

A driver's mistake helps me to get home



Asari Toru who drove me a distance of 200 kilometers

October 25: I'm in Aomori city and on the way back home to Niigata. Rather than go back the way I came along National Route #7, I decided to try the Tohoku expressway that runs through Sendai.

The first driver was on his way back home to Akita City after attending a Rugby match in Aomori. He offered to take me to Route 7 in Akita city. Because he would be taking the expressway a major part of the way, I knew I would make good time, but I also knew getting to Akita even as early as 1 PM would still leave me hitchhiking in the dark by the time I got to Tsuruoka in Yamagata with 150 kilometers left to go. I hoped rather that I would be able to continue on the Tohoku expressway, but I knew that the Hanawa Service Area where I needed to get off at was past the driver's exit. Amazingly the driver missed his exit and ended up taking me to the Hanawa Service area anyway!

It was a 3-hour wait at Hanawa before I caught the second ride. It's not easy on me physically to stand for three hours waiting for rides, but I knew if I could catch a good one, it would be worth the wait. A 30-year-old man, Toru, took me all the way to Miyagi Prefecture just before Sendai. He drove at a good clip which gained me some time. Toru listened intently while I shared with him the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. I told him if he even only knows, understands and believes in the first 6 chapters of the book of Genesis, he'll be smarter than most of the professors of Tokyo University, the top school in Japan! And I'm not kidding when I say that.

After that, a sweet older couple from Morioka who were on the way to Yokohama took me to Adataru which is just before the Ban'etsu expressway junction that leads home. Morioka is a conservative town deep in the country, but because their daughter married a man from the U.K. and is living there now, they both felt an affinity toward foreigners.

Though I still ended up hitchhiking in the dark at the Adataru Service area, going the remaining 150 kilometers home meant just one good ride rather than

several on Route 7. A chiropractor from Fukushima picked me up after a 40-minute wait and took me all the way home.