

THE
Bible
IN
America™
MUSEUM
Newsletter

Houston Baptist University

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The Dunham Family Bible in America Museum



Archie and Linda Dunham

Houston Baptist University has received a \$1,000,000 gift from ConocoPhillips specifically designated for the construction of the new home of the Bible in America Museum in the planned Cultural Arts Center. The gift was given by the Board of Directors of ConocoPhillips in recognition of Archie Dunham's leadership as Chairman of the Company. The Museum will be named "The Dunham Family Bible in America Museum."

"Linda and I are extremely grateful to the ConocoPhillips Board of Directors for choosing to honor us in such a meaningful manner," said Archie Dunham. Don Anderson BA '68, vice president for development at Houston Baptist University said, "It is fitting that this gift will fund a new home for one of the most extensive collections of rare American Bibles available on public display today in honor of a family whose faith in God has directed their lives and their work for so many years."

The Bible in America Committee is working to secure the balance of funds needed to complete the Museum building as well as to prepare the exhibits for the larger Museum space. If you would like to contribute, please contact Rick Ogden BA '98 at 281-649-3355 or rogden@hbu.edu.

The Bible in Space

The smallest item in The Bible in America Museum's collection is a portion of a microfilmed Bible taken to the Moon and back by Apollo 14 in February 1971. This was not the first time the Bible was in space, however.

Apollo 8 was the first manned mission to orbit the Moon. On Christmas Eve, 1968, Apollo 8's crew of Frank Borman, Jim Lovell, and William Anders sent a message to "all the people on Earth." In a live television broadcast, they showed photos of the earth and moon as they read the first ten verses of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called Seas: and God saw that it was good."

In 1969 Apollo 11 became the first mission to land on the Moon. After completing all the landing chores, Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong shared communion together, using a tiny communion set Aldrin had brought. Aldrin read Jesus' words from John 15:5, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me, and I in him, he will bear much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing." Later, during his Moon walk, Aldrin left on the Moon a portion of Psalm 8 he had written out, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

In 1971 Apollo 15 visited the Moon's highest mountains, the Appenine Mountains, The sun shining on the lunar scene brought Psalm 121 to Astronaut Jim Irwin's mind, "I look to the hills, from whence cometh my help? My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth." As exciting as walking on the moon was, back on earth Irwin frequently told people that, "Jesus Christ walking on the earth is more important than man walking on the moon."

John Glenn, the first American in space in 1962, was able to be part of a space shuttle flight 36 years later, in 1998. He then said, "To look at this kind of creation out here and not believe in God is to me impossible. It just strengthens my faith." Even though he never was in space, three thousand years earlier, David wrote in Psalm 19, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handy work."



The Apollo 14 crew: Stuart Roosa, Alan Shepard and Edgar Mitchell.

Red Letter Edition

The idea for a Red Letter edition of the Bible, in which the words of Jesus were printed in red, was the idea of Louis Klopsch (1852-1910), a German immigrant and journalist. In 1890 Klopsch was the American editor of *The Christian Herald*, a British weekly, and distributed the sermons of Rev. T. Dewitt Talmage to newspapers. On June 19, 1899, when writing an editorial, Klopsch's eye fell on Luke 22:20, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which I shed for you." Klopsch asked Rev. Talmage if Christ's words could be printed in red. Rev. Talmage replied, "It could do no harm and it most certainly could do much good." By the end of that year, Klopsch printed 60,000

copies of a New Testament with all the words of Jesus in red letters. The red letters were especially helpful in the King James Version which did not use quotation marks, and the response was very favorable. The King of Sweden sent a telegram praising the red letter edition, and President Teddy Roosevelt invited Klopsch to dinner in the White House (Klopsch accepted). In his own day Klopsch was well known not only as American editor of *The Christian Herald*, but for his philanthropy and famine relief around the world. Today red letter Bibles have become so accepted that some people may consider them part of the original Bible, as they do chapters and verses.

We Were Asked ...

Recently **The Bible in America Museum** received two interesting emails. The first was from a lady in California who had recently visited the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz, Germany. There she was told that every American President had taken his oath of office on a Gutenberg Bible. Was that true? Those who read our last newsletter know that statement was false and could only have been made by a misguided guide. No President ever was sworn in on a Gutenberg Bible, though Harry Truman did use a Gutenberg facsimile.



