



Shuri Castle, Okinawa

# JBS NEWS INTERNATIONAL

vol. 4  
Oct. 2008

We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28 (TEV ed.2)

## Warm Greetings from Japan Bible Society!

The verse above, Romans 8:28, was chosen as the most popular verse of the Bible when we published the "Bible Verses that Touched My Life" in 2007. We are living in the time of turmoil in the fields of the politics, economics, academics, and religion. However, aren't we blessed that we can believe everything will be for our good? We are thankful we can share the work of the Lord with you through JBS International News. We ceaselessly pray that the Kingdom of God be with you as promised in Romans 8:28.

Sincerely in Christ,



*Makoto Watabe*

Makoto Watabe  
General Secretary

## Celebrating the Distribution of 10 million New Interconfessional Translation

On July 2nd, JBS celebrated the distribution of the 10 millionth Bible of the New Interconfessional Translation. It has been 21 years since the translation was made in 1987, in collaboration with the Catholic and Protestant churches. Ceremonies took place at leading Christian bookshops throughout the country to mark the event, with each bookshop presenting a Panoramic Bible to one purchaser of the New Interconfessional Bible. In Tokyo, the General Secretary Rev. Makoto Watabe

presented the Bible at Kyobunkwan in Ginza, to a couple who happened to be there to buy a Bible for a baby who is to be born in October.

"I hope the child will come to listen to His voice rather than other voices in the world," says the father to be, an evangelist from Ginza church nearby.

According to the survey done last year, about 80% of the Christians in Japan read the New Interconfessional Translation. About a million Bible is distributed every year, which means one in four houses have a Bible, including non-believers.

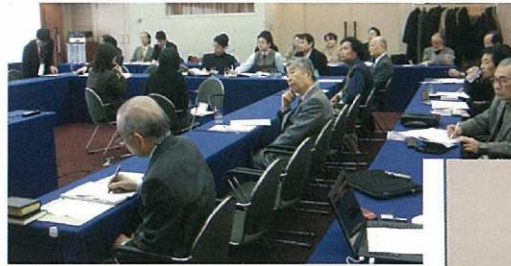
"We hope to spread the Gospel to the younger generation. In order to reach out to them, we have launched the Bible Picture Book series and the Manga Bible series," says the General Secretary. "We are surprised at how eager the Japanese people are to study the Bible. We distribute the Bible because of what is written in the Bible, the verse from 1st Thessalonians 2:13. We cannot wait to see what will happen in the future."



Rev. Watabe, GS presenting the Panoramic Bible to a couple in Ginza

# Bible Translation Workshop

On the 12th and the 13th of March, JBS held the "Bible Translation Workshop" at International House of Japan (Tokyo) in collaboration with Wycliff Bible Translators in Japan. Four guest speakers were invited, Dr Lourens de Vries, the UBS Honorary Translation Consultant, two speakers from Wycliff, Mr Takashi Matsumura, and Mr Takashi Fukuda, and Professor of Gakushuin University, Dr Naoyasu Fukushima. The topics discussed were: the skopos theory, the changes in Japanese, how to translate the Bible into a minority tribal language and others. About 50 people attended the lectures.



The Bible Translation Workshop

Dr Lourens de Vries lecturing at the workshop



## The USA National Prayer Breakfast

The board chairperson Rev. Omiya and General Secretary Rev. Watabe were invited to the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington D.C. The meeting was held for three days at the Hilton Washington from 5th to the 7th of February 2008. 4,000 people, including the President, the Senators, various Christian leaders and the foreign guests, prayed for the world peace in the name of Jesus.



Rev. Omiya and Rev. Watabe with Mr. Douglas Coe

## Japanese National Prayer Banquet

Also in Japan, national prayer banquet has been held since 10 years ago, inviting Christian Diet Members in a hotel in Tokyo, and 10 JBS staffs attended the meeting on the 21st of February.



