

## AN UPDATE CONCERNING EUROPE 2017 WINTER TRAINING

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Dear saints, the Lord is advancing His move in Europe. Throughout Europe the Lord is strengthening His testimony and adding many to the local churches. This has largely been the result of the Lord's blessing on the spread of the ministry publications and the perfecting of the saints in Europe through training.

### THE SPREAD OF THE MINISTRY

In 1984 Brother Lee said, **“During the past twenty years, eighty percent of the more than three hundred churches in the West have been raised up through the publications.”** (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1984*, vol. 5, p. 207)

Ephesians 3:9 says, “And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is.” In 1986 Brother Lee said, **“The Lord's recovery has been commissioned** with a big enterprise **to spread the Lord's truths**. He has given us the truths which we are holding. But we need the faithful, pure-hearted ones, who do not have any intention to live to themselves but to Him, to **go out to spread these ‘gold bar’ truths.**” (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, p. 114)

Brother Lee's fellowship has been our experience in Europe. In the UK the ministry broadcasted over the radio was a vital factor for the increase of the churches, especially in London. In the Netherlands the distribution of the Stream Magazine had much to do with the raising up of the lampstands in that country.

All throughout Europe the spread of the ministry has produced increase and raised up the Lord's testimony in many countries. In the year 2000, there were approximately 650 saints and 32 lampstands in Europe. Today there are just over 4,700 saints and at least 90 local churches. Just this year, the first Lord's table was enjoyed in Split, Croatia; Copenhagen, Denmark; and Krakow, Poland.

In October of this year, over 35,000 Recovery Versions of the New Testament were distributed to hungry ones all over Europe, including more than 31,300 in Germany alone. The response among these ones has been exceeding expectations, with hundreds wanting further contact.

The following are testimonies from saints who participated at the Bible distributions:

“We met a girl who was interested to look at the footnotes in the Bible. She was surprised that we would come all the way to Bielefeld for the distribution. We read through John 4:13-14, and she said that it didn't make sense to her. When we went through the footnote for verse 13, she exclaimed, ‘Wow I understand it!’ Praise the Lord.”

“We were approached by a young man who had received a Recovery Version Bible a couple of months back. He said he had been reading it and found it to be beautiful. He recognized our sign and had to stop by and say hello.”

“A young German was so happy to receive a Bible with notes and cross-references and said, ‘Thank you so much. This is an answer to prayer.’”

Before the distribution in October, there were six cities in Germany identified as established churches, or soon-to-be established churches—Hamburg, Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, and Munich. Over the past two years the saints have been laboring in Germany in response to the mass migration of refugees into the country that began in 2015. The Lord has since added to them Farsi-speakers, Arabic-speakers, and native Germans. Now, following the Bible distribution and the labor of the last two years, the number of saints in Germany is approximately 500, almost double the number of saints from two years ago. There are also now 28 cities in Germany where there are saints or seeking ones asking for contact.

Amos 8:11 says, “Indeed days are coming, / declares the Lord Jehovah, / When I will send a hunger into the land, / Not a hunger for bread nor a thirst for water, / But for hearing the words of Jehovah.”

We are seeing a hunger in the land of Europe, and the ministry of the age is spreading throughout Europe. The Recovery Version of the New Testament is now available not only in English but also in other European languages, including Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and, by January 2018, Polish. Although the ministry may not yet be available in many other European languages, Europeans, especially the young people, are increasingly able to read and understand English, enabling them in the meantime to receive the English ministry publications distributed across the continent.

In 1 Timothy 2:3-4, the apostle Paul says, “Our Savior God, who desires **all men** to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.” We pray that the Lord’s heart for all men would be duplicated in us. Europe is a continent with over 600 million people in 47 sovereign states, which is almost twice the number of people in the United States. We praise the Lord for the ones that the ministry has reached over the decades, yet there is still a vast void of the truth—even the full knowledge of the truth—for millions of Europeans. May the Lord enlarge our hearts and strengthen the churches to spread the ministry publications to all men for the raising up of His testimony.

## THE NEED FOR TRAINING

As new ones are gained through the spreading of the divine truths, there is a great need for training the new ones and existing saints. The way of training is a great principle in the New Testament and a great factor of blessing in the Lord’s recovery.

In 1992 Brother Lee said, “Another thing I want to make clear is our burden to have trainings to train the saints. Brother Nee conducted regular trainings for the saints in mainland China. I came out of mainland China to Taiwan in 1949. We started a formal training there for four months in 1953. From that year on, I set aside a few months nearly every year for the training of the saints.” (*A Timely Word*, p. 37)

In the same message he also said, “If you ask me to stop the training work and stop the publications, I cannot do it. I must obey my Lord who sent me, who charged me, and who gave me this commission to help His recovery, who gave me this burden of the ministry of His word to release His word.” (*A Timely Word*, p. 38)

In the *Life-study of Ephesians*, Brother Lee says, “We need to be trained for the practice of the church life. This means that the training should enrich and uplift our practice of the church life.” (p. 353)

In line with Brother Lee's fellowship, the Full-time Training in London began in 1997, and to date, 276 saints have completed the two-year training, with an additional number participating in at least one term. These ones who have been trained represent at least 24 European countries. Although the training is conducted in English, this term only six of the 42 trainees were native English speakers. This two-year training has been instrumental in reconstituting European young people with the truth.

