

First donation received to Palpal account for the Japan earthquake victims



I would like to thank Darryl Rollins in the USA for sending \$20 toward the relief fund. This is the first donation via Paypal from a person who saw this web site.

Darryl's donation will be part of other donations listed on Help Japan 2011 of which yours truly is the webmaster. I previously had my Paypal button on that site, but was asked to take it off because my Paypal account is not registered with the Leap High 28 NPO. They are hoping to get their own Paypal account.

Visit to friends in Sendai



Charles Begley before van stocked with food and goods for friends in Sendai

On March 26, Charles Begley and I drove to the city of Sendai to bring supplies to a small Christian community of 6 adults and 7 children. It was a 4 hour drive along the Banetsu and Tohoku expressways and was through Fukushima prefecture. As you see from the map, the Tohoku expressway is about 58 kilometers or 36 miles from the two troubled nuclear power-plants in Fukushima.



Route from Niigata to Sendai

Charles' van was completely filled with supplies, thanks to friends in Niigata and a donation of money from the director of NPO Leap High 28, Yoko Ishikawa, with whom I am working with in building the Help Japan 2011 web site. In all we took approximately 80,000 yen or about \$1000 US worth of food and goods. This included 105 kg of rice, bags of white radish (daikon), potatoes, carrots, eggplant, onions, noodles, curry and stew ingredients, canned goods, 24 packs of nattou, 2 camping stoves, 35 cans of can fuel for the stoves, 90 liters of kerosene for heating, clothes, blankets, and shoes. Most of these items are now hard to find or buy in Sendai, a city of one million people, the largest city of northeast Japan and the closest to the epicenter of the earthquake on March 11th in the Pacific. Some materials like clothes, shoes and blankets were not immediate needs of my friends in Sendai, but items they would distribute to others in need.



Cars lined up to get gas at the Bandaisan service area on the Banetsu expressway in Fukushima

The Tayama family was very grateful for the food and the means to cook it. They had no vegetables the past two weeks. Until a few days ago, they had no electricity. They still have no running water or gas.

Visual impressions

Much unlike my visit to the city of Ojiya in Niigata after the October 2004 earthquake when I saw destruction in any direction I looked, I saw no destruction or damage of anything whatsoever. The roads were not broken as they were in Niigata, and no houses fell. The only sign that something had happened was many convenience stores were closed. That is not to say there was no direct destruction at all from the earthquake. One friend reports his apartment was damaged to the point of becoming unlivable which forced him to move. But the overall direct damage from the earthquake seemed to be minimal. The real destruction was caused by the tsunami along perhaps 500 kilometers of the Pacific coast, up to 10 kilometers inland. This is roughly 5000 square kilometers of devastation!

It was cold and snowy in the mountains of Fukushima, but there was no snow in Sendai and not too cold in my friend's house even without the heaters on. But it was still daytime with a clear sky. The sun helps warm the houses. The Pacific side of Japan has a much higher percentage of sunny days than the west coast along the Sea of Japan. I'm sure it does get colder at night, and all that donated kerosene will be used for heating.

We came to a point in Sendai about 14 kilometers or 8 miles from the Pacific coast. My friend Charles did not want to purposely drive close enough to see any destruction. He said he saw enough of it on TV.

Photos after arriving in Sendai



Happy recipients of goods



Mrs. Tayama with one of the three
30 kilograms of rice donated by
friends in Niigata



Charles with the Tayamas



Yours truly struggling to hold the
30 kilogram bag of rice waiting for
Charles to figure out how to use
the camera.



The children rejoicing over the box
of bread products donated by a
bakery in Niigata



The Tayama family with some of the
supplies they received.

Testimonials from Friends in Sendai

Mrs. Tayama: "I work as a maid in a large hotel in Sendai. I was on the 10th floor in standing in front of the elevator when the earthquake hit. As soon as I pushed the down button to call the elevator, the building started to shake. It shook so bad I couldn't stand up without falling. I crouched down on the floor and stayed there till the shaking stopped."

Mr. Tayama: "The night of the earthquake we all slept with our clothes on. Tremors continued through the night. We knew we all may have to evacuate the building at any time. "

Bringing supplies to friends in Sendai



Tomorrow, Saturday March 26th, Charles Begley, the director of Begley Productions and I will travel to the city of Sendai, the largest city in northeast Japan that was affected by the earthquake, to bring supplies to a large family of 4 adults and 7 children. They are sitting in a cold house wearing their winter coats for lack of kerosene for heating.

