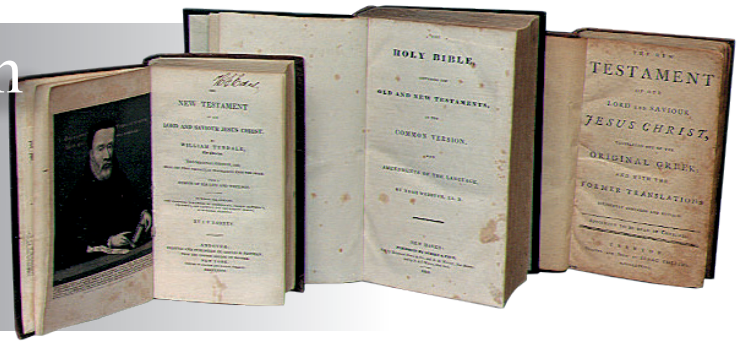


Dunham Bible Museum News



Houston Baptist University

Winter 2021

Volume 18, Issue 2

A MONUMENT TO GOD'S DELIVERANCE

Among the manuscripts in the Dunham Bible Museum's collection is a beautiful 17th century scroll on fine vellum of the book of Esther, part of the collection acquired from Dr. John Hellstern. Colorfully decorated in the 15th century Italian style, the Hebrew scroll includes 28 miniatures of the main characters of the story – King Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai, and Esther. Other miniatures show the opening banquet scene, Esther approaching the King for an audience, and Haman leading Mordecai through the streets on a white horse, as well as Haman's ten sons on the gallows.



First two panels of the 17th century scroll of Esther. The beginning scene, on the bottom right, shows the banquet scene where the King wanted Queen Vashti to perform.

The story of Esther has a special place in the Scriptures and Jewish life. Esther, descendant of Jewish exiles taken to Babylon, became queen of the Persian ruler of Ahasuerus, though she had kept her Jewish ancestry secret. When Haman, vizier of Ahasuerus, seeks to destroy the Jewish people throughout the empire, Esther is encouraged by her cousin Mordecai to approach Ahasuerus and hinder the scheme. Through dramatic events, Haman's plot is foiled, and the Jewish people are spared.

While God is not mentioned in the book, His work is apparent as the Jewish people are providentially rescued from Haman's destructive plot. Ever since this dramatic deliverance, the Jews have annually commemorated these events by celebrating the feast of Purim with days of feasting and joy, the giving of presents, and the reading again of the book of Esther. The beautiful scroll in the Dunham's collection was undoubtedly commissioned by a wealthy Jewish family for display in their home and use in their celebration of Purim.

After Haman's sons were killed, Esther requested of the king that "tomorrow" they be hanged on the gallows. The Jewish Midrash said that "Sometimes tomorrow means the next day, and sometimes it means the time to come," and some Jewish scholars have seen in Esther's request a prophecy for the future. The Nuremberg Trials after World War II resulted in the conviction of 12 high ranking Nazis for the



This section at the end of the scroll lists the names of the sons of Haman and shows them all hanged on the gallows.

crime of genocide, attempting to exterminate the Jewish people. One of the persons was convicted in absentia; one committed suicide before his execution. But, on October 16, 1946, ten Nazis were executed by hanging, replicating the fate of Haman's sons millennia before.

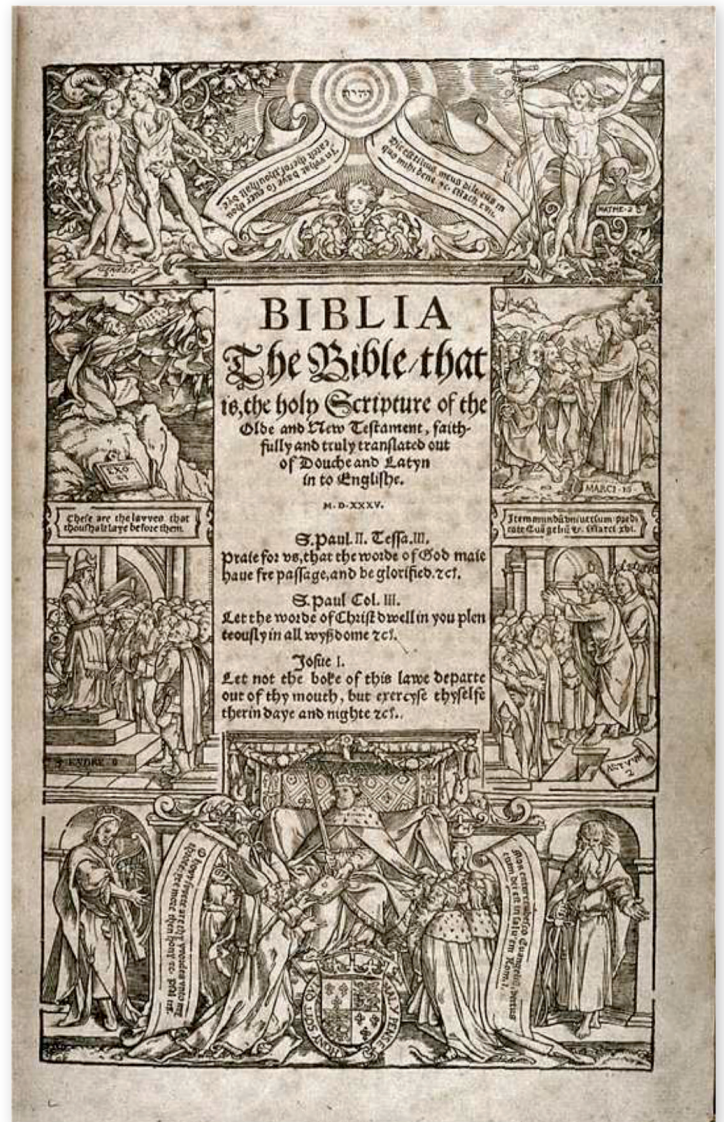
Advice for Reading the Scripture, from the first printed English Bible, 1535