## 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Protestant Missions in Japan

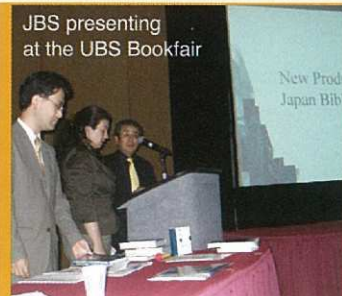
In 2009, Japan will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Protestant missions since the coming of the Protestant missionaries, and the signing of the Harris treaty in 1859. We are planning an interdenominational event to gather all the Protestant churches, missions, schools, organizations, etc. After a year preparation, in April this year, the executive committee was inaugurated to prepare for the event. The chairpersons are Rev. Tsugumichi Ohkawa (Yamato Calvary Chapel), Rev. Tatsuhiro Mineno (Wesleyan Holiness Yodobashi Church), and Rev. Nobuhisa Yamakita (moderator of the United Church of Christ in Japan). Rev. Makoto Watabe, the General Secretary of JBS was appointed director general. The event will be held at Pacifico Yokohama on the 8th and the 9th of July 2009. The executive committee has decided the slogan as: "One in Christ ~ as a witness of Christ," using it together with the special logo. We hope that no one organization will lead the event but everyone will walk together, hand in hand, to make the event a memorable and a successful one.



Members of the executive committee at the inauguration



JBS presenting at the UBS Bookfair



## UBS Bookfair in Orlando, Florida USA

UBS Bookfair and Publishing / Marketing Meeting took place prior to the International Christian Retail Show in Orlando, Florida. Starting with the discussion on "Mission and Trade," the meeting covered a wide range of topics from pricing to e-commerce. A wonderful showcase of many national Bible Societies brought innovative ideas and cutting-edge designs to add strength and flavor to the publishing works of the fellowship.

Japan Bible Society contributed by presenting our recent products: The Bible Cube, the Art Bible II, the Bible Picture Books for children with ON-PITSU, Manga (Japanese comic style) Bible, and the Greek-reading Software with Karaoke function.

## Bible Picture Book series – Press Release and the Exhibition –

Japan Bible Society will publish 36 Bible Picture Books for children, one book per month for three years, starting April 2008. The pictures of the OT and NT are drawn by Japanese artists: Mr. Shiro Fujimoto and Ms. Sachiko Sugita. The stories are all in Japanese. It is our first attempt in producing a fully original work.

In February, we had a press release for the Bible Picture Book series at Kyobunkwan, where about 80 people came. A mini exhibition was held for a week in the same building for people to see the actual original pictures from the series.



vols.1~2 of the Bible Picture Books

### ON-PITSU



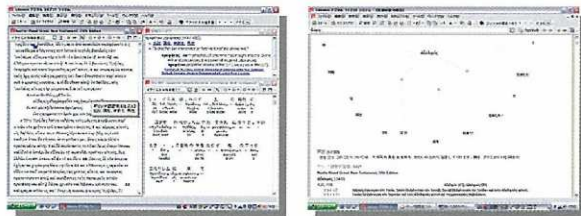
"We are doing our best to be as faithful to the Bible as possible. Also we have produced 'On-Pitsu', a device, that comes separately from the Bible Picture Book series, that would read the text if you touch the page number at the bottom right hand corner. This is helpful for children who cannot read yet. We hope this would increase the number of Christians in the future by letting the small children hear the Word"

## The First Audible Greek Bible software

JBS will be launching the Greek software for those who want to read the New Testament in the original Greek language. It is useful for seminary students, pastors / priests and researchers. It is the Greek / New Interconfessional Translation, an interlinear New Testament. The text used will be in Classical Greek, UBS 4th edition of Nestle-Aland 28th edition. There are five wonderful characteristics: 1) you can listen to the actual reading of the Greek as you read the text, and a blue arrow will follow the reading (like Karaoke). The grammar and the meaning will also be shown, 2) Since it is an interlinear Bible, you can actually check how the Greek language is being translated into Japanese (NIT), 3) You can right click the word to get the basic information of the particular word and also do the word search, 4) Septuaginta, TEV, KJV, New Interconfessional Translation are all in the software so that you can compare and search, 5) Since this software has been invented in collaboration with the LibronixDLS, if desired, a user can download various Bibles as well as dictionaries and commentaries to enrich his / her research and study.

