

## **A Brief History of the Lord's Move in Israel through His Recovery from 1999-2008**

### *The initiation—an open door through the Russian-speaking immigrants*

While saints in the recovery have always had a burden for Israel and in 1973 Brother Lee spoke clearly about the burden for the church life to go back to Jerusalem for the Lord's return, the up-to-date move of the Lord in Israel through His recovery took a significant turn in 1999. At that time, in order to determine the hunger for the ministry among the more than 1 million returned Russian-speaking Jews, Rhema began to advertise and distribute the Recovery Version in the Russian language. More than 3000 Recovery Versions were ordered, and the feeling of the Body was that this manifestation of hunger was an indication that the Lord was initiating a practical move to Israel. In response to this leading, a group of saints from the USA, Russia, and Armenia moved to Israel to labor in late 2000 and early 2001. Though there have been particular political and cultural difficulties to deal with, we are full of joy to report that the Lord has raised up the church life among the Russian speakers in three cities in Israel, in addition to a good number of positive contacts in other cities. Especially in the three local churches, over the last seven years a good foundation in the truths of the Lord's recovery has been laid.

In this initial stage the Lord has used the Russian-speaking immigrants to establish His testimony. Their manifest openness, hunger for the deeper truths, and capacity to receive, understand, and experience these deeper truths reveal the hand of the Lord. Furthermore, we feel that this move of the Lord in Israel is a direct continuation of His move in the former Soviet Union, which is a tremendous blessing that has produced a number of prepared Russian-speaking co-workers and local saints of Jewish background who are burdened to migrate to Israel, a vast storehouse of ministry materials available in the Russian language, visiting groups of Russian-speaking saints, and trainings and conferences in Russia to which we can send the young saints from Israel.

At present, the total number of saints being shepherded in Israel is about 120. This includes 58 who are in group meetings, 54 who are being visited weekly in their homes, and 37 who receive less regular care.

### *A further advance toward the goal*

However, because a definite goal of our labor is to raise up a solid testimony among the typical inhabitants that reflects the demographic proportions of the country (approximately 40% native-born Hebrew-speaking Israelis, 40% immigrants, including Russian speakers from the former Soviet Union, and 20% Arabs), we feel that the Lord is leading us at this time to increase our emphasis on gaining native-born Hebrew-speaking Israelis. To carry out this advance, we feel that the Lord's move in Tel Aviv and our laboring on the University of Tel Aviv are key. Tel Aviv is the largest city in Israel. It is the economic and transportation capital of the country. Tel Aviv is also the most important city for secular (non-religious) native-born Israelis, having a smaller

percentage of Russian-speaking immigrants than other cities. Therefore, we feel that an increased emphasis on this city, and on the campus in particular, will be the Lord's way to labor more with the Hebrew-speaking Israelis. We are only in the initial phase of this shift toward Tel Aviv. To support the campus labor there, we are praying for a "player-coach" and his family to move to Tel Aviv and locate near the campus, to become the nucleus of a team. Also, we are burdened that some would come to study in the university, including those who have completed the full-time training.

### *Continued distribution of the ministry in the four main languages of Israel*

The translation and distribution of the ministry continues to be a high priority. From the beginning, Rhema has carried out the free distribution in Russian. For the past five years, Rhema has also distributed in English, which is spoken by many Israelis as a second language. Now the translation of the Rhema materials into Hebrew has been completed, and we have begun to advertise and distribute in Hebrew. Finally, in order to reach the 20% of Israelis who are Arab speakers, Rhema is considering distributing in Arabic, into which the Rhema materials have also recently been translated. In addition to the free distribution, LSM will continue to translate titles for the long term constitution of the saints and the churches.

### *The final goal—raising up the church in Jerusalem*

Finally, we mention Jerusalem, a city which occupies a special place in the heart of the Lord and in the hearts of the believers and the Jews. Jerusalem is the spiritual and political capital of Israel, and it was mentioned expressly by Brother Lee as the final destination of the propagation of the Lord's recovery around the globe. Therefore, in our labor also, in terms of the outward spread, raising up a solid church in Jerusalem is our final goal.

Actually, we have been visiting Jerusalem regularly almost from the beginning of our time in Israel, and there are several saints in and around the city who are solidly in the recovery. But we feel that the road to Jerusalem passes through Tel Aviv. Very possibly the way the Lord will take to Jerusalem will be to gain a good number of native Israelis in Tel Aviv, including a good number of young people off the campus, who will be a supporting base and a springboard for His further move to Jerusalem.

We earnestly entreat all the saints and the churches in the Lord's recovery to pray for the Lord's move in Israel. May the Lord continue to bless His move in Israel for the building up of His universal Body and as a preparation for His return.

The co-workers laboring in Israel