
The JCC Times

Issue 241

Summer 2010

A Newsletter of the Japanese Congregational Church

What is the Bible?

By Gregory Rawn

One popular description of the Bible uses the acronym B.I.B.L.E. (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth). I don't know about you, but that sounds great to me. I would love to have an instruction manual to figure out life. If the Bible were an instruction manual, then it would be full of rules, instructions, and explanations. And the main figures of the Bible would be shining examples of how we should act, right?

Unfortunately, if you read the whole Bible cover to cover, then this "instruction manual" metaphor breaks down. Certainly there are many essential rules (ten of them come immediately to mind, or twelve, if you count Jesus' two greatest commandments), valuable instructions (Proverbs, anyone?), and even some explanations. But, what about the law that condemns wearing clothing made of two different materials (Lev. 19:19)? Cotton-poly blend, anyone?

Then, if you look too closely at our Bible "heroes", you might be a bit offended. Abraham passed off Sarah as his sister (twice), and then apparently taught his son Isaac to do the same. Aaron, the first high priest, made an idol for the people and then lied about it (Ex. 32:34). David was an adulterer and a murderer, and even Solomon, the wisest man in the world, allowed himself to be seduced by his wives into idolatry. In the New Testament, the disciples were often so dense that even Jesus got frustrated with them!

And, finally, if the Bible were solely an instruction manual, don't you think more of it would make sense? Don't get me wrong, the essentials of the good news of Jesus and the main laws of God are quite clear. But, if you think the Bible is all clear, then please explain the following to me (just to name a few):

- The Levite and the Concubine (Judges 19:22-30)
- Elisha the Baldy (2 Kings 2:23-24)

- Jesus Cursing the Fig Tree (Matthew 21:18-19)
- Parable of the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:1-14)

Okay, so if the Bible is not an instruction manual, what is it? Simply put, the Bible is God's way of showing himself to us, his special revelation. That might be simple to write, but it is a lot less simple to understand the details. The Bible, like life, is complicated. But, if we can't hope to understand the Bible, then why should we even bother reading it?

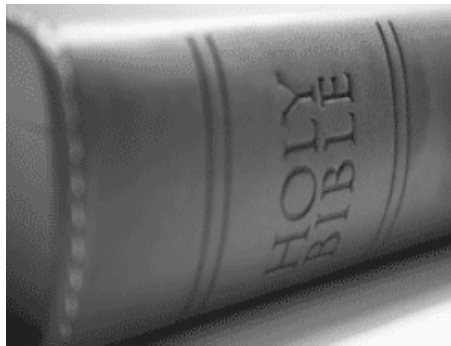
The Bible is like the ocean. The ocean is so wide and deep that it cannot be completely understood by any one person. But, that doesn't mean that you cannot

enjoy a day at the beach, study a particular sea creature, or even take a tour of the whole thing. Understanding the ocean takes time and a lot of work. The same is true of God and the Bible. We cannot hope to completely understand God, but that shouldn't stop us from taking the time and effort to know and understand what we can. The rewards of spending time working in the Bible, in the revelation of

God, are life-changing.

So, the best way to get to know God is to read the Bible, but how should we read it? Often we read the Bible in small chunks, focusing on a chapter, story, or a verse. We concentrate the time and resources we have on understanding that one piece. This is important. But, it is also important to understand the whole thing, the whole story where these pieces are found. These both are valuable methods for reading the Bible, but the most important thing is to read, and to immerse your reading with prayer.

If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. (James 1:5)



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

Summer Birthdays!

June 2- Shirley Jorgensen
 5- Jack Fujio
 9- Tatiana Gellein
 10- Toshio Yamagishi
 12- Shohei Shindo
 13- Rachel (Luttio) Wolff
 18- Megan Farren
 18- Jillian Farren
 21- Peter Tsai
 25- Iris Henry
 28- Bob Kuramoto
 29- Jody Hanson
 30- Rebecca Luttio



July 1- Sean Tablazon
 Tsuneko Suzuki
 13- Jim Jorgensen
 13- Larry Lee
 16- Sara (Luttio) Johnstone
 17- Norishige Suzuki
 18- Melyssa Tsai

August 1- David Ishii
 3- Cory Farren
 10- Joyce Tsai
 13- Atsuko Shindo
 18- Yoko Tablazon
 27- Takero Shindo
 29- Shirley Yabu

Special Offerings: February-May

In Memory of Ai Chih and Ryo Tsai:
 Peter and Joyce Tsai

In Memory of Ryo Tsai:
 Hidetaka and Kazue Nakahara
 Art and Kay Abe
 Linda Suyama Azuma
 Alice Hayakawa, June Hayakawa Fung and Larry Fung and
 Family, Janet Hayakawa and Lee Lyttle and Family
 Saibo Fujii, Wayne Fujii and Family, Sharon Fujii

In Memory of Sachi Osumi:
 John and Lori Whaley

In Memory of Lily Y. Hori:
 Takashi and Robert Hori

In Memory of Tossie Yamashita - Birthday:
 Jack Yamashita

Special Offering:
 Suyeko Fujikado
 Hideki and Yueh Hua Ohyama

Fujinshinshikai:
 Larry and Bisim Lee

Walk for Rice

This year's annual **Walk for Rice** is scheduled for Saturday, June 19th at Seward Park in Seattle. Sue has registered JCC as a team on the Walk for Rice website. If you're interested in joining us, please let Sue know your email address, so she can send you the link to register. We encourage walkers to collect their donations and give them to Sue on the morning of the event so that all donations will be presented as a JCC Team donation. All checks should be made out to "Walk for Rice". Peter & Joyce Tsai have graciously offered to host a potluck lunch at their home, which is located close to the park. The Walk begins at 10:05 am. If you're not able to walk, please consider making a donation to this event that raises money for the Asian Counseling & Referral Service Food Bank.