So far we have acquired,

- 4 containers of kerosene holding 18 liters each equaling 72 liters.
- 60 kilograms of rice
- Boxes of macaroni
- Vegetables such as cabbage, carrots and onions

They also requested we bring can meat, fresh meat, natou, and ingredients to make curry and stew.

It's unfortunate that we cannot bring more kerosene to this family. That 72 liters may last them only a week. But it will soon be April and warmer weather.

Sixty kilograms of rice is enough for at least two months of meals. By then it may be easier for them to buy rice locally.

The route to Sendai will take us within 57 kilometers of the nuclear power plant in trouble in Fukushima. But this is well outside the danger radius. I've heard people within 20 kilometers of the nuclear reactors have been evacuated.

Message from an acquaintance of the people who are fighting the radiation leak in the crippled nuclear power plant in Fukushima



I received the following email from a friend about the situation of the nuclear power-plant in Fukushima.

Dear everyone,

I have an urgent request for prayer. Right now there are people who are giving their all to save our country, its people, and you and your family at the risk of their lives at Fukushima atomic power plant. Please pray for the success of their work.

The Soldiers of Special chemical troop of Defense army (those who are working at the plant now) are volunteers who are above 55years old, who believe that their responsibility to their families (raising their children) is nearly over. They have volunteered to do this work. There are 50 such volunteers.

This is an excerpt from an article in JIji-tsushin□

Tokyo Electric Company has asked different cooperative firms for help of volunteers who would be a suicide squad to do the technical work inside of atomic power house.

One of the volunteers who has been working at an atomic power plant in West Japan for 40 years volunteered saying he would have only one year till his retirement and his children are grown up now.

His family couldn't dissuade him. He is quiet but firm in his determination that such a difficult job should be done by veterans like him. His daughter said this is a side of her father that she has never seen before.

The next day, 20 more volunteers left their homes for this mission as if it was a usual morning of going to work.

Working under such conditions at atomic power plant, it is usual to be

exposed to radiation. The allowed amount of contamination during such work is limited by the government to 100msv.

But this number was changed from 100msv to 250 msv because those volunteers have requested to lift the limit so that they would have enough time to do their work. So they were prepared to risk high doses of radiation.

The peace that we still enjoy now is due to their sacrifice...

Please everyone, pray!

Please pray that the mission can be completed.

Please pray that the future missions awaiting will be successful.

Pray for the safety of these workers.

Please tell all of your friends, family members, and as many people as possible

Ask them to join us in prayer for this.

Satellite photos of the affected areas of Japan before and after the catastrophe



Fukushima Daiichi (meaning #1) Nuclear Plant

My brother Mike sent me the following link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/03/13/world/asia/satellite-photos-japan-before-and-after-tsunami.html>

Each photo has a slider in the middle. Move the slider back and forth by putting your mouse pointer in the middle of the center bar and holding down the left mouse button, and you will see the tremendous difference and amount of destruction caused by the earthquake and tsunami. Simply awful! Seeing the difference of before and after is simply heartbreaking. I've been to that area frequently back in the mid-1970s. It was one of the most beautiful areas of Japan. Now it's a wasteland.

Day 5 after the Japan earthquake: Hitchhiked back home



The red line shows the route I took back to Niigata. The right arrow points to one of the nuclear powerplants in trouble.

March 16, 2011: While in Kobe I joined a NPO project and worked nearly all my waking hours for two days to setup a new web site, Help Japan 2011, to help raise aid for the earthquake victims. The next day I traveled back to my home in Niigata partly by train but mainly by hitchhiking. I started off at Kanda parking area on the Hokuriku expressway in Shiga prefecture. It was surprisingly cold and snowing the front license plates of the cars were covered with wet snow and unreadable. I brushed off the snow from several license plates to determine how far the driver may be going.

Parts of the Hokuriku expressway run very close to the Sea of Japan. There was no threat of tsunami danger as they rarely occur on this side of Japan. However, on 26 May 1983, [104 people were killed in close to the Sea of Japan in Akita](#) by a tsunami after an earthquake.

You can see from the map that I traveled back to an area closer to possible danger. But I do not believe Niigata will be affected much even if the situation in Fukushima worsens.

