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Preparing for the most important journey of your life

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The *Kojiki* was written in Japanese-style *Kanbun* (Chinese classical writing), and the *Nihon Shoki* was written in *Kanbun* (Chinese classical writing). Both the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* consist of many myths and a bit of history.

The beginning of the *Kojiki* says: "At the time of the beginning of heaven and earth, there came into existence in *Takamanohara* (High Plain of Heaven – home of the gods) a deity named *Ame-no-Minakanushi* (the first god and the source of the universe according to *Shinto*); next, a deity named *Takamimusubi* (the god of agriculture according to *Shinto*); and next, a deity named *Kamimusubi* (the third god of creation according to *Shinto*). These three deities all came into existence as single deities, and their forms were not visible (or 'they hid their bodies')."

Motoori Norinaga, author of a commentary on the *Kojiki*, called the *Kojikiden*, said that these deities were made, that is, they were born, and hid themselves, and that they died. It says that the gods are dead. These first three gods were not eternal beings, but were born according to the *Kojiki*. This leaves us wondering where the gods came from. According to proper logic, the gods do not exist now, nor have they ever existed. *Shinto* is mythology and idolatry. Let us take a look at what the Bible teaches about God in comparison to *Shinto*.



The Bible teaches about the true God

What kind of book do you think the Bible is? In fact, the lyrics in Japanese for a children's chorus clearly explains it. "This is the Bible, a letter I received from God." God gave us the Bible, the most important letter in the world, to introduce us to Himself. So, who is the God of the Bible? Let's take a look together.

Who is the god of the festivals?



For many people, festivals are... A special event that deepens bonds with people in the town and the region, with opportunities to meet old friends after a long time, enjoy shopping at the night market, and eat a feast with the family. But did you know that the *Jinja Matsuri* (Shinto Festival) has an inherently religious connection? By all means, please consider the following important questions before this year's *Jinja Matsuri*.

Some important Questions

- 1) Does God really exist?
- 2) If God really exists, is He one or many?
- 3) Is this God a god who can listen to people's requests and help them?
- 4) Man asks God for many things, but is he responsible for obeying God instead of just asking for things?

Mythical Legends (*Shinto*)



Japan has a long history of mythology. *Shinto* is an old religion unique to Japan, and the gods that form the basis of *Shinto* are similar to the gods of ancient Babylon and Egypt. They use different names, but they are still personifications of the forces of nature. Shrine deities are found in the two very old books, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon Shoki*. The *Kojiki* was first published in 712 AD and the *Nihon Shoki* in 720 AD.

Who is the God of the Bible?



- 1) **A God who exists forever.** "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Psalm 90:2)

2) The only God and the Creator of all things in the universe.

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;" (Acts 17:24) It teaches that the idea of putting a God – who created a universe beyond human comprehension – in something like a *mikoshi*, a portable shrine, or a temple is unreasonable.

- 3) **He is a living Ruler who created all people.** "Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;" (Acts 17:25-26)

- 4) **He is a God who is completely different from images made by man.** "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." (Acts 17:29)

- 5) **He is a righteous God who judges all sin.** "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained (Jesus Christ);..." (Acts 17:31) "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment;" (Hebrews 9:27)

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