

## HBU Welcomes New President

On September 1, 2006, Dr. Robert B. Sloan Jr. became the third President of Houston Baptist University. Dr. Sloan came to HBU from Baylor University, where he most recently served as Chancellor, after serving 10 years as Baylor's President, from 1995-2005. At Baylor Sloan demonstrated his strong commitment to Christian scholarship and education, as well as integrity and leadership skills.

For Dr. and Mrs. Sloan, the location of HBU was a major attraction. There are few Christian Protestant universities in major cities, and the Sloans recognized the many opportunities for HBU's expansion and growth in Houston, the fourth largest city in the United States.

"In addition to its people, HBU has many remarkable assets, not the least of which is the City of Houston itself. Houston is teeming with diversity, opportunity, cultural resources, outstanding leaders, and is truly an international metropolitan area. Further, the distinctive Christian character and mission of the University are both matched and supported by the great churches of Houston and the surrounding areas," Sloan said. "Houston Baptist University is an institution with a remarkable history and also big plans, and I am thrilled to be a part of them."

Houston Baptist University will inaugurate President Robert B. Sloan Jr. on November 28 at 2 p.m., with a reception to follow at 4 p.m. on the HBU campus. Those planning to attend the inauguration may RSVP by calling 281.649.3008 or e-mail [inauguration@hbu.edu](mailto:inauguration@hbu.edu).



*Sue and Robert Sloan*

## Antiquities Collection Given to Bible Museum

Dr. Gerald Bodey and his wife Nancy recently donated their antiquities collection to **HBU's Bible Museum**. Dr. Bodey is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Infectious Diseases at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. Dr. and Mrs. Bodey have traveled extensively, with Dr. Bodey lecturing professionally in numerous countries. Their collection of antiquities is one of several different collections begun on their travels.

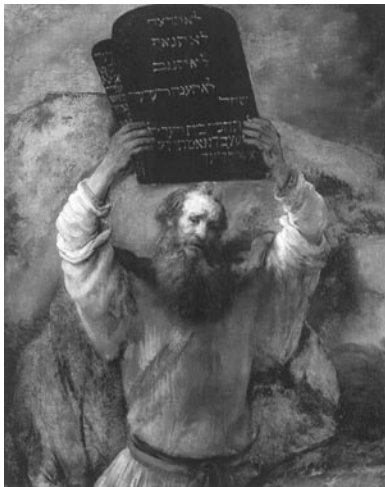


*Nancy and Gerald Bodey examine an item from their antiquities collection, a 3rd century B.C. Greek vase, with David Capes, Chairman of HBU's Department of Christianity.*

Though the Bible's truth transcends any particular geographical location or time period, the Bible is a historical book rooted in history. Items in the Bodeys' collection help elucidate life in the historical periods of the Bible. Clay tablets written in cuneiform, the early writing of ancient Sumer and Babylon, contain administrative records from the third millennium B.C. One small tablet from the 5th century B.C. is a promissory note for barley from the reign of King Artaxerxes I, the Persian ruler who sent Nehemiah back to Judah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. Cylinder seals from ancient Babylon were used to mark objects to show ownership. Clay pottery, dating from the third millennium to the first century B.C., are examples of utilitarian household items from ancient Palestine, Greece, and Italy. The ubiquity of pottery and potters in the ancient world made the image of the potter a powerful one in prophetic writing. Isaiah 45:13, for example, warned the rebellious Israelites, "Does the clay say to the potter, 'What are you making?'" This is what the Lord says, the Holy One of Israel and its Maker ... 'do you question me about my children, or give an order about the work of my hands?'"

Several artifacts in the collection are from ancient Egypt, including an alabaster jar from the early third millennium B.C. The collection of oil lamps dates from 400 B.C. – 600 A.D. and includes samples from ancient Greece as well as Syria and Palestine. The smallness of the lamps helps 21st century visitors to the **Bible Museum** better appreciate how foolish were the five virgins of Jesus' parable who did not bring extra oil for their lamps! The antiquities donated by the Bodeys will help visitors to the **Bible Museum** better understand the historical world of the Bible.

