

The other ten spies expressed fear and defeatism and discouraged the people. Genealogical lists, for example at 1 Chronicles 2:18, mention a Caleb son of Hezron. If the references are to the Caleb who spied for Moses, then Jephunneh was also called Hezron.

2. (1 Chronicles 7:38). Unspecified date.

Jephunneh son of Jether was a brave warrior and leader of a clan of the tribe of Asher. His brothers were Ara and Pispa.

### **Jerah** (Hebrew origin: *Moon*)

(Genesis 10:26). Unspecified date.

Jerah son of Joktan was a descendant of Noah through Shem, Noah's second son. His brothers were Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Almodad, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab.

### **Jerahmeel** (Hebrew origin: *God will be compassionate*)

1. (Jeremiah 36:26). 7th century B.C.E.

Jerahmeel was son of the king (either King Josiah or King Jehoiakim). He was one of the court officials—the others were Seraiah son of Azriel and Shelemiah son of Abdeel—commanded by King Jehoiakim to arrest the prophet Jeremiah and his trusted companion, Baruch. They failed in their mission because Jeremiah and Baruch had gone into hiding.

2. (1 Chronicles 2:9). Unspecified date.

Jerahmeel, the eldest son of Hezron, a descendant of Judah, was the brother of Chelubai—also called Caleb—and Ram, the ancestor of King David. His sons were Ram, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. He had a son, Onam, with another wife named Atarah.

3. (1 Chronicles 24:29). 10th century B.C.E.

Jerahmeel son of Kish was a Levite who served in the Tabernacle during the reign of King David.

### **Jered** (Hebrew origin: *Descent*)

(1 Chronicles 4:18). Unspecified date.

Jered was the son of Mered and his Israelite wife, who was a descendant of Judah. Jered, the brother of Heber and Jekuthiel, was the founder of Gedor.

### **Jeremai** (Hebrew origin: *Elevated*)

(Ezra 10:33). 5th century B.C.E.

Jeremai, a descendant of Hashum, divorced his foreign wife during the days of Ezra.

### **Jeremiah** (Hebrew origin: *God will rise*)

1. (2 Kings 23:31). 7th century B.C.E.

Jeremiah of Libnah was the grandfather of two kings—Jehoahaz and Zedekiah—through his daughter Hamutal, who married King Josiah.

2. (Jeremiah 1:1). 7th and 6th centuries B.C.E.

Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, a descendant of a priestly family, was born around the middle of the 7th century B.C.E. in Anathoth, a village in the Benjamin region not far from Jerusalem. The book called by his name comprises his prophesies, from the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah (in the latter part of the 7th century B.C.E.) to after the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians (beginning of the 6th century B.C.E.). The book also contains biographical and autobiographical narratives concerning the prophet and his activities as well as historical records of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the subsequent events that took place in Judah and in Egypt.

Jeremiah, who never married, was wholly dedicated to his mission, which was to warn the people of the catastrophe that was to fall upon the nation because of their idolatry and sin. He lived to see his predictions come true with the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king; the destruction of the city and the Temple; and the exile to Babylon of the king of Judah and many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. He also foretold, but did not live to see, the eventual return of the people from the Babylonian Exile and the restoration of the nation.

Jeremiah, horrified and shocked at the prevailing apostasy, began to preach as a young man. He went to the court of the Temple, thundered against sin, warned of its terrible consequences, and predicted that God would bring a disaster upon Jerusalem. Pashhur son of Immer, the priest in charge of the Temple, heard him, had him flogged, and put him in a cell at the Upper Benjamin Gate in the Temple. The next day, Jeremiah was brought to Pashhur's presence to be released. He prophesied to Pashhur that he and his family would be taken into captivity and would die and be buried in Babylon.

During the first year of King Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah went to the Temple and told the priests and the people that if they did not repent the Temple and Jerusalem would become a curse to all nations. The mob crowded around him and threatened to kill him. The

bones of Joseph went with them and were buried in Shechem, in a parcel of ground that Jacob, his father, had bought from the sons of Hamor for 100 pieces of silver.

2. (Numbers 13:7). 14th century B.C.E.

Joseph, of the tribe of Issachar, was the father of Igal, one of the twelve men sent by Moses to spy the land of Canaan and report back about its cities and its inhabitants.

3. (Ezra 10:42). 5th century B.C.E.

Joseph was one of the men who divorced his foreign wife in the time of Ezra.

