

THE EPISTLE

Saint James' Episcopal Church

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This Month's Cover

Our cover painting this month, in honor of the Feast of Saint Barnabas (June 11) is a detail from *Paul and Barnabas at Lystra* by Jakob Pynas (1593?-1656?). Unlike those of his pupil Rembrandt, whose paintings were huge, the full painting is small, measuring about 19" high and 29" long. It is oil on wood, and is displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

St. Barnabas preceded St. Paul as a missionary for the early Christian Church. He invited Paul to join him on a journey, and the two worked together for a long time, although Barnabas was clearly the leader on the first journey. In Lystra they healed a man, and the people took them for Gods. They called Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hermes (Zeus' messenger). When they denied being gods the people stoned them. They escaped the city, although Paul was injured. The painting depicts Paul preaching, with the older Barnabas behind him.

Jakob Pynas and his brother Jan were artists of the Dutch Golden Age that just preceded the Baroque period in which Rembrandt flourished. There is evidence that Rembrandt was briefly one of his students. Jakob was born in Haarlem sometime before 1593, and his brother Jan was born in Alkmaar. Much of the activity of the brothers was in Amsterdam, although they may also have worked in Italy for a while. The style of the brothers is almost identical, to the point that many of their paintings are attributed to J. Pynas because critics cannot tell which one executed them. This painting, however, is almost definitely the work of Jakob.

Richard R. Losch+

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A Word From the Editor

Most people are not fond of eating lard or flour straight, and no one likes to eat baking soda. I for one am not particularly partial to buttermilk, either. Mix them all together in the right proportions and bake them, though, and you will get biscuits that as we say in the South would make you slap your daddy. Similarly, elemental sodium is a highly active metal that can react violently when in contact with many other things. Put a sliver of it on your skin and you will get a very serious chemical burn. Chlorine is another element that is a deadly poison and will kill any living thing. It was used as an anti-personnel gas in World War I, and a tiny amount of it in water will kill any germs that may be there. If you combine sodium and chlorine in the right proportions, however, you get table salt, which is a compound that is essential to life. Unless you have studied chemistry you probably do not understand how these things happen, but you know they do.

Life is very much the same. All too often things come our way that we dislike or even hate, and sometimes we are confronted with things that are just plain dangerous. Notwithstanding, these life events frequently work together to produce a very beneficial final result. Many times that result depends on how we deal with these unpleasant or dangerous events. We rarely can handle them well by ourselves, as much as we would like to think that we are self-reliant and independent. With God's help, however, we can weather anything. He never promised that we would be protected from trouble (in fact, he promised quite the opposite!), but he did promise that the end result would be to our benefit, and that he would never allow more to befall us than we can handle. I call this Christian chemistry—put together all the things that we don't like, let God mix them as he will, and the result will be beneficial or even wonderful. Remember Romans 8:28: "All things work together for good to them that love God.

Father Rick Lorch

Be Wordly Wise

Elizabethan Pronouns

The “thees” and “thous” of Elizabethan English are confusing to many, and they actually contain a word that was originally a mistake (see last month’s “Wordly Wise”). The present tense conjugation of “to love” was:

I love	we love
thou lovest	ye love
he loveth	they love

If we use the equivalent objective pronoun (not worrying about the apparent self-love), we get:

I love me	we love us
thou lovest thee	ye love you
he loveth him	they love them

Notice that “you” shows up only once, and that is where the mistake came in. By the end of the 18th century “thou lovest” had been replaced by “you love.” The English alphabet used to have 27 letters. The 21st (following *t*) was ꝥalled *thorn*. It was pronounced as a *th* as in “then.” In the Old English script it looked very much like *y*, and the two were often confused.¹ Since “thou” was often written as “þou”, many people misread it as “you”, and the mistake eventually was accepted as correct English. This is why we often see signs like “Ye Olde Booke Shoppe.” This is called Fake Old English, and is an attempt to be cute or quaint. Many 17th and 18th century signs had “Ʒe” for “The”, and since the *thorn* looked like a *y* many misread it as “Ye.”

