

The Vision

It is a beautiful warm spring day. The year? 1930. The time? High noon. The place? Western Ukraine, occupied by Poland between World Wars I & II.

Three men are walking eastward on a dirt road, a few kilometers from the Soviet border. One man is my father, Kirill, recently converted to Christ. With him is his cousin, Mark (the leader of their newly formed evangelical group), and a friend. As they walk, they talk about the words and ways of the Lord.

It was then that my father saw a huge, dark, ominous cloud slowly moving westward, from the direction of the vast Soviet Union. He saw it as more than a physical cloud and more than a political cloud. It was clear to him that this was also a spiritual cloud - saturated and churning with demonic forces that were soon to be unleashed in our part of Ukraine. All this he saw not only with his physical eyes but also with his spiritual perception and God-given discernment.

He asked Mark and his friend if they could see the monstrous cloud. They saw nothing; to them, the sky was cloudless. They made a joke of it. Kirill was seeing visions; the heat of the day had gone to his head. When he told them he believed the Soviets would be moving into their territory before long, they thoughtlessly dismissed his concern.

Life was good and life was stable under Polish rule. All of our people had enough land, and the future seemed bright. Besides, there was a spiritual awakening moving across their region. They were establishing churches and sharing their faith with the unsaved. True, some of their friends were moving to the Western Hemisphere, but the three of them had no reason to go anywhere. In any event, going to a new country was the furthest thing from my father's mind.

Kirill did not immediately share his vision with anyone else. Two days after his high noon experience, Dad's younger (single and, at that time, unsaved) brother, Maxim, announced he was immigrating to Canada. Was anyone interested in going with him? To everyone's and to his own surprise, my father said he was. We soon began to make preparations to move to Canada. Most of the local Christians and relatives did not understand and were very disappointed with Dad's decision.

Several years later, my father was vindicated. The WW II front made its devastating move across our land. The Soviets did take over our area. Before Ukrainian partisans murdered him because he would not join them, Mark wrote us to say my father's predictions were fulfilled to the last detail. He was glad we were obedient to the Lord's leading and safe in our adopted country.

In Saskatchewan, we survived the trials of the Great Depression and the ravages of the Dust Bowl. In Ontario, we started all over again and the Lord blessed and prospered us. My parents lived Matthew 6:33. They did seek first the kingdom of God, and material things were given to them as well.

I am pleased my parents obeyed the guidance of God, not questioning his ways and his will, not dissuaded by well-meaning relatives. I have endeavored to live by the same principles. Occasionally, however (like today), I do ask the hypothetical question: What if my father disobeyed the Lord; what if he yielded to family and friends who ridiculed him

for his "vision" or criticized him for his unexpected move to the New World? What if we had stayed in Ukraine? Would we have survived the war - partisan and foreign? Would I still be among the living? Where, who, and what would I be? Would you be reading this? ♦♦♦