## Rembrandt's 400 and Bonhoeffer's 100!



*Moses Showing the Law is one of Rembrandt's 850 paintings, etchings, or drawings based on the Bible.*

one based upon the Scriptures? It is not surprising then that more of Rembrandt's works were based on biblical texts than any other subject. Out of his enormous artistic production (about 600 paintings, 300 etches, and 1500 drawings), about 850 of Rembrandt's known works are from the Bible. Over 600 of his drawings of Biblical subjects survive. Many are on the backs of letters or bills and seem to be his personal meditations on Biblical subjects. By the use of light, Rembrandt often concentrated on the inner thoughts and feelings of his subjects rather than simply their outer actions. Among the **Bible Museum's** recent acquisitions is a **Rembrandt Bible**, an elegant Bible published in 1965 with illustrations by Rembrandt chosen and annotated by Seymour Slive, Rembrandt scholar and Director of Harvard's Fogg Museum.

Three hundred years after Rembrandt, theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer became a leader of the Confessing Church in Germany, which stood firm for the Christian faith against Hitler's anti-Semitism and attempts to mold the Church into a Nazi framework. The Nazis banned Bonhoeffer from preaching, and he joined the resistance movement. His resistance connections were discovered, and Bonhoeffer was imprisoned for the last two years of World War II. On April 9, 1945, just days before the end of the War, he was hanged. Bonhoeffer understood that such a death could be the cost of following Christ. In his 1937 *The Cost of Discipleship*, he had written, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."



2006 marks the birthday centenaries of two very different men – Rembrandt von Rijn and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Rembrandt, born July 15, 1606, became one of Europe's greatest painters and certainly the most prominent Dutch painter of all times. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, born Feb. 4, 1906, became one of the leading theologians of the 20th century. Though men of very different times and talents, both spent a great deal of time meditating upon the Bible.

Patrons in 17th century Holland favored paintings which instructed as well as pleased the eye. What painting could be more instructive than

## Bonhoeffer on Bible Meditation

"It is not necessary for us to find new ideas in our meditation. Often that only distracts us and satisfies our vanity. It is perfectly sufficient if the Word enters in and dwells within us as we read and understand it. As Mary "pondered ... in her heart" what the shepherds told her (Luke 2:19), as a persons' words often stick in our mind for a long time – as they dwell and work within us, preoccupy us, disturb us, or make us happy without our being able to do anything about it – so as we meditate, God's Word desires to enter in and stay with us. It desires to move us, to work in us, and to make such an impression on us that the whole day long we will not get away from it. Then it will do its work in us, often without our being aware of it ..."

"The Word of Scripture should never stop sounding in your ears and working in you all day long, just like the words of someone you love. And just as you do not analyze the words of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, accept the Word of Scripture and ponder it on your heart, as Mary did. That is all. That is meditation ... Do not ask 'How shall I pass this on?' but 'What does it say to me?' Then ponder this Word long in your heart until it has gone right into you and taken possession of you."

"Every gift we receive, every new understanding, drives us still deeper into the Word of God. We need time for God's Word. In order to understand the commandments of God correctly we must meditate at length upon his Word."

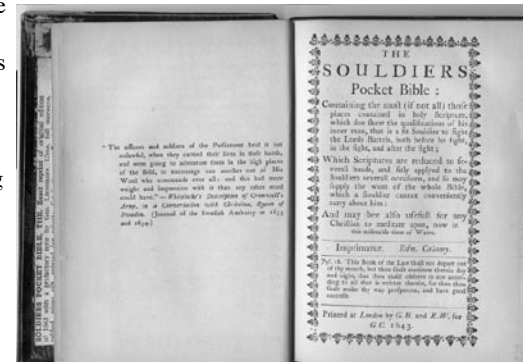
## A Veterans' Day Look at Soldiers' Bibles

Veterans' Day is a most appropriate time to look at the Soldiers' Bibles in the **Bible Museum**.

The practice of distributing Bibles to soldiers in the field actually began with Oliver Cromwell during the 17th century English Civil War. Cromwell insisted that his soldiers be "religious men" and "refrain from

pillage and disorder, drunkenness and impiety." Since an entire Bible was too large for a soldier to conveniently carry, in 1643 *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* was distributed to Cromwell's Army. This was a 4 1/2"x7" book of 16 pages containing a collection of Scriptures "useful for any Christian to meditate upon, now in this miserable time of war." The verses were organized under headings such as "A Soldier must not do wickedly;" "A Soldier must pray before he goes to fight;" and "A Soldier must consider that sometimes God's people have the worst in battle as well as God's enemies."