In 1528, when persecutions against church reformers intensified under King Henry VIII, Miles Coverdale fled to the Continent. There he met William Tyndale, who in 1526 had been the first to print an English translation of the New Testament. Coverdale worked with Tyndale on revising his New Testament, while also working on an English translation of the Old Testament from the Latin and German (Coverdale knew no Hebrew). In 1535 Coverdale printed the first complete Bible in English, dedicating the Bible to King Henry VIII.

The title page is almost a sermon in itself. At the center of the top panel is the Hebrew name for God, with two Scriptures emanating from God. On the left the Scripture, "the day you eat you shall die" speaks of Adam and Eve. The right picture of the resurrected Christ has the Scripture, "this is my dear Son in whom I delight – hear him." Panels on either side of the main title are parallel scenes from the Old and New Testaments. Moses and Aaron receiving the Law parallels Jesus teaching His disciples; King David reading the Scriptures parallels the preaching of Paul. At the bottom panel, King Henry VIII gives the Scriptures to the Bishops and clergy on the left, with the Scripture "O how sweet thy words unto my throat – sweeter than honey;" the King gives the Scriptures to the peers on the right, with the Scripture "I am not ashamed of the Gospel."

In his prologue, Coverdale included some advice on how to read the Scriptures, advice useful for today's readers as well:

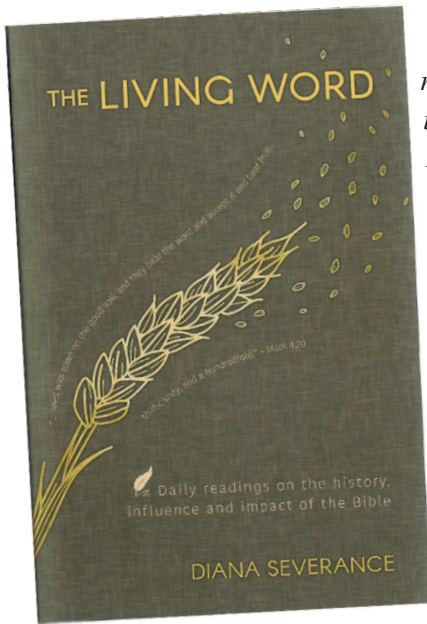
For there are some things which are done and written, to the intent that we should do likewise, as when Abraham believes God, is obedient unto his word, and defends Lot his kinsman from violent wrong. There are some things also which are written, to the intent that we should avoid such like. As when David lies with Urias' wife, and causes him to be slain ... when you read scripture, be wise; and when you come to such strange manners of speaking and dark sentences, ... as are hid from your understanding, commit them unto God or to the gift of his holy spirit in those who are better learned than you Sit down at the Lord's feet and read his



Title page of 1535 Coverdale Bible,
the first complete Bible printed in English

words, and, as Moses teaches the Jews [Deut. 6] take them into your heart, and let your talking and communication be of them when you sit in your house, or go by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And above all things fashion your life and conversation according to the doctrine of the holy ghost therein, that you may be a partaker of the good promises of God in the Bible and be heir of his blessing Christ. In whom if you put your trust, and are an unfeigned reader or hearer of his word with your heart, you will find sweetness therein ... take these words of scripture into your heart, and be not only an outward hearer, but a doer thereafter [James 1:22], and practice yourself therein, that you may feel in your heart, the sweet promises for your consolation in all trouble, and for the sure establishing of your hope in Christ."