Richard R. Losch+

“The Epistle” Is Online

The last three years’ issues of *The Epistle* are online. Go to <http://rlosch.com>, click on the “Epistle” tab, then on the issue you want to see. You can then download it as a *.pdf* file.

Richard R. Losch+

¹ Similarly, an 18th century affectation was to write an *s* in the middle of a word with a form of the letter *s* (f) that looked very much like an *f*—thus George Wafhington. This often led to mistaken readings.

Parish Directory Update

We will be updating the Parish Directory during June and will publish the updated Directory as of July 1, 2016. Copies of the Parish Directory are available on the table in the Parish House. Please review the Parish Directory for any errors and/or omissions and give any additions or corrections in writing to Hiram Patrenos or e-mail them to him at patrenoj@bellsouth.net.

Hiram Patrenos

Altar Flower Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to provide altar flowers. A sign-up chart is located in the sacristy. You may use flowers from your yard or if you wish, make arrangements with a florist to provide them. For more information, please speak with Carolyn Patrenos.

Hiram Patrenos

Bishop Sloan To Visit

The Right Reverend John McKee Sloan, Bishop of Alabama, will visit St. James' on Sunday, June 19th and will be the celebrant at Holy Communion at 11:00 a.m. A catered parish luncheon will follow the service. So that we may plan accurately, if you plan to attend the luncheon, you are asked to sign up on the sheet on the sacristy bulletin board or to e-mail Hiram Patrenos at patrenoj@bellsouth.net no later than Sunday, June 12th.

Hiram Patrenos

Saint Alban's, Gainesville

Our regular third Sunday service at St. Alban's will be cancelled in June. All our St. Alban's people are invited to St. James', Livingston for the 11:00 a.m. Eucharist and Bishop's Visitation, and for the catered luncheon afterward.

Richard R. Losch+

Henry VIII – Tyrant, or Victim?

Henry VIII (1491-1547) is generally remembered as an evil-tempered, licentious, tyrannical despot who was cruel, capricious and obscenely obese. He suffered from severe headaches, unpredictable explosive fits of rage, insomnia, compulsive-obsessive behavior, impotence, and memory lapses. This is quite a contrast to the many descriptions of him in his youth, where he is reported to have been handsome, charming, kind, gentle, scholarly and highly intelligent. His subjects loved him and he was widely recognized as an outstanding musician, theologian and athlete. Within a few years, however, the dream of a glorious era for England gave way to the reality of a reign of terror. For centuries historians, physicians and psychiatrists have pored over the records to try to determine what could have been the cause of such a radical change. Some have proposed diabetes. That would account for the obesity, but it does not explain the personality changes other than that the constant physical pain in the extremities might lead to a bad temper. Hypothyroidism and psychosis have also been proposed, but neither these nor any other suggested diseases satisfactorily account either for the symptoms or for the rapidity of the changes in his personality after 1536.

A recent study at Yale by neurologist Arash Salardin has proposed a very different answer to the question. When he began the study he approached it with the hypothesis that Henry was a sociopathic narcissist who took out his frustrations on his subjects. As he catalogued the records and symptoms in detail, however, an entirely new explanation began to emerge. The symptoms were strikingly similar to those of many boxers and football players who have suffered a series of concussions. A concussion is essentially a bruise to the brain. If it is severe enough and not properly treated it can cause what is called diffuse axonal injury—in effect, the synapses that connect the cells in the brain become damaged, and portions of the brain cannot communicate with each other. A series of concussions can exacerbate this condition and lead

to what can appear to be psychotic behavior. This most often manifests itself in the symptoms that we described above, which were so prevalent in the last decade or so of Henry VIII's life.

