

exalt," or "will rise"). The name of the great prophet (*see* article below) and of eight other persons in the Bible.

1. An inhabitant of Libnah, the father of Hamutal, wife of Josiah, and mother of Jehoahaz and Zedekiah (2 Kings 23:31; 24:18; Jer. 52:1), before 608 B.C.

2. One of the chief men of the tribe of Manasseh E, apparently about the time of its deportation by the Assyrians (1 Chron. 5:24), about 727 B.C.

3. One of the Benjamite warriors who joined David at Ziklag (1 Chron. 12:4), before 1000 B.C.

4 and 5. The fifth and tenth in rank of the Gadite adventurers who joined David's troops in the wilderness (1 Chron. 12:10, 13), before 1000 B.C.

6. One of the priests who signed the sacred covenant along with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:2); probably the same as one of those who followed the princes in the circuit of the newly repaired walls with the sound of trumpets (12:34), 445 B.C.

7. A priest who accompanied Zerubbabel from Babylon to Jerusalem (Neh. 12:1). It is probably himself or his division that is mentioned in v. 12, 536 B.C.

8. The son of Habazziniah and father of Jaazaniah, which last was one of the Rechabites whom the prophets tested with the offer of wine (Jer. 35:3), before 626 B.C.

**JEREMI'AH** (jer-e-mī'a; "Jehovah will lift up, exalt," or "will rise").

The second of the greater prophets of the OT. He was the son of Hilkiah, a priest of Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin (Jer. 1:1). Many writers, both ancient and modern, have supposed that his father was the Hilkiah mentioned in 2 Kings 22:8. Against this hypothesis, however, there have been urged (Keil, Ewald, Orelli, and others) the following facts: (1) that the name is too common to be a ground of identification; (2) that the manner in which Hilkiah is mentioned is inconsistent with the notion of his having been the high priest of Israel; (3) that neither Jeremiah himself nor his opponents allude to him; and (4) that the priests who lived at Anathoth (1 Kings 2:26) were of the house of Ithamar, while from Zadok down they were of the line of Eleazar.

**Early Life.** The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah while he was still young (Jer. 1:6) and happened in the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah (626 B.C.), while the prophet still lived in Anathoth. He appears to have remained in his native city until he was obliged to leave in order to escape the persecution of his fellow townsmen (11:21) and even of his own family (12:6). He then took up his residence at Jerusalem.

**Under Josiah.** He probably assisted King Josiah in the reformation effected during his reign (2 Kings 23:1-2). The movement on behalf of true religion ceased as soon as the influence of the

court was withdrawn, and the prophet bewailed the death of this prince as the precursor of the divine judgments for the national sins (2 Chron. 35:25).

**Under Jehoahaz.** The short reign—three months—of this king gave little scope for prophetic action, and we hear nothing of Jeremiah during this period.

**Under Jehoiakim.** The king (608-597 B.C.) had come to the throne as the vassal of Egypt, and for a time the Egyptian party was dominant in Jerusalem. Jeremiah appeared as the chief representative of the party that favored the supremacy of the Chaldeans as the only way of safety. In so doing he had to expose himself to the suspicion of treachery, and was interrupted in his ministry by "the priests and the prophets," who, with the populace, brought him before the civil authorities, urging that capital punishment should be inflicted on him for his prophecies (Jer. 26). The officials of Judah endeavored to protect him and appealed to the precedent of Micah the Moresheth, who had uttered a similar prophecy in the reign of Hezekiah; and so for a time he escaped. Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, seems to have had some influence in securing the prophet's safety. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah was commanded to write the predictions that he had been given (chap. 36). Probably as a measure of safety he was, as he says, "restricted," and could not himself go to the house of the Lord. He therefore enlisted Baruch to write the predictions and to read them publicly on the fast day. Baruch was summoned before the officials, who advised that both he and Jeremiah should conceal themselves while they endeavored to influence the mind of the king by reading the roll to him. Jehoiakim read the three or four leaves and then destroyed the roll. He gave orders for the immediate arrest of Baruch and Jeremiah, who, however, were preserved from the angry king. The prophet, at the command of God, rewrote the roll, adding "many similar words" (v. 32). To this period is assigned the prophecy in the valley of Ben-hinnom (chap. 19) and his ill treatment at the hand of *Pashhur* (which *see*).

**Under Jehoiachin.** We still find Jeremiah uttering his voice of warning during the closing days of the reign of Jehoiakim and the short reign of his successor, Jehoiachin (598 B.C.; Jer. 13:18; cf. 2 Kings 24:12; Jer. 22:24-30). He sent a letter of counsel and condolence to those who shared the captivity of the royal family (chaps. 29-31).