4. (Nehemiah 12:14). 5th century B.C.E.

Joseph was the head of a priestly clan descended from Shebaniah when Joiakim was High Priest during the time of Nehemiah.

5. (1 Chronicles 25:2). 10th century B.C.E.

Joseph was one of the sons of Asaph, the Levite appointed by King David to be in charge of the singers in the House of the Lord. He and his brothers—Zaccur, Nethaniah, and Asarelah—assisted Asaph in his work, with Joseph taking the first turn of service.

### **Joshah** (Hebrew origin: *God set*)

(1 Chronicles 4:34). 8th century B.C.E.

Joshah son of Amaziah was one of the leaders of the tribe of Simeon who went to the fertile valley of Gedor in search of pasture for their flocks during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. The Simeonites destroyed the tents of the people (descendants of Ham) who lived there, wiping them out forever and settling in their place.

### **Joshaphat** (Hebrew origin: *God has judged*)

(1 Chronicles 11:43). 10th century B.C.E.

Joshaphat the Mithnite was one of the brave soldiers in King David's army.

### **Joshaviah** (Hebrew origin: *God set*)

(1 Chronicles 11:46). 10th century B.C.E.

Joshaviah and his brother Jeribai, the sons of El-naam, were brave warriors in King David's army.

### **Joshebekashah** (Hebrew origin: *Hard seat*)

(1 Chronicles 25:4). 10th century B.C.E.

Joshebekashah, a Levite and member of a family of musicians, was in charge of the seventeenth turn of service in which musical instruments were played in the House of God during the reign of David. He had thirteen brothers and three sisters, all of them trained

as skillful musicians by their father, Heman, one of the three leading musicians—the other two were Asaph and Jeduthun—of the period.

### **Joshibiah** (Hebrew origin: *God will settle*)

(1 Chronicles 4:35). 8th century B.C.E.

Joshibiah son of Seraiah was the father of Jehu, one of the leaders of the tribe of Simeon who went to the fertile valley of Gedor in search of pasture for their flocks during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. The Simeonites destroyed the tents of the people (descendants of Ham) who lived there, wiping them out forever and settling in their place.

### **Joshua** (Hebrew origin: *God saves*)

1. (Exodus 17:9). 13th century B.C.E.

Joshua son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, was the loyal assistant of Moses during the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness. He succeeded Moses as leader of the Israelites, defeated the Canaanites, and distributed the conquered land to the twelve tribes. His original name was Hosea (Deuteronomy 32:44), but Moses gave him the name Joshua (Numbers 13:16).

Joshua first showed his military prowess when he commanded the Israelite forces that defeated Amalek in a battle that was watched by Moses, Aaron, and Hur from the top of a hill. Joshua is next mentioned in the Bible when he accompanied Moses to Mount Sinai and waited for him at the bottom of the mountain, while Moses climbed to receive the commandments from God. After forty days and nights, Moses came down from the mountain, carrying two stone tablets with the commandments written on them. The two men went back to the camp.

Joshua heard shouts from far away and said to Moses, "There is a cry of war in the camp." Moses answered, "It is not the sound of the tune of triumph, or the sound of the tune of defeat; it is the sound of song that I hear!" (Exodus 32:17–18). They came close to the camp, and Moses saw the people dancing around the image of a bull. Angrily, he threw down the tablets that he had brought from the mountain, destroyed the bull, and ordered the Levites to kill all the idol worshipers.

Sometime later when Joshua was told that two elders, Eldad and Medad, were prophesying in the camp, he said to Moses, "My lord Moses, restrain them!" Moses rebuked him, "Are you