As a young man Henry was a very capable athlete. Not only was he physically powerful, but he was also agile and extremely well coordinated. He excelled at everything from tennis to wrestling, but his favorite sport was jousting, at which he was a champion.¹ The purpose of jousting, which is done in full armor, is to knock one's opponent off his horse with a lance. Although Henry was usually victorious, he had his share of defeats. Being knocked to the ground from a horse at full gallop is a shock to say the least, and often results in a blow to the head. On one occasion he had his visor up, and the lance entered his helmet, just missing his eye. He was unconscious for several minutes after that, and had spells of dizziness and severe headaches for several days afterward. Probably his most severe injury was in 1536, after which there was a remarkable personality change. People had noticed personality changes over the previous few years, but this one was quite pronounced. He was a fine horseman, and one day while hunting he tried to jump over a stream. The horse tripped and threw him headfirst into the rocky streambed. That blow to his head was probably the final straw in a series of traumatic brain injuries. After that he was more the Henry that we remember today. He started eating obsessively and soon became obese, flew into uncontrollable rages, and often had memory lapses. At one point a year before he died his sixth wife, Katherine Parr, had an argument at a banquet with the bishop Stephen Gardiner. Henry was furious and ordered that she be taken to the Tower of London the next morning. That morning she was distraught and Henry could not understand

¹ Unlike the clumsy, overweight and narcissistic Nero, whom no one dared beat in an athletic competition for fear of his life, the young Henry loved a good challenge. Though he did not often lose, he would praise and reward any athlete who was good enough to defeat him.

why. He was trying to console her when the soldiers arrived to take her. He had completely forgotten that he had ordered her imprisonment and flew into a rage, ordering that the soldiers be imprisoned for insolence to the queen. Fortunately, Katherine was able to calm him and he rescinded the order.

Henry's unpredictability, ranging from warm geniality to blind irrational rage, was a source of concern not only to his subjects, but also to other rulers. He would often fly into a rage at ambassadors over very petty matters, and he was known for sudden mood swings from giddy happiness to deep gloom. Particular incidents of this indicate not that he was bipolar, however, but that he was showing symptoms of traumatic brain injury. This would also account for the impotence that was a point of discussion among his various mistresses. He blamed his failure to consummate his marriage to Anne of Cleves on the fact that before he met her he was shown her portrait, which indicated that she was a beautiful woman, when in fact she was quite plain and rather dowdy. According to her courtiers, however, Henry was simply unable. This again could be the result of his series of concussions.

If the conclusions of Dr. Salardin's research are valid, historians may finally have an explanation of the radical changes in Henry VIII's behavior over the years. His tyranny is not justified, but at least it can be explained. A common game for historians is "what if." It makes one wonder in what direction England and the Church might have gone if that promising, charming and capable young prince had been more interested in tennis than in jousting and hunting.

Richard R. Losch+

On a tombstone in a country churchyard in England:

“Remember man, as you walk by,
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, so shall you be.
Remember this and follow me.”

To which someone replied by writing on the tombstone:

“To follow you I'll not consent,
Until I know which way you went.”

Ancient Lullabies

Babies cried just as much in ancient times as they do today, and while their parents loved them just as much, crying babies were also just as irritating to them as they are to us. To add to the discomfort, however, they believed that the crying was also irritating to the gods, especially the household gods who watched over their own home and family. This was their explanation of the extremely high infant mortality rate that was common in the ancient world. When the gods had had enough of the baby's crying, they would simply end its life. Some gods were more tolerant than others, but it didn't pay to push them too far. Because of this, ancient Mesopotamians developed magic rituals and incantations to mollify the gods and drive away evil spirits. These actually worked, although not for the reason that the users may have thought. The incantations were sung, and they usually also involved physical acts such as rocking the baby or stroking it in magical ways. As any mother knows today, holding, stroking and rocking the baby, along with singing to it, will usually stop the crying unless it is caused by physical pain or a long overdue need for a diaper change.

