

The Heritage Edition

Igniting the Spiritual Imagination



“One of the extraordinary undertakings of our times.”

— Smithsonian Magazine



COVER: *Creation*, Donald Jackson, Copyright 2003, *The Saint John's Bible*, Saint John's University, Minnesota USA. ABOVE: Donald Jackson, Master Calligrapher and Artistic Director of *The Saint John's Bible*.

The Saint John's Bible

THE DREAM

From childhood, Donald Jackson dreamed of creating a handwritten, illuminated Bible like the ones he saw at the British Library. Entering art school at 13, he became an internationally renowned calligrapher and official scribe to Queen Elizabeth II. In 1995 he witnessed the monks of Saint John's Abbey and University processing with the Book of Gospels during liturgy and proposed the Bible project. So it was that the artist and the monastic community came together to do something not done since the invention of the printing press in the 15th century: create a Bible in the manner of the early Benedictines who, in their scriptoriums, produced and preserved some of the greatest texts of Western Civilization.

THEOLOGICAL RIGOR

The Committee on Illumination and Text (CIT), a group of art historians, medievalists, artists, biblical scholars and theologians convened at Saint John's University, presented Donald Jackson with briefs and abstracts for the scripture illuminations. This group, under the leadership of Fr. Michael Patella, OSB, acted as clients for the work, offering direction and approving final sketches, as well as receiving the pages as each of the seven volumes was completed. *The Saint John's Bible* contains the text and notes of the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) translation. This translation was chosen because it is theologically sound and approved by a large number of Christian denominations.

*"America's
Book of Kells"*

— Newsweek Magazine

INSPIRING ART

An international team of calligraphers and artists created the 1,165-page manuscript and its 160 major illuminations. Each folio is two feet tall by three feet wide and will be bound into seven volumes at the end of the exhibition phase of the project. The script was devised by Donald Jackson to be readable, modern, and appropriately dignified for this sacred text. In addition, he wanted a script with speed, flexibility—"juice"—in keeping with the living Word.

LIVING WORD

The Saint John's Bible reflects Benedictine values, particularly highlighting three themes: hospitality; conversion of life; and justice for God's people. Additionally, gold leaf was used liberally to represent the divine, silver/platinum to reflect the principle of wisdom, and rainbows to show God's promise in the vivid illuminations in the volumes Prophets and Revelation. Inked stamps, textile patterns and other motifs carry themes across volumes. A wide range of artistic styles, including iconography, abstraction, chrysography and illustration, work together to expand our visual vocabulary for the sacred.

FOR NOW AND ALWAYS

The Saint John's Bible is a Bible for the 21st century. Strands of DNA and magnified images of viruses under the microscope are woven into illuminations. Satellite photos of the Ganges river delta and photos from the Hubble telescope are used to depict creation. Images of contemporary ecological destruction find their place alongside period images from celestial charts and sculpted creatures that stood at the doors of ancient buildings in Babylon. The imagery, like the text, is alive and constantly rewards the modern day seeker. And through the Heritage Edition, the finest reproduction of *The Saint John's Bible* is within reach of communities throughout the world.



Experience *The Saint John's Bible*: The Heritage Edition

The Saint John's Bible is a singular achievement: the complete text of the Bible, written on calfskin vellum using traditional tools and inks. As a work of sacred art, it ignites the spiritual imagination of all those who view its pages. It stands alone.

However, the beauty, richness, and inspiration of *The Saint John's Bible* are not limited to those able to see the original pages in a museum setting. Because of the Heritage Edition, a masterpiece in its own right, people around the world can experience *The Saint John's Bible*. These volumes can be used in liturgies, by scholars, and in the daily life of a faith community.

Limited to 299 sets, the seven volumes of the Heritage Edition of *The Saint John's Bible* are true to the scale, beauty, and artistic intent of the original manuscript. Let these magnificent volumes inspire you and your community.

When we placed [the Heritage Edition] side-by-side on a table in Cambridge with the great Bible of Bury St. Edmunds Abbey [c. 1135] and the even vaster Bible of Dover Priory [c. 1160], it hardly seemed to be a facsimile at all but a living manuscript, as heavy and as lovely to touch and feel as its medieval ancestors.

— Dr. Christopher De Hamel, Director of the Matthew Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

THE MAKING OF A HERITAGE EDITION

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Heritage Edition would not have been possible even when *The Saint John's Bible* project began in 1998. It was not until very recently that the quality of printing on 100% uncoated cotton paper necessary to providing this level of quality was available.

