

# THE EPISTLE

Saint James' Episcopal Church  
Livingston, Alabama



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## ***This Month's Cover***

Our cover this month, in honor of the Feast of St. Joseph (March 19), is Guido Reni's *Saint Joseph with the Infant Jesus*, completed in 1640(?). It is oil on canvas, and measures 4'2"x3'4". It is displayed at the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia. The painting depicts Joseph as an older man holding the infant Jesus in a sylvan setting. In the upper left we see the forest, but if we look carefully we can see there what looks like the face of the adult suffering Jesus behind one of the trees. In the lower right background we see a tutelary angel. Reni has masterfully captured a very tender moment. The face of Joseph has a gentle and loving expression, and the infant Jesus, happy and secure in his strong arms, is feeling the softness of the old man's beard. He holds two rose buds, depicting the legendary Christmas Rose that grew from Jesse's staff (a symbol that Jesus is a descendant of King David, Is. 11:1).

We know little about Saint Joseph other than that he was a righteous and faithful man. He was alive when Jesus was 12 (Lk. 2:41ff), but since there is no mention of him thereafter and Jesus on the cross commended the care of his mother to John, we may conclude that he had died sometime before Jesus began his ministry. Ancient tradition says that he was a widower with children (thus explaining references to Jesus' brothers and sisters), and thus his marriage to Mary was not his first. Marriage between older widowers and younger women was very common in those days. This is all conjecture and tradition, as the Bible gives us almost no information about him. He is venerated by the Church as a paragon of fatherhood, obedience to God, and righteousness.

Guido Reni (1575-1642) was a Bolognese painter in the High Baroque style. This was an ornate and flamboyant style

*The Epistle* is published monthly except August by Saint James' Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 446, Livingston, AL 35470-0446, the Rev. R. R. Losch, Editor, email [rlosch33@gmail.com](mailto:rlosch33@gmail.com), Phone 205-499-0968. Copyright © 2018 Richard R. Losch. Permission is granted to reproduce text items in parish newsletters or bulletins (but not on the Internet or digitized) as long as they are reproduced completely and in print, and credit is given.

encouraged by the Counter-Reformation to dispute the dour, austere simplicity favored by Protestants. It eventually evolved into the highly detailed and “busy” Rococo style of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Most of Reni’s works were of religious or mythological subjects. His parents were Bolognese musicians, so by the norm of his time he was trained to become a musician. He showed little talent for it, but his artistic genius was noticed early in his life. He apprenticed in the studio of Denis Caelvert, where he made lifelong friendships with other students who also went on to achieve great fame. After highly successful periods in Naples and Rome, he returned to Bologna in 1614, opened his own studio, and received commissions from many important patrons around Europe. He is the most famous Italian painter of his time, and in his studio he trained many students who also became renowned masters. Reni died in Bologna in 1642, and was buried in the Rosary Chapel of the Basilica of San Domenico. The painter Elisabetta Sirani was later buried in the same tomb. Her father had been Reni’s pupil, and many believed that she was his artistic reincarnation.

*Richard R. Losch+*

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## ***A Word from the Editor***

We will soon be entering into Lent, which is a season about which many Christians are ambivalent. Because it is a season focused on sin, repentance and the sacrifice of Christ, it can be something of a “downer.” Notwithstanding, it is also focused on the Resurrection, and the fact that Christ’s sacrifice was an act of love for us through which we can gain salvation. That is definitely joyful news. Most things in life are a balance.

Since I broke my hip I have been on a regimen of therapy exercises which, I admit, I hate doing. I go back and forth between periods of slacking off, and then getting back to doing them religiously. “Doing them religiously” is an appropriate phrase here, because my exercises are very much like Lenten discipline. Although I don’t enjoy them and often have to force myself to do them, I admittedly feel better when I keep up with them. When I slack off I have less energy and I find that

walking is more painful and difficult. This is true not only with Lenten discipline, but also with the regular year-round disciplines that we need to practice as Christians. The most obvious of these disciplines are a regular prayer life, study of the Scriptures and the Church's teachings, regular participation in public worship and the Church's sacramental life, and constantly attempting to live as we know Christ would have us live (that's the hardest part). When we slack off on these, as most of us do from time to time, we can feel it spiritually. And the longer we slack off, the harder it is to get back—slack off long enough and we eventually lose the inclination to get back at all. That is the road to perdition. When we keep up with our disciplines, whether special Lenten ones or the regular year-round ones, we are spiritually energized, we have a sense of security, and life seems better even when we are beset with problems. It's never too late to start, and this Lent couldn't be a better time.

