

Good morning.

My name is Hidetoshi Taniguchi.

I came from Osaka, Japan and joined PBC in September 2007. I'm grateful that I can share what's going on in Japan, churches in Japan, and Japanese community here in the bayarea after the massive earthquake and tsunami struck east part of Japan on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

This is the strongest and largest earthquake recorded in Japan, and affecting multiple ways that is Earthquakes, Tsunami and the damage in nuclear power plant. However this disaster could not destroy the dignity of men and women in Japan. They stay organized, help each other and not doing evil things against one another.

Yuta Kajita, Hashigami Jr. high school student, made a speech on behalf of the students at the commencement ceremony. The speech went like this:

**“We were helpless before the disaster the nature brought to us.  
It mercilessly took away the most precious things from us.**

**It was too brutal to be called a trial from Heaven.  
This is too painful and frustrating and I can't bear this.**

**But, we won't curse Heaven.  
We accept our destiny and help each other.  
That is our calling.”**

This 15-year-old boy's speech may represent how people affected are like. They are brought to be humble, not blaming God and seeking hope in the midst of the tragedy.

The disaster has also affected our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Fukushima First Bible Baptist Church stood near the nuclear plant. This church has to be closed down.

Members of the church had to evacuate, and being helped by two churches. Pastor Akira Sato reported that God had been adding new believers.

In his report on March 13<sup>th</sup>, he says,

**I humbly request your fervent, urgent prayers that our church would survive this crisis and the work of mission would not be stopped, that we would rise again, and that the radiation leak would be stopped. I covet your prayer.**

Japanese people who live in Stanford area are emotionally affected. There are some people at Stanford whose friends and families were affected. My wife and other ladies gather together and raised funds by making bento boxes and cookies. They are housemakers who don't have job or money, but they are trying to find what they can do with what they have.

Today, we brought baked goods made by Japanese ladies and a member of the Japanese bible study here in PBC. Please pick up some after the service, with donations of any amount. All donation goes to Christian organizations that help churches and people.

Children in the local public school are collecting donations for Japan. My two daughters started making origami to give to their friends who donates for Japan. The amount of donation may be minimal, but the heart they are sending is enormous. I believe it is God who put the love for people in children's heart. And they prove that He can make good out of this tragedy.

At the patio, we have set up the activity that kids can do to support Japan.

Many friends are kind enough to ask me if my families and friends are OK. They are OK but I always miss to say that I'm not.

I'm not OK because so many people including young children had swept away by tsunamis.

I'm not OK, because so many people lost their families, friends and homes.

I'm not OK because they are still suffering.

There are brothers and sisters who are suffering in Japan. They are part of our body. Here I am suffering and I'm part of this body of Christ.

People need care from our body of Christ.

It means a lot if we take action as a body of Christ.

"Why did this happen?" This is the question many people ask.

And this now became the question *I* ask.

It seems that God doesn't answer.

He may not answer because He's also suffering and choked up with tears.

He may not answer because it's not a good time to know the answer.

But I can still cling to God, never let go of Him until God bless Japan.

Like Jacob who wrestled with God, I am wrestling in prayer to win the blessings.

I believe that Japan will rise again.

But how Japan stand up again matters more.

I don't want Japan to just stand up with her own strength. Japan is helped by other countries, but I want people in Japan to know that it is God who makes it possible for them to overcome this hardship.

Like the crowd of 5000 people, I want Japan to be fed by Jesus.

Like a man with leprosy, I want Japan to be touched by Jesus.

Like a deaf man at Decapolis, I want Japan to hear Jesus.

Like a blind man at Bethsaida, I want Japan to see Jesus.

Like a paralytic carried by four men, I want Japan to stand up with Jesus' command.

Like a crippled man sitting at the temple gate, I want Japan to walk in the name of Jesus.

**Psalm 37:24 says;  
though he may stumble, he will not fall,  
for the LORD upholds him with his hand**

I pray that God Himself will bring Japan on its feet.

Please join me in prayer if you will.

Dear Heavenly father, you are the Creator and sovereign God.  
You are our God and we are your people.

We praise your name.  
You are good all the time.  
You never create nor caused bad things.

Lord, the world is filled with evil and tragedy now.  
Whole creation is suffering.  
This is because we have chosen wrong god and denied your kingship.

You are our king, Lord.  
Sovereign King, come and reign over us.  
Jesus, the Son of God, come quickly.

Lord, rule over us.  
Rule our heart.  
Rule our lives.

Lord, bring good out of this tragedy.  
Build the cities of God in the land of sorrow.  
Lord, strength Christian in Japan and all over the world with your word and Spirit.

Earthquake has destroyed everything but you are shaking people's heart around the world to stand up to pray for Japan.  
Tsunami has swept away many people's lives.  
Lord, send waves of blessing much larger than tsunamis.  
Large enough to cover all over Japan.  
So that Japan can be a source of blessings to other nations.

I pray these in Jesus name, Amen.