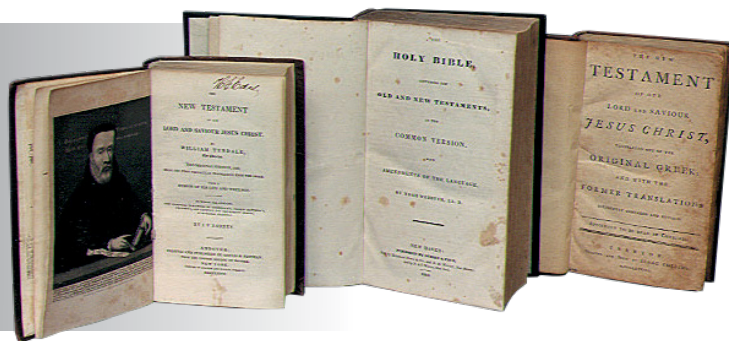


Dunham Bible Museum NEWS



Houston Christian University

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Our 25th Anniversary



Dr. Robert Sloan with Linda and Archie Dunham at the luncheon for the 25th anniversary of the Dunham Bible Museum. Archie and Linda Dunham have been major contributors to the Museum, enabling the Museum to assemble and exhibit one of America's leading Bible collections.



Drs. Robert Sloan and Donald Brake. The Bible collections of Drs. Donald Brake and John Hellstern, which the Museum purchased in 2009, include Bible manuscripts and the earliest printed Bibles.

The Dunham Bible Museum's 25th anniversary celebration on November 22, 2022, began with Roy Peterson's address to students at convocation. Dr. Peterson told his personal story of the Bible's transforming work in his own life. Making a series of bad choices as a teenager, involved with drugs and the wrong crowd, at the age of 19 Peterson found himself in jail in a Mexican prison for drugs. His comrades bribed their way out of jail; his lawyer took his money and never showed up for trial; and he ended up with a nine year prison sentence. In this dismal situation, Peterson came to faith in Jesus through the reading of the Bible brought to the prison by Jesus people.

Through amazing Providential circumstances, Peterson was released early from prison and returned to his family in New York. He became active in church, continued his Bible reading, and grew in his Christian faith. After some success in business management, Peterson went to work with Wycliffe Bible Translators in South America, eventually becoming CEO of Wycliff. He later went on



Dr. Sloan with Jerry Wiles, original organizer of the Bible Museum, and with guest speaker Roy Peterson.

to become CEO of the American Bible Society, overseeing its move from New York to Philadelphia.

Peterson's personal story, from his time in a Mexican prison at 19 to his Christian work and leadership, shows the transforming power of the Bible – a perfect message for the Bible Museum's 25th anniversary. Peterson encouraged students to regularly read the book of Proverbs, a chapter a day, to gain wisdom for life. He said that if he had Proverbs 1:10 in his heart when he was 19, he would not have joined the crowd which led him to prison. [Dr. Peterson's convocation address and his conversations with Dr. Sloan at the anniversary luncheon can be found under "Lectures" at the Dunham Bible Museum's website.](#)

Special guests at the celebration included Archie and Linda Dunham, Jerry Wiles, and Donald Brake. Jerry Wiles helped the University acquire an American Bible collection and established the Bible Museum in the University's Library. The Dunhams' generous contributions enabled the building of the current Museum and the acquisition of important Bible collections. Among those collections were those of Drs. John Hellstern and Donald Brake. Each of the guests was honored with a framed leaf of a 1610 Geneva Bible which included verses about the Scriptures' importance. Unfortunately, Dr. John Hellstern, another honoree, was unable to attend.

The anniversary was a special time to reflect on the Bible Museum's mission to exhibit the Bible's history and influence, drawing people to God's Word, which He has magnified above His Name (Psalm 138:2).

ISBC at the Dunham Bible Museum

In October the Dunham Bible Museum hosted the International Society of Bible Collectors for its annual meeting. Members from throughout the United States came and enjoyed the exhibits and collections at the Museum. Dr. Craig Evans was the key speaker at the meeting and gave talks on the New Testament manuscripts, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and how the Bible was written. [Links to Dr. Evans' lectures can be found on the Dunham Bible Museum's website under "Lectures."](#)

The ISBC presented the Dunham Bible Museum with the William Tyndale Award, "For assembling one of the great Bible Museums in America and in celebration of its 25th Anniversary." They also presented the Arnold Ehlert Award in the field of Bible research to Diana Severance for her book *The Living Word: Daily Readings on the History, Influence and Impact of the Bible*.



