

# Northern Japan continues to shake

Last night at 11:32 PM while in bed in my home in Niigata near the Sea of Japan, I felt a relatively strong earthquake. The building shook for a considerable amount of time. It is not common for earthquakes to occur on the west side of Japan, and because of the duration of the quake, I thought it may have occurred on the Pacific side near the previous earthquake of March 11. A radio report confirmed it.

Increased frequency of earthquakes is one of the signs that Jesus said would precede His return to earth.

Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

Matthew 24:4 ¶And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

Matthew 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Matthew 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Matthew 24:7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and **earthquakes, in divers places.**

There are 66 books, 1,189 chapters and 31,102 verses in the Bible. It's interesting to note that in the 19 times and 16 verses the word earthquake in either its singular or plural form appears in 9 books and 14 chapters of the Bible, it appears 7 times in 5 verses in the book of Revelation, more often than in any other book of the Bible. The book of Revelation is the last book of the Bible and the book that most people associate with the last days just before Christ's return to earth.

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Lily Arendt



This is a photo I took of my little girl, Lily, then 4 years old, when we lived in Kamakura city Kanagawa prefecture. The photo is on the Shonan coast, near Inamuragasaki. I was taken with black and white film, and developed and printed personally by me. Back in those days I did a lot of B/W photography with my 35 MM Minolta SLR, and had the availability of a darkroom.



Lily Arendt, 4 years old, Kamakura city Kanagawa prefecture, Shonan coast, near Inamuragasaki, 1989.

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## [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.

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## [Satellite photos of the affected areas of Japan before and after the catastrophe](#)



Fukushima Daiichi (meaning #1) Nuclear Plant

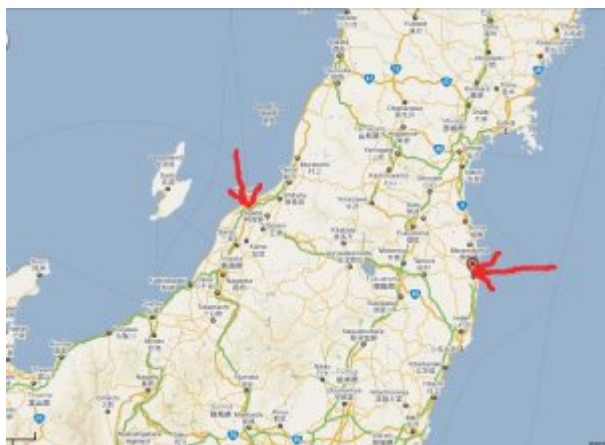
My brother Mike sent me the following link:

<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.

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## [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.

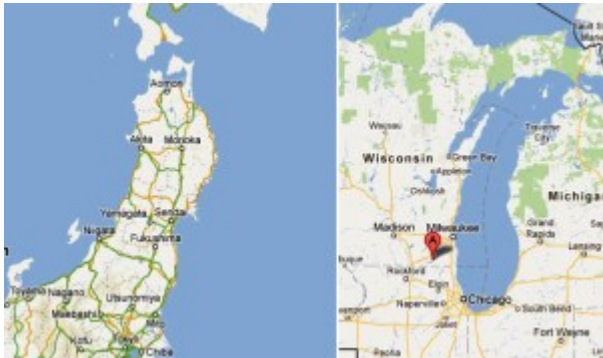
Fukushima prefecture is one of the neighboring prefectures of Niigata, where I live. Fukushima is one of my stomping grounds.

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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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## [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 right 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.

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## [Niigata to Kanto – tramatic 4th 2011 hitchhike adventure](#)



Walls of snow along road in Japan

**February 1, 2011:** I started out very well with the first ride on my trip to Noda city in Chiba prefecture, just east of Tokyo. The purpose of this trip was to attend a fellowship meeting at 7 PM. It was good weather and I left home at a very good time, just after 10 AM. Tokyo is 300 kilometers away but it usually takes me less than 6 hours, only half a day. I found that weekends

are best for hitchhiking, but today was a weekday, a Tuesday. I finally arrived in Noda at 8:25 PM!

After waiting only a minute, the first driver took me all the way to Sanjo city, the entrance of the Hokuriku Expressway. He kindly went out of his way to do so. From there I took a 180 bus ride to Sakae parking area on the Hokuriku. The preponderance of the traffic was local. Hardly anybody was going to the Kanto plain.