In 1854 a Massachusetts antiquarian collector, George Livermore, found a copy of the 1643 *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* among a collection of pamphlets he bought. With the outbreak of the American Civil War, he reprinted 100 copies for private distribution. The American Tract Society soon reprinted copies of this Cromwellian pocket Bible for Union soldiers. They replaced the Geneva Bible translation with the King James when quoting verses. An American Civil War re-issue of *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* is on display at the **Bible Museum** (A digital copy can be viewed at the **Museum's** website, [www.hbu.edu/bia](http://www.hbu.edu/bia), under "Reprints from the Collection."). Printed on the title page is



Oliver Cromwell's famous battle cry to his troops, "Trust in the Lord and keep your powder dry."

The American Tract Society republished *The Souldiers Pocket Bible* in the Spanish American War and distributed 126,000 to soldiers in World War I. The World War I edition had a manuscript facsimile in handwriting,

Sagamore Hill  
June 1st 1917  
*This is worth reading,  
Comrade and friend.  
Theodore Roosevelt.*

In addition to *The Souldiers Pocket Bible*, the **Bible Museum** has two other **Civil War Bibles**, New Testaments which belonged to Charles W. Sperry and William Jones, two Illinois infantry men. The current **Museum** display also includes a **Bible given to West Point Cadet** Arthur Newman in 1914. The American Tract Society began presenting Bibles to West Point graduates in 1869. In 1928, however, they began presenting Bibles to the entering class rather than the graduating class. (Certainly they could use them while at West Point!). Dwight Eisenhower took the Presidential oath of office on his West Point Bible.

The American Bible Society and local Bible societies were active in distributing New Testaments and Bibles to soldiers in the Mexican War and every American war thereafter. During the Civil War, they distributed Bibles to both the North and South. During the Spanish-American War they sent nearly 75,000 Bibles to the front lines. In 1898, Spanish Gen. Josè Toral said that a Bible could be found on the body of every wounded or dead American, showing the "deep-rooted hypocrisy existing in the American nation."

The Bibles and Testaments distributed to the soldiers during

World War I were a witness to the diverse immigrant population of the United States. Scriptures were distributed in Armenian, Chinese, Czech, French, Greek, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Rumanian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Yiddish and other languages, as well as English!

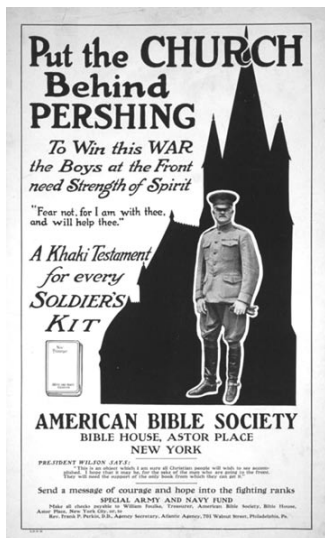
World War II was the first time in U.S. history that the government made the Bible part of the general issue to servicemen. Different Bibles were given according to the religious preference of the soldier – Jewish, Protestant, or Catholic. A letter from President Roosevelt "To the Armed Forces" was printed in front of the Bibles. Roosevelt wrote:

*"As Commander-in-Chief I take pleasure in commending the reading of the bible to all who serve in the armed forces of the United States. Throughout the centuries men of many faiths and diverse origins have found in the Sacred Book words of wisdom, counsel, and inspiration. It is a fountain of strength and now, as always, an aid in attaining the highest aspirations of the human soul."*

During World War II, when Eddie Rickenbacker and his seven companions had to abandon their aircraft and were drifting on three rafts in the Pacific for weeks, a Bible was their comfort. Rickenbacker wrote: "With the New Testament as an inspiration, we held morning and evening prayers. The rafts were pulled together making a rough triangle. Then, each in turn, one of us would read a passage. None of us, I must confess, showed himself to be very familiar with them, but thumbing the book we found a number that one way or another bespoke our needs." Most appreciated were Psalm 23 and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

Two **World War II Testaments** in the **Museum** have metal covers with the words "May this keep you safe from harm." These came to be known as "Heart-Shield" Bibles, because when placed in the left pocket, the metal-covered Bible shielded the heart from bullets. An **Iraqi Freedom New Testament** has a simple metal cover with cross molded on the front, with "11 Sep. 06" engraved on right corner. The **American Bible Society's Military Edition New Testament**, also distributed to today's soldiers, includes prayers, Bible study guides, and inspirational quotes by well-known leaders.

Today, as in every American war, soldiers daily face physical hardships, separation from their loved ones, and the possibility of debilitating wounds or death. The Bibles in their pockets or knapsacks, and more importantly in their hearts and minds, give them spiritual strength during difficult times.