While many modern lullabies are gentle and loving songs, others reflect the parents' frustration in spite of their love for the infant. If the child could understand the words of "Rock-a-bye Baby," I doubt that he would be very calmed by it. Some lullabies of ancient Mesopotamia have survived, and tell us much about not only the attitudes of the parents, but also their lifestyle. This one, probably purchased from a shaman, shows that the family was reasonably wealthy, as they had a nanny and a wet-nurse:

You, baby, newborn human: you have now emerged, you have now seen the sun, the light. Why in the womb of your mother did you not treat her like this? Instead of treating your father well and allowing your mother to lead a normal life, you have terrified the nanny and kept the wet-nurse awake. With your noise, the household god is no longer sleeping, the household goddess cannot grab sleep. Whom shall I send to Enkidu, who fixed the three night watches [saying], "Let him overcome him who overcame the gazelle, let him bind him

who bound the gazelle's kid." In the open country, let someone he meets give [him] his sleep, let an ox-driver let him have his sleep. Until his mother wakes him, let him not wake up.¹

And another says,

The one who dwelt in darkness where no light shone, he has come out and seen the light of the sun. Why does he scream so that his mother cries and the tears of Antu [run in a] heaven stream? "Who is this who makes such a noise on earth? If it is a dog, someone give it food. If it is a bird, someone throw a clod at it. If it is a mischievous human child, let someone cast the spell of Anu and Antu over him. Let his father lie down to get the rest of his sleep. Let his mother, who has her chores to do, get her chores done." The spell is not mine, it is a spell of Ea and Asalluhi, a spell of Damu and Gula, a spell of Ningirima, mistress of spells. They said it to me, I repeated it.²

There was a ritual that accompanied this incantation:

[This is an] incantation to soothe a baby. Its ritual: Place bread by the head of the baby. Recite this incantation three times. Rub [the bread] on him from head to foot. Throw this bread before a dog. This baby will become quiet.

Rubbing a baby with bread may seem unusual, but I suppose that to the baby one massage is as good as another. Another prescribed ritual was to rub the baby with oil. The soothing effects of that are obvious.

Akkadian lullabies were not as simple or as short as modern ones, but it appears that they served the purpose of calming the baby just as ours do. The ancients believed that the gods prescribed these incantations and rituals, and therefore using them would please the gods and keep them from harming the baby whose cries were an irritation to them. Parents loved their babies just as much then as they do today, and with a roughly 75% infant mortality rate, they lived in constant fear of the loss of their child. Losing it to a petulant and impatient god was at least something they thought they could do something about.

Richard R. Losch+

¹ Translation from Akkadian, edited by Farber, *Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf!*, pp. 34–36.

² *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Mary and Joseph's Hometown

We don't know where Mary and Joseph's home actually was when they were betrothed. The ancient tradition that we rehearse every Christmas is that Joseph and Mary were living in Nazareth when Mary conceived, that they went to Bethlehem for the tax (actually a census), and that Jesus was born while they were there. Matthew, however, indicates that their home was Bethlehem and they went to Nazareth only after they returned from Egypt, in order to avoid Herod's successor Antipas. It is virtually certain that Jesus was one to two years old when the Wise Men visited, yet they visited Jesus in a house (not a stable) in Bethlehem, not in Nazareth (Matt. 2:11). When Herod ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem two years old and younger, the Holy Family fled to Egypt, returning and moving to Nazareth only after Herod's death. Mark and John say nothing of Jesus' birth, and Luke simply tells us that Mary was in Nazareth in Galilee when the Angel Gabriel came to her (Lk. 1:26f). He also tells us that Joseph was of the House of David, yet the homeland of the Davidic line was Bethlehem in Judea. Despite the tradition, there would have been no reason for Joseph to have had to go from Nazareth to Bethlehem for Augustus' census. The purpose of a census was to find out how many people there were in a region for tax purposes, so the last thing the Romans would have wanted was for people to travel halfway across the country to be counted. If Mary and Joseph were living somewhere in the lands of the Tribe of Judah (Joseph's tribe), it would have been reasonable for them to travel into the tribal capital, Bethlehem, for the census. This could have been a trip of up to 20 miles, which was a full day's journey (Nazareth was over 80 miles away, a good 4 days' trip). That would account for their having no place to stay when they arrived in the city, even if they lived in the general region of Bethlehem. We also know that Mary had relatives in Judah. Zachariah and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, lived in Judah, and Mary went there to visit them before Jesus was