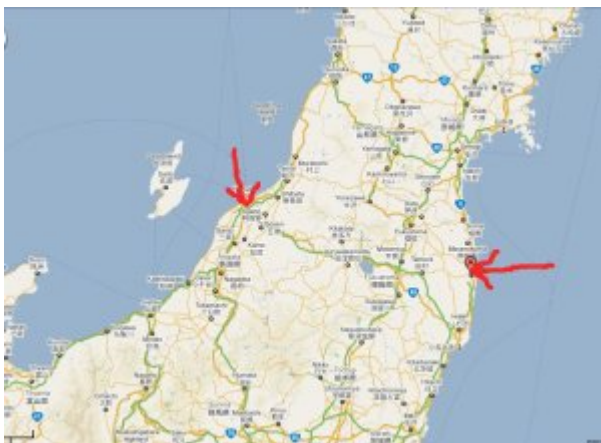
God was good to me and I saved thousands of yen getting lifts as far as Uozu city in Toyama Prefecture in 5 cars. It was past dark by that time and so I took trains the rest of the way. To save money, I took local trains. However at Joetsu the trains were stopped due to a plastic sheet that had wrapped itself around a power-line of the train. In order to get home that day, I was forced to take an express train from there for which I was charged an extra 1150 yen express ticket to Nagaoka city. For some reason I wasn't charged for an express ticket the rest of the way.

The first driver was a young man who listened intently to the Bible stories I shared with him. The second was a father and son who run a Buddhist Temple. The son was dressed in a Buddhist monk's clothing and had a shaved head. They asked me to explain who Jesus Christ is and what He means to the world, and of course I was more than glad to do so.

You may wonder why I would talk of matters of faith at such a time of crisis as Japan is in now. Most Japanese are very apathetic to matters of religion, but now they are seeking comfort, and are open to hearing answers from the Bible about their problems. One man even told me to pray for the earthquake victims!

One of the drivers was a young single lady, Kana Chan, who lived in Australia for two years. Thank you Kana Chan for the ride!

[News from friends affected by the earthquake](#)



The left arrow points to my location and the right one is the location of one of the nuclear power plants in trouble.

Two days ago I was finally able to contact a friend in Sendai, the largest city closest to the epicenter. He said that he and his family are OK and that their apartment building had only minor damage. Dishes have fallen off the shelf and many were broken.

The friend met up with news journalists from America and took them close to the towns of the Rikuzen coast that were destroyed by the tsunami. The towns are completely gone with only rubbish remaining.

Due to concerns of a possible meltdown of the nuclear reactors in neighboring Fukushima, he and his family will move from Sendai to avoid possible radiation contamination.

A family with 7 children who live next door to me moved to Nagoya, far from

Fukushima. They had planned to move even before the time of the disaster and it gave them greater motivation to leave quicker than planned. But as I said in a previous post, I do not think nuclear radiation will come to the Niigata area where I live. The prevailing winds blow from the west to the east, and there is a mountain range between us and one of the Fukushima power plants, 180 kilometers away.

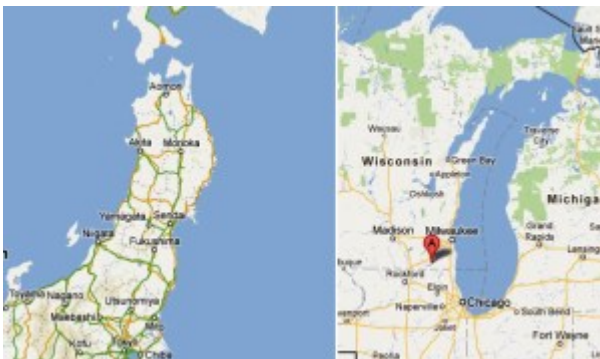
A family I know who has a house in Chiba just east of Tokyo has left the country entirely.

Fukushima prefecture is one of the neighboring prefectures of Niigata, where I live. Fukushima is one of my stomping grounds.

The Chinese ideograph of Fukushima literally means, "happy island". Who is the author of life? Yeshua Hamashiach – AKA Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Who is the author of unhappiness and death – Lucifer, AKA Satan, the hairy one.

The Rikuzen coast was one of the most beautiful areas of Japan to visit. It became a wasteland.

