

# Dunham Bible Museum News



Vol. 6, Issue 2 • January - March 2009

## CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JESUS, THE CHRIST

*Special Exhibit*

## Now Through March 6

In the awesome grandeur of Herod's Temple, a shaft of light falls on the central figure of the infant Jesus in Rembrandt's "Presentation in the Temple", as this holy moment in the life of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus is celebrated.

Visualizing Matthew 4:23, Gustave Dore, the very popular and voluminous nineteenth century Bible illustrator, shows a cluster of invalid persons, Jesus laying his right hand on the forehead of a child, while reaching out with his left hand to another ill man. Against the backdrop of pillars of a Galilean synagogue, several stern, questioning and seemingly disapproving elders overlook the compelling scene. The illustration is simply called, "Jesus heals."



Salvador Dali's "Annunciation" expresses that moment of rapt submission of Mary to God's will. "The Three Crosses" and "The Pieta" express moments of anguish in the life of Jesus, as shown in the *Michelangelo Bible* edition. These are three of the contrasting styles of art of the life of Jesus. Lesser known artists such as Carrache, Leloir, Corbould, along with several unknown artists and engravers, combine to illustrate *Celebrating the Life of Jesus, the Christ*, currently in the Special Exhibits' area of the Dunham Bible Museum.

The life of Jesus from humble birth to glorious ascension is depicted in Christian Bible art from some thirty Bibles spanning five centuries. Most of these Bibles are huge folio volumes with illustrations printed from hand engraved woodblocks, or copper, or steel plates. However, neither artist or engraver, nor their suburb craftsmanship is really what is most important in this exhibit! Rather, what is important as we view the art is the *moment caught in time* fixed before our eyes and impressed on our hearts and minds, regarding Jesus' birth, baptism, miracles, healings, teachings, passion, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. It is a moment of wonder! Amazement! Thanksgiving! Joy! It is the wonder and victory of our faith expressed in art!

The Bibles shown are from the extensive illustrated Bible collection of Dr. and Mrs. John Hellstern, currently

on loan, and in the process of being acquired by Houston Baptist University. Virtually any Biblical theme and all the special seasons of the Christian year can be magnificently illustrated from this splendid resource. Make plans personally to visit this special exhibit. Even better make plans with a group from your church or other of your associations for a visit.

*Continued p. 2*

## Dunhams Help Expand Bible Museum's Collections

As longtime friends and benefactors of Houston Baptist University, Archie and Linda Dunham have touched the campus with their generosity in numerous ways. The Dunham's strong commitment to the Bible as the inspired Word of God has made



the University's Bible Museum a natural object of their bounty. In 2004, when Archie Dunham retired from ConocoPhillips, the corporation donated \$1 million to name the University's Dunham Bible Museum in recognition of his service to the corporation and to the greater Houston community. Recently Archie and Linda Dunham made a \$1.25 million gift to the University to help expand the rare Bible collection for the Dunham Bible Museum. The addition of rare ancient and medieval manuscripts as well as the earliest printed Bibles to the museum's permanent collection expands the Dunham Bible Museum's ability to create public exhibits on the Bible's history. The Museum can also offer scholars an important library of rare Biblical texts for promising research. In recognition of the Dunhams' generous contribution to the University, the theater in the Morris Cultural Arts Center has been named the "Dunham Theater."

While at the Dunham Bible Museum you will want to experience the extraordinary tour through Bible history from some of its earliest hand written documents, medieval manuscripts and scrolls, early printed Bibles and Reformation volumes, on through to the Bibles which

influenced American history. Each of these exhibit areas will enlighten your mind and enliven your heart. Visitors are giving feedback of heightened appreciation for their Bible since their visit, along with a renewed commitment to read God's Word.

## ILLUMINATING THE WORD

### An exhibit of prints from *The St. John's Bible*

Johann Gutenberg revolutionized Bible production in 1455 when he printed the Vulgate Bible with moveable metal type, rendering obsolete the creation of Biblical manuscripts by teams of scribes. The printing press replaced the monastic scriptorium in Biblical production. In 1998, for the first time in 500 years, the Benedictine Abbey of St. John's in Minnesota commissioned a handwritten, illuminated Bible.

The project was placed under the direction of Donald Jackson, one of the world's leading calligraphers and senior scribe to Queen Elizabeth, responsible for the creation of official state documents. Jackson assembled a team of artists and calligraphers who worked ten years on *The St. John's Bible*, completing the work in 2008.



*The Sower, from The St. John's Bible*

March 12-April 16. Each illumination is an artistic reflection on the Word of God. "In the Beginning," a brief introductory film will be shown throughout the day in the Museum's theater. "The Illuminator," describing the work on the *Bible* in more detail, will be shown at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.. There is no charge for the exhibit, though donations are welcomed. Groups of five or more should make reservations at 281-320-0487 or [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu).