The paper of the Heritage Edition is designed specifically for this project. The weight and feel of the pages approximate that of the vellum used in the original manuscript.

Donald Jackson directed the making of the Heritage Edition throughout every process to assure its fidelity to the original. The pages are printed using state-of-the-art offset lithographic printing technology from Heidelberg Corporation. Mr. Jackson approved every page before final printing. Correspondence to the original is so important that even the “show-through” caused by transparency in the vellum is captured on the pages of the Heritage Edition.

After printing, gold and silver foils are applied using a series of stamping and embossing processes. In places where results cannot be achieved through mechanical means, Donald Jackson's studio manager, Sarah Harris, has hand treated the illuminations. Therefore, no two Heritage Edition sets are identical.

The volumes are bound—by hand—in a single piece of Italian calfskin leather and adorned with a solid silver clasp. Each head band and tail band is hand sewn in Pakistan. Each volume is numbered and initialed by Donald Jackson, and protected in a burgundy clamshell box.



Heritage Edition

PENTATEUCH | HISTORICAL BOOKS | WISDOM BOOKS | PSALMS | PROPHETS |
GOSPELS & ACTS | LETTERS & REVELATION



VOLUME 1: Pentateuch

GENESIS | EXODUS | LEVITICUS | NUMBERS | DEUTERONOMY



Creation, Adam and Eve, the Ten Commandments, Abraham and Sarah, Exodus ... some of the greatest moments of the Bible find expression in the first five books, the Pentateuch, also known as the Torah. The leather cover features the image of a menorah, a recurring image of light, covenant and relationship.

“We tend to read greedily and hastily, as we do so many other things; this beautiful text shows us a better way. This project not only revives the ancient tradition of the church sponsoring creative arts, it also offers an insight into that lost skill of patient and prayerful reading.”

— The Most Reverend Rowan Williams,
Former Archbishop of Canterbury

VOLUME 2: Historical Books

JOSHUA | JUDGES | RUTH | 1 SAMUEL | 2 SAMUEL | 1 KINGS | 2 KINGS | 1 CHRONICLES | 2 CHRONICLES | EZRA | NEHEMIA | TOBIT | JUDITH | ESTHER | 1 MACCABEES | 2 MACCABEES



The Bible stands as testament to God's love for us; only that force could compel such amazing effort over so many years by many talented people. For those of us who teach within the Ignatian tradition, The Saint John's Bible inspires moments of reflection and discernment in our faculty and students.

— Dr. John Pauly, former provost at Marquette University

In purples, greens and gold, the illuminations in *Historical Books* explore the relationship of God's people to God's promise. Marginal text treatments trace the Israelites' rise and fall as they move through the era of judges and kings, with prophets guiding the way. The cover motif, from the Ark of the Covenant illumination, was inspired by the pilgrims' cathedral in Compostella, Spain.