THE LIVING WORD



The Living Word: Daily readings on the history, influence and impact of the Bible is a collection of 366 daily readings that reflect on the power and impact of the Bible in history. The Bible has had a powerful impact and influence in the lives of men and the affairs of nations. The Bible's influence can also be seen in all areas of life, including literature, art, science, law, and government. The daily

readings in *The Living Word* tell some of the story of the Bible's history and give examples of ways specific Scriptures have influenced both well-known and little-known individuals through the centuries. Seeing the Bible's influence through the ages encourages us to read and study the Scriptures daily.

Written by Dr. Diana Severance, Director of the Dunham Bible Museum, *The Living Word* has received notable endorsements. Dr. Leland Ryken, Professor of English Emeritus at Wheaton College stated, "*The Living Word* is without doubt the most complete and amazing collection of information about the Bible and its influence in print...a triumph of unobtrusive scholarship and research." Dr. Peter Lillback, President of Westminster Theological Seminary found the work "a joyful daily tour of the extraordinary role the Bible has played in the life of the church from its New Testament beginnings until today." Dr. Daniel Dreisbach, professor at American University, believes "The stories and insights in these collected readings will inform, inspire, and invite reflection. But most important, it will encourage readers to engage in God's Word in new and interesting ways." Dr. Steven Lawson of One Passion Ministries found the book "a gold mine of invaluable truths about the primacy and power of the divinely-inspired word of God." Dr. Timothy George, Professor at Beeson Divinity School, wrote, "I love this book and commend it warmly to God's people everywhere."

The Living Word is available at the Dunham Bible Museum's gift shop and can also be ordered online from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or Christianbook.com.

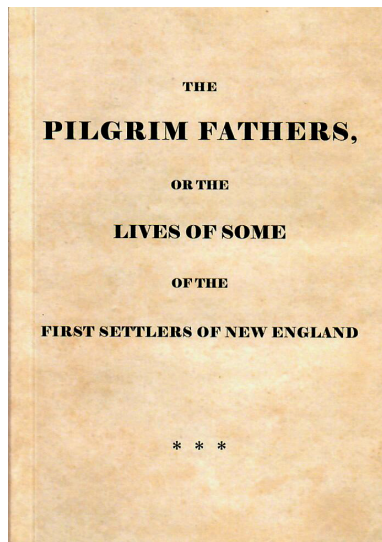
PILGRIM WILLIAM BREWSTER

Diplomat, Publisher, Preacher

One Small Candle, the Dunham's special exhibit on the Pilgrims, features several books associated with Pilgrim William Brewster. Brewster was a diplomat before becoming a leader of the Separatist group which came to America. Educated at Cambridge, Brewster served in the diplomatic corps as secretary to William Davison, ambassador to the Netherlands and then secretary of state under Queen Elizabeth. When Davison fell out of favor, Brewster went back to his manor in Scrooby, England. It was in his manor house that a group of Separatists began meeting. When authorities began searching out and arresting the Separatists, Brewster went into hiding and fled to Holland.

In Leiden Brewster taught English to students at the University of Leiden, and in 1616 he established a printing press, along with Edward Winslow and Thomas Brewer. The pilgrim press published religious books and pamphlets, sending them into England. A sample of one of the press's works is on exhibit in *One Small Candle*. The English ambassador discovered the location of the press and persuaded the Dutch to shut the press down. Thomas Brewster was arrested and imprisoned, but Brewster again went into hiding and was not found by the authorities. The seizure of the printing press was an important event which stirred Brewster and the Separatists to find a place where they could truly live in freedom.

Brewster was an elder in the Separatist congregation



The Pilgrim Fathers provides biographies and reflections on the early settlers who greatly influenced America's founding. \$10 - available online at the Museum's website or in the Museum's gift shop.

in Leiden and was the Pilgrim preacher for the first years in America. His sermons were noted for their exposition of the Scriptures. At the time of his death in America, Brewster amazingly had 400 books listed in his will, most of them theological books. That such a library would be assembled in the difficult days of the early Plimoth Colony demonstrated the value placed on the love and study of the Scriptures by these early settlers.



HOUSTON BAPTIST UNIVERSITY
7402 Fondren Road
Houston, TX 77074-3298

NonProfit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Mail-Sort, Inc.

281-649-3287

DSeverance@HBU.edu

Visit our website at
HBU.edu/BibleMuseum

*"The principles of the bible are the
groundwork of human freedom."
- Horace Greeley*

Visit our website at www.hbu.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 Exhibit

"One Small Candle" is a special exhibit on the Pilgrims in
commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the *Mayflower*
's landing in America in 1620. The Museum also currently
features "Out of this World," a special exhibit on 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.



CONNECTING YOU,
THEN AND NOW

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!