[Joined an NPO project to help the Sendai Earthquake Victims](#)



The Tohoku or Northeast area of Japan is about the size of Lake Michigan. The earthquake moved this massive amount of land 2.4 m (8 ft) east into the Pacific! That's what caused the tsunami that killed 19,759 people.

It was an auspicious time for me to come to Osaka after the earthquake. I was contacted by a friend, Josh DeSantis, the chairman of Hiyaku28 NPO, to come to Kobe to set up a new website to raise donations for the earthquake victims. Josh participated in the relief efforts of the 1995 Kobe earthquake. Kobe is only a 360 yen train ride from where I was in Osaka. I had just enough money to get to Kobe with 69 yen left in my pocket, the remainder of 5000 yen I started with a week ago. Please see the web site I put up so far: Help Japan 2011

There is no chance for me to have a direct face to face contact with the

earthquake victims at this time. Authorities have been telling volunteers not to come! Rescue operations are still underway. Much of the devastated area is still under water. Only professional rescue workers are allowed.

The Situation of my Family and Friends after the Tohoku Earthquake



I've been calling all my friends, especially the ones that live close to the earthquake epicenter near Sendai, Japan. Nobody I know was hurt during the earthquake in the slightest. Everybody in Northern Japan experienced the shocks of the quake, but nobody was close enough to the coast to be affected by the tsunami.

My family in Niigata reports that they all went outside during the earthquake, but then went back inside when it was over because of the cold. Simon in Misawa in Aomori Prefecture says he was without power for 40 hours. Sam in western Tokyo was also without power, but he has a generator that generated enough power for lights. Paul in Nasu, northern Tochigi prefecture said that he and his family were not at home during the quake. They returned to find many broken dishes on the floor. I tried calling friends in Sendai which is close to the epicenter, but their phones were not working. However, I heard from others that they are all OK.

I lived in Sendai from 1975 – 1977. During that time I used to visit the towns of the Rikuzen area that were destroyed by the tsunami. There is not a single city in the area I haven't been to.

Day after the Sendai earthquake –

hitchhike adventure from Tokyo to Osaka



Saturday, March 11, 2011: The morning after the major earthquake in the Pacific not far from Sendai, the largest city in the Tohoku area, I accessed the Internet news and saw more horrific photos of destruction by the tsunami. A friend with whom I stayed with said, "Over 10,000 people were killed!" I began to weep but learned later he got it wrong. So far the number of reported deaths is 1/10 of that number, but it will probably go much higher.

I have been to the city of Sendai many times, and even lived there once from 1976-1978. The year I left there was a major earthquake that destroyed part of the city. I used to visit from time to time the very towns along the Pacific coast that were destroyed by the tsunami.

The purpose of my trip is to search for employment to earn more money. Jobs are now scarce at home, and my previous source of income was terminated. I had considered visiting friends in Yaizu city in Shizuoka Prefecture, but because their house is right on the coast, I didn't consider it a safe place to be at this time. Osaka was a better option for me. I had only 1500 yen left in my pocket, but I knew it would be enough to get me to Osaka. This is why I headed the opposite direction from the destruction in Tohoku. I am not running from danger. I know another earthquake can happen at any time no matter where I am, and I'm now in Osaka, not far from Kobe which was destroyed in 1995 by a major earthquake.

The trains in Tokyo all stopped immediately after the earthquake, but the next morning they were all running again. I took a 260 yen train ride to Fujigaoka station on the Denentoshi line and walked from there to the Kohoku Parking Area on the Tomei expressway. In just a few minutes a car with 3 men offered me a ride as far as Nagoya.

Part of the Tohoku expressway in Shizuoka Prefecture runs right next to the ocean, and there was a tsunami warning alert out. The police closed that section of the expressway till the alert was lifted. In spite of the alert, vehicles waited in a long line for many kilometers in anticipation that the alert would be lifted. I don't know how long the first cars waited but we had

to wait only 15 some minutes.