After waiting at Sakae PA in Sanjo for over 90 minutes, I accepted a ride from a young single couple to Ozumi parking area. This is further down the road but just past the Nagaoka junction going towards Joetsu city which is not the direction I needed to go. However I knew I could walk to the other side of the expressway and catch traffic that could go toward Kanto.

I found my situation at Ozumi even worse than it was in Sakae! There was much snow and ice in the parking area, and most of the traffic was going back in the direction I just came from. After waiting another hour and a half, I accepted a ride from a lady going to Nagaoka city. Normally I would not want to get off the expressway in Nagaoka, but the situation was so that my only hope was to hitchhike from Nagaoka down National Highway route 17 and get back on the expressway – this time the Kan'etsu – to catch a car to Kanto.

The lady took me only as far as National Highway route 8, too far to walk to route 17. Snow was piled up so high along the road I had very little room to stand between it and passing cars. A police car approached me and the officer said in very good English, "Don't enter this road! There are many truck accidents here!" Oh my, things could hardly be worse! It was already past 2PM and I have yet 250 kilometers to go. I couldn't walk further down the road without disobeying the police officer. The only option was to stand at a rather poor intersection with more room to stand hoping to catch a car. Cars whizzed past me. Drivers coming to route 8 from the road perpendicular to it were only 2 or 3 every few minutes.

Finally, after waiting there for about 20 minutes, an older man in a pickup truck took pity on me and offered me a ride. He went out of his way to take me to route 17.

At route 17 I caught the next ride within a minute! The driver offered to take me to the Yamaya Parking area on the Kan'etsu. I had never been to Yamaya before because it is a rather small parking area with few cars. It took a while to find it. Snow in that area is one of the deepest in all of Japan. Walls of snow higher than our heads lined the roads everywhere making navigation harder than it would have been without them.

The driver, being a local man, was able to figure out Yamaya's location and took me to the back entrance. As soon as I got there, I saw a man and told him I needed to go to Kanto. He looked at me warily and asked me who I was, and if I didn't have anything dangerous in my luggage. He was a Yamazaki bread truck driver with a load of bread going all the way to Tokorozawa in Saitama and offered me a ride to Higashi Tokorozaka station. But because of company rules, he couldn't go any faster than 80 kilometers an hour which



meant at least 40 minutes longer than most cars would take me. But in this case, it was a “bird in the hand” situation and I was happy just to get to Noda. It turned out being an hour and 25 minutes late wasn’t such a big problem after all, for the meeting continued to 10 PM, and I had a good time and made new friends. The trip was worth the effort.

My return trip was the exact opposite of the previous day. It only took one car with hardly any waiting to get all the way back home. A 25-year-old man named Takuma who sells wasabi offered me a ride to Niigata station but then decided to take me a bit further to my area.

The first hour of our conversation was just asking him questions about his life and background. It didn’t seem to be leading to anything deeper. I feel I owe to every driver who picks me up a message of Salvation in knowing the Author of life, Jesus Christ, but because Takuma wasn’t asking me anything about what I do, I didn’t see any openings to the subject of Biblical/spiritual things. Finally, I got the inspiration to ask him if he knew the story of the Garden of Eden. This worked and lead to deeper talk! Most Japanese are open to hearing bible stories, and Genesis chapters 1-3 is a good place to start because it explains so many things about why the world is as it is today.

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## [Saitama to Niigata – 3rd hitchhike adventure 2011](#)



**January 25:** Today in 4 cars I hitchhiked back to Niigata. The third driver would have taken me to Nagaoka train station, but because it was not too late, still 4PM with a hour of sunlight left, and because I would have had to wait 50 minutes at the train station for the next train, I decided to try to try to hitchhike a bit further. It was now the beginning of the rush hour, in spite of many cars on the road, nearly everybody was ignoring me. The ones who didn’t gave me a cross arm sign meaning, “NO!”. I always turn my eyes away from them when they do that and don’t take it personally. This is the only type of rejection I find no trouble to handle. □

The 20 minutes wait on snowy route 8 proved indeed to be worth it, for Miss Mao, a young lady in her 20s, took pity on me and turned around to pick me up! Miss Mao is one of those special people who I know God especially has His eyes on, for she has love for others, and she listened intently as I told her stories from the Bible.