VOLUME 3: Psalms

BOOK I | BOOK II | BOOK III | BOOK IV | BOOK V



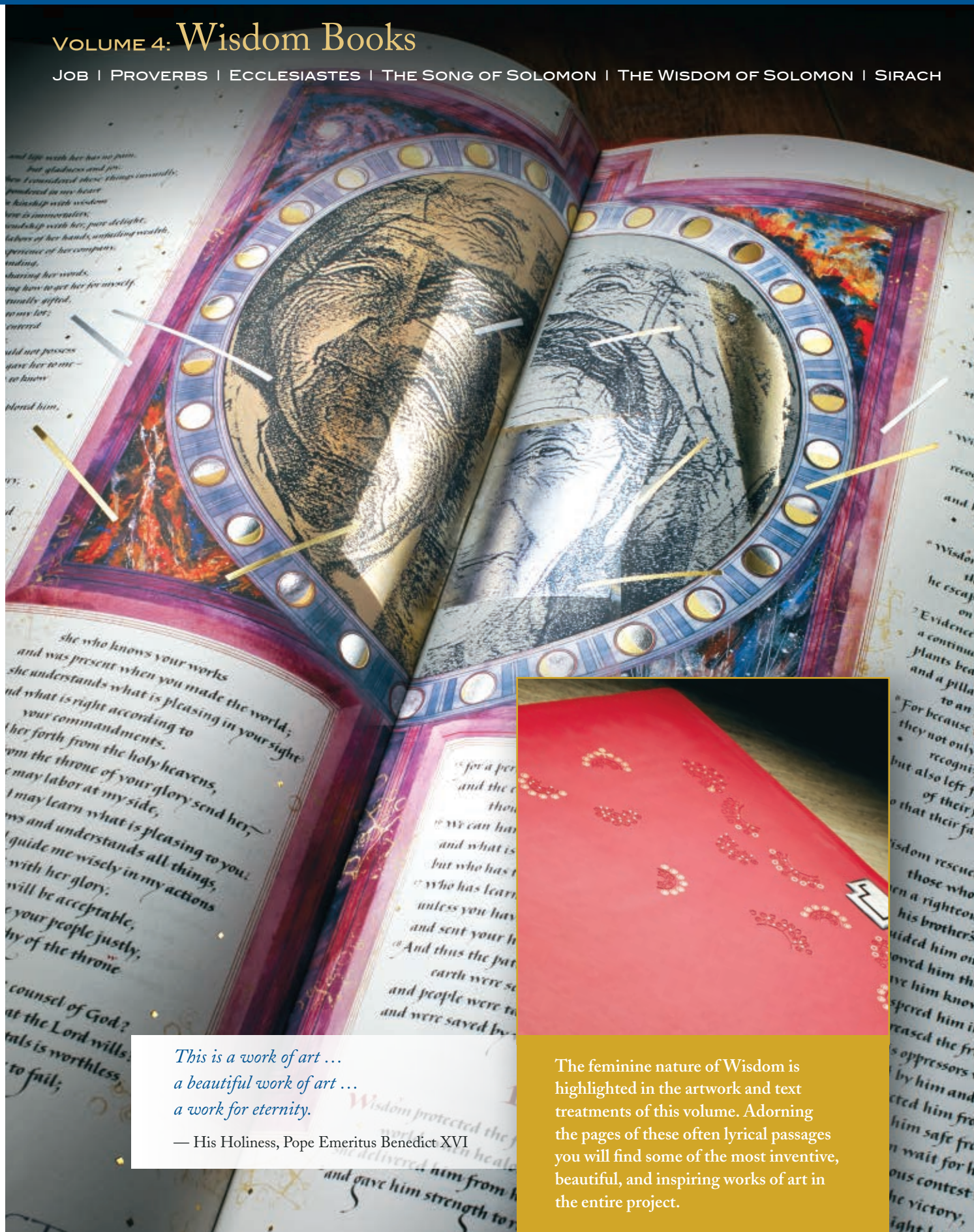
Psalms is the prayer book of the church. Benedictines chant and pray the psalms several times a day. This volume is graced with digital prints of the monks at Saint John's Abbey chanting their daily prayer, as well as representations of other chant traditions throughout the world.

"The illuminations are not illustrations. They are spiritual meditations on the text. It is a very Benedictine approach to Scriptures."

— Fr. Michael Patella, OSB, Chair, Committee on Illumination and Text

VOLUME 4: Wisdom Books

JOB | PROVERBS | ECCLESIASTES | THE SONG OF SOLOMON | THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON | SIRACH



*This is a work of art ...
a beautiful work of art ...
a work for eternity.*

— His Holiness, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

The feminine nature of Wisdom is highlighted in the artwork and text treatments of this volume. Adorning the pages of these often lyrical passages you will find some of the most inventive, beautiful, and inspiring works of art in the entire project.

VOLUME 5: Prophets

ISAIAH | JEREMIAH | BARUCH | EZEKIEL | DANIEL | HOSEA | JOEL – AMOS | OBADIAH – HAGGAI | ZECHARIAH – MALACHI



The Beinecke Library and the Institute of Sacred Music are pleased to help bring such an outstanding work to Yale. The acquisition of The Saint John's Bible will provide an opportunity for scholars, faculty, and students to compare this modern edition with the Beinecke's medieval manuscripts and early printed Bibles.

— E.C. Shroeder, Director of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University

The visions of the prophets during the time of the Babylonian Exile provided inspiration for Jackson and his team. Modern and period images collide in vibrant illuminations full of promise, sorrow and, ultimately, joy. This book's full power is revealed by placing it alongside *Historical Books* and *Revelation*



VOLUME 6: Gospels & Acts

MATTHEW | MARK | LUKE | JOHN | ACTS OF THE APOSTLES



“My experience with The Saint John’s Bible was love at first sight. It radiates hope and speaks to people of all faith journeys.”

