

A BRIEF REPORT CONCERNING THE WORK UNDER THE CARE OF LORD'S MOVE TO EUROPE

A REVIEW OF OUR HISTORY

In 1991, as the doors into the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe opened, Brother Lee was enlightened by the Lord to see that the direction of the Lord's present move must be toward Europe (*The World Situation and the Direction of the Lord's Move*, Witness Lee, Living Stream Ministry, pp. 17-19). At the same time he said that the first step in that move would be to eastern Germany and western Russia (pp. 47-48). The first migration training was conducted in Anaheim beginning in August 1991. Because of the great spiritual hunger of the Russian people, during that training a decision was made that all the migrating saints would go to western Russia (as a part of Europe) to initiate the Lord's move in Europe. To support that move, Brother Lee arranged for some of his coworkers to oversee the distribution of the financial supply related to the saints who migrated for the Lord's unprecedented move in that part of the earth. This service in the Body became known as the Lord's Move to Europe (LME). Since 1991, with the support of LME, there have been six major migrations of saints to serve in six regions of the world: the former Soviet Union (1991), Eastern Europe (2001), Israel (2001), London (2001), Mexico (2002), and Western Europe (2007). The later migrations to Eastern Europe and Western Europe can be considered further steps in the fulfillment of Brother Lee's word concerning the direction of the Lord's present move being toward Europe. Brother Lee was also very burdened for the spread of the Lord's testimony to Israel (see *Life-study of Ephesians*, Witness Lee, Living Stream Ministry, pp. 666-668). The work in all these regions has been a blended work in the Body of Christ involving saints from North America, the Far East, the former Soviet Union, Europe, Central America, and Australasia.

During the sixteen years from 1991 through 2007 the labor of the workers, in coordination with the publication work of Living Stream Ministry and the free mass distribution of ministry publications by Rhema, Inc., has resulted in hundreds of local churches being raised up and thousands of seeking ones being saved and gained by the Lord for His testimony in more than 30 countries. The most evident results have been in the former Soviet Union, where the work of the ministry spread from its beginnings in Moscow and St. Petersburg to many other cities, resulting in the establishing of approximately 200 local churches with almost 4000 saints. Significant results have also been seen in London and in Mexico, where more than 1000 have been brought into the church life through the labor of the saints in conjunction with the propagation of the ministry by radio and free mass literature distribution. In addition, three full-time trainings have been established, in Moscow, London, and Mexico City, and approximately 200 of the graduates are now serving as full-time workers. The Lord has also raised up four local churches and several groups of seeking ones in Israel. The work in continental Europe has touched twenty countries and has resulted in more than thirty churches with over a thousand saints being raised up.

Over the past sixteen years it is estimated that more than 600 saints emigrated to serve in the former Soviet Union, Europe, Israel, and Mexico. The living expenses of these saints, together with other costs of the work, such as conferences, trainings, and travel to visit seeking saints and newly established churches, have been borne all these years by the faithful giving of the churches and the saints in the Lord's recovery. In recent years the total financial outlay for the work under the practical oversight of LME has been over \$3 million per year. We thank the Lord for the one accord in His recovery, which has enabled Him to accomplish so much for His move in these crucial parts of the earth.

THE LORD'S NEW MOVE TO WESTERN EUROPE

In the past two years the Lord has burdened His recovery to join with Him to strengthen and expand His testimony in Western Europe. At present, 85 applications have been received by LME from saints burdened to emigrate to that part of Europe. In August, after the spring semester of the emigration training in Anaheim, sixteen saints emigrated to serve full time in London to begin the current phase of the Lord's

move in Western Europe. They are now serving on seven campuses in the London area with the local full-timers and the saints in the church in London. At a certain time next year some of these are expected to move to countries in continental Europe, including France, Germany, and Spain. We expect that more saints will follow them in the coming months and years as the Lord provides the persons and the finances to meet the needs of His move. Brother Lee said that the Lord would surely raise up a strong testimony in Western Europe before Antichrist is manifested at the end of this age (an unpublished message given by Witness Lee on May 7, 1977, in New York City).