## Lincoln and the Bible

During this bicentennial year of Lincoln's birth, there will be many celebrations throughout the country recalling the life and character of this great American. Any true consideration of Lincoln must include something of the Bible's influence on his life and thought. In her 1909 book *Lincoln's Use of the Bible*, S. Trevena Jackson tells the story of a school located across the fence from the White House:

"The President often watched the children play. One morning the teacher gave them a lesson in neatness, and asked each boy to come to school next day with his shoes blacked. They all obeyed. One of them, John S., a poor, one-armed lad, had used stove polish, the only kind his home afforded. The boys were merciless in their ridicule. The boy was only nine years old, the son of a dead soldier, his mother a washerwoman, with three other children to provide for. The President heard the boys jeering Johnny, and learned the facts about the boy.

"The next day John S. came to school with a new suit and with new shoes, and told that the President had called at his home and took him to the store and bought two suits of clothes for him and clothes for his sisters, and sent coal and groceries to the house. In addition to this the lad brought to the teacher a scrap of paper containing a verse of Scripture, which Mr. Lincoln had requested to have written upon the blackboard: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

"Some weeks after the President visited the school, and the teacher directed his attention to the verse, which was still there. Mr. Lincoln read it, then, taking a crayon said: 'Boys, I have another quotation from the Bible, and I hope you will learn it and come to know its truth as I have known and felt it.' Then below the other verse he wrote: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive. A. LINCOLN.'"

You can read the entire *Lincoln's Use of the Bible* at [www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum](http://www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum) under "Reprints from the Collection."

Like medieval manuscripts, *The St. John's Bible* is written on vellum using quill pens. Natural inks were handmade and hand-ground from minerals and stones such as lapis lazuli, malachite, silver, copper, and 24-karat gold. Though the techniques used were from centuries past, *The St. John's Bible* employed a modern English translation as well as contemporary scripts and illuminations. The work was an *educational* endeavor, as modern artists replicated techniques of earlier centuries. It was also a *spiritual* endeavor, as theologians



*The last page of Acts, from The St. John's Bible*

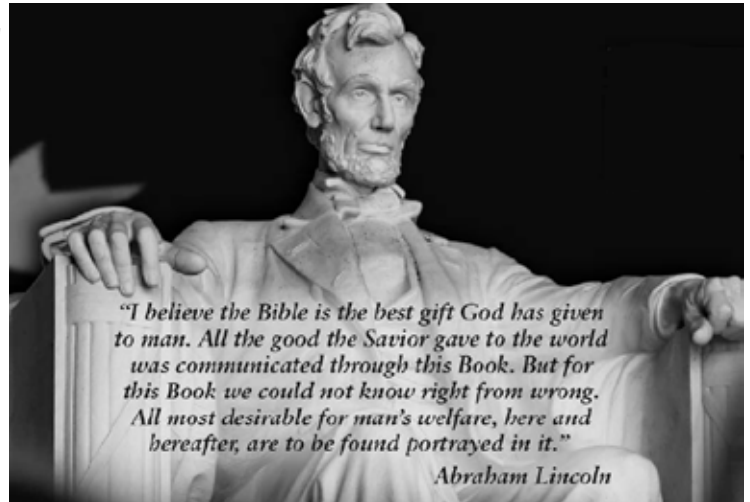
worked with Donald Jackson's team on important themes and Biblical cross-references to be incorporated in the 160 illuminations. *The St. John's Bible* was also an *artistic* endeavor, with illuminations designed to glorify the Word of God.

*The St. John's Bible* is monumental. Two feet tall and three feet wide, the 1000 pages are bound into seven volumes. Prints of 25 selected illuminations of *The St. John's Bible* will be on display at the Dunham Bible Museum

# Ronald White to speak on "Lincoln and the Bible"

February 26, noted Lincoln scholar **RONALD WHITE** will speak on "Lincoln and the Bible" at the 4th of the 2008-2009 Dunham Bible Museum Lectures. White has spoken to many national audiences, including to groups at the White House and to Congressional leaders. He has a great interest in the relation of the Christian faith and learning. White's biography *A. Lincoln*, due out this month from Random House, follows his two earlier works on Lincoln: *Lincoln's Greatest Speech* and *The Eloquent President- A Portrait of Lincoln Through His Words*. *Lincoln's Greatest Speech* analyzes Lincoln's Second Inaugural address, particularly noting the Bible's influence on Lincoln's thought.

The lecture will be at 7 p.m., Thursday Feb. 26th in the Belin Chapel. The lecture is free, but please RSVP your attendance to 281-320-0487 or [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu). The Bible Museum will be open to visitors before and after the lecture.



