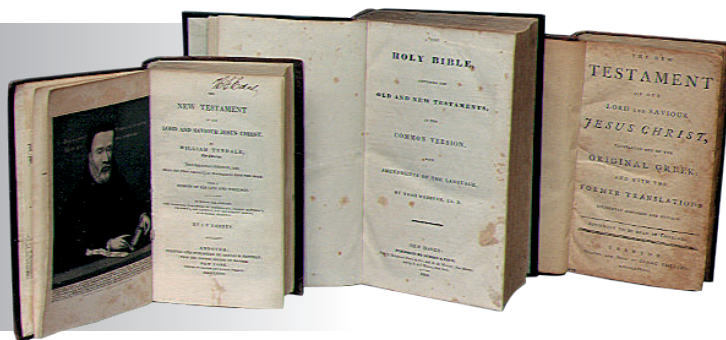


Dunham Bible Museum NEWS



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Bibles at Presidential Inaugurations



Ronald Reagan's Second Inaugural, as pictured on the Dunham Bible Museum's "The Bible Throughout American History" mural.

In the recent movie *Reagan*, at the scene of Ronald Reagan's inauguration, the film showed a Bible page with a hand-written note along the side, "This is a verse good for the healing of a nation." The verse the note referred to was II Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, will humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land." Reagan used his mother's Bible at his swearing in, opened to II Chronicles 7:14, where she had written the importance of that verse for the nation.

The U.S. Constitution prescribes the oath of office for the U.S. President, but does not require the oath be taken on a Bible. Nevertheless, since the first inauguration of George Washington, most Presidents have taken their oath on a Bible. Some Presidents have placed their left hand on the closed Bible while raising their right; other Presidents have opened the Bible to a Scripture particularly meaningful to them.

Some Bible verses chosen by Presidents on which to take their Presidential Oath

- ❖ Abraham Lincoln, 1865: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." *Matthew 7:1*
- ❖ Andrew Johnson, 1865 and James Garfield, 1881: "The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turns it whithersoever he will." *Proverbs 21:1*
- ❖ Chester Arthur, 1881: "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in thy righteousness." *Proverbs 31:1-2*
- ❖ Grover Cleveland, 1885: "Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness; he is gracious and full of compassion and righteousness." *Psalms 112:4*
- ❖ William McKinley, 1897: "Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge thy people that is so great?" *II Chron. 1:10*
1901: "He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good; and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." *Proverbs 16:20-21*
- ❖ Theodore Roosevelt, 1905: Teddy Roosevelt did not take the presidential oath on a Bible at his first term but at his second inaugural his Bible was opened to "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves..." *James 1:22*
- ❖ William H. Taft, 1909: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" *I Kings 3:9-11*

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Bible verses chosen by Presidents on which to take their Presidential Oaths, continued

- ❖ Warren G. Harding, 1921 and Jimmy Carter, 1977: “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” *Micah 6:8*
- ❖ Woodrow Wilson, 1913: “And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments...” *Psalms 119:45-46*
1917: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...” *Psalms 46*
- ❖ Calvin Coolidge, 1923: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...” *John 1*
- ❖ Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1933, 1937, 1941, 1945: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am becoming as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing....” *I Corinthians 13*
- ❖ Harry S. Truman, 1949: 2 Bibles were used at Truman’s inauguration, with his hand resting on both. One Bible was opened to the Beatitudes, and a Gutenberg Bible given to him by people of Missouri was opened to the 10 commandments. *Matt. 5:3-11; Ex. 20:3-17*.
- ❖ Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953, 1957: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. *Psalms 33:12*. In his 1953 inauguration, Eisenhower also had a Bible opened to *II Chronicles 7:14*, which Reagan later used in 1981 and 1985.
- ❖ Richard Nixon, 1969, 1973: “And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”
- ❖ Gerald Ford, 1974: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy path.” *Proverbs 3:5-6*
- ❖ George H.W. Bush, 1989: Opened to the Beatitudes in *Matthew 5:3-11*
- ❖ Bill Clinton, 1993: For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” *Galatians 6:8*
1997: “they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste place: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many great generations; and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.” *Isaiah 58:12*
- ❖ George W. Bush, 2005: “they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint.” *Isaiah 40:31*

Presidents Obama, Trump and Biden all took the oath with the Bibles closed. President Obama used Abraham Lincoln’s Bible for his oath taking. President Trump used Lincoln’s Bible and his mother’s Bible. President Biden used a family Bible that had been in the family since the 19th century.

“There are great problems, ladies and gentlemen, before the American people. There are problems which will need purity of spirit and integrity of purpose such as has never been called for before in the history of this country. I should be afraid to go forward if I did not believe that there lay at the foundation of all our schooling and of all our thought this incomparable and unimpeachable Word of God. If we cannot derive our strength thence, there is no source from which we can derive it.”

~ Woodrow Wilson, Governor of New Jersey, President of Princeton University, and President of the United States

Cherubim and the Gospel Writers

Irenaeus was born in Smyrna, in modern Turkey, in the second century. There he heard the preaching of Polycarp, who had studied under John the apostle. Irenaeus, thus, had a close connection to early apostolic teaching. When he was later chosen bishop of Lugdonum, what is now Lyon, France, Irenaeus defended the Scriptures and apostolic doctrines against false teaching which had arisen in the church. Irenaeus' work *Against Heresies* especially addressed the error of Gnosticism. In refuting the heretics of his day, Irenaeus refuted the false gospels of the heretics and emphasized there were only four Scriptural gospels – those of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Irenaeus wrote that the gospels could not be either more or less than four. As there are four zones of the world and four winds, and the church is scattered throughout the world, so there are four Gospels as the pillars and ground of the truth. As the Word, the Creator of all, sits above the cherubim, so He has given the Gospel under four aspects, bound together by one Spirit. The four faces of the cherubim (Ezekiel 2), Irenaeus said represented 4 images of aspects of the Son of God. The first, like a lion, symbolized His leadership and royal power. The second, like a calf, signified his priestly sacrifice. The third, like a man, signified his humanity. The fourth, like an eagle, signified the Spirit hovering His wings over the Church. Irenaeus linked the Gospel of Matthew with the man, for the Gospel begins with the genealogy of Jesus. He linked John with the lion, for it is full of confidence. Luke begins with a priestly sacrifice, so this gospel is linked with the ox. Mark begins with the prophecy of the Spirit in Isaiah, so his Gospel is linked with the eagle.

Many later writers agreed with Irenaeus that the four faces were the four gospel writers, but differed on the figures for each. The most commonly accepted was that used by Jerome in the fourth century – Matthew the man, for the Gospel begins with the genealogy of Jesus; Mark is the lion, for it roars in the desert with prophetic power; Luke the ox because it begins with temple sacrifice; John the eagle, for it soars heavenward with the Divine Word.

This use of the images for the Gospel writers is found in many Bibles, including the 1611 first edition of the King James Bible. The New Testament title page is rich with symbolism. In addition to pictures of the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles, it includes depictions of the four gospel writers, each with the emblem of a man, lion, ox, or eagle.

On the cover of the pulpit Gospels in the Russian Orthodox Church, it is customary to have 5 medallions on the cover. The center medallion is of the resurrected Christ. On each of the four corners are medallions of the four gospel writers, with their emblem beside them. This is seen on Catherine the Great's Gospels in the Museum's collection.



At the entrance to the Dunham Bible Museum is a stained-glass window of a man writing. Without reading the label, you can tell this is the apostle John because of the eagle at his feet!



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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
 - American Bibles
 - Early printed Bibles
 - *The St. John's Bible*
 - English bibles
 - 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@hc.edu



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.

Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts Snapshot in Houston, October 19!

CSNTM has the wonderful goal of photographing and digitizing every New Testament manuscript. Dan Wallace and his team of scholars will be sharing their amazing preservation work with friends on Saturday, October 19, at 6pm at the Lanier Theological Library. Texas hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Register at csntm.org/events

Become a Friend

The Dunham Bible Museum Friends support the programs and collections of the Museum through annual contributions and participation in Museum events. Friends have the satisfaction that their tax deductible gift will benefit the Dunham Bible Museum, enabling it to achieve its goal of being a premier museum dedicated to the Bible, its message, history, and influence. All Friends will receive year-long benefits of a printed subscription to the Dunham Bible Museum News, invitations to exhibit openings, and a discount on Museum store purchases. Visit the Museum's website (hc.edu/biblemuseum) for the membership form.

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