**Michael** (Hebrew origin: *Who is like God*)

1. (Numbers 13:13). 14th century B.C.E.  
Michael was the father of Sethur, one of the twelve men sent by Moses to spy the land of Canaan and report back about its cities and its inhabitants.
2. (Daniel 10:13). 6th century B.C.E.  
Michael, in the visions that Daniel had during the reign of Cyrus of Persia, was a prince of the highest rank, who was mentioned by a mysterious figure who appeared to Daniel and told him, "Have no fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to get understanding, practicing abstinence before your God, your prayer was heard, and I have come because of your prayer. However, the prince of the Persian kingdom opposed me for twenty one days; now Michael, a prince of the first rank, has come to my aid, after I was detained there with the kings of Persia. So I have come to make you understand what is to befall your people in the days to come, for there is yet a vision for those days" (Daniel 10:12–14).  
The man in the vision added that he would show Daniel the future of his people, that he was going back to fight the prince of Persia, and that the prince of Greece would now come in. He also said that the only one helping him against them was the prince Michael, who in a future troubled time would stand beside the sons of Daniel's people, and the people would be saved.
3. (Ezra 8:8). 5th century B.C.E.  
Michael, a descendant of Shephatiah, was the father of Zebadiah, a man who returned with Ezra from Babylon, leading eighty males of his clan.
4. (1 Chronicles 5:13). Unspecified date.  
Michael was a leader of the tribe of Gad who lived in the land of Bashan. His brothers were Eber, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Zia, and Jacan.
5. (1 Chronicles 5:14). Unspecified date.  
Michael was the son of Jeshishai and the father of Gilead, of the tribe of Gad. His descendants lived in the region of Gilead, on the eastern side of the Jordan River.
6. (1 Chronicles 6:25). Unspecified date.  
Michael son of Baaseiah and father of Shimea, of the clan of the Kohathites, was an ancestor of Asaph, one of the Levites appointed by King David to be in charge of the singers in the House of the Lord.
7. (1 Chronicles 7:3). Unspecified date.

Michael son of Izrahiah, a descendant of Tola, was the leader of a clan of the tribe of Issachar. His brothers were Isshiah, Obadiah, and Joel.

8. (1 Chronicles 8:18). Unspecified date.  
Michael son of Beriah was the leader of a Benjamite clan that lived in Jerusalem.
9. (1 Chronicles 12:21). 11th century B.C.E.  
Michael, from the half tribe of Manasseh, deserted Saul's army with his men, joined David at Ziklag, and became a captain of his army.
10. (1 Chronicles 27:18). 11th century B.C.E.  
Michael was the father of Omri, the leader of the tribe of Issachar during the reign of King David.
11. (2 Chronicles 21:2). 9th century B.C.E.  
Michael, a son of King Jehoshaphat, received from his father great gifts of gold, silver, and fenced cities. After Jehoshaphat died, his first-born son, Jehoram, ascended to the throne and killed Michael and all his other brothers.

**Michal** (Hebrew origin: *Who is like God*)

(1 Samuel 14:49). 10th century B.C.E.

Michal was the youngest of the two daughters of King Saul and his wife Ahinoam. Her older sister was Merab.

Saul, jealous of David's victories and popularity, devised a plan to get rid of his widely admired army officer. He offered him Merab in marriage if David fought against the Philistines. Saul secretly hoped that David would be killed in battle. David fought successfully against the Philistines, but Saul didn't honor his promise. Instead of giving Merab to David, he married her to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite.

Saul was very pleased when he found that Michal, his youngest daughter, loved David, because he saw a way to use her as a snare. The king sent a message to David, offering him his daughter in marriage and asking for no dowry—except for the foreskins of 100 Philistines. Saul still hoped that David would be killed. David went, fought against the Philistines, and slew 200 of them, twice as many as Saul had demanded for his daughter's hand. He brought their foreskins to the king, who had no choice but to allow him to marry Michal.

Saul grew more and more distrustful and afraid of David, and he asked his son Jonathan to kill David. Jonathan went to David and advised him to hide, while he tried to convince his father not to kill him. Saul listened to Jonathan's good words about David and agreed not to kill him. However, a short time later, while David

Years later, the people of Gibeon demanded revenge against King Saul's family because he had tried to wipe them out. The two sons of Rizpah—Armoni and Mephibosheth—and their five nephews were delivered by King David to the Gibeonites, who hanged them on a hill. Rizpah took sackcloth, spread it on a rock, and sat there, guarding the bodies against the birds and the beasts of the field from the beginning of the harvest season until, months later, the rains came.

*Note:* Making love to the present or past concubine of a king was interpreted in ancient Israel as a symbolic attempt to usurp power. This is reminiscent of when Absalom made love to the ten concubines whom David, in his flight from Jerusalem, had left behind to take care of the palace.

**Rohgah** (Hebrew origin: *Outcry*)  
(1 Chronicles 7:34). Unspecified date.

Rohgah was the son of Shemer, of the tribe of Asher. His brothers were Ahi, Hubbah, and Aram.