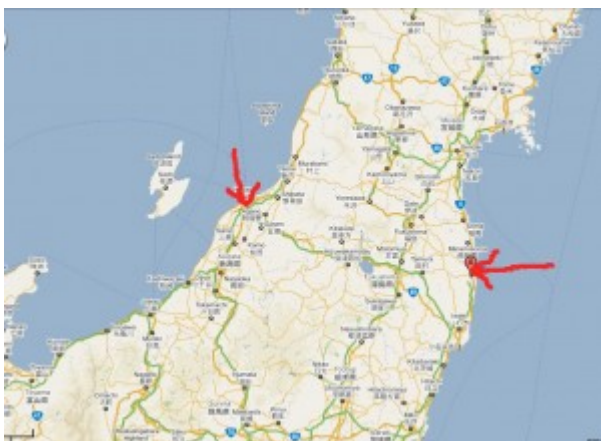
In order to keep some of the impatient drivers from speeding after the expressway re-opened, a police car and an expressway maintenance truck led the procession of traffic at a slow pace at first, only 60 kilometers per hour. A few kilometers later they increased the speed to 80. Finally both left at the next exit and the traffic took off! The driver in the car I was in started to cruise at 150 KM an hour and reached up to 180 KM an hour from time to time, 60 KM over the limit. It would have been a hefty fine and his license taken away if he was caught.

From Nagoya a 31 year old man took me to Kyoto. From there it was only a 360 yen train ticket to Osaka.

During times of major catastrophes such as the earthquake, the Japanese become more open to hearing about God and matters of faith. The man listened intently as I shared with him the meaning of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The first 3 chapters of the Bible hold the key of understanding all the rest of the Scriptures. Most Japanese have no interest in religion per se, but are highly interested in history. I try to share faith with them from this point of view.

As i write this I am siting in my friend's apartment in Osaka walking the news about the earthquake on CNN. I know as much as you do about it. Osaka is far from Sendai and nobody here even felt the quake.

Shook up while in Tokyo by Massive Earthquake



The pointer on the left points to where I lived in Niigata City, and the pointer on the left is where the Fukushima nuclear reactors are that were damaged by the earthquake and tsunami.

March 11, 2011: At 2:46 PM local Japan time I was sitting in a MacDonald's in Sangenjaya, only two train stops from Shibuya, a major commercial center of

Tokyo. An earthquake began shaking the building. There are earthquakes in Japan from time to time that are strong enough to be felt without doing any damage, but this one was the strongest I have experienced in my life doing damage right before my eyes! It got stronger and stronger to the point that the women in the MacDonald's started to scream and a few people ducked under the counters to protect themselves. A large picture window close to where I was sitting was shattered to pieces! Glass fell on the street and on the floor of the MacDonald's, and one piece even landed on the counter where I had my laptop PC. I grabbed the laptop and the rest of my stuff, and went outside and watched as the police brought brooms and swept the broken glass. A police box is just next to that MacDonald's.

At first I thought the earthquake was local because only the MacDonald's seemed to have damage, but I hear the main part was the Northeast of Japan, which meant the entire north half of Honshu felt the earthquake.

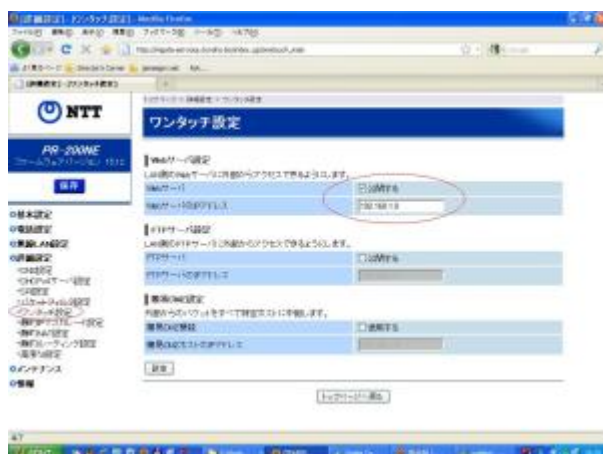
It was a good time to meet people and talk with them. It seems people are more willing to take time and stand and talk when something big happens that shakes them up!

Thirty minutes later there was an aftershock and more broken glass fell from the window. The police tried to keep the people away from the building, and the MacDonalds closed for business that day. It's funny but that was the only business that closed from what I could see. Everybody else continued business as normal.

A few hours later in the evening, I heard for the first time how massive the earthquake was, all of northern Japan and especially the Northeast area, an area I sometimes visit.

As I write this post, I can still feel aftershocks from time to time.

Adventure Setting Up a Home Web Server



Following instructions from a couple web articles, I learned to set up my own

home web server!