born (Lk. 1:5ff). There were definitely Judean connections, therefore, even if Mary's immediate family were Galileans.

What about Nazareth, then? Frankly, we don't know. Although there is no documentation, ancient tradition says that Saint Anne, the mother of Mary, grew up in Sepphoris, a city about four miles from Nazareth. We can only conjecture from there what circumstances brought Nazareth into the picture. Perhaps St. Joachim, Mary's father, was a Nazarene who married Anne and took her to Nazareth, where they raised Mary. Family bonds were strong in those days, and people often traveled long distances to visit relatives. Anne and Joachim may have visited their relatives Elizabeth and Zachariah in Judah, and there met Joseph of Bethlehem, whom they betrothed to their daughter Mary. Until Joseph and Mary were married she would have remained with her family in Nazareth, where the Angel Gabriel visited her to announce the conception of Jesus. Joseph, being a just man and accepting the miracle of Mary's pregnancy, did not "put her away," but married her and brought her back to his home near Bethlehem. When the census was decreed they journeyed to the city, where Jesus was born. Then, having to flee Bethlehem because of Herod, they went to Egypt and finally to Nazareth where they made their home and raised Jesus.

While the above scenario is pure conjecture it is completely reasonable, and very satisfactorily explains the apparent contradictions between the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke. There is no doubt that Jesus grew up in Nazareth, and he was known as Jesus of Nazareth. It is not clear, however, whether Joseph ever lived there before their return from Egypt. I suspect that God does not want us to know the specifics, because we would then be tempted to pay more attention to the details and places than to the significance of the incarnation of the Son of God.

Richard R. Losch+

What if there were no hypothetical questions?

The Star of David

The so-called Star of David is a six-pointed star usually made up of two intertwined equilateral triangles. It is universally recognized as the symbol of the Jewish people, and it is the centerpiece of the flag of Israel. It is also often called the Seal of Solomon, and tradition says (incorrectly) that it was the primary symbol on his signet ring.¹ What surprises many people is that the symbol is only a few hundred years old, and was not associated exclusively with the Jewish community until the 19th century. In fact, it originated in the 2nd or 3rd century AD, and is found as a decorative motif in more ancient and medieval Christian churches than Jewish synagogues. Notwithstanding, by 1800 it was clearly associated with Judaism, and by the middle of the 19th century, with the advent of the Zionist movement and the immigration of thousands of Jewish refugees into Palestine, it had become the standard symbol of Judaism. In 1897 the Zionist Congress adopted it as their official symbol, and in 1948 it was included on the flag of the newly formed State of Israel.



Magan David

The Hebrew for it is *Magan David* (מגן דוד).² *Magan* does not mean star, but protective covering in the sense of armor or a shield. When God made his covenant with Abram he said, “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield (*magan*)” (Gen. 15:1). The word appears 22 times in Psalms as a shield, such as “His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart” (Ps. 91:4) and “We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our hope and our shield” (Ps. 33:20). The symbol that we call the Star of David, then, is actually a symbol of God’s protection.

Richard R. Losch+

¹ Archaeology has never found any evidence whatsoever of what was on either David’s or Solomon’s official seals.

² In Ashkenazi (Russian/German) Hebrew and in Yiddish it is *Mogeyn David*, thus the name of the famous kosher wine, Mogen David.