The four Gospel writers, from first page of Gospels in the Armenian Bible. Following a tradition from the second century, each Gospel writer has a symbol associated with him, taken from the four faces of the cherubim in Ezekiel. Matthew was associated with the angel, Mark with the lion, Luke with the ox, and John with the eagle.

Astvacashunch

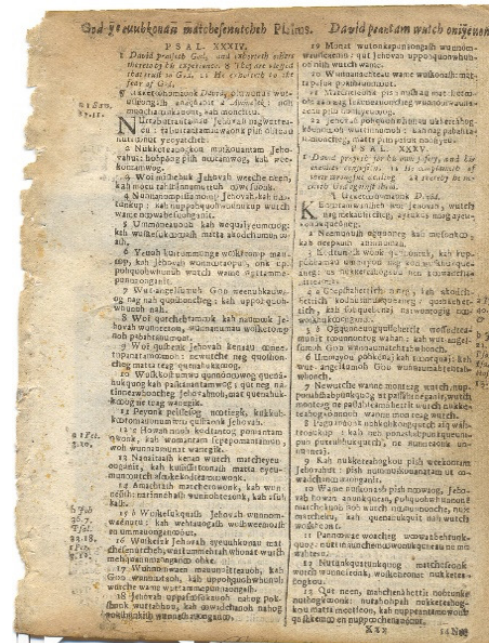
In 314, Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as the state religion, when King Tiridates III converted to Christianity. At the time, Armenian was a spoken, but not a written language. Around 405, Mesrop Mashtots developed an Armenian alphabet. The first sentence Mesrop wrote in Armenian was the opening of the book of Proverbs, "To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding." The Bible was the first book of literature translated into Armenian. The Armenian word for Bible is Astvacashunch, which means "God-breathed," a truth expressed in II Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

Over the next centuries, numerous Armenian Bibles were produced in manuscript, most with ornate illuminations. In 1666, the first printed Bible in Armenian was printed in Amsterdam. A second printing of the Armenian Bible was made in Constantinople in 1705. Recently, the Dunham Bible Museum acquired the third printing of the Armenian Bible, done by Mkhitar Sebastatsi in 1733. The Bible includes cross references, annotations, and numerous etchings and engravings.

Creating an Alphabet for the Bible

The Armenian alphabet and written language was the first to be created for Bible translation, but not the last. In the 9th century, brothers Cyril and Methodius developed an alphabet in their missionary work among the Slavs. This alphabet, known as Cyrillic, is used today for Russian, Bulgarian, Serbian and Ukrainian.

Similarly, all of the native tribes in North America had a spoken language but not a written language. Whenever the Bible was translated for these tribes, a written language had to be developed. This process is true in many places in the world today. Wycliffe Bible Translators, partnering with SIL International, has created written alphabets for over 1400 languages and continues the process of developing alphabets and written languages so people can read the Bible in their native tongue.



The Bible in Algonquian was the first Bible printed in America. Translator John Elliott developed a written language for Algonquian when making his translation.



Bible which belonged to Catherine the Great of Russia, from the John Hellstern collection. The Russian alphabet was developed by missionaries Cyril and Methodius in the 9th century.



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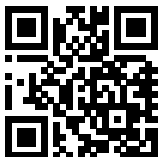
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Visit our website at
HC.edu/biblemuseum

"The foundations of our society and of our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible, that it would be difficult to support them, if faith in these teachings should cease to be practically universal in our country."

—Calvin Coolidge



Visit our website at www.HC.edu/biblemuseum
There you will find virtual tours of the Museum's exhibits, past and present, as well as videos of past lectures and much more.

Current Special Exhibits

- "Celebrating the Life of Jesus, the Christ: Three Centuries of Bible Art"
- "The Treasured Word"
- Out of this World – the Bible on the Moon

The Dunham Bible Museum's regular exhibits include:

- Bible manuscripts
- Early printed Bibles
- English bibles
- American Bibles
- The St. John's Bible
- Foreign Bible translations

...all designed to show the Bible's history, influence, and impact.



The Dunham Bible Museum is OPEN
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday – Saturdays,
except University holidays.

To make an appointment for group tours, or
for further information, contact

Dr. Diana Severance at
281-649-3287 or DSeverance@HBU.edu

On your next Dunham Bible Museum visit, try out our new audio tour using your cell phone!