*Father Rick Losch+*

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## ***Be Wordly Wise***

### ***Athlete***

In light of the recent Olympic Games, we should consider the meaning of the word athlete. It comes from the Greek word *athletes* (ἄθλητης), prize-fighter or champion. It derives from *athlon* (ἄθλον), prize, and interestingly enough is also related to *athletis* (ἄθλις), combat, and *athlios* (ἄθλιος), miserable or wretched. The last is appropriate when we consider that in the early Olympic games absolutely no holds were barred, including eye-gouging, kidney-punching, biting and groin-kicking. By New Testament times some of these were slightly restricted, but even then death or permanent injury were fairly common results of the games. Athletic contests were serious business. In ancient times there were no participation awards, and losing was a major disgrace that could follow a man for life. Victory, on the other hand, while the prize itself was nothing more than a laurel wreath, led to fame and fortune. A man who was victorious in two or three contests could become every bit as famous and wealthy as today's top athletic stars.

*Richard R. Losch+*

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## ***Easter Flowers***

Each year St. James' Church offers the opportunity to remember loved ones through donations to the Altar Guild, which provides the lilies and altar flowers in the church for Easter services. If you wish to make a donation for this—In memory of, In honor of, or In thanksgiving for—envelopes with forms are available at the back of the church or you may print this information clearly and mail it along with your contribution to Carolyn Patrenos, President, St. James' Altar Guild, P.O. Box 399, Livingston, Alabama 35470. Checks should be made payable to St. James' Altar Guild. Because of the increased costs for these flowers, we ask for a minimum donation of \$25.00 for memorials. The publication deadline for inclusion in the Easter bulletin is Wednesday, March 28th. Your donation is tax deductible.

*Hiram Patrenos*

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## ***No Sunday School on Third Sundays***

Each third Sunday I have an early service at St. Alban's in Gainesville, and it is difficult for me to get back to Livingston in time for Sunday School. We will therefore not have an adult Sunday School class on third Sundays from now on. I apologize to those who have been faithful Sunday School attendees.

*Richard R. Losch+*

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## ***Services for Holy Week and Easter***

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday—On Sunday, May 25th, our observance of Passiontide will begin with the celebration of the Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Communion at St. James' at 11:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday—Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altar at 6:00 p.m.

Good Friday—The Liturgy for Good Friday and the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified at 5:00 p.m.

Easter Day—The Community Easter Sunrise Service will be hosted by Livingston United Methodist Church at 6:30 a.m. at the Livingston Civic Center. St. James' will celebrate The Day of the Resurrection with Holy Communion at 11:00 a.m.

*Hiram Patrenos*

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## *Moses' Disagreement With God*

When the Israelites had received the Law at Mount Sinai and were preparing for the journey to the Promised Land, God told Moses, "I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way. ... Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion" (Ex. 23:20). This was not particularly good news to Moses, because he had already had to deal with several rebellions. He could easily see that the Israelites did not readily submit to any authority, even that of God. If there were a rebellion on the journey it would not be forgiven, and the people would be destroyed. His later confrontation with God reveals that for all his protestations of timidity, Moses was a truly bold leader, daring to challenge even God himself.

On Mount Sinai Moses was allowed to meet God personally, and God proclaimed to him that he is "the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, ... and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin" (Ex. 34:6f). Moses' response was daring. In effect he said, "If you are forgiving and the angel is not, we don't want the angel to lead us. We want you to lead us personally." His reason was, "Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and sin, and take us as your inheritance." (Ex. 34:9). He was asking God to go with them personally and forgive them, precisely because they were sinners! Since the angel would be unforgiving, Moses wanted the forgiving God himself to go with them. That was the Israelites' only hope for survival.

In the spirit of Shalom Aleichem's Tevye, the beloved 18<sup>th</sup> century Hassidic Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev once prayed, "Lord of the universe, I want to propose a deal. We have many sins. You have much forgiveness. Let us exchange our sins for your forgiveness. And if you should say that this is not a fair exchange, then my reply is: If we had no sins, what would you do with all your forgiveness?"<sup>1</sup>

*Richard R. Losch+*

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<sup>1</sup> With thanks to Dr. Eliyahu Lizorkin-Eyzenberg.