ISBN: 978-4-8202-9216-6

JPY 21,000 (tax included)



The Karaoke like function screen Word study function screen

## Manga Bible series

In February 2008, we published the first volume of the manga (comic) Bible, *Messiah*. This is in collaboration with New Life League Japan, to publish five volumes of stories from the Bible. The first volume is about the life of Jesus, and the second volume *Apostolos*, which was published in May, is about the life of the Apostles, focusing on Peter and Paul. The third to the fifth volumes are going to be stories from the Old Testament. The newest volume, *Genesis*, is going to be published in September.

The illustrations are done by two Japanese artists, one for the Old Testament, and the other for the New Testament. JBS translation department edits the script.



Genesis

### Manga Bible vols. 1~3 data

Cat. No. NI550P-1 (vol.1); NI550P-2 (vol.2); NI550P-3 (vol.3)

Size: 210mm×140mm 288pgs Full-color

Domestic Price: JPY 1,050 (tax included)

## Bible Cube receives award for Book Binding ~Tokyo International Bookfair~

The annual "Tokyo International Bookfair" was held from the 10th of July to the 13th of July.

Japan Book Publishers Association gives awards to publishers that make excellent books in book bindings, and this year, the Bible Cube of JBS was awarded. The last time our Bible received such an award was 26 years ago and it was a prideful moment when the board chairperson's award in Humanities and Social Sciences was handed to us. The Bible Cube was exhibited in the 42nd Art of Book Making / Book Binding Competition Exhibition.

The Bible Cube is the lightest and most compact Bible among our line up (compared with the basic Bible, it is 25% lighter), and it has been named the "Bible Cube" because of its shape. The cutting-edge design has been considered highly. 10,000 copies were printed as the first edition and it has been sold completely, which shows its popularity.



The Bible Cube and the plaque

## APAB and the General Secretaries' Meetings



Van presented to Bangladesh Bible Society

APAB and General Secretaries Meetings were held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from the 7th to the 11th of April 2008, and Ms. Emi Beland, and Rev. Watabe attended them. Bangladesh is a Muslim country, where 160 million people live. The percentage of Christians there is the same as Japan, less than 1 % and it is a very difficult country to evangelize. Bangladesh Bible Society distributes about 1 million Bibles a year, and the Toyota van that was donated by JBS in 2007 is being used for the transportation of the Bibles and the people. They also bring blankets and food to those affected by disasters. It is only then that the people there would receive the Bible.

## Donating the Bibles to 365 Japanese Churches Abroad

According to Christian Yearbook, there are 365 Japanese Churches outside of Japan. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the New Interconfessional Translation, JBS has sent 9 selected Bibles to the churches. The content is as follows: the "Study Bible", "The Pocket-Size NT Bibles" (3 colours), "Manga Bible Series" (vols. 1 & 2), "Picture Bible Book series" (vols. 1 & 2), and "Bible Verses That Touched My Life".

The Japanese churches abroad are mostly small churches, often in financial difficulty, using old Bibles. We want to remember them in prayers and support them. The shipping started in July and all the boxes will be sent by the autumn. We have received letters of thanks from the churches that have received the gift.



Members of the Iglesia Evangelica Peruano Japonesa

### Trip to the Holy Land 16~26<sup>th</sup> June

To celebrate the 20th year of the New Interconfessional Translation and the 10 million distribution, a trip to Jerusalem was organized by Japan Bible Society. The theme of the trip was to "Follow the path of Moses, Jesus, and Elijah," and 23 participants visited Cairo, Mount Sinai, the Dead Sea, the city of Jerusalem, the Lake Galilee, Mount Carmel, and Caesarea.



### Mini info. on Japan 2 –Sports–

#### Aikido

Origin : after WWII

Founder : Morihei Ueshiba

#### Judo

Origin : Meiji period (1868 -1912)

Founder : Dr Jigoro Kano

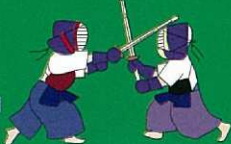
#### Karate

Origin : ancient in origin, from China, introduced during Edo period (1603-1867), formed in Okinawa

Founder : Okinawan people

#### Kendo

Origin : ancient in origin, refined during Muromachi Period (1392-1573)



#### Kyudo

Origin : ancient in origin



#### Sumo

Origin : ancient in origin