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## Japanese traditional drink for the new year: Otoso

# お屠蘇

Otoso, the traditional Japanese drink during new year celebration.

Every year for three days from January 1st, the Japanese drink [Otoso](#) as part of their celebration of the new year. It is made of spiced Japanese rice wine.

Most Japanese don't know the root of the meaning of the word Otoso which literally means, "something that was slaughtered and resurrected." Yes! This name literally has Christian roots! It has to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Reading from left to right as in English, the first character for O makes a word honorific, the same meaning as the o in *Ocha*, Japanese green tea.

The second character with the sound of to means a person who was slaughtered or killed.

The third character, so, has the meaning of resurrection, coming back to life. Interestingly part of this character is the character for fish. A fish symbol was used among early Christians as a secret sign to know one other. The top part of the character is used in all characters that are plants. Some people say it represents a crown of thorns. The right part of the character has the meaning of tree with a cross.

There is not a single educated Japanese person who will argue the meaning of those Chinese characters! I repeat, not a single person. It is as clear as the difference between black and white to them. Some doubters may argue the Christian roots of that word, but they will not deny those characters mean something killed / resurrected.

There are **many** things in Japanese language and culture that indicate

Christianity came to Japan far earlier than most Japanese believe. They were taught in school that Christianity first came to Japan with a Jesuit priest, Francis Xavier, who came to Japan in 1549. But evidence abounds that Christian missionaries came to Japan much earlier, from the 2nd century. This knowledge has been covered.

I hope to add to this blog from time to time more information about Christian influence in Japan that have become central to Japan culture.

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## [Hitchhike stats for 2010](#)



Happy new year to all!

Yesterday, December 30th, I returned home after a very fruitful 12 day trip to the Kanto and Kansai areas of Japan. Kanto includes Tokyo and Kansai is all of the area of Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe and surrounding towns and cities. The total distance hitchhiked in Japan this year was 15800 kilometers.

The graph below shows a comparison of the distance I hitchhiked this year compared to 4 previous years. As you can see, it was a bit less than last year's total of 19530 kilometers.



Graph of distances hitchhiked in Japan through the years

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## [Adventure hitchhiking home from Misawa](#)

## city, Aomori Prefecture



**Nov. 14, 2010:** Today I hitchhiked back home from Misawa city in Aomori, a distance of 570 kilometers, in only 8.5 hours and 3 cars! This was probably one of the quickest and easiest days ever hitchhiking such a distance.

Misawa is home to a large US Air Force base. Many of the people of the city can speak English. I'm sure they benefit economically from the base.

The first driver was a young father, Mr. Nagano, with his two sons, 5 and 6 years old in the back seat. He works as an air traffic controller at Misawa Air base and his wife works part time at a MacDonaldds. Mr. Nagano was on his way to Hachinohe, but because he had extra time, and because he seemed to enjoy speaking to me in English, he took me way out of his way down the Hachinohe expressway to Orizumi Service area. From there it was much easier to get a ride rather than from the expressway entrance at Hachinohe.

The next car were 3 older ladies on their way to Mizusawa in Iwate Prefecture. They took me to Shiwa Service Area past Morioka. I was now in an excellent position to get to Adatarara Service Area in Fukushima, the service area just before the Ban'etsu expressway junction. I needed to travel along the Ban'etsu if I hoped to get home that day.

The last driver, Mr. Motoki, was on his way to Maebashi city in Gunma. It was pretty much a straight shot for Mr. Motoki to go down the Tohoku expressway, get off at Sano in Tochigi prefecture, and take the national highway route 50 toward Maebashi from where he would pick up yet another expressway, but he instead opted to take me to Niigata via the Ban'etsu expressway. It was a bit longer for him to go toward Niigata, but it is also a straight shot from Niigata to his destination of Maebashi.

It was dark by the time we reached Adatarara SA, and Mr. Motoki didn't want me to hitchhike in the dark, so he offered to take me home. It was probably better overall for Mr. Motoki to return the way he did, for he avoided at least one traffic jam and saved an extra 1000 yen in toll by staying on the expressway. On the weekends in Japan, if you have a "ETC card", you can travel any distance in Japan on the expressway for only a 1000 yen! This is only a fraction of the toll on a weekday.