JCC Calendar of Events Summer 2010

June 2010

July 2010

August 2010

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Dates to Remember

Worship

Worship Service & Sunday School, Sundays,
10:00 AM

Holy Communion, Sundays, 6/6, 7/11, 8/1,
10:00 AM

JCC Worship Service and Picnic @ Judkins
Park, 8/29, 9:00 AM

Bible Study

Bible Study, Sundays, 9:00 AM (except on
6/27, 7/4, 8/8, 8/15, 8/29)

Prayer

Prayer at the Cross, Wednesdays, 12:15 PM

Service

Homeless Feeding/Lord's Table, Monday,
6/7, 8/2, 7:30 PM

Walk for Rice, Saturday, 6/19, 10:00 AM
Tutoring Sessions, Sundays, 6/20, 6/27, 7/4,
7/25, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 11:30 AM

Fellowship

Nichigo Bento Fellowship, Sunday, 6/6,
7/11, 8/1, 11:30 AM

Baptism Celebration/Farewell Lunch, Sun-
day, 6/20, 11:30 AM

Fellowship Time, Sundays, 6/20, 6/27, 7/4,
7/25, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, 11:30 AM

Kau Kau Lunch Outing, Sunday, 7/18,
12:00 PM

Mariners' Game Outing, Wednesday, 8/4,
7:05 PM

Men's Fellowship, Saturday, 8/14, 11:00
AM

Women's Bible Study, 8/14, 11:00 AM

Meetings

Board Meeting, Sunday, 8/15, 9:00 AM

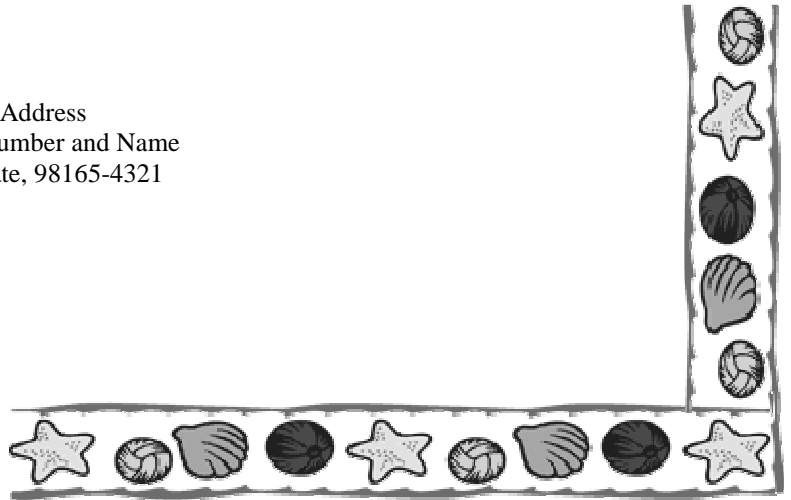
*The Newsletter Deadline for September will
be Sunday, August 22 at noon.*

Japanese Congregational Church

305 17th Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98144

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Mailing Address
Street Number and Name
City, State, 98165-4321



Extra, Extra, Read All About It!

The **4th of July** falls on a Sunday this year. Pastor Steve will be out of town, but Betty will be here to deliver the sermon. So if your holiday plans keep you in town, be sure to come to church for another of Betty's inspiring messages.



Sunday, June 20th will be a special day as we witness the **baptism of Atusko Shindo**. We will have a special lunch following service to celebrate the baptism and to wish the Shindo family a fond farewell.



Joining us on **Sunday, June 13th** will be Pastor Steve's parents and the Luttio's daughters, Rachel Wolff & Sara Johnstone and their families. The Johnstones will be in town before they move to Japan as part of Sara's commitment with the Air Force.



Our **summer activities** have been finalized so please put these dates on your calendar – a **Kau Kau Lunch outing** is scheduled for Sunday, July 18th following service; a **Mariners' game** on Wednesday, August 4th at 7:05 PM; our

Summer Picnic/Worship Service, Sunday, August 29th at 10:00 AM. More details about each event will be available in the Sunday Bulletin as we get closer to those dates.



Hannah Ehler is spending the summer as a missionary in Japan. Thank you to Melyssa Tsai who is able to lead the **Sunday School Classes** in June except for June 27th, and Betty, who can teach all of July, except the 4th of July when she'll be preaching to us. If you're able to help out on June 27th and July 4th, it would be greatly appreciated. Due to the number of children attending on some Sundays and the difference of ages in the children, they could use another adult to assist them. Please consider offering your help when needed.

Japanese Congregational Church

Rev. Steve Luttio, Pastor

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