## *The Real Meaning of Prayer*

There seem to be many articles in *The Epistle* in which we look to the original Hebrew and Greek to find the meaning of a passage, and there is good reason for that. As we have so often pointed out, it is very difficult to grasp the subtle meanings of a Bible passage if we have only a translation of it to work from. Translations rarely carry over the exact meaning of a word. Even when we are working from earlier English documents we can run into the same problem. For example, in the King James Version we see the phrase “silly women” (2 Tim. 3:6) which leads many to accuse St. Paul of misogyny. In Jacobean times, however, silly did not mean inane, it meant innocent and vulnerable. When Justice Antonin Scalia had to make a decision on a Constitutional issue, he would read the appropriate passage in the Constitution, then read as many late 18<sup>th</sup> century documents as he could find in order to discern exactly what those words meant when the Constitution was written. He often found that words have changed significantly over time, and he wanted to determine what the original writers meant to say. We need to do the same thing with the Bible.

A good example of this is the meaning of the word “prayer.” To most people today, the first thing that comes to mind when they think of prayer is an entreaty—asking God for something. This is not its meaning in the Old Testament, however, and since Jesus was a Jew, it was not how he thought of prayer. It is true that many prayers, even the Lord’s Prayer, ask for things. That is not the primary purpose of prayer, however, but is a secondary byproduct of it.

The basic concept of prayer in the Old Testament is best defined by the actual word that we translate as prayer. That word is *tfilia* (תפילה). It derives from the verb *lehitpalel* (להתפלל), which means to judge oneself or to be introspective. In Jewish tradition this introspection is seen as a means of bonding oneself with God, much as a child bonds himself with his father. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, the first thing in his prayer was to address God as “Our Father.” In many of his prayers he addressed God as “Father,”

but that is different from “Our Father.” His calling God “Father” is interpreted as a recognition not only that he, being a faithful Jew, was a Child of God, but also that he himself is the Incarnate Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. In the Lord’s Prayer it is “*Our Father*,” an acknowledgment of the father-child bond that we seek with God.

Jesus referred to the Temple as a House of Prayer (Matt. 21:13). This is a reference to Isaiah 56:7, “These I will bring to my holy mountain, and give them joy in my house of prayer.” A literal translation of the Hebrew, however, would be “...in the house of my prayer.”<sup>1</sup> One might well ask, why the house of *my* prayer? Why would God pray, and to whom? If we consider that prayer is not an act of requesting but one of introspection and bonding, however, this makes perfectly good sense. Just as we bond with God through prayer, so he bonds with us. True prayer, like true love, is reciprocal.

There is great power in prayer, not as a means of getting something we want, but as a means of uniting ourselves with one another and with God. There is nothing wrong with asking God for something (this is called prayer of petition), as long as we accept the fact that as in any loving father-child relationship, the answer will often be “no,” “not right now,” or “not the way you think it will be.” Similarly, praying for one another bonds us with each other and with God, whether or not the prayer is answered in the affirmative, and even whether or not the person for whom we are praying knows that we are doing so. Never underestimate the uniting power of prayer.

*Richard R. Losch+*

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## ***The Epistle is Online***

The last five years of *The Epistle* are now online. Go to <http://rlosch.com> and click on the “Epistle” tab at the top. You can read it online or download it as a .pdf file.

*Richard R. Losch+*

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<sup>1</sup> וְשִׂמְחָתֵיכֶם בְּבֵית תְּפִלָּתֵי

## *Can God Really Hate?*

There are some things in the Bible, including some statements of Jesus, that just do not seem to make any sense. For example, Jesus tells us that anyone who does not hate his father and mother cannot be his disciple (Lk. 14:26). How could Jesus, a faithful Jew, so blatantly contradict God's commandment that one is to honor his father and mother? To answer simply, he didn't.

It has been said that reading the Bible in translation is like listening to Bach on a harmonica. You will get the tune, but you will miss everything else. When computerized translation programs first came out, someone fed into the computer, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," and ran it through three languages sequentially, finally translating it back into English. The result was, "The liquor is good, but the meat is spoiled." The New Testament was written in Greek, but Jesus preached in Aramaic (a Syrian language very similar to Hebrew).<sup>1</sup> When we read his sayings in English, we are therefore reading a translation of a translation.