**Under Zedekiah.** In the fourth year (594 B.C.) of this monarch's reign Hananiah prophesied that the power of the Chaldeans would be destroyed and the captives restored from Babylon (Jer. 28:3); he corroborated his prophecy by taking off from the neck of Jeremiah the yoke that he wore by divine command (v. 10; cf. 27:2). Jeremiah was told to "go and speak to Hananiah, saying, 'Thus says the Lord, "You have broken

the yokes of wood, but you have made instead of them yokes of iron." For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, "I have put a yoke of iron on the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon" (28:13-14). It was probably not until the latter part of the reign of Zedekiah that the prophet was put in the confinement, as we find that "they had not yet put him in the prison" when the army of Nebuchadnezzar commenced the siege of Jerusalem (37:4-5). Jeremiah had declared what the fatal issue would be (chap. 24) and was incarcerated in the court of the prison adjoining the palace, where he predicted the certain return from the impending captivity (32:37). Jeremiah's suffering reached its climax under this king, especially during the siege of Jerusalem. The approach of the Egyptian army and the consequent withdrawal for a time of the Chaldeans brightened the prospects of the Jews, and the king entreated Jeremiah to pray to the Lord for them. The answer received from God was that the Egyptians would go to their own land and that the Chaldeans would return and destroy the city (37:7-8). This irritated the officials, who made the departure of Jeremiah from the city the pretext of accusing him of deserting to the Chaldeans. In spite of his denial, he was cast into prison where he would doubtless have perished but for the intervention of Ebed-melech, one of the royal eunuchs (37:12-38:13). The king seems to have been favorably inclined toward the prophet, but, for fear of the officials, consulted with him secretly (38:14-28). In one of these secret interviews Jeremiah obtained a milder imprisonment in the guardhouse belonging to the royal citadel where he was given "a loaf of bread daily from the baker's street, until all the bread in the city was gone" (37:17-21). While in prison he bought, with all requisite formalities, the field at Anathoth that his kinsman Hanamel wished to get rid of (32:6-9), thus showing his faith in his country's future.

**Under Nebuchadnezzar.** Nebuchadnezzar took the city (586 B.C.; Albright's date, 587), and gave a special charge to his captain, Nebuzaradan, to free Jeremiah and to obey his request (39:11-12). He was, accordingly, delivered from the prison and the choice given him either to go to Babylon or remain with his own people. He chose the latter and went to Mizpah with Gedaliah, who had been appointed governor of Judea. After the murder of Gedaliah he advised Johanan, the recognized leader of the people, to remain in the land (42:7-22). The people refused to heed his advice under the plea that he was acting in the interest of the Chaldeans, went to Egypt "as far as Tahpanhes," and took Jeremiah and Baruch with them (43:6-7). While there he still sought to turn the people who had so long rebelled against the Lord back to Him (chap. 44). His writings give us

no further information respecting his life, but it is probable that he died in Egypt soon after.

**Traditions.** There is a Christian tradition that Jeremiah was stoned to death by the Jews at Tahpanhes. An Alexandrian tradition reported that his bones had been brought to that city by Alexander the Great. On the other hand, there is the Jewish statement that, on the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, he, with Baruch, made his escape to Babylon and died there in peace.

**Archaeology.** In 1935 J. L. Starkey discovered eighteen ostraca with Heb. writing in the ancient Phoenician script in a guardroom adjoining the outer gate of the city of Lachish (cf. Harry Torczyner, *Lachish I: The Lachish Letters*, 1938; W. F. Albright, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 70 [April 1938]: 11-17). Additional ostraca were found in the last campaign in 1938. These letters were written by a certain Hoshaiiah, who was at some military outpost, to a man named Jaosh; evidently the high commanding officer at Lachish. Nebuchadnezzar had attacked and partly burned Lachish about a decade previously in Jehoiachin's reign. These letters, however, belong to the layer of ashes representing the final destruction of the city and are to be dated early in 588 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar was beginning his final siege of Jerusalem together with that of Lachish and Azekah. These so-called Lachish Letters have immense paleographic value and shed much historical light on the time of Jeremiah. The Heb. names and expressions used, such as "weakening the hands of the people," remind us of Jer. 38:4. M.F.U.

**Character.** "In every page of Jeremiah's prophecies we recognize the temperament which, while it does not lead the man who has it to shrink from doing God's work, however painful, makes the pain of doing it infinitely more acute, and gives to the whole character the impress of a deeper and more lasting melancholy. He is preeminently 'the man that hath seen afflictions' " (Lam. 3:1). He reveals himself in his writings "as a soul of gentle nature, yielding, tender-hearted, affectionate, with almost a woman's thirst for love, with which certainly the iron, unbending firmness, and immovable power of resistance belonging to him in his prophetic sphere are in strange contrast" (Orelli, *Com.*, p. 11).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: F. B. Meyer, *Jeremiah: Priest and Prophet* (n.d.)

**JEREMIAH, BOOK OF.** The prophecies of Jeremiah are named after the prophet himself, Yirmeyahu or Yirmeyah. His ministry extended over the last tragic forty years of the kingdom of Judah to the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of its inhabitants to Babylon.

**Purpose.** The prophetic oracles of Jeremiah constitute a stern warning to Judah and its capi-