

KIM HO JIK

FIRST CHURCH MEMBER FROM KOREA

By Lucy Stevenson Ewell

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(Based on a true story)



South Korea is a country in East Asia.



Today there are more than 88,000 members of the Church in South Korea.



There is also a temple in the capital, Seoul.

Kim Ho Jik took a deep breath. It was his first day studying and teaching at a university in the United States.

Learning was important to Ho Jik. He wanted to learn as much as he could about nutrition. Then he could make life better for people in South Korea, where he was from.

Ho Jik carried a box of books up some steps to his new office.

"Hello," said a man from the office next door. "I'm Oliver. I'm studying here too."

"It's nice to meet you," Ho Jik said.

Weeks passed. Ho Jik and Oliver became friends. They talked about what they were learning. Ho Jik noticed that Oliver never drank or smoked. He didn't work on Sundays either. *I wonder why*, Ho Jik thought.

One day Oliver gave Ho Jik a book. It was about the Articles of Faith. "This book tells about what I believe," Oliver said. "Let me know if you want to learn more."

Ho Jik finished the book in less than a week. Oliver gave him another book called the Book of Mormon. Ho Jik read it quickly too. He started going to church with Oliver. But he wasn't sure he wanted to be baptized.

Soon it was Oliver's last day at the university. Ho Jik saw him in the hallway. "I believe God brought you here for a special reason," Oliver said. "But not just so you can teach your people about nutrition. You need to teach them about the gospel too."

Ho Jik thought about Oliver's words for a long time. Finally he decided to be baptized. He was baptized in the same river where Joseph Smith was baptized 122 years earlier!

When Ho Jik finished school, he went home to South Korea. He was excited to share the gospel with his family. He also taught many others about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



Kim Ho Jik became an expert on the nutritional value of the soybean.



Ho Jik's children were some of the first people to be baptized into the Church in Korea.



Ho Jik translated the Articles of Faith into Korean.

God had brought him there for a special reason.



Ho Jik became a leader. He had important jobs in education and government. He helped people in his country have more nutritious food. He made a difference in their lives.

But Ho Jik wanted to make an even bigger difference. Missionaries were not allowed to teach in Korea. Ho Jik wanted to change that. He knew that if he asked the government to let missionaries teach there, he could get in trouble. But he knew it was worth it. He would give up everything to bring the gospel to Korea.

Ho Jik asked the government to let missionaries teach in South Korea. And the government said yes! Soon missionaries came, and Ho Jik helped them teach more and more people.

Ho Jik knew that Oliver was right. He had been sent to that university so he could learn about the gospel. He was grateful God had blessed him with the gospel and with the opportunity to share it. ●

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALYSSA TALLENT