The New Testament was written in Greek. If Jesus' words were ever written down in Aramaic, those documents are long lost. That does not mean, however, that we cannot be reasonably sure in most cases what Aramaic words he used. The Old Testament was translated into Greek (the Septuagint), yet we also have copies of the original Hebrew and Aramaic documents.<sup>2</sup> Although we know there are some errors and later interjections in the copies we have, they are very close to the

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<sup>1</sup> By Jesus' time Hebrew was no longer a spoken language. It was used by Jewish scholars much as Latin was used in the Middle Ages, but the common language throughout that part of the Middle East was Aramaic. Aramaic was the language of Aram, which we now call Syria. It is written with the Hebrew alphabet, and although pronounced somewhat differently, most of its grammar and vocabulary are very close to Hebrew. There are some communities in the Middle East, mostly Christian, who still speak Aramaic. Unfortunately, ISIS has destroyed many of them.

<sup>2</sup> Parts of the Book of Daniel, for example, were originally written in Aramaic, not in Hebrew.

originals. Thus if we see a Hebrew word translated into Greek in the Old Testament and find the same Greek word in one of Jesus' sayings, it is reasonable to deduce that he used the same Hebrew/Aramaic word as was in the Old Testament documents and was translated into that Greek word. This is strong evidence of what he actually said. The Septuagint, then, functions rather like a Rosetta Stone between ancient Hebrew and Greek.

Now let us consider "hate your father and mother." The Old Testament tells us that God "hated" Jacob's twin Esau (Mal. 1:3), yet we see many cases where this is clearly not true (e.g. Deut.2:4ff). He loved Esau, but he loved Jacob more. It is not a simple binary love-hate situation, but one of degrees of love. For example, we may love all children, but we do not love other people's as much as we love our own. The Old Testament is full of statements where we translate the word as "hate," but "do not love as much" is what is obviously meant or implied.

There are some things that even God cannot do. He cannot be not God; he cannot do evil, because by definition evil is that which is contrary to what God loves or does; and he cannot hate, because hate is the opposite of love, and as John tells us, God is Love. He cannot be the opposite of what he is.<sup>1</sup> God does not even hate Satan and the fallen angels. He loves them, and grieves over their arrogant refusal to return that love.

The Hebrew/Aramaic word that we translate "hate" is *sonēh* (שנא), and there is no Greek or English word exactly equivalent to it. The closest Greek word is *miseō* (μισέω), and although not an exact translation, it is close. It is the word that the Septuagint translators and the New Testament writers chose. In English the word "hate" implies an emotion of anger and odium. In Hebrew and Greek *sonēh* and *miseō* do not have that implication, and there is no English word equivalent to them. Those two words are closer to "not be fond of," or "love less

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<sup>1</sup> Medieval philosophers often discussed whether there is anything God cannot do, such as whether he can create two mountains side-by-side without a valley in between. However, they did not discuss how many angels can dance on the point of a pin. That inane idea was created by McGuffey's Readers, a series of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century elementary schoolbooks

than,” while “abhor” or “detest,” are closer to the way we normally use the word “hate.”<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew and Greek words do not contain an automatic implication of hostility. When we consider this, Jesus’ statement makes perfectly good sense. If we would be disciples of Christ we must learn to love him above all else, even our own family. It is not that you are to hate your mother and father, it is that you are to love God even more than you love them. If we consider this every time we see the word “hate” in the Bible, dozens of passages become much clearer to us.<sup>2</sup>

*Richard R. Losch+*

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## ***Jonah and Lent***

The Book of John is often passed over as little more than a quaint story of a petulant and disobedient prophet who gets his comeuppance from God because of the repentant pagans in Nineveh. In fact, this book has great importance not only to Jews on the holiest day of their year, Yom Kippur,<sup>3</sup> but also to Christians during Lent. Lent, like Yom Kippur, is the time of self-examination, repentance, and intent to turn one’s life around and live more as God would have us live. From this point of

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word for hatred as we use the concept is *apechtheia* (ἀπεχθεία), and the Hebrew is *‘olinot* (עוֹלִינּוֹת). These words carry the implication of hostility and anger.

<sup>2</sup> I do not know Arabic (which is a Semitic language related to Hebrew and Aramaic), but from what I can find it has a plethora of words that are all translated hate, ranging from having malicious rancor (*bagada*, بَغْضَاء or *maqata*, مَقَات) to begrudging (*vb*, تَقَمَّ عَلَى) or simple regret (*‘asifa*, أَسِيف). This makes translations of the Qur’an and Hadith as difficult as the Bible to understand accurately, since they report a wide variety of Allah’s reactions to people and things that are all translated as hate, yet actually have much milder meanings. Ironically, it is also fodder for those who quote mistranslated passages in order to spread “Islamophobia.”

