ears that function! You have been given as my adviser. You will now give some advice! You know most about this - king. You know most of the answers. You will explain!"

"You know all there is to know, Uncle Carl!"

Dar's expression of confidence was touching, even if it was wildly inaccurate. Carl rolled his eyes in despair. Was there never to be an end to having responsibility thrust upon him? It must have been his imagination, but he could have sworn an oath that he heard a gentle laugh from somewhere close. It must have been his imagination, because the noise from the excited crowd was swelling. He gestured resigned surrender.