

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14

*Psalm 102, Isaiah 11:1–10*

Christmas was my least favorite holiday when I was a teenager. I felt lonely and ashamed since I did not have a date. In Japan, many people celebrate Christmas as if it were a romantic event like Valentine's Day. Most Japanese people do not know the real meaning of Christmas.

In 2001 when I was in darkness, a lady told me about Jesus. That was the first time someone prayed for me in Jesus' name. While she was praying, my tears came out like a river and my body became hot. After the prayer, I had peace that I had never had before, even though my problems were not solved. The Holy Spirit touched my heart and transformed me. Since then, I have prayed about many small and big things to Jesus. By reading my old prayer journals, I am amazed how God answered my prayers. I didn't even remember that I prayed for a woman to have a baby in 2004, but I found out that she had a baby boy ten years later. Sometimes God answers our prayers immediately, but most of the time we need to wait for a while.

What am I waiting for most? The return of Jesus! Isaiah 11:6–10 is the prophecy of the coming Kingdom of Heaven. This promise gives me great joy and hope as I wait for Jesus. No battle, no pain and no more sadness! It's totally different from this world. Though I am a Christian, I still have many challenges and troubles. However, the Holy Spirit is with me and provides help whenever I pray.

Let's pray and cry out to the LORD just like the Psalmist of Psalm 102! Our God is good. He will hear our prayers and give us joy even in the middle of distress.

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