<sup>3</sup> At Sabbath morning services there is always a reading from the Torah and one from the Prophets. At Sabbath afternoon services only the Torah is read except on two Sabbaths—*Tisha b’Av* (that commemorates the destruction of the Temple) and *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement.

view, the Book of Jonah has much to offer.

Jonah lay in the belly of the fish<sup>1</sup> for three days, which to Christians symbolizes Jesus' three days in the tomb. Far more important, however, is what we learn from the story itself. Jonah was commanded by God to go to Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) and warn them that if they did not repent of their sins they would be destroyed. Jonah did not want to go, so he got on a ship and fled in the other direction. A raging storm came up, and when Jonah confessed to the sailors that he was the cause of it they threw him overboard. He was swallowed by a great fish, who three days later vomited him up onto the shores of Nineveh. He then warned the Ninevites, rather enjoying the thought that they would reject him and be destroyed. They listened, however, repented, and were saved. This so angered Jonah that he sat outside the city and pouted until the concept of God's forgiveness and mercy finally began to sink in.

This is the only book in the Bible in which the Hebrew prophet is the anti-hero who totally misunderstands the God for whom he professes to speak, and the sympathetic characters are the pagan Ninevites, sworn enemies of Israel. In fact, Israel is never even mentioned in the book. What it teaches is the universality of God's mercy; the emphasis on moral sin being the greatest sin; the importance of personal responsibility and accountability; the recognition that actions and transformation of character, not hollow rituals, are the means to access God's mercy; that God loves all his creation, and despises none; and most important, that God is "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in loving-kindness" (Jonah 4:2).

Once we get beyond the image of a jejune prophet throwing a tantrum, and the scientific problems of a man living inside a fish for three days, we can get to the real meat of the book, and there is plenty of it. This makes it a singularly appropriate book for study and meditation during Lent.

*Richard R. Losch+*

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<sup>1</sup> The Bible says it was a "great fish," not a whale. The idea of its being a whale is a result of a popular mis-telling of the Bible story.

## ***When In Rome, Eat as the Romans Eat***

Let's divert for a moment from theology and Scripture to culture and history. Archaeologists recently discovered a Roman cookbook by one Apicus<sup>1</sup>, *De Re Coquinaria* (*On the Matter of Cooking*). It contains a recipe for custard (*tyropatinam*), which apparently was a very popular dish. Ancient recipes present a challenge to modern cooks for two reasons. First, Rome's arm was long, and they were able to obtain rare spices and herbs from Africa and Asia that are expensive and were often called by names that we do not recognize today. Secondly, they rarely gave measurements—cooks seem to have known how much to use, and saw little need to write down the amount. The custard recipe is as follows:

**Custard:** Take milk, estimate the amount for this dish and sweeten it some with honey; to the fluid add 5 eggs; for half the amount, 3 eggs. Mix into the milk and beat well to make a uniform body; [pour] into an earthen dish and cook on a slow fire. When congealed, sprinkle with pepper and serve.<sup>2</sup>

The journal *Biblical Archaeology Review* (10/11/2017) has modernized the recipe, and for those adventurous enough to try it we include it here:

### **Roman Custard** (BAR's variation)

*This make a very small portion. If you are making this for friends and family, we suggest tripling or quadrupling the recipe.*

#### **Ingredients:**

2 cups milk	¼ tsp nutmeg; plus some for garnish
¼ cup honey	Berries or fruits for garnish
3 egg yolks	

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<sup>1</sup> Apicus is obviously a nickname, as it means Gourmet.

<sup>2</sup> **TYROPATINAM:** ACCIPIES LAC, ADVERSVS QVOD PATINAM AESTIMABIS, TEMPERABIS LAC CVM MELLE QVASI AD LACTANTIA, OVA QVINQVE AD SEXTARIVM MITTIS, SI AD HEMINAM, OVA TRIA. IN LACTE DISSOLVIS ITA VT VNVM CORPVS FACIAS, IN CVMANA COLAS ET IGNI LENTO COQVES. CVM DVXERIT AD SE, PIPER ADSPARGIS ET INFERES.

