November 2015 Adventure Hitchhiking to Aomori Prefecture

On November 21, 2015, I hitchhiked in 9 cars from Gatsugi in Murakami City, Niigata Prefecture, to Hirosaki in Aomori, a distance of 330 kilometers of about 206 miles. This trip was so unusual that I feel compelled to document it in this post.

The first car was from Murakami city at the intersection of Route 345 and Route 7. Two ladies with two little boys 3 and 4 years old stopped for me! They were on their way to the Kamo Aquarium in Tsuruoka City, Yamagata Prefecture. It was such fun talking to the boys and the ladies. They are sisters, twins but not identical, and the one sitting on the passenger side is the mother of the two boys.

The ladies dropped me off at a point still far from the center of Tsuruoka. I walked a mile or so to get to a better traffic light where I could hitchhike. On the way I met the goat you see in the photo! He was friendly and let me pet it, but then he put my arm between his horns and twisted his head in such way it hurt my arm! I immediately left.

Car #2 was a lady who took me to an ideal point in central Tsuruoka. From there many cars would be going to the next city of Sakata.

After only a short wait a man on his way to Sakata picked me up. He plays the viola in a orchestra!

Car #4 was a mother and daughter who took me close to the border of Akita, the town of Yuza.

Car # 5 was a lady from Niigata, Kazuoka Kobayashi, who is from the same remote area of Japan as my friends, the Matsuoka family, and she of course knows them! She was on her way to her home town. I would have gone with her to see my friends but their children were sick with the flu. Even more

unusual is that she heard the Gospel when she was little, loves the Words of Jesus, and realized she is a child of God! And because her and I would be returning back the same day two days later, we arranged that I meet her at the closest train station that was convenient for both of us so that we could return to Niigata together. And so we did!

Kazuko took me to an expressway parking area that had only a few cars. Normally I would not choose such a place to hitchhike, and felt a bit worried. However only a few minutes after Kazuoka left a car with a married couple entered the parking area and offered to take me to the next large city of Noshiro. This was perfect for me!

From Noshiro after only a few minutes wait a lady, car #7 pulled up and offered to take me to Futatsui. This is only a relatively short distance but on my way to the next city of Odate.

Car #8 was yet another lady, Keiko Kanako, a piano teacher! And she was playing George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue which I just heard the previous evening! I introduced her to Emily Bear, a gifted American pianst that some consider to be a child Mozart. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=To7EG40KofU

Did you count the number of cars with only ladies? Six in one day! This is by far my record! Things like this happen only in Japan.

Keiko took me to my favorite hitchhike spot in Odate, from there many cars would be going to Aomori. It was cold and I went to the toilet of the convenience store nearby to put on warmer clothes. It's now after 4 p.m. and getting dark. After 20 or so minutes of no success and getting cold I decieded to walk up the road to try to stay warm. After another 10 minutes or so a man offered to take me to Hirosaki train station. This is only 45 kilometers or 30 miles short of my final destination. I took a train the rest of the way.

God is good and answered my prayers in Jesus's Name abundantly!