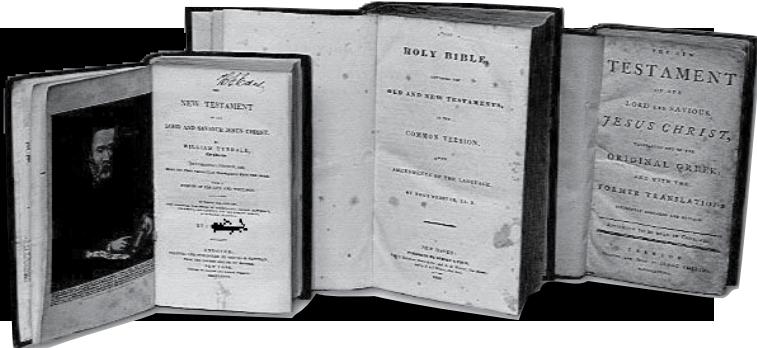


Dunham Bible Museum News



Houston Baptist University

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KJV@400 - From Hampton Court, around the Globe and to the Moon

No one in 1611 could have imagined the global importance the English language would have 400 years later – neither King James who authorized the new translation of the Bible into English nor the 54 translators themselves. When the King James Version was first published in 1611, there were four million English speaking people, almost all living on the island nation of Great Britain, at the edge of Europe. Today, 400 years later, English is a global language with two billion English speaking people and 70 nations with English as the majority language. Wherever English speakers have gone on the globe – and into space – they have taken with them the King James Version of the Bible. The Dunham Bible Museum's exhibit *KJV@400: From Hampton Court, around the Globe, and to the Moon* commemorates the 400th anniversary of this important translation. Earliest editions of the King James Bible are on exhibit, as well as important later editions from the following four centuries.

Before coming to the English throne in 1603, King James had been King James VI of Scotland, where the Geneva Bible was in use. James had come to thoroughly disdain the Geneva Bible, feeling its study notes were subversive of kingly authority. He was very pleased to commission a new Bible translation to replace the Geneva Bible favored by the Puritans.

In 1604, shortly after King James I became King of England, a conference of theologians and Church leaders met with the King at Hampton Court Palace. At the Hampton Court Conference Puritans presented their hope that “the present state of the Church may be further reformed in all things needful, according to the rule of God’s holy word.” King



Queen Victoria once said that the Bible was the secret of England's greatness, and as the British Empire expanded, it carried the English Bible around the globe. "The Secret of England's Greatness" by Thomas Jones Barker, 1863, shows Queen Victoria presenting a Bible to an African chieftain. Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery



King James' decision to authorize a new English translation of the Bible was made at a Conference at Hampton Court in 1604.

James was not sympathetic to the Puritans' requests, except when Puritan John Reynolds suggested a new English translation of the Bible was needed. King James thoroughly approved and commissioned a new English translation of the Bible.

Amazingly, the King James Version is the product of committees. The 47 translators were organized into six committees or companies - two each at Westminster, University of Oxford, and University of Cambridge. All but one of the scholars were ordained priests of the Church of England. Some were sympathetic to the Puritans; others were High Church. All were imminent Greek and Hebrew scholars. The translators were not specifically paid for their work, other than with ecclesiastical appointments.

The work of the three committees was reviewed by a final committee which read the translation aloud, contributing to the eloquent language and later influence of the work.

The King James Version continued to be the most prominent English Bible translation for well over 350 years and remains an important translation in use today. However, two factors have led to the need for contemporary Bible translations. First, over

the centuries, the English language has changed both in the spelling and meaning of words, making the King James Bible difficult for many to understand. Second, discoveries of Greek and Hebrew manuscripts centuries older than those used by the King James translators allow scholars to translate from a more accurate Biblical text. The Dunham Bible Museum's exhibit includes a display of recent translations.

A Royal Monument of English Literature

How many copies of the 1611 King James Bible remain?

Drs. Donald Brake and John Hellstern have published a census of the 1st edition of the 1611 King James Bible, listing the known copies of this important edition. Beginning in 2004, the pair diligently combed library catalogues worldwide, as well as contacted auction houses, museums, and individual collectors. The results were published in a limited edition work: *A Royal Monument of English Literature: The King James Bible 1611-2011*, a copy of which Brake and Hellstern donated to the Dunham Bible Museum. The beautifully produced book includes a leaf from an original 1611 Bible and the history behind the translation, as well as the census.

At the beginning of Brake and Hellstern's search, about 40-50 1611 editions were thought to exist. Many were surprised to learn that there are at least 165 remaining 1st editions of the King James Bible, most in the United States and Great Britain.

