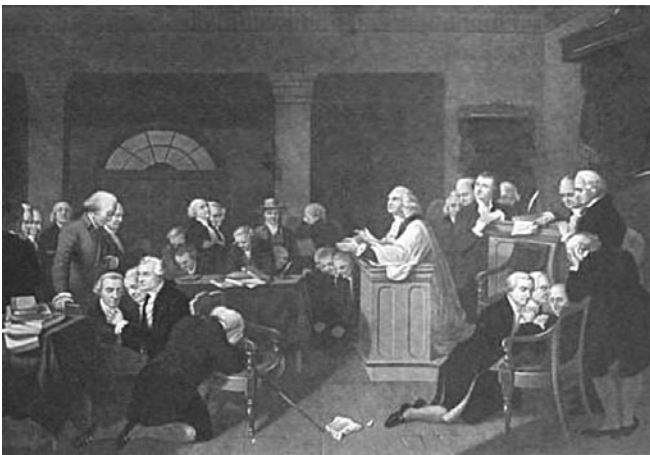


Dear Abby – 1774

In September 1774, a Congress of representatives from the thirteen colonies assembled in Philadelphia. Their task? — consider what to do about the British restrictions on colonial liberties. Samuel Adams nominated Rev. Jacob Duchè, an Episcopalian clergyman from Philadelphia, to give the opening prayer in the Congress. When reading his prayers and the appointed Psalm for the day, Rev. Duchè read from *The Book of Common Prayer*, first composed by Thomas Cranmer, whose many-faceted work in bringing the Bible to the English people is described elsewhere in this newsletter.



19th century engraving of the First Prayer in Congress

John Adams, attending the Congress, wrote his wife Abigail a thrilling description of this opening prayer in Congress. Adams wrote that Rev. Duchè:

read several prayers in the established form, and then read the Psalm. You must remember this was the next morning after we heard the terrible rumor of the cannonading of Boston. I never saw greater affect upon an audience. It seemed as if Heaven had ordained that Psalm [35] to be read on that morning. After this, Mr. Duchè, very unexpectedly to every body, struck out into an extemporary prayer, which filled the bosom of every man present. I must confess I never heard a better prayer or one so well pronounced...It has had an excellent effect upon every body here. I must beg you to read that Psalm.

As we reflect on Independence Day and our country's beginnings, why not heed John's entreaty to Abigail and read Psalm 35, which so stirred the hearts of our country's founders?

“LET THEM SHOUT FOR JOY, AND BE GLAD THAT FAVOR MY RIGHTEOUS CAUSE: YEA, LET THEM SAY CONTINUALLY, LET THE LORD BE MAGNIFIED, WHICH HAS PLEASURE IN THE PROSPERITY OF HIS SERVANT.”

Psalm 35:27

Astronaut's Widow Visits HBU

Evelyn Husband, widow of space shuttle *Columbia* commander Rick Husband, was a special guest at HBU and the **Dunham Family Bible Museum** this spring. During her inspiring talk at convocation, Mrs. Husband gave a personal description of the events surrounding the *Columbia's* break-up over Texas on February 1, 2003. There was hardly a dry eye in the audience as Mrs. Husband described the Christian journey of Rick Husband, his devotion to his family, and the Scriptures important to them through their trials.

Commander Husband had spoken a few words to the assembled crew and their spouses the evening before *Columbia's* launch. With a voice full of emotions, he quoted Joshua 1:7, “Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you should have good success wherever you go.” While visiting the **Bible Museum**, Mrs. Husband discussed how frequently this passage from Joshua came up in the events following the flight. When the state of Israel issued a postage stamp in memory of Ilan Ramon, who was the first Israeli astronaut and was making his first flight on *Columbia*, the Scripture from Joshua 1:7 was printed on the stamp.

Though Commander Husband had wanted to be an astronaut since a small boy, more important to him was that he be a faithful servant to God and a godly husband and father for his family. In the funeral instructions Rick Husband left in the event of a failure in *Columbia's* flight, he wrote, “Tell ‘em about Jesus! – That He is real to me. Proverbs 3:5-6, Colossians 3:23.”

Just two days after her husband's death, Evelyn appeared on “Good Morning America” to read a statement from the astronauts' families. Katie Couric asked Evelyn how she would like her husband to be remembered. Evelyn replied,

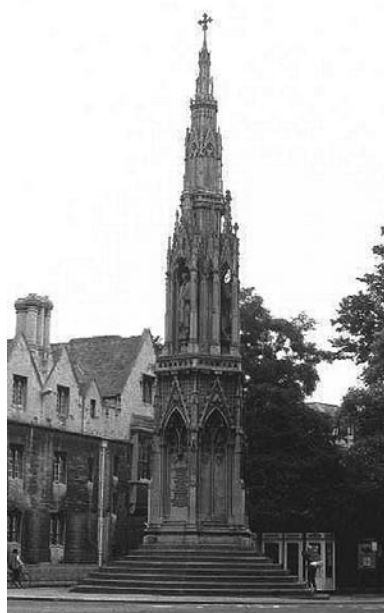
When Rick autographed pictures for people, he always put a Scripture on it that was Proverbs 3:5-6, which says ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.’ And that has been a blessing to me and Rick. And now it's a blessing to me because I don't understand any of this, but I do trust the Lord. And so that's been a tremendous comfort.



Evelyn Husband, widow of astronaut Rick Husband, continues to rely on God and the Bible for her strength and comfort.

In briefly describing her thoughts and emotions and sharing accounts of events after *Columbia's* fall to earth, Mrs. Husband shared how she received strength from the Bible to face the days ahead. She could turn to Jesus for comfort, because Isaiah 53:3 told her He was a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; He knew how she felt. Psalm 147:3 re-assured her that God heals the brokenhearted and binds the wounds. From Revelation 21:4, she knew that her husband now was with Jesus, where there were no tears, no death, no mourning. Psalm 56:8 told her that God keeps track of each one of our sorrows. In the midst of the sorrow of losing her loving husband, the wonderful father of her children, and her best friend, Evelyn Husband gave us an example of the truth Jesus spoke in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

450 Years Later – The Scriptural Legacy of a Christian Martyr



Martyrs' Memorial, Oxford, England

A central tourist site in Oxford, England is the Martyrs' Memorial, a Victorian monument in honor of the three 16th century leaders of the English Reformation who under Queen Mary were burned at the stake for their faith. Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley met their fiery deaths together in October 1555. Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, followed them to the flames on March 21, 1556.

When Queen Mary required all England to submit to the Pope's authority in the Church, Cranmer struggled with the tension between the Christian's duty to submit to the government powers (Romans 13) and the necessity of following the Bible's authority alone in the rule of faith. In the end, Cranmer's conviction in the supreme

authority of Scripture held, and he courageously met his death.

Thomas Cranmer's influence and legacy continued long after the flames which consumed his body had died. As one of the prime architects of the Reformation in the Church of England, Cranmer elevated the position of Scripture in the life of the Church. When he became Archbishop in 1533, possessing a portion of the Scriptures in English was still illegal. However, in the midst of the political and religious turmoil during the reign of King Henry VIII (with his six wives) and Henry's heir, King Edward, Cranmer steadily worked to bring the Scriptures to the people. He did this in four main ways.

First, he encouraged the 1539 publication of the English Bible, which, because of its size, became known as the **Great Bible**, a copy of which was required to be placed in every church in England. Cranmer's Preface to the Great Bible encouraged the individual's personal, daily reading of the Scripture. He quoted extensively from the fourth century church father John Chrysostom to show that reading of the Bible by the individual Christian was a practice encouraged in the early church.



*Cranmer's burning at the stake, as shown in Foxe's **Book of Martyrs**.*

Secondly, in the *Articles of Religion* for the Church, Cranmer clearly stated the sufficiency "of the holy Scriptures for salvation" and asserted that "it is not lawful for the church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's written Word."

Thirdly, Cranmer wrote a series of sermons in English which explained key Christian truths from the Scriptures and the fathers of the early church. The first sermon in the series was "A Fruitful Exhortation to the reading and knowledge of the holy Scripture." Here again Cranmer encouraged the individual, daily reading of Scripture and explained the transforming power reading the Bible regularly would have in the Christian's life. He also explained the importance of prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit in making the Scripture understandable to the reader.



Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury 1533-1556

Finally, in *The Book of Common Prayer*, Cranmer made the English Scripture (not the Latin liturgy) the basis and foundation of the Church's worship. Two thirds of *The Book of Common Prayer* comes from Scripture. Cranmer provided a pattern of daily Scripture reading in which readers read through the book of Psalms each month and the entire Bible every two years.

Thomas Cranmer left a strong legacy of the Scriptures to the English people, a legacy that continues among English speaking people of many different races throughout the world today. He is among the many who sacrificed their lives that we might have the Scriptures. It is appropriate we remember his work during the 450th anniversary of his martyrdom.

"TO A CHRISTIAN MAN, THERE CAN BE NOTHING EITHER MORE NECESSARY OR PROFITABLE, THAN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE, FORASMUCH AS IN IT IS CONTAINED GOD'S TRUE WORD, SETTING FORTH HIS GLORY AND ALSO MAN'S DUTY."

From Cranmer's sermon on the reading of Scripture

“Blessed Lord, who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of your holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Prayer for Second Sunday in Advent
in *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Monthly Psalm Reading

In *The Book of Common Prayer*, Thomas Cranmer set forth a plan for reading through the book of Psalms monthly. Following is the order of the readings given for saying the psalms in morning and evening worship. If a month had 31 days, the psalms for the 30th day were repeated. This intensive reading of the psalms made the psalms an intimate part of the language and thought of many generations of English speaking people.

	MORNING	EVENING
1.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	6, 7, 8
2.	9, 10, 11	12, 13, 14
3.	15, 16, 17	18
4.	19, 20, 21	22, 23
5.	24, 25, 26	27, 28, 29
6.	30, 31	32, 33, 34
7.	35, 36	37
8.	38, 39, 40	41, 42, 43
9.	44, 45, 46	47, 48, 49
10.	50, 51, 52	53, 54, 55
11.	56, 57, 58	59, 60, 61
12.	62, 63, 64	65, 66, 67
13.	68	69, 70
14.	71, 72	73, 74
15.	75, 76, 77	78
16.	79, 80, 81	82, 83, 84, 85
17.	86, 87, 88	89
18.	90, 91, 92	93, 94
19.	95, 96, 97	98, 99, 100, 101
20.	102, 103	104
21.	105	106
22.	107	108, 109
23.	110, 111, 112, 113	114, 115
24.	116, 117, 118	119:1-32
25.	119:33-72	119:73-104
26.	119:105-144	119:145-176
27.	120, 121, 122	126, 127, 128
	123, 124, 125	129, 130, 131
28.	132, 133, 134, 135	136, 137, 138
29.	139, 140, 141	142, 143
30.	144, 145, 146	147, 148, 149 150

Cranmer on Reading the Bible

The 1540 second edition of the *Great Bible*, and numerous Bibles following, included a Preface by Thomas Cranmer. Cranmer’s preface addressed two main issues – the benefits of individuals reading the Scriptures and a warning to those who spent their time in endless disputes about the Scriptures. In a country which had forbidden the personal reading of the Scriptures for generations, Cranmer took the bold step of exhorting the people to daily read the Scripture. His exhortation and practical admonitions showed a pastor’s heart. He wrote that being too busy for the Scriptures because of one’s work in government, or household duties, or caring for the children, or time needed for business was no excuse. Those most distracted by the affairs of the world were most in need of the Scripture! Cranmer wrote that in the Scripture was the medicine and remedy for many grievous wounds and ailments. If your wife provokes you to anger, your child causes you sorrow, your enemies lie in wait for you, your friend (or so you thought) envies you, your neighbor picks quarrels with you, your mate undermines you, your lord threatens you, poverty is painful to you, you mourn the loss of a beloved, or prosperity exalts you, adversity brings you low, the Scripture contained the needed treatment. So many and various occasions of

cares, tribulations, and temptations beset you and besiege you round about. Where can you have armor or fortress against your assaults? Where can you have salves for your sores but of holy scripture? ... The reading of the scriptures is a great and strong bulwark or fortress against sin; the ignorance of the same is a greater ruin and destruction of them that will not know it. That is the thing that brings in heresy; that is that causes all corrupt and perverse living; that is it that brings all things out of good order.

In the second part of his Preface, Cranmer cautioned people to read the Scriptures with the fear of God in their hearts. The Scriptures were not to be used for endless disputations or read with philosophical sophistry. Endless talk about the Scripture was no substitute for a holy life transformed through the power of God’s Word:

every man that comes to the reading of this holy book, ought to bring with him first and foremost this fear of almighty God, and then next, a firm and stable purpose to reform his own self according thereunto, and so to continue, proceed and prosper from time to time, showing himself to be a sober and fruitful hearer and learner; which, if he do, he shall prove at the length well able to teach. Though not with his mouth, yet with his living and good example, which is sure the most lively and effective form and manner of teaching.

Today, 450 years after his death, Cranmer’s words on the importance of the Scripture continue to challenge us.

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 7 and up.

For appointments or more information, contact
Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or dseverance@hbu.edu.

Visit our Website at www.hbu.edu/bia

“ALL MANNER OF PERSONS, OF WHATEVER
ESTATE OR CONDITION THEY BE, MAY IN THIS
BOOK LEARN ALL THINGS WHAT THEY OUGHT
TO BELIEVE, WHAT THEY OUGHT TO DO, AND
WHAT THEY SHOULD NOT DO, AS WELL CONCERNING
ALMIGHTY GOD, AS ALSO CONCERNING THEMSELVES
AND ALL OTHERS.”

Thomas Cranmer

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.

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. Deadline for submission is midnight, December 31, 2006. The winner will receive the award winning DVD, *Discovering the Bible*.

Vision Becoming Reality

Construction on HBU's new Cultural Arts Center began March 2006. The steel framework for the Chapel, Grand Hall, and spaces for the **Bible Museum** and Decorative Arts Museum can already be seen against the Houston skyline, and workmen are preparing the groundwork for the 1200-seat theater. In the photo, the Chapel is on the left, with the Museum areas on the right. The theater will be located in the fresh dirt area adjacent to the current steel structure.

