**Report about the Home going ceremony of Missionary Celeb Kim in Latvia UBF by Grace Sun Lee**

**“THE LORD GIVES, THE LORD TAKES, PRAISE HIS NAME”**

“The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.” (Job 1:21b)

Missionary Caleb Kim went to be with the Lord on August 5th at the age of 46. He is survived by his wife Esther, and by his daughter Esther Jr. (9). Caleb was taken from us rather suddenly and unexpectedly. Though he was in good health, while trying to retrieve his daughter’s water tube from the Baltic Sea, he had a heart attack and drowned.

No one was prepared to deal with such sorrow especially with having just two families in the ministry. But as soon as the news were heard, Missionary Peter Kim from Ukraine, Missionary David Park from Russia, and Missionary Paul Oh from Minsk proceeded the practical preparations for practical steps. They were spiritual comrades who acted like 911 emergency workers. Especially Missionary Andreanna Kang, Hannah So, Lydia Kim showed the incarnate love of Jesus Christ sharing sorrow and showing comfort of God and serving meals until M. Esther was comforted to be strengthened in faith.

Through the Bible study of John 14, M. Esther could turn her eyes from troubled heart to trust in God, depending on the Holy Spirit. She became strong in the Spirit to welcome the guests. Their spiritual parents, Pastor Mark and Anna Yang, Sh. Moses Kim, Grace S. Lee’s visit comforted her with God’s faithfulness.

Around 50 coworkers came for Sunday worship service and the funeral ceremony on Monday from Moscow, Yekaterinburg, and Petersburg in Russia, Ukraine, Korea, Lithuania, Estonia, Minsk, the United States and Sweden. They were like the cloud of witnesses to witness the glorious home coming of Missionary Caleb Kim which revealed God’s glory. On Sunday, Dr. James Suh had delivered the message from John 14:1, “Jesus is the way and the truth and the life.” He taught us that God does not leave us alone like orphans but lead us through the Holy Spirit. Missionary Esther sang a hymn which had been chosen by Missionary Caleb Kim for the upcoming St. Petersburg conference. Missionary Hannah Sayuk from Kiev UBF served the beautiful music. We showed Mother Barry’s condolence and prayer through Video clips.

On Monday at 11 am, Missionary Dr. Mark Yang delivered a sermon titled, “May the name of the Lord be praised.” based on Job 1:21, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.“ It was a very powerful and relevant message proclaiming the gospel clearly. God is the Sovereign Lord whose name is to be praised because He is the giver of life. God had led Missionary Caleb to Christ through Bible study about 28 years ago, and since then he had lived faithfully for him as his disciple. In 1994, he married Esther, who shared the same calling and they went to Moscow as missionaries. For 13 years, they participated in pioneering ministry in Russia. God used Caleb and Esther as an exemplary house church for raising many Russian students as Jesus’ disciples. Especially, they raised Maria Nikizina, Hannah Zivaev, Nazezda Paminoh, Krasnadar Vera Mauh as servants of God.

Since 2009, he served Latvia ministry along with his wife Esther and young daughter Esther Jr, Timothy and Andreanna Kang’s family. They went only by faith, without any visible prospect of obtaining a proper job or visa. Caleb got a job as a travel guide, which was very busy and demanding. Nevertheless, he prepared Sunday messages wholeheartedly with life giving spirit. He loved God with all his heart and loved God’s sheep as his own children. He was known as a lover of his wife as Christ loves the church. He loved his daughter so much that his nickname was “daughter lover.” He taught the Bible faithfully to her and played with her whenever he found time. He was a faithful steward with small things. He also served sheep, Samuel Kang Jr. and Artyom with the message of their eye level. He was a man of vision who prayed not only for evangelizing Latvia but also for Baltic 3 countries.

God is the taker of life for His sovereign wise and good purpose. In all things God works for the good. Through the story of life of Elizabeth Eliot, we are taught how to turn the adverse situation to give glory to God by trusting in His Sovereign good purpose. We prayed for Missionary Esther to find God’s comfort, spiritual direction and prayer topic for the future missionary life.

After message, five short testimonies was shared by close spiritual friends, Abraham Song, Isaac Choi, Andreanna Kang, Hanna So and Paulus Oh. We praise God for His grace and the power of the gospel which changed a sorrowful sinner to be a man of God. Little Esther played a beautiful piano sonata for her dad.

I thank God for blessing this wonderful fellowship with God’s comfort. Missionary Timothy Kang opened his home to all the man missionaries while women missionaries stayed with Esther. Even though we are deeply sorrowful at the loss of Missionary Caleb, we were also joyful because of the resurrection hope and the over pouring love through the Holy Spirit in and through coworkers. Missionary Mike Thompson told me that we should mark this event in CIS UBF history. The homecoming address taught all our mission coworkers the kingdom of God as our ultimate destination. We all decided to press forward to the kingdom of God as holy pilgrims with urgency in carrying out our mission.

When Missionary Caleb’s family from Korea heard and witness the love relationship with many brothers and sisters in Christ and saw the pictures of a happy and blessed house church, they expressed their deep thankfulness to God and confessed that Missionary Celeb had lived his life to the fullest. We prayed that their family may accept the gospel deeply in their lives through this event.

God has used the life and death of Missionary Caleb Kim as a kernel of wheat for the evangelization of Latvia and the Baltic countries. Let’s pray that God may help Esther to hold on to God’s great love and live as a blessing to many people like Elizabeth Elliot. Missionary Timothy Kang has to succeed the Latvia UBF ministry. May God help him to fan the seed of prayer of Missionary Caleb to flame and serve Latvia and Baltic 3 countries with the gospel of Jesus and make Latvia a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Written by Grace S. Lee