The first edition of the King James Bible was a large folio edition, with pages 11.5 x 17.5 inches, designed to be used as a pulpit Bible in the churches of England. The linen and rag paper has survived the centuries well. It is unknown how many initial copies were printed by Robert Barker, the King's licensed printer, but Brake and Hellstern estimate 1,500-2,000 copies comprised the first edition. This seems especially likely since another folio edition needed to be printed as early as 1613. Barker printed five folio editions – 1611, 1613, 1634, and 1639/40. The leaves were identical, word for word, allowing leaves remaining from one printing to be used with leaves from a different printing.



1st edition of the 1611 King James Bible in the Dunham Bible Museum.
Photo by Michael Tims, Houston Baptist University

A note in the 1611 edition owned by University of Houston enabled Brake and Hellstern to document the cost of the Bible in 1611: "This holy Bible was bought of William Cooper in Hereford Robart Smith the elder and John Hye Church wardens, and also brought into this Church upon the 17th daye of Januarie 1612 Anno R(egni) R(egis) Jacobi 10 which cost 3£." In today's prices, 3£ is equivalent to about \$789. From other sources we know that the cost of printing was 10-12 shillings, or about \$158 in today's prices.

Dr. Brake well summarized the importance of the 400th anniversary of this 1611 translation of the Bible into English: *Four hundred years ago a book was born that left a legacy not only within the scope of literature but within the timelines of history and the Christian church as well – the King James Version of the Bible. The world's best seller during the past four centuries, the King James version has stood unsurpassed by all other English books in its popularity and influence.*

*We need not look far to discover the King James Bible is woven into the fabric of our personal stories and the wider stories of our faith communities. The cadence and rhythms of the King James Bible have drawn the world to its sheer literary beauty. The truth of the KJV has instilled courage in martyrs, brought peace to the dying, graced victims with forgiveness, and guided prodigals to their homes. It has counseled both commoners and kings with an unchanging message through the ages.*¹

"To the Reader"

The 1611 Bible included a Dedication to King James, and a preface "To the Reader." The preface gave the history and method used in Bible translation as well as encouragement in the study of the Scriptures. The work of translating the Scriptures was described as "that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we might look into the most Holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water ... Indeed without translation into the vulgar [common] tongue [language], the unlearned are but like children at Jacob's well (which is deep) without a bucket or something to draw with."

King James' Translation?



Though King James commissioned the English translation of the Bible which now bears his name, he did none of the translation work himself. King James, however, was a scholar and had written paraphrases and commentaries on Scripture. Among these were a paraphrase on the book of Revelation, meditations from Chronicles (a good book for kings to study), and a meditation on the Lord's prayer. He also began, though never completed, a translation of the book of Psalms. James's writings were collected and published in 1616 as *The Workes of the Most High and Mightie Prince, James by the Grace of God, King of Britaine, France, and Ireland, Defender of the faith, etc.* This book is part of the KJV@400 exhibit.

¹ quote from Brake's *A Visual History of the King James Bible*, published by Baker Books, February 2011.

A Heritage of Worship in the Psalms

In January, Michael Morgan brought selections from his collection of rare Bibles and psalters to the Dunham Bible Museum. Organist at Central Presbyterian in Atlanta and musician for Columbia Seminary, Morgan's passion for the psalms in Christian worship was evident as he described the histories behind the rare volumes and as he led in the Psalm Festival January 21.



Congregational singing in the language of the people was an important contribution made by the Reformation. Martin Luther recognized that music was a gift from God. Calvin noted that the psalms were God's gift to us and would only allow the singing of psalms in worship. The French and English Protestants simultaneously made metrical versions of the psalms to allow for their ease in congregational singing.

Morgan's exhibit included the first complete English psalter by Robert Crowley, first published in 1549, and the 1562 psalter by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins. Sternhold was a servant of King Henry VIII. Henry's son, who became King Edward VI, encouraged Sternhold in his music and psalm versification.

When the Pilgrims came to America in 1620, they bought with them the psalter composed for them by Henry Ainsworth

in 1612. The first book printed in America was the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), a metrical version of the psalms by Puritan pastors in Massachusetts. The book was continually reprinted for decades. Morgan's collection included all these as well as a first edition of Isaac Watts' *Psalter*, first published in 1719. Watts was an important bridge between psalm singing in the churches and the development of hymns. Many of his psalm versions continue to be sung as hymns. His version of Psalm 72 became "Jesus shall reign where'er the Sun."