In order to reconstitute the people of God, there is the need to educate them with the word that comes out of the mouth of God, which expresses God. This means that to reconstitute the people of God is to educate them by putting them into the Word of God that they may be saturated with the Word...As a result, they [Israel] became a divine nation on earth...to be God's testimony. (*Life-study of Nehemiah*, pp. 32-33)

Weekend trainings for the saints of all ages began at Heckfield Place in 2003, and following the purchase of Bower House in 2005, one-week trainings began in May of 2010 and have continued through the spring of this year. Although we have had the capacity to accommodate only approximately 100 saints in the one-week trainings each month for two months each year, the total number trained at the week-long trainings has been 1,550 representing 37 countries.

A brother who attended a one-week training for the first time last year testified,

"I went to a seminar at the Amana Trust bookshop in Central London for the first time. My intention was only to go to the bookshop, but while I was there, a brother informed me that there was a seminar in progress...It was because of that time in the seminar that I signed up to come to this one-week training.

This week [of training] has opened my eyes fully to the gospel and brought me to the truth...I came from somewhere where I was captured within the framework of religion. The knowledge was there, but I was trapped by it. However, this week I experienced the recovery process of the gospel. We really are all one in Christ. He is the Head, we are part of the Body, and this has become a living...I can only thank the living God for what He has done for me. He has even made me a part of His Body. The only way I can describe it is that it's like a miracle."

In 1991 Brother Lee said, "We may first strengthen the ministry in England because eventually England will be crucial for all of Europe" (*Elders' Training, Book 11: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (3)*, p. 68). By having these trainings in London, the saints and churches across Europe have been greatly strengthened, and many of them have consecrated themselves fully to the Lord.

Since the year 2000, the number of saints in Europe has increased sevenfold. This is surely due to the spread of the ministry and the training of the saints. Yet this is still short, and there are still many more seeking ones the Lord is looking to gain.

In 2014 a map of the UK was presented to the saints representing the number of people who have responded to the *Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee* radio program or have requested more contact while receiving a free Recovery Version of the New Testament. Since then the saints in the UK have been endeavoring to follow up with them. During the summer

of 2017, more than 70,000 phone calls were made to these ones confirming that thousands are still open to have more fellowship with us.

One of these phone calls reached a radio listener who had also been reading the ministry, especially the life-study messages. During the phone call, a trainee invited him to a seminar nearby. It was the first event with the saints he had ever been to. At the seminar he indicated that he was open to having a meeting in his home, and after about three or four meetings with the saints in his home, he started coming to the Lord's table. He has been enjoying the church life and meeting with the church in London since.

There is an average of over 50,000 persons listening to the *Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee* radio broadcast Monday through Friday, and another large group on the Lord's Day afternoon in the UK. The *Life-study of the Bible with Witness Lee* is also broadcast in Spanish on the radio throughout Spain. Over 35,000 Recovery Versions of the New Testament were distributed throughout Europe in 2017, and there still are over 200,000 Recovery Versions of the New Testament in the European languages ready to be distributed. Soon there will be another printing of Recovery Versions of the New Testament, which will include 30,000 in the Polish language. Each year the saints in Europe also contact hundreds of university students through the autumn activities, many of whom are open for further contact and open to attend the meetings and conferences.

All of these ones need shepherding and training. Although the former training center at Heckfield Place and the current training center at Bower House have been instrumental in training many saints, there have been limitations in the number that we have been able to receive for training.

At Bower House, we have the capacity to host approximately 200 Europeans **per year** for one-week trainings and weekend retreats. Woodland Camp, a 17-acre site, ten minutes from Bower House, was purchased in 2013 and is being prepared so that the capacity can be enlarged to more than 200 Europeans **per week** for ongoing trainings and weekend retreats throughout the year. In order to do this, we need to prepare a meeting place and the infrastructure that will prepare the way for a total of 45 two-bedroom cabins to be built. We believe that over the next few years, the Lord will provide us with these facilities to meet the need of training so many seeking ones for the increase of the Lord's testimony throughout Europe.

“Of the three influential factors in today's world, the Far East and the United States have been occupied and taken by the Lord's recovery. Europe still remains as a region in which the Lord's recovery needs to be rooted and grow. I hope that we would bring this fellowship to the Lord and pray. We should tell the Lord, ‘Lord, these days are the consummation of the age. Lord, in these days rekindle my love toward You.’” (*The World Situation and the Direction of the Lord's Move*, p. 19)

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For information regarding praying, giving, and going related to the Lord's move in Europe, please visit [amanatrust.org.uk](http://amanatrust.org.uk) and/or [lordsmove.org](http://lordsmove.org).

For information regarding the London properties, please visit:  
[amanatrust.org.uk/uk-building-project](http://amanatrust.org.uk/uk-building-project).