— Tita Diepenbrock, Donor of *The Saint John’s Bible* Heritage Edition to Santa Clara University

The first volume completed for *The Saint John’s Bible* project, the pages of *Gospels & Acts* abound with significant illuminations and text treatments. The life of Christ and the journey of the early church are explored in theologically rich and startling new ways that reward ongoing reflection.

VOLUME 7: Letters and Revelation

ROMANS | 1 CORINTHIANS | 2 CORINTHIANS | GALATIANS | EPHESIANS | PHILIPPIANS | COLOSSIANS | 1 THESSALONIANS | 2 THESSALONIANS | 1 TIMOTHY | 2 TIMOTHY | TITUS | PHILEMON | HEBREWS | JAMES | 1 PETER | 2 PETER | 1 JOHN | 2 JOHN | 3 JOHN | JUDE | REVELATION



In Letters, a series of text treatments highlight the foundational teachings of the Christian tradition. Then, in the final great letter to the churches, the Revelation to John at Patmos, Donald Jackson wrote the entire text and created each page's rich illumination, bringing the Heritage Edition to its culmination.

"The Bible is the calligraphic artist's supreme challenge (our Sistine Chapel), a daunting task."

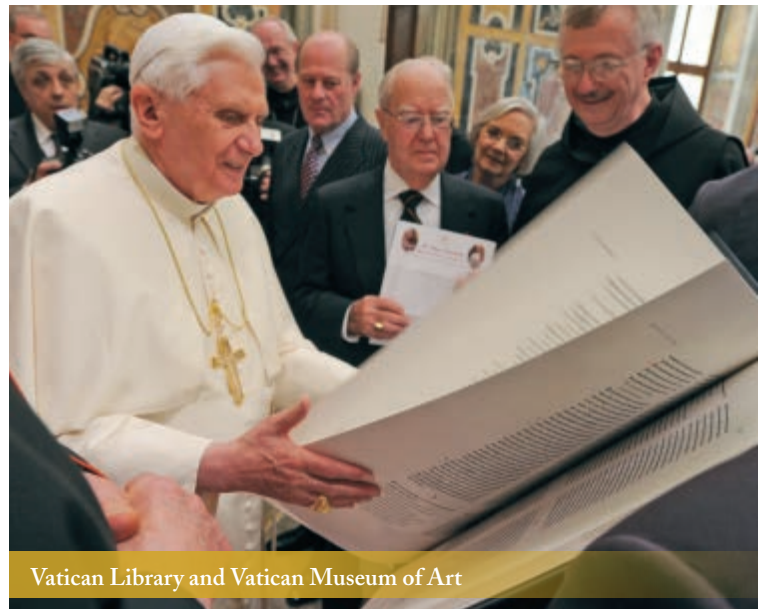
— Donald Jackson

Igniting the Spiritual Imagination Around the World

THE FOLLOWING ARE JUST SOME OF THE 100 LOCATIONS WHERE YOU WILL FIND *THE SAINT JOHN'S BIBLE* HERITAGE EDITION.