While Morgan's psalm collection brought the history of the psalms to HBU, the Psalm Festival demonstrated that the psalms can still be used in worship today. Morgan drew from his own *Psalter for Christian Worship* and played the beautiful Smith organ in Belin Chapel as he led the congregation in "Hebrew Songs for Christian Seasons." Beginning worship with a psalm of praise (Psalm 148), every following psalm chosen expressed the themes of the Christian year, from the birth of the Savior (Psalms 67, 98), through man's repentance for sin (Psalms 51, 139), the hope of Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday (Psalms 99, 23), the sorrows of the crucifixion (Psalm 22), culminating in the joy of the resurrection (Psalm 118) and ascension of the Christ (Psalm 47). As Isaac Watts noted, when we read the Scriptures God speaks to us; when we use the metrical psalms, we speak to God.

Thank You! Charles Pierce – Volunteer Extraordinaire

For the past four years, the Dunham Bible Museum has been blessed with having Charles Pierce as a faithful volunteer. A veteran of World War II and a retiree from Exxon, Charles has volunteered for a variety of organizations during his retirement years. He was a docent at the Museum of Natural Science for several years before coming to the Dunham Bible Museum. A resident of University Place, Charles has done everything at the Bible Museum from sorting and cataloguing books when the Museum was in the library, to keeping the Museum open for Saturday visitors. He was indispensable in helping the Bible Museum move into the Morris Cultural Arts Center – assembling furniture and climbing into cases to clean the glass and helping install exhibits. As an Exxon retiree, Charles converted his volunteer hours into Exxon/Mobile contributions, bringing \$8000 to the Bible Museum during his years here. The chairs in the Museum's theater were among the items purchased with these funds.

When Charles' daughters came to visit him, he would bring them by the Bible Museum, and it always was a delight to see the great love and respect they have for their dad. Sadly for us, Charles is now moving to Round Rock, Texas to be nearer one of his daughters. He will be sorely missed, but the Dunham Bible Museum is a better place because of his service.





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www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum

“No other book of any kind ever written in English – perhaps no other book ever written in any other tongue – has ever so affected the whole life of a people as this authorized version of the Scriptures has affected the life of the English-speaking peoples.”

~President Theodore Roosevelt
1911

Celebrating 400 Years of the King James Version March 11-12 Carthage, Texas

The Greater East Texas Baptist Association and Southside Baptist Church in Carthage, Texas are sponsoring a special event to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. Early English Bibles will be on display. Special speakers include:

- Dr. Jim Richards, Executive Director of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention;
- Dr. Jerry Johnson, president of Criswell College;
- Dr. Harold Rawlings of Kentucky, author of *Trial By Fire: How the Bible Got into English*;
- Dr. John Hellstern of Dallas, co-founder of The Living Word Bible Museum;
- Prof. Joe Hough, Professor of History at Panola College, Carthage, Texas;
- Rev. Eric Greene, pastor of Thomson Memorial Presbyterian Church, of Centreville, Miss.; and
- Dr. Kirby Hill, pastor of Southside Baptist Church, of Carthage, Texas.

The film *KJV: Making of the King James Bible*, filmed in part at the **Dunham Bible Museum**, will also be shown at the celebration. For more information, see www.southsidecarthage.com.

The Mayor of Carthage has pronounced March 7-12 “Celebrating 400 Years of the King James Version Week,” and the entire Bible will be read in the town square as part of the celebration.

>> COMING EVENTS <<

- **March 31 – Lecture by Dr. Dan Wallace on New Testament text behind the King James Bible**, 7 p.m., Belin Chapel.
- **October 28-29 – The Dunham Bible Museum will host KJV@400: A Story of Biblical Proportions** as a forum for 21st century scholars to commemorate and consider this significant Bible translation made 400 years ago. The KJV@400 Conference will consider the historic background of the King James Bible, and its cultural influence on England, America, and around the globe. **Confirmed speakers include:**
 - Donald Brake (Dean Emeritus, Multnomah Seminary)
 - Gerald Bray (Beeson Divinity School)
 - Leonard Greenspoon (Creighton University)
 - David Jeffrey (Baylor University)
 - Timothy Larsen (Wheaton)
 - Liana Lupas (American Bible Society)
 - Leland Ryken (Wheaton)
 - Robert Sloan (Houston Baptist University)Details of the Conference will be forthcoming.

The **Dunham Bible Museum** is open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Saturday, except University Holidays and the Saturdays before Monday holidays. To make an appointment for group tours, or for further information, contact:

Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287
or dseverance@hbu.edu.