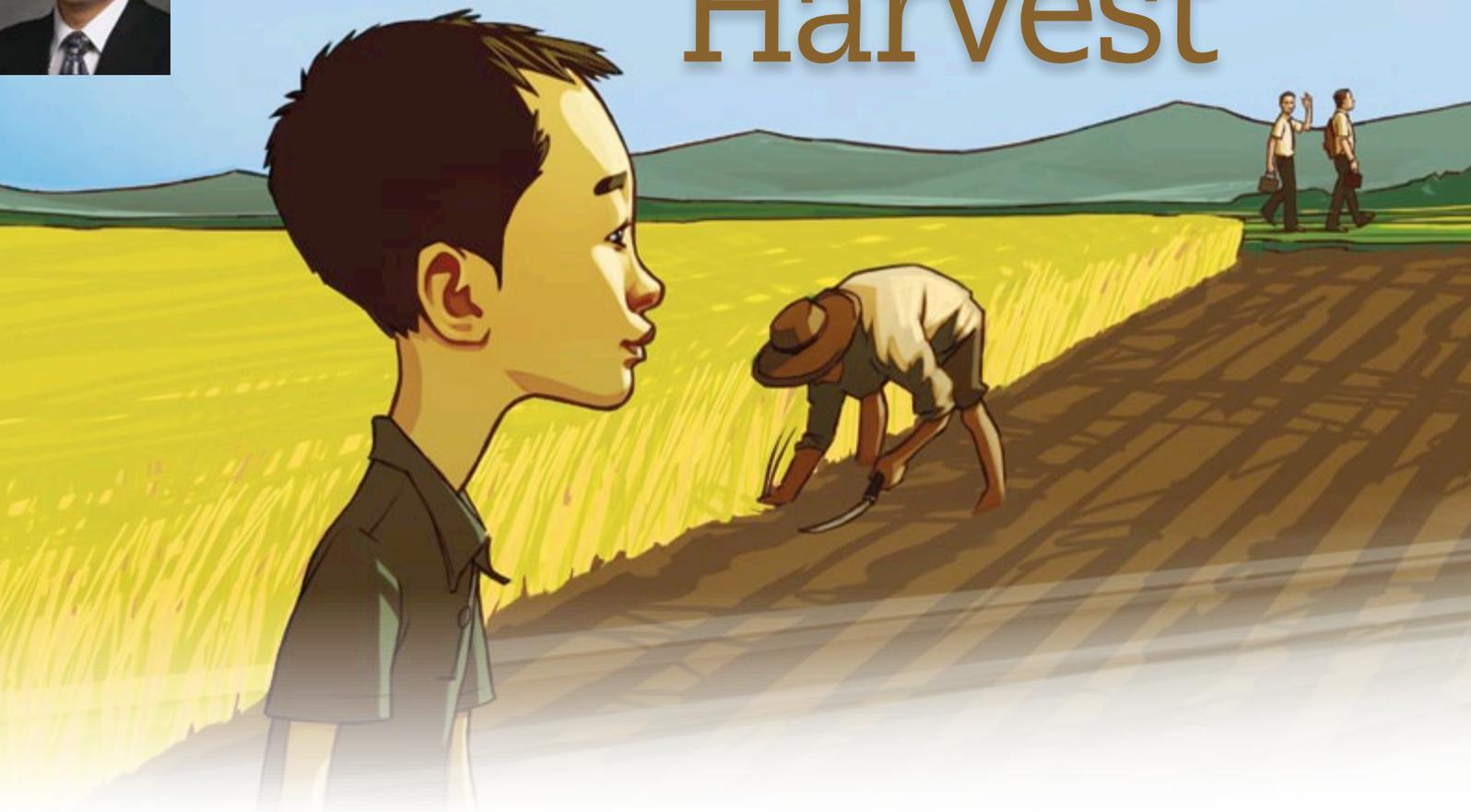




FRIEND TO FRIEND

By Elder
Koichi Aoyagi
Of the Seventy

The Harvest



“The Holy Ghost . . . will show unto you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5).

As a boy in Japan, I wanted to learn English. But English lessons were expensive, and I did not have enough money to pay for them.

One day I saw two young men handing out flyers for free English lessons. They were missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I immediately signed up for their English class.

I sensed something special about the missionaries. They were cheerful and positive. I asked them about their church, and my heart was touched. I did not understand it at the time, but I was feeling the Spirit. Soon I wanted to be baptized.

My parents did not want me to be baptized into a church that was different from theirs. But the missionaries came to my home and lovingly talked with my parents. The Spirit touched my parents’ hearts, and they gave me permission to be baptized.

One Sunday in October, I was assigned to give an important part in a program at church. But in October everyone in my family had to work hard to harvest the rice in my father’s rice fields. That included working on the Sabbath day.

I prayed to Heavenly Father, and the Spirit planted a thought in my mind: *I could try to finish the harvest before Sunday.* I would get up early and work every morning before school. Then every afternoon I would work after school until dark.

But by Saturday night only half of the harvest was done. I went to bed discouraged that I had not accomplished my goal. Sunday morning I awoke early to go to the fields. My father came to my room and, with a gentle smile, asked why I wasn’t going to church. My heart was full of joy. I could go to church and keep the Sabbath day holy!

I am grateful to know that as we listen to the Lord’s voice and follow Him, He will always bless and guide us. ◆