Letter of commendation from President Wilson reproduced in the front of pocket New Testaments distributed during World War I:

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

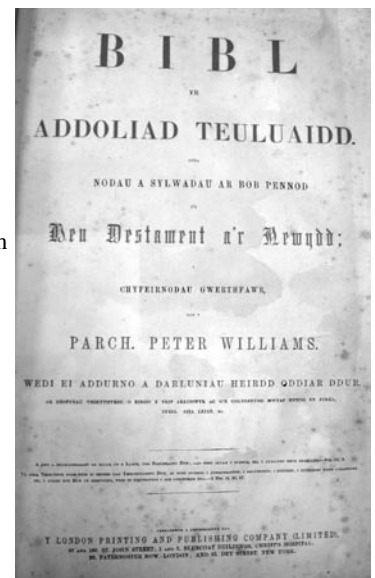
28 JULY 1917

*The Bible is the word of life. I beg you will read it and find this out for yourselves, - read, not little snatches here and there, but long passages that will really be the road to the heart of it. You will find it full of real men and women not only but also of the things you have wondered about and been troubled about all your life, as men have always, and the more you read the more it will become plain to you what things are worth while and what are not, what things make men happy – loyalty, right dealing, speaking the truth, readiness to give everything for what they think their duty, and, most of all, the wish that they may have the approval of the Christ, who gave everything for them, - and the things that are guaranteed to make men unhappy, - selfishness, cowardice, greed, and everything that is low and mean. When you have read the Bible you will know that it is the Word of God, because you will have found it the key to your own heart, your own happiness, and your own duty.*

WOODROW WILSON

## Folio Bibles Donated to Museum

Don Heese, long time Bible collector whose large American Bible collection now is at the International Bible Society Headquarters in Denver, recently donated 13 folio Bibles, dating from the 17th through the 19th centuries, to **HBU's Bible Museum**. Among them is a Welsh Bible with commentary by Peter Williams (1722-1796). Peter Williams's commentary, the first real Bible commentary in Welsh, first appeared in 1770 and went through at least 38 issues until 1900. Williams' notes, patterned after Ostervald's commentary, were designed "with a moral and theological observation."



**“I BELIEVE THE BIBLE ALONE IS THE  
ANSWER TO ALL OUR QUESTIONS AND  
THAT TO RECEIVE AN ANSWER FROM  
IT, WE ONLY NEED TO ASK WITH  
PERSISTENCE AND A LITTLE COURAGE.”**

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

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

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 Bible in America Museum Newsletter by e-mail and save the University postage, send your e-mail address to [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu).

## Newsletter Naming Contest!!

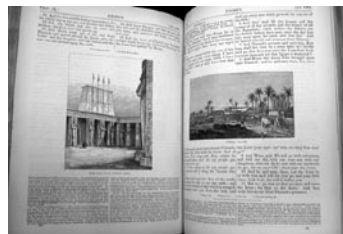
As the **Dunham Family Bible Museum** prepares to expand and move into its new quarters at HBU's Cultural Arts Center (now under construction!), there are many improvements and changes afoot. As part of the improvements, a name is needed for the Museum's newsletter, and we invite our readers to submit their suggestions. The name should capture the Museum's goal of "advancing the study, understanding, and appreciation of the history, transmission, and Christian influence of the Bible in the Church, in individual lives, and the culture of civilizations." Multiple entries are permissible. Submissions, which should include your name and address, should be sent to Dr. Diana Severance, Bible in America Museum, Houston Baptist University, 7502 Fondren Rd., Houston, TX 77074 or to [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu). Deadline for submission is midnight, Dec. 31, 2006. The winner will receive the award winning DVD, *Discovering the Bible*.

### 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 group tours, are available by appointment.
- A curriculum packet is available for teachers, designed for grades seven and up.

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

## Dr. Kitto's Bible



**The Bible Museum** recently acquired a very fine copy, c. 1860, of John Kitto's Illustrated Family Bible. Of this Bible with its numerous illustrations and notes, Charles Spurgeon advised his pastoral students, "you will economise rigidly until you have accumulated funds to purchase

**KITTO'S PICTORIAL BIBLE.** You mean to take that goodly freight on board before you launch upon the sea of married life. As you cannot visit the Holy Land, it is well for you that there is a work like the Pictorial Bible, in which the notes of the most observant travellers are arranged under the texts which they illustrate. For the geography, zoology, botany, and manners and customs of Palestine, this will be your counsellor and guide."