Another query came from a soldier in Iraq who wanted to know where he could find "The Soldier's Bible." "The Soldier's Bible" is sometimes called "The Soldier's Prayer Book" or "Deck of Cards," and was recorded by Tex Ritter and many others over the years. Interestingly, the ballad has continued popular for centuries; a broadside from 1778 is the earliest version of the story known. One version of the story is found on **The Bible in America Museum's** website (www.hbu.edu/bia) under "Influence in American History."

Recent Acquisitions

Joella Morris recently contributed two books to **The Bible in America Museum** focusing on American hymnody and the Bible in the schools. One is a small, pocket size 1823 printing of Isaac Watts' *Psalms*. Watts had placed the psalms in poetic form and placed Christ's name in places where he was prophesied, "making David speak as a Christian." Watts' *Psalms* became the hymnal for many churches in the 18th and early 19th century. Mrs. Morris' second contribution was Edward Robinson's *A Dictionary of the Holy Bible for the use of schools and young people*, 1856. Maps and wood engravings make this book for use in schools especially interesting.



This photo of Ukraine's President Yushchenko kissing the Bible during his inauguration ceremony illustrates that the role of a Bible in inaugural ceremonies is not just a U.S. custom, but is part of a strong tradition in western civilization.

"The only spiritual light in the world comes through Jesus Christ and the inspired Book; redemption and forgiveness of sin alone through Christ. Without His presence and the teachings of the Bible we would be enshrouded in moral darkness and despair.

The condition of those nations without a Christ, contrasted with those where Christ is accepted, reveals so marked a difference that no arguments are needed. It is an object-lesson so plain that it can be seen and understood by all."

— Samuel Colgate, American manufacturer and philanthropist

A Self-Interpreting Bible

Every few months it seems a new Bible version hits the market. Either the translation is new (e.g. literal, free paraphrase, contemporary, gender inclusive), the format is different (e.g. leatherbound, paperback, CD, magazine), or the notes are designed for a targeted audience (e.g. women, African-Americans, seniors, cowboys). One of the most long-lived Bible versions is John Brown's **Self-Interpreting Bible**, first published in Scotland in 1778.

John Brown was born in Scotland in 1722, orphaned at an early age, and taught himself Latin and Greek while tending sheep. Later he studied for the ministry and learned Hebrew. For 36 years he was pastor of the church in Haddington, Scotland. He designed his annotated Bible to be practical and helpful for people who wanted to know the Scripture, but did not have the time or skill for deep, personal studies.

The first American printing of Brown's **Self-Interpreting Bible**, which is part of **The Bible in America Museum's** collection, was a folio edition published in New York in 1792. This first Bible published in New York was a subscription Bible, and George Washington is the first subscriber listed. Printing was a very time-consuming expensive process in those days, as every letter of type was set by hand. It became the practice to sell subscriptions, printing the Bible in portions over several months. The first American edition of the **Self-Interpreting Bible** was published in 40 numbers over a period of two years. After the printing was completed, the subscriber took all the numbers to a binder and had them bound.

The frontispiece to the first American printing of Brown's Bible, shown at right, shows America, with an Indian headdress on, seated in front of the Liberty Tree. On the tree are listed the names of leading American patriots. In her left hand America holds the Constitution; she is receiving the Bible from Peace, kneeling before her. Brown's **Self-Interpreting Bible** went through at least 26 American editions, with the New Testament being last published in the 1920's. One of the later editions in the **Bible in America Museum's** collection was a Bible from the Battleship *Texas*.

Brown's notes were designed to make the biblical text more understandable and focused on translation issues or historical background. The notes for each section were followed by "reflections" which applied the Scripture to the heart. Throughout his work, Brown emphasized that the goal of Scripture was to promote holiness and virtue and to glorify God. He believed the Scripture references were the most important part of his Bible. By using Scripture to comment and explain Scripture, Brown believed the Holy Spirit Himself became the commentator, and the reader discovered "the truth for himself in God's own light."