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## Adventure to Akita station



I needed to travel from Niigata to Aomori city for important business the following day. If I hitchhike, I like to give myself two days to be on the safe side to be on time for such matters. Aomori city is 470 kilometers from home and mostly by regular highway. I often can only get as far as Akita city – a little over half way – where I spend the night at a friend’s house. But this time I couldn’t spare an extra day. That meant a long ride by the slow, non-express train to save money.

There was an hour and a half wait time between changing trains in Akita. Rather than take the train to Akita station, I opted to get off at Kamihama station which is close to Route 7 and half way between Sakata city and Akita city. The train station man was surprised I got off at Kamihama. He said, “There is nothing here!” I told him, “I’ll find something to do!”

After only a few minutes wait at the traffic signal just in front of the station, a man in a recycle truck carrying what he referred to as “sleeping resources” (a junk motorcycle and some metal trash) picked me up and said he could take me just before Akita city, about 80 kilometers! I knew I could still easily make the train connection at Akita station if I couldn’t hitchhike further past Akita.

The man, Mr. Shindo (63) is a metal recycle dealer. His business card says, “Metal recycle with a smile”. Mr. Shindo’s philosophy of life is similar to mine. “Life is a journey” he says. It began to rain and so he decided after a while to take me all the way to Akita station. On the way Mr. Shindo bought me a nice lunch of fried noddles and introduced me to his lady friend at the noodle shop. By hitchhiking, I made two new friends, got a free lunch, and saved 1000 yen of train fare. Life is indeed a journey.

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# Adventure hitchhiking to Okabe station in Saitama



**Nov. 6, 2010:** Today my destination was Konosu city in Saitama Prefecture, some 250 kilometers from home. I got to Okabe station on the Takasaki line in 4 cars. The third vehicle was Mr. Mrs. Noda, dentists who live in Kamo City in Niigata Prefecture. Every time I meet a dentist, I always show them my teeth and they exclaim how nice they are. I inherited exceptionally strong teeth from my mother who had all of hers up to when she turned 80. I'm 60 years old and never had a cavity.

The Nodas took me to the Yorii parking area on the Kan'etsu expressway which is not far from Hanazono interchange. I hoped to catch a ride exiting the expressway at Hanazono that was going in the direction of Kumagaya city, the big city not far from Konosu. But after waiting over 30 minutes with no success, I opted to leave the parking area out the back parking area workers' gate and try to catch a ride on the regular road. I never got off the Kan'etsu expressway at Yorii before and was unfamiliar with the area. I soon learned it is an especially remote place, far from a large city, and there was no traffic along the country road I was walking on! I only had the setting sun to my back to know I was going in the right direction. I've joked sometimes that because Japan is so small with so many trains, if you walk in any direction for any length of time, you are bound to arrive at a train station that goes somewhere. This is true but that "length of time" could be very long indeed if you are deep in the country like I was. It would have taken me well over an hour to walk it, and I was hauling a rather heavy piece of luggage.

Finally a car approached me. The nice thing about being deep in the country is that usually the very first car will stop, and so was the case today. The driver was glad to give me a lift to the closest station for he was going that way. I would have walked further than I needed to without him not knowing the roads.

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## Hitchhike adventure to Misawa city, Aomori city, Saitama prefecture Soka city, (next to Tokyo) Niigata city



On October 8th, 2010, from Sendai, the largest city in the northeastern area of Japan, I hitchhiked in 8 vehicles to the city of Misawa in Aomori Prefecture. Misawa city is host to a US Air Force military base. Yours truly served the Air Force and the government of the United States of America from February 10, 1970, to February 9, 1974. I appreciated the discipline of military life, and seriously considered before my tour of duty expired to continue my server my government, the United States of America. However, after 3 years and 9 months left in my military duty, I felt called to a higher calling. I wanted to do more in life than follow my wife's shopping cart when buying groceries to feed me and the rest of the family. I felt called to be an ambassador to the Kingdom of the Creator, Jesus, Yeshua.

Every person I encounter in life is a unique experience for me to understand why the Creator made us like Him but yet so different from each other. A few of the kind Japanese people who picked me up:



