

# Dunham Bible Museum

## News



Houston Baptist University

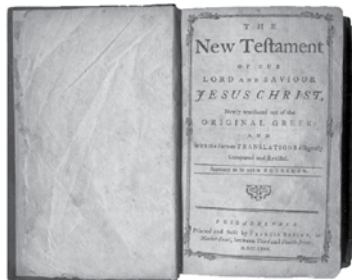
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### A Lone Survivor

The rarest item in the Dunham Bible Museum's collection is the New Testament printed in Philadelphia by Francis Bailey in 1780. This is the only known complete copy of one of the earliest English New Testaments printed in America. (The New York Public Library has a copy which is incomplete from the end of John through Revelation.)

Since the King of England controlled the license to print the King James translation of the English Scriptures, there were no English Bibles printed in the American colonies before the American Revolution. Once Independence was declared, however, a number of printers began to print the King James translation, beginning with the New Testament. In 1777, Philadelphia printer Robert Aitken printed the first English New Testament in America. Only two copies of that printing remain. Aitken printed two further editions in 1778 and 1779, but no copies of those survived. In



1779, Isaac Collins of Trenton printed a New Testament; only one copy has survived. In 1780 Boston printers Thomas & Fleet and Philadelphia printers Hall & Sellers as well as Francis Bailey printed New Testaments. One copy survives from each of those printings. The Francis Bailey New Testament in the Dunham Bible Museum's collection is thus among the earliest surviving English Scriptures printed in America. An inscription inside the Museum's Bailey New Testament reads, "Abigail Pinkham, Hir book bought in Middleborough March the 6th 1781. Prise 5/8."

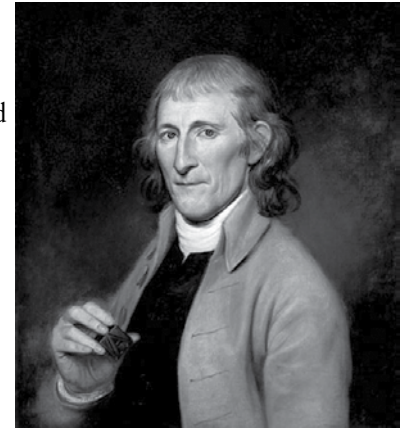


Portrait of Mrs. Francis Bailey by Charles Wilson Peale. Mrs. Bailey is holding a Bible, though not one printed by her husband. There is no record of Francis Bailey ever printing a complete Bible.

Courtesy of Cincinnati Art Museum.

In 1780, with the British out of Philadelphia, Bailey established a printing shop and printed his New Testament. Bailey printed a wide variety of items, including political pamphlets, Pennsylvania money and stock certificates, and a book on how to build bridges.

When Scotsman James Glen delivered a lecture in Philadelphia in 1784 on the mystic teachings of Emmanuel Swedenborg, Francis Bailey became an enthusiastic student and the first publisher of Swedenborg's works in America. Swedenborg claimed to have regular access to both Heaven and Hell, where he conversed with the spirits. John Chapman, popularly known as "Johnny Appleseed," was also a convert to Swedenborg's teaching. Chapman not only carried apple seeds to the new settlements in Ohio; he also brought Swedenborgian pamphlets printed by Francis Bailey. How different was this production of Bailey's printing press from the Truth found in his 1780 New Testament.



Portrait of Francis Bailey by Charles Wilson Peale. Bailey holds a piece of type, indicating his profession as a printer.

Courtesy of Cincinnati Art Museum.

Testament reads, "Abigail Pinkham, Hir book bought in Middleborough March the 6th 1781. Prise 5/8."

# Influence of the Bible in Literature

The new and expanded *Dunham Bible Museum* exhibits, expected to be completed by the end of this year, will tell the story of the origin and history of the Bible as well as the influence of the Bible on culture and life. One exhibit will feature works of literature which have been influenced by the Bible. Dr. Louis Markos, Professor of English at Houston Baptist University, has briefly summarized the Bible's influence on eight classic literary works:

C. S. Lewis asked himself what the Second Person of the Trinity might have been like had he incarnated himself on a magical world of talking beasts and living trees. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* replays the gospel story of sin and redemption, Crucifixion and Resurrection as it might have played out on the world of Narnia.

J. R. R. Tolkien once wrote in a letter that *The Lord of the Rings* is a "fundamentally religious and Catholic work." His epic fantasy embodies the full biblical understanding of the nature of good and evil and shows how God can choose the smallest person (i.e. David the Israelite and Frodo the Hobbit) to fulfill his greater plans.

With a title taken from the Sermon on the Mount, "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you" (Matthew 7:2), Shakespeare's play *Measure for Measure* explores the biblical mystery of law vs. grace, justice vs. mercy.

With a title taken from the Book of Genesis, "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden" (4:16), John Steinbeck's novel *East of Eden* transports the story of Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel to the edenic fields of pre-WWI California.

In composing *Paradise Lost*, his poetic retelling of the Fall of Satan and the Fall of Man, John Milton scoured the Bible for every possible detail and clue. His timeless epic offers a dramatic reenactment of how these two cosmic events might have transpired.

In what is arguably the single greatest Christian work, *The Divine Comedy*, Dante takes us on an epic journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. His understanding of what sin does to the human soul and how God's mercy can free us from sin's grip embodies a profound knowledge of and meditation on the Bible.

Perhaps the greatest devotional book ever written, John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* recasts the spiritual

journey of Christians into the form of a fanciful allegory. With great passion and imagination, Bunyan transforms the temptations described in the Bible into concrete obstacles that every Christian must overcome.

The greatest book ever written on the grieving process, *In Memoriam*, AHH is made up of a series of poems written by Alfred, Lord Tennyson as he dealt with the death of his friend, Arthur Henry Hallam. In his epic poem, Tennyson, like Job, wrestles with God's justice and mercy and ransacks the Bible for answers to the problem of pain, assurances of God's love, and glimpses of Heaven.

Two articles by Dr. Markos, "Recovering the Bible as Literature – an Evangelical Approach" and "George Herbert's Redemption," can be found at the *Dunham Bible Museum's* website [www.hbu.edu/bia](http://www.hbu.edu/bia) under "Influence in History and Culture."

## The Pearl of Great Price

In 12th century France, a group arose called the Waldensians or the Vaudois. At a time when the Church was accumulating more wealth and worldly power, Peter Waldo and his followers sought to live lives of poverty and simplicity, following the Bible rather than religious traditions. Waldo was the first to translate the Gospels into French. In a day when the Bible in the common language of the people was scarce, the Waldensians became known for their knowledge and trust of the Scriptures. "The Vaudois Barbe," by the American Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier, depicts the value the Waldensians placed on the Bible, the "Pearl of Great Price."

**The Vaudois Barbe**  
by John Greenleaf Whittier

"O, lady fair, these silks of mine  
are beautiful and rare ...  
The richest web of the Indian  
loom which beauty's queen might wear;  
And my pearls are pure as thine own fair neck  
with whose radiant light they vie;  
I have brought them many a weary way ...  
will my gentle lady buy?"

The lady smiled on the worn old man  
through the dark and clustering curls  
Which veiled her brow, as she bent to view  
his silks and glittering pearls  
And she placed their price in the old man's hand  
and lightly turned away,  
But she paused at the wanderer's earnest call ...  
"My gentle lady stay!"



“O, lady fair, I have yet a gem  
which a purer lustre flings,  
Than the diamond flash of the  
jewelled crown  
on the lofty brow of kings;  
A wonderful pearl of exceeding price,  
whose virtue shall not decay,  
Whose light shall be as a spell to thee  
and a blessing on thy way.”

The lady glanced at the mirroring steel  
where her form of grace was seen,  
Where her eyes shone clear, and her dark locks  
waved their clasping pearl between:  
“Bring forth thy pearl of exceeding worth then,  
traveler gray and old,  
And name the price of thy precious gem,  
and my pages shall count thy gold.”  
The cloud went off the pilgrim’s brow,  
as a small and meager book,  
Unchased with gold or gem of cost,  
from his folding robe he took.  
“Here, lady fair, is the pearl of price,  
may it prove as such to thee!  
Nay, keep thy gold ... I ask it not,  
for the Word of God is free.”

The hoary traveler went his way,  
but the gift he left behind  
Hath had its pure and perfect work  
on that highborn maiden’s mind,  
And she hath turned from the pride of sin  
to the lowliness of truth,  
And given her human heart to God  
in its beautiful hour of youth.  
And she hath left the old gray halls,  
where an evil faith had power,  
The courtly knights of her father’s train,  
and the maidens of her bower;  
And she hath gone to the Vaudois vales  
by lordly feet untrod,  
Where the poor and needy of the earth are rich  
in the perfect love of God.

### Museum Volunteers



*Volunteers Thelma Dowies, Caryn Powell, Charles Pierce, Doug Sanders, and Chris Huls donned hard hats to visit the construction site of the Dunham Bible Museum’s new home.*

## Museum’s Bible Collection Featured at Houston’s First Baptist Church

While leading Houston’s First Baptist Church in a 10 month study of Nehemiah, Senior Pastor Gregg Matte looked to Houston Baptist University to help aid his teaching in a four week series entitled, “Word of God Speak.” Matte was interested in giving attendees an opportunity to get familiar with the legacy of the word of God. What better way to do that than with samples from HBU’s historic **Dunham Bible Museum**? The museum loaned more than 20 pieces from its collection for a display each Sunday at HFBC. Thousands gathered before and after services to view the precious, historic word of God. “We are so pleased with the way the display turned out,” added production director Santry Rush. “The display really gave the congregation a chance to connect the history of the Bible with a gained knowledge after each sermon; it was very powerful.” As the series came to an end, many were sad to see the Bibles returned, but all held fast to the inspiring impression the Bible display left on the church.

## Surf’s Up!

The next time you’re surfing the Web, you might want to check out a website or two devoted to the Bible and its history. 2007 being the 60th anniversary of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, you might want to begin examining that subject. The Shrine of the Book’s website, <http://www.imj.org.il/eng/shrine/>, includes summaries of the history and significance of the scrolls, as well as an on-line copy of the famous Isaiah scroll.

PBS recently aired a program on the “Birth of the Bible” which focused on the beginnings of the English Bible. The website with background information can be found at [www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/case\\_bible/](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/case_bible/).

Last year’s exhibit “In the Beginning: Bibles Before the Year 1000” at the Smithsonian’s Freer-Sackler Galleries drew record crowds. If you missed the exhibit, you can view it along with additional material online at [www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online/ITB/html/introduction.htm](http://www.asia.si.edu/exhibitions/online/ITB/html/introduction.htm).

The American Bible Society’s website has been redesigned and includes a weekly program by the Society’s President: [www.bibles.com](http://www.bibles.com).

Visit [www.saintjohnsbible.org](http://www.saintjohnsbible.org) to keep up-to-date with the production of the *St. John’s Bible*, a 21st century illuminated and calligraphied manuscript Bible which uses non-21st century methods.



MUSEUM

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Visit our website at [www.hbu.edu/bia](http://www.hbu.edu/bia)

*“The Lord does not shine upon us, except when we take His Word as our light...Unless God’s Word illumine the way, the whole life of men is wrapped in darkness and mist, so that they cannot but miserably stray.” ~ John Calvin*

Please notify us of any changes or corrections in your address. We also welcome hearing from our readers and Museum visitors. If you would like to receive the *Dunham Bible Museum News* by e-mail and save the University postage, send your e-mail address to [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu).

## Opportunities Available

As the new home for the Dunham Bible Museum nears completion, opportunities are available for friends of the Dunham Bible Museum to help complete funding for the Museum’s design and exhibits. The Dunham Bible Museum will be housed in HBU’s new Joella and Stewart Morris Cultural Arts Center. In addition to the Bible Museum, the Center includes Belin Chapel, McNair Hall, a performing arts theater, the Museum of Southern History, and the Museum of Architecture and Decorative Arts. The Dunham Bible Museum is poised to move into its new home in the Morris Cultural Arts Center by the end of the year, with a grand opening to be announced by HBU President Robert Sloan. Those interested in making tax-deductible contributions towards the completion of the new Bible Museum exhibits may send checks, made payable to the Dunham Bible Museum, to Dunham Bible Museum – attn. New Exhibits, HBU, 7502 Fondren Rd., Houston, TX 77074. For further information, contact Rick Ogden at 281-649-3355, [rogden@hbu.edu](mailto:rogden@hbu.edu)) or Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287, [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu)).

## Visit the Dunham Family Bible in America Museum

- Museum Hours, September – May:
  - \* Tuesdays, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
  - \* Thursdays, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
  - \* 2nd Saturday of the month, noon – 5 p.m.
- Tours at other times, including summer tours, are available by appointment.
- A curriculum packet designed for grades seven and up is available for teachers.

For appointments or more information, contact Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu).