

A Tribute To President Ho Jik Kim

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President Ho Jik Kim was chosen by God to play the key role in establishing the gospel of Jesus Christ in Korea. It is therefore clear that President Ho Jik Kim was one of the noble and great ones chosen in the pre-mortal existence to carry out this great responsibility. "Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers..." (Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 3:22-23). President Ho Jik Kim was one of these noble and great ones.

Over a period of years God prepared Korea for His church to be established there. At the end of world war II thirty five years of Japanese occupation of Korea came to an end and Korea became free to govern itself. Next, the suffering endured by the Korean people during the Korean war caused them to be searching for help from God. The LDS servicemen prepared the way for the establishment of the church in Korea. At the end of world war II, it was an LDS serviceman, Colonel Denmark C. Jensen, who on behalf of the United States of America accepted the surrender of the Japanese army in South Korea. Brother Jensen and other LDS servicemen after world war II first taught the restored gospel in Korea. During and after the Korean war, the LDS servicemen taught the gospel to their Korean friends and by 1955 had baptized 60 or 70 Koreans.

Before the outbreak of the Korean war, God influenced President Syngman Rhee to send Dr. Ho Jik Kim to Cornell University in the USA to obtain an advanced degree in nutrition. While there he met brother Oliver Wayman, one of his fellow graduate students, and learned about the church from him. Oliver Wayman and others taught Ho Jik Kim the gospel and he was converted and baptized on July 29, 1951, by Joseph A. Dye in the Susquehanna river near the spot where Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were baptized. After coming up out of the water, Ho Jik Kim heard a voice say to him: "Feed my sheep". He was given the Aaronic Priesthood and ordained a Deacon on August 5, 1951, by V. A. Bohman and was ordained a Priest on August 26, 1951, by Joseph A. Dye. Oliver Wayman told Ho Jik Kim that the real reason he came to study at Cornell University was to become a member of God's true church so he could return to Korea and help bring the gospel to all of the Korean people. God had brought Ho Jik Kim into the church and let him know of the important role he was to play in Korea. After returning to Korea he was given the Melchizedek Priesthood and ordained an Elder by Spencer D. Madsen in Pusan on May 17, 1953. Ho Jik Kim was ready to serve the Lord.

The ministry of President Ho Jik Kim in Korea was for eight years from 1951 to 1959 when he was called home by the Lord. During these eight years he accomplished the work he had been foreordained to do in the pre-mortal existence. He taught the gospel to his wife and children and they all joined the church. He taught the gospel by example and by precept to his colleagues in education circles and to his associates in government circles. Through his efforts the church became known and respected by his friends in education and in government, and the seeds sown in their hearts by President Kim continue to bear fruit now and will continue to bear fruit forever. He was a lig

ht by his example to many young people in Korea through his work in the church. Through his influence many of them joined the church and the seeds planted in their hearts by President Kim continue now to bless their lives and will continue to bless their lives and the lives of their posterity forever.

In addition to all of the above, during the last four years of his life President Ho Jik Kim played the key role in establishing the church in Korea. He was set apart as President of the Korean District of the Northern Far East Mission by President Joseph Fielding Smith in the summer of 1955 and served in that position until his death in 1959. He was vitally instrumental in influencing Korean government officials to issue visas for the first missionaries and also for the missionaries who came later to enter Korea. He was instrumental in obtaining approval from the Korean customs officials for the church to bring in equipment and supplies from Mission Headquarters in Tokyo. He himself translated, and supervised the translation and printing by others, the first church literature into the Korean language. He began the translation of The Book of Mormon into Korean and was still working on this project, as his time permitted, right up to the time of his death. He searched out and completed the acquisition of property for the church in Seoul and Pusan. He obtained official recognition for the church from the Korean government and drew up the documents for the church juridical person (Zaidan Hojin) and served as the responsible officer for the church in Korea. He effectively led and inspired the Korean members and leaders of the church in the Korean District and in the Korean branches.

Truly President Ho Jik Kim faithfully accomplished all he was foreordained to accomplish.

On August 31, 1959, Our Father in Heaven called President Ho Jik Kim home. We grieved at his passing and we miss him sorely, but we rejoice in knowing that he is alive and well, free from all suffering and pain, and living in a better place joyfully reunited with his loved ones who have passed on. President Kim suffered from high blood pressure for years but never let his illness keep him from his work for the Lord.. We know he is still engaged in bringing the light of the gospel to the millions and millions of Koreans waiting in the spirit world. "I beheld that the faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead." (D&C 138:57) We are sure the Lord said to President Ho Jik Kim "Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord." (Matthew 25:21) President Ho Jik Kim is our friend forever and, with you, I am looking forward to a happy reunion and a continuing association with him forever.