Using Scripture to Understand Scripture

John Brown believed the collection of parallel Scriptures included in his **Self-Interpreting Bible** was his most useful and important contribution. In the introduction to his Bible he wrote:

"In these ... we have a delightful view of the Harmony of the scripture, and multiplied Proofs of every article of our Christian faith; ... we have in little room, a large Commentary, infinitely more certain than any dictates of men; and of which the very words are, as nails and goads, pointed and fastened by the great Master of assemblies. In a truly diligent comparison of them, many texts all at once explain, and are explained, by each other ... I can truly say, that my labour, in collecting the parallel texts in this work, has afforded me much more pleasant insight into the oracles of God than all the numerous commentaries which I ever perused ...

"Herein the serious inquirer has the Spirit of God for his director, the lovely oracles of God for his commentary. He has the pleasure of discovering the truth for himself in God's own light. And the discovery which he thus makes, by humbly searching the Scriptures, is inexpressibly more agreeable than merely to have met with it at random in some commentator. Being acquired by care and labour, it generally fixes itself much more firmly in the mind. And, while we are thus occupied in comparing the several texts, we may humbly expect that the Holy Ghost will illuminate all with his glory, and apply all to the heart."

The Pony Express Bible

Though the Pony Express existed for only 18 months, it has become an important part of American history and folklore. With the motto of "The mail must go though," the company of Russell-Majors & Waddell contracted to carry mail the 1,996 miles from St. Joseph Missouri to Sacramento, California in record time. A schedule as exacting as a railroad timetable was set up. Horses traveled 8-10 miles per hour and were changed every 10-15 miles. Delivery of Lincoln's Inaugural Address was made to the west coast in a record 7 days and 17 hours. The total number of known Pony Express riders was 120, with rider Buffalo Bill later becoming famous. Every rider had to swear on a Bible, "before the great and living God, that during my engagement, and while I am an employee ... I will, under no circumstances, use profane language. I will drink no intoxicating liquors; I will not quarrel or fight with any other employee of the firm, and that in every respect, I will conduct myself honestly, faithful to my duties, and so direct my acts as to win the confidence of my employers. So help me God." After signing the oath, riders were given the Bible, which they took with them on their trail. Unfortunately, a Pony Express Bible is not part of **The Bible in America Museum's** collection.

The Bible in America Museum



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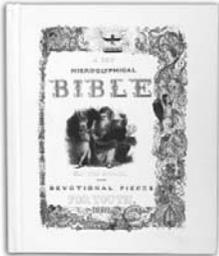
visit our Website at www.hbu.edu/bia

“THE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS OF THIS NATION’S LAWS WAS GIVEN TO MOSES ON THE MOUNT. THE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS OF OUR BILL OF RIGHTS COMES FROM THE TEACHINGS WE GET FROM EXODUS AND ST. MATTHEW, FROM ISAIAH AND ST. PAUL.”

HARRY S. TRUMAN, 1950

Please notify us of any changes or corrections in your address. If you would like to receive the *Bible in America Museum* Newsletter by e-mail and save the University postage, send your e-mail address to dseverance@hbu.edu.

1837 Children’s Bible For Sale



The Bible in America Museum has reprinted a facsimile of an 1837 children’s Bible in its collection. Called a *Hieroglyphic Bible* for its 400 illustration, made by noted American engraver Joseph Adams (1803-1880), Harper Brother’s 1837 *Hieroglyphic Bible* includes Bible verses on one page and devotional poems for children on the facing page. Many of the poems are from *Divine Songs* and *Hymns for Infant Minds* by the famous English hymn writer Isaac Watts. The facsimile is available at the HBU bookstore and at the Bible in America Museum for

\$14.95 plus \$1.23 tax. Mail orders are also accepted; add \$1.42 for shipping and handling (or \$3.19 for 1st Class). Please make checks payable to Houston Baptist University.

VISIT THE BIBLE IN AMERICA MUSEUM

There is no charge for admission.

Museum hours:

- April-May:
Tuesdays, 10am-4pm
Thursdays, 11am-4pm
1st Saturday in May, noon-5pm
Tours at other times are available by appointment.
- June-August the Museum will be open for tours by appointment only.

For appointments or more information, contact Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or dseverance@hbu.edu.

Visit The Bible in
America Museum
website at
www.hbu.edu/bia

New items have been added
to the “Reprints from the
Collection” and “Influence in
American History” sections.