The Dates of Easter and Passover

The question is often asked as to why Easter in the Eastern Orthodox (Greek) Churches often falls at a different time from that in the Western (Latin) Churches, and why Easter does not always coincide with Passover. This year, for example, the West celebrated Easter on March 27, while the Eastern Orthodox Churches celebrated it on May 1; and Passover this year was April 22-30. The reason is because of the use of different calendars. By 46 BC the Roman calendar had become so out of synchronization that the traditional summer months were cold and the winter months were swelteringly hot. In 45 BC Julius Caesar introduced a new calendar to correct this. It is called the Julian calendar, and is based on the Mean Tropical Year (MTY). The MTY is the period it takes for the earth to complete one full revolution so the sun appears at exactly the same place in the sky as it did a year before. With a perfectly correct calendar, the same date will fall at exactly the same point in the MTY every year. For its time the Julian calendar was a fine piece of astronomy, but it is slightly inaccurate in that it loses one day every 128 years. By the 16th century AD the calendar was noticeably off the MTY (by about 13 days). In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII corrected this by decreeing a new calendar, now known as the Gregorian calendar, which is what we use in the West today. It is off by only one day every 3226 years. It includes making a quadrennial correction, adding an extra day every 4 years ("Leap Year"). By Gregory's time the Eastern and Western Churches had gone their separate ways (they split apart in 1054), so the Eastern Church ignored his decree and stayed with the Julian calendar. Although the whole world now uses the Gregorian calendar, the Eastern Orthodox Churches still use the Julian calendar for the calculation of Church observances.

Both calendars, the Julian and the Gregorian, are called solar calendars and are based on the Mean Tropical Year. The Jewish liturgical calendar is a lunar calendar, based on the cycles of the moon. The new moon marks the beginning of each

month, with the full moon falling exactly in the middle of each month. Its only solar reference is the two equinoxes and the two solstices. Passover always falls on the 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan, which begins on the first new moon on or after the Vernal Equinox. The Vernal Equinox is the time in the spring that the day and night are of equal length. In the Gregorian calendar that falls on March 20. Easter is also calculated on the moon and the Vernal Equinox. It is the first Sunday after the first full moon *nearest* the Vernal Equinox. In the Eastern Church, however, it is the first Sunday after the first full moon *on* or *after* the Vernal Equinox. This small distinction can occasionally cause the Eastern Easter to fall up to a month later than the Western Easter. Similarly, Passover might fall at the same time as Holy Week or Easter, but usually there is a significant difference. Passover begins on the 14th day after the first new moon on or after the Vernal Equinox, regardless of what day of the week that might be.

Richard R. Losch+

Alleluia!

The word Alleluia or Halleluiah, which is used in a variety of hymns and liturgical phrases, is often used as an equivalent of “Hooray!” Its liturgical use, however, is much more serious. It is a Hebrew word (הללויה) that means “Our praise to God.” It is based on the root *hallel* (הלל), “praise” or “hymn.” The word hymn comes from the Greek *hymnos* (ὑμνος), an ode of praise to a god. The Hebrew name for the Book of Psalms is *Tehillim* (תהלים), “Praises.”¹ When we say “Alleluia,” then, we are proclaiming our praise to God.

Richard R. Losch+

Even duct tape can't fix stupid, but at least it can muffle the sound.

¹ At the end of the Last Supper, “when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives” (Mark 14:26). This hymn would have been one of Psalms 113-118, which are Psalms of praise and were the Psalms appointed to be sung at any of the several ritual meals of Passover.

A Touch of Trivia

In 1961 five boys started a garage band that was an immediate success. They called themselves the Pendletons, after the Pendleton flannel shirt that was so popular at the time. Later that year they cut their first album, but the recording company didn't like their name. The company convinced them to call themselves "The Beach Boys."

Richard R. Losch+

JAMIE

by Richard R. Losch



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