**Instructions:**

Preheat oven to 325°. Gather all ingredients together. Pour the milk into a bowl and mix with the honey until blended (a flat plastic spatula works well for this). Whisk the egg yolks in a separate bowl; set aside. Pour the milk/honey mixture into a small saucepan and heat briefly for around 1-5 minutes, just enough for the milk and honey to combine. Take milk/honey mixture off stove and let cool for a couple minutes. Once cool, add the well-beaten egg yolks. Add nutmeg and stir thoroughly (it is fine to keep using the whisk here). Pour custard into a baking dish. We suggest using a cupcake pan, as the custard cooks more evenly. (If you choose to use a large baking dish, you should also increase your baking time. However, in a large dish, the custard might not cook completely and instead may be a bit like mush, as happened on one of our failed attempts to recreate this recipe.) Bake 15-20 minutes, or until custard is golden brown. Remove and let sit for one hour. Garnish with fruit or berries of your choice and enjoy!

*Richard R. Losch+*

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## ***Nehemiah the Governor***

Few people are familiar with Nehemiah, even though he was one of the major figures in the history of Israel. He was equal in importance to Ezra in the restoration of Jerusalem after the return from the Babylonian Exile. When Persia overthrew Babylonia and freed the Jews who were in exile there, most of them returned to Judea.<sup>1</sup> Many, however, remained in Babylonia where they had been born and raised, and many went to Persia (modern Iran). Most of the latter had been leaders of the Jewish community in Babylonia. They were invited to Persia because of their skills and talents, which were well appreciated. Nehemiah's family apparently had gone to Persia and found favor there, because Nehemiah became cupbearer to the king. This was a position of great honor, and it gave him ready access to the king. When he heard of the suffering of the Jews in Judea he pleaded with the king to let him return to Jerusalem and restore it. The king not only allowed him to go, but he also made

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<sup>1</sup> Before the Exile the Southern Jewish kingdom was known as Judah; after the return it is more commonly known by its Greco-Roman name of Judea.

him governor of Judea, provided him with safe passage and money, and gave him permission to take timber and stone from the royal forests and quarries.<sup>1</sup> While this was a generous act of compassion, it was also a wise political move. It was very much to Persia's advantage to have a strong and grateful vassal on the western frontier.

When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, his first project was to rebuild the city wall. Because of the large number of lawless raiders in the region this was very important. He struggled against strong opposition from the Samaritans and libertarian Jews, who wanted no part of a strong Jewish government. The priest Ezra and the prophet Haggai, who had also returned from Babylon, urged him to restore Solomon's Temple that had been destroyed by the Babylonians decades earlier. Nehemiah concurred, and also supported Ezra's attempt to reform the moral standards of the people and bring them back to full participation in the Jewish faith. The primary leader of the rebuilding of the Temple was Zerubbabel.

In 433 BC Nehemiah went back to Persia for a year, but when he returned to Jerusalem he found that heathens from Ammon, east of the Jordan, under the leadership of his old enemy Tobiah the Ammonite, had taken control of the Temple. With the aid of Ezra he managed to drive them out and restore order. Ezra was a thinker and Nehemiah a man of action, and their strong friendship resulted in a permanent change in Judaism that is still evident today. Most scholars believe that the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and possibly also I and II Chronicles, were originally all one book. If so, it was most likely written by Ezra with the collaboration of Nehemiah. At the end of the Book of Nehemiah, after relating his accomplishments, he says, "Remember me with favor, my God" (Neh. 13:30).

*Richard R. Losch+*

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<sup>1</sup> This was King Artaxerxes I, commonly known as Xerxes. In the Book of Esther he is called Ahasuerus. He was the fourth king of the dynasty begun by Cyrus I, which was one of the most enlightened and civilized of all the ancient empires. It was also Xerxes who led the failed invasion of Greece made so famous by the 400 Spartans at the Battle of Thermopylae.

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## *A Touch of Trivia*

In 1942, soon after America's entry into World War II, a young German citizen who had emigrated to America in 1939 wrote President Roosevelt, begging him to let him join the U.S. military. Roosevelt turned the matter over to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who investigated the man and agreed to let him join the Navy. He served bravely, earning a Purple Heart. The man was William Patrick Hitler, the son of Adolf Hitler's older brother Alois.

*Richard R. Losch+*

JAMIE

by Richard R. Losch



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