Yale University



Vatican Library and Vatican Museum of Art

St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, England





Private Collection



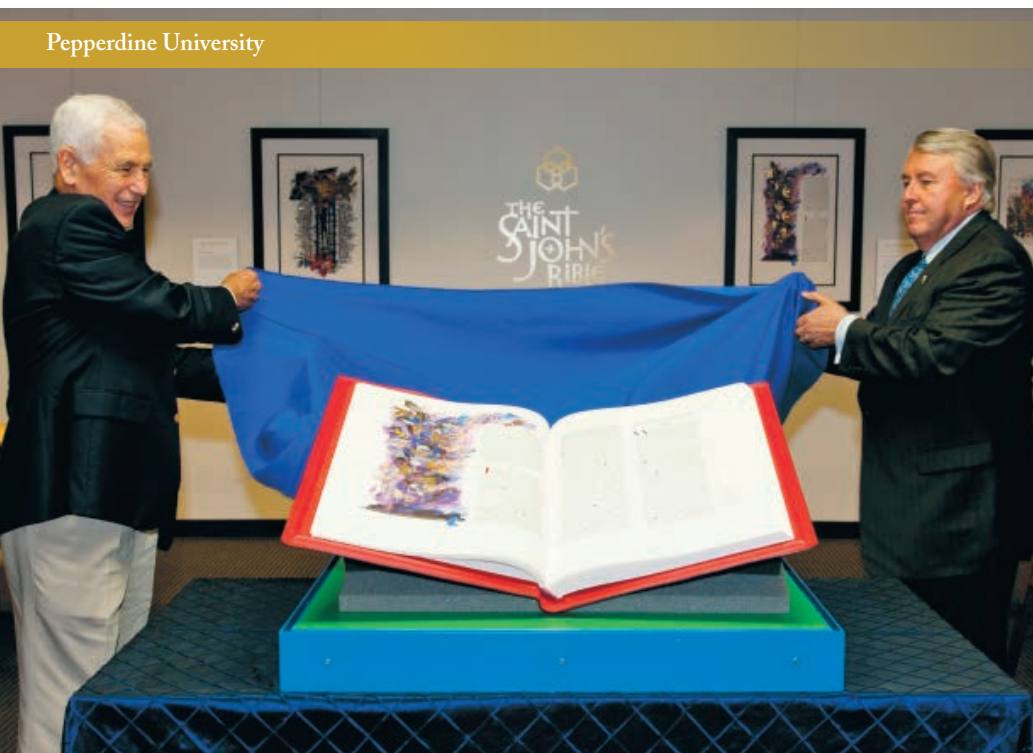
Marquette University



Carson Newman University



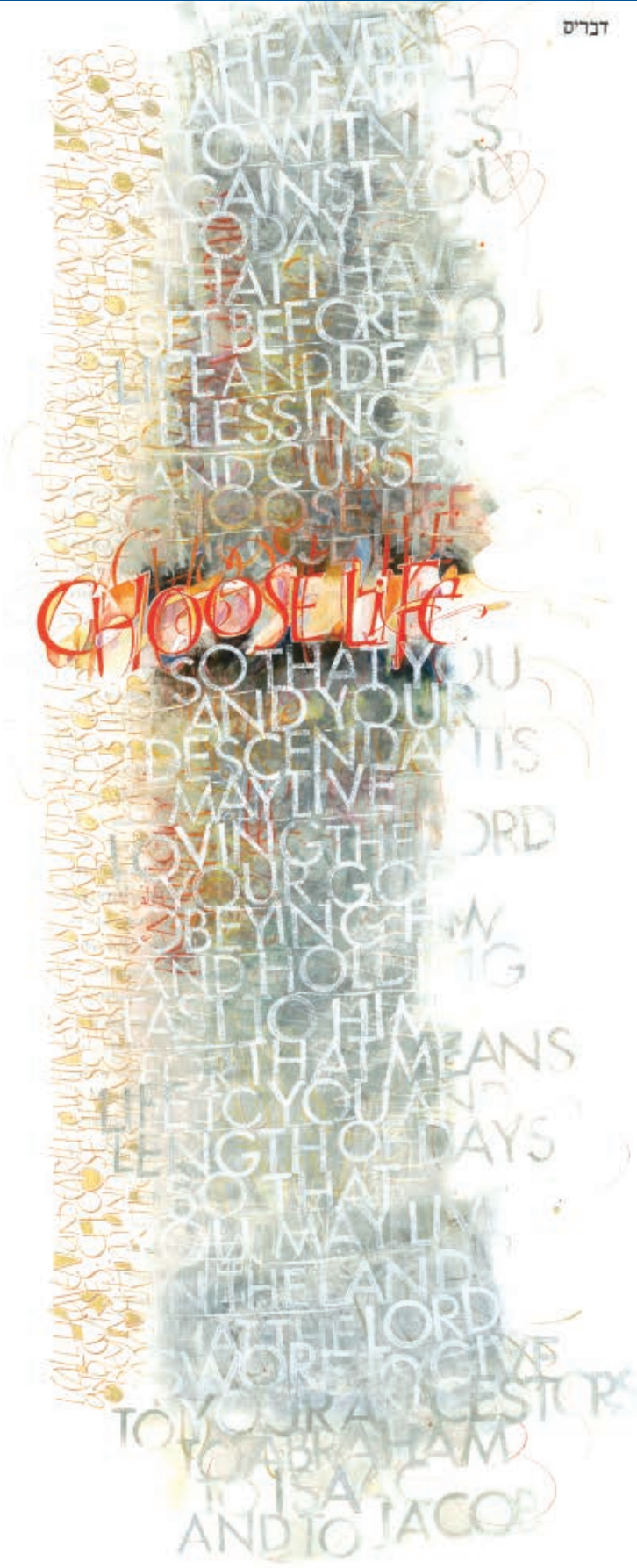
Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, Florida & Arizona



Pepperdine University



Azusa Pacific University



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