A RECONSIDERATION OF THE WORK IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE

In consideration of the Lord's present move to Western Europe, the brothers who serve in LME and in the work in Europe have met together on several occasions for intensified prayer and fellowship regarding the present stage of the Lord's move in Europe. In particular, much consideration has been given to the continuation of the work in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. As indicated above, this work has been going on for sixteen years, since 1991, under the Lord's abundant blessing.

In recent months it has become apparent that LME will not have sufficient financial resources to support the work in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the level at which it has been carried out in previous years. There are a number of reasons for this:

- Over the past eight months offerings to LME have substantially reduced in comparison to previous years. One factor is that the number of saints from North America and the Far East serving in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has declined steadily over the past few years. This has spontaneously resulted in a decrease in funds sent to LME from churches which support the migrated saints. Another factor may be that other needs in the recovery, such as the construction of the new LSM Ministry Center (Building 8), the purchase of the London property, the campus work, DCP, and the present migration to Western Europe, have taken priority in 2007.
- While the number of saints from North America and Taiwan serving in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has declined, an increasing number of local saints in these countries have been raised up to serve full time through the full-time trainings in Moscow and London. We rejoice that the Lord has gained so many to serve in His move. However, until the present time the churches in these countries have been able to provide only a small percentage of their financial support. As a result, a higher percentage of the funds LME receives from the churches and the saints in North America and the Far East has been directed toward supporting local full-timers, leaving less available for other needs of the work.
- Many of the fixed costs associated with the work, such as rent, utilities, food, travel, etc., have significantly increased in recent years. Coupled with this, the value of the US dollar has fallen steadily. For example, the Euro is now twice as strong against the dollar as it was six years ago, and the currencies of Russia and other parts of Europe have shown similar gains.

Through our prayer and fellowship the Lord has led us to the realization that the present financial situation of LME may be the Lord's way of temporarily restricting the spread of the work in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (see *Life-study of 2 Corinthians*, Message 51, Witness Lee, Living Stream Ministry, pp. 448-453). We have also realized that, in order for the Lord's move to be strengthened, the churches and the saints in these countries need to bear a greater share of the cost of the work, especially the cost of supporting full-timers raised up among them (see *The High Peak of the Vision and the Reality of the Body of Christ*, Witness Lee, Living Stream Ministry, pp. 20-23). Because of the decline in available financial resources, LME will begin to reduce its support of the work in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This will result in an initial reduction in the number of full-timers serving in these places. We expect that this reduction will take several months to accomplish. As the Lord provides the resources, we will continue to support the full-time trainings, the conferences, the campus work, as many serving ones as possible, and other essential elements of the work in these countries.

THE WAY FORWARD

Although we feel led by the Lord to make some changes, we do not consider this a retreat in the carrying out of the Lord's move; rather, we expect that by our taking these measures the Lord's move will become more prevailing as the recovery becomes more deeply rooted in Europe and the seed of the divine life grows and develops in the saints.

We encourage all the saints and the churches in the Lord's recovery to continue to support the Lord's move in the former Soviet Union, in both Eastern and Western Europe, and in Israel through their prayer at the incense altar, through the faithful and regular giving of their finances, and through many saints' offering themselves to migrate for the spread of the Lord's testimony. Through the first quarter of 2008 LME will need adequate financial resources to carry the work in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe through the present transition into a new stage, and for the foreseeable future there will still be the need for finances channeled through LME to carry out the ongoing work in all parts of Europe and in Israel. We look to the Lord to meet this need through His Body.

May we all persevere in prayer, in giving, and in going to fulfill the Lord's commission given to His recovery so that the present age may be consummated.

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Yours in the Lord's recovery,
The brothers serving in LME