## Join the Dunham Bible Museum Friends

In this inaugural year of the new Dunham Bible Museum, the Dunham Bible Museum Friends is being organized to support the programs and collections of the Museum through annual contributions and participation in Museum events. Dunham Bible Museum Friends help spread the word about the exhibits and activities of the Dunham Bible Museum. Friends also have the satisfaction that their tax deductible gift will benefit the Dunham Bible Museum and enable 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, a membership certificate, and a discount on Museum store purchases. Additional benefits are available for those wishing to contribute at a higher level. Won't you consider becoming a charter member of the Dunham Bible Museum Friends?

### Annual Membership Levels and Benefits

- King James Level - \$50 (Student \$30)**
  - Membership card/ certificate
  - Invitations to exhibit openings and announcements of public programs
  - Printed copy of Dunham Bible Museum News
  - 10% discount on Museum store purchases
- Geneva Level - \$75**
  - King James Level benefits
  - Autographed copy of Donald Brake's *A Visual History of the English Bible*
- Coverdale Level - \$250**
  - Geneva Level benefits
  - 20% discount on Museum store purchases
- Wycliffe Level - \$500**
  - Coverdale Level benefits
  - An original 1611 King James Bible leaf, quarto size
  - Private reception with Dr. and Mrs. Robert Sloan
- Tyndale Level - \$1,000**
  - Wycliffe Level benefits
  - An original 1611 King James Bible leaf, folio size
  - Private tour with director for 30 persons or less from donor's friends, business, church, club, or other organization.
- Gutenberg Level (Corporate Benefactor)- \$2,000+**
  - Tyndale Level benefits
  - Recognition notice in each quarterly Dunham Bible Museum News
- St. Jerome Level (Life-time Individual Membership) - \$10,000**
  - Tyndale Level benefits
  - Framed original 1611 King James Bible leaf

Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Gift membership from \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the publication of my name on the Dunham Bible Museum Friends list.

Please do not publish my name on the Dunham Bible Museum Friends list.

I am interested in volunteer opportunities at the Dunham Bible Museum Friends.

Please check your chosen membership level above, and make checks payable to Dunham Bible Museum - HBU or pay by credit card below:

Visa  Mastercard  American Express  Discover Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name as shown on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with payment to:

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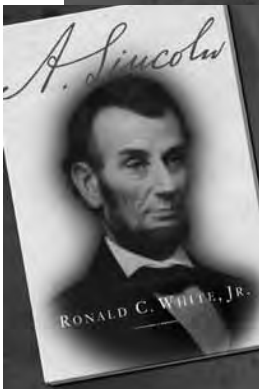
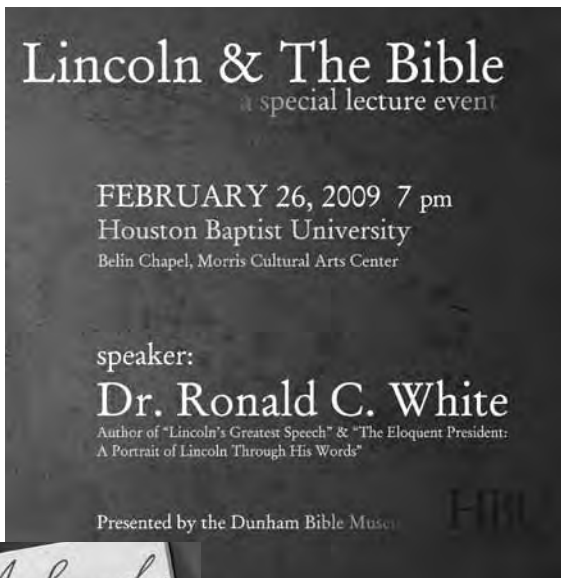
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Visit our website at  
[www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum](http://www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum)

“I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a better man.”

*Abe Lincoln to his friend Joshua Speed*



The lecture is free, but please RSVP your attendance to:  
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The Dunham Bible Museum will be open to visitors before and after the lecture.

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**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).**

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### Visiting the Museum

The Dunham Bible Museum is open 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. To make an appointment at other times, for group tours or for further information, contact **Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or [dseverance@hbu.edu](mailto:dseverance@hbu.edu).**

### COMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars for coming lectures and exhibits (the Bible Museum will be open before and after all lectures).

**Now - March 6** – Special exhibit, “Celebrating the Life of Jesus, the Christ,” featuring Bible art of the life of Christ

**February 26** – “The Bible and Lincoln” by Ronald C. White, author of *Lincoln’s Greatest Speech*, *The Eloquent President: A Portrait of Lincoln Through His Words*, 7 p.m., Belin Chapel.

**March 12 - April 16** – Special exhibit on the St. John’s Bible