**Romanti-ezer** (Hebrew origin: *I have raised help*)  
(1 Chronicles 25:4). 10th century B.C.E.

Romanti-ezer, a Levite and member of a family of musicians, was in charge of the twenty-fourth turn of service in which musical instruments—cymbals, psalteries, and harps—were played in the House of God during the reign of David. He had thirteen brothers and three sisters, all of them trained to be skillful musicians by their father, Heman, one of the kingdom's three leading musicians; the other two were Asaph and Jeduthun.

**Rosh** (Hebrew origin: *Head*)  
(Genesis 46:21). 17th century B.C.E.

Rosh, one of the ten sons of Benjamin, was among the seventy Israelites who immigrated to Egypt. According to the list in Genesis, his brothers were Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Muppim, Huppim, Bela, and Ard. Rosh is not mentioned in the other three lists of the sons of Benjamin (Numbers 26:38, 1 Chronicles 7:6, 1 Chronicles 8:1).

**Ruhamah** (Hebrew origin: *Pity*)  
(Hosea 2:3). 8th century B.C.E.

Ruhamah was the third child the prophet Hosea had with his wife Gomer. Ruhamah's complete name was Lo-ruhamah, "Without pity" (Hosea 1:6), which symbolizes that God would exile the people of Israel without pity. Later, the prophet expressed hope that, one day, Judah and Israel would be reunited, and then

his daughter Lo-ruhamah would be called simply Ruhamah. Her brothers were Jezreel—a name that symbolized the destruction that God would bring over the dynasty of Jehu—and Lo-ammi, whose name means "Not my people."

**Ruth** (Hebrew origin: *Friend*)  
(Ruth 1:4). 12th century B.C.E.

Ruth, a Moabite girl, married Mahlon, an Israelite son of Elimelech and Naomi, and brother of Chilion. Her husband and his family had lived in Bethlehem in Judah, but a great famine forced them to immigrate to Moab, on the eastern side of the river Jordan. Elimelech died shortly afterward. After ten years of marriage, Ruth's husband and her brother-in-law also died. Their bereaved mother, Naomi, decided to return to her native country. Her two daughters-in-law expressed their wish to go with her.

Naomi said to them, "Turn back, my daughters! Why should you go with me? Have I any more sons in my body who might be husbands for you? Turn back, my daughters, for I am too old to be married. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I were married tonight and I also bore sons, should you wait for them to grow up? Should you on their account debar yourselves from marriage? Oh no, my daughters! My lot is far more bitter than yours, for the hand of the Lord has struck out against me" (Ruth 1:11–13). The girls wept; Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and went back to her parents' home, but Ruth stayed with Naomi.

Naomi said, "See, your sister-in-law has returned to her people and her gods. Go follow your sister-in-law." Ruth answered, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may the Lord do to me if anything but death parts me from you" (Ruth 1:15–17). Naomi saw that Ruth's mind was made up, and she said no more.

The two women walked on, until they came to Bethlehem. The people in the town, surprised to see them, asked each other, "Can this be Naomi?" Naomi said to them, "Call me Mara, for Shaddai has made my lot very bitter. I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. How can you call me Naomi when the Lord has dealt harshly with me, when Shaddai has brought misfortune upon me!" (Ruth 1:19–21).

The two women had arrived at the beginning of the barley harvest. Because they didn't have anything to eat or money with which to buy food, Ruth told Naomi

mother of Absalom and Tamar, the girl who was raped by her half-brother Amnon. Absalom, after Amnon was killed, fled to his grandfather's kingdom and stayed with King Talmai for three years, until David allowed him to return to Jerusalem.

### **Talmon** (Hebrew origin: *Oppressive*)

1. (Ezra 2:42). 10th century B.C.E.

Talmon, a Levite, was one of the gatekeepers—the others were Akkub and Ahiman—in charge of the East Gate of the Tabernacle under the supervision of Shallum during the reign of King David. He was the ancestor of a clan of gatekeepers who returned with Zerubbabel from the Babylonian Exile.

2. (Nehemiah 11:19). 5th century B.C.E.

Talmon was one of the gatekeepers of the Temple during the days of Nehemiah and the High Priest Joiakim.

### **Tamar** (Hebrew origin: *Palm tree*)

1. (Genesis 38:6). 17th century B.C.E.

Tamar married Er, Judah's firstborn son, who died young and childless. Judah told his second son, Onan, to marry Tamar and thus provide offspring for his dead brother. Onan, unwilling to have his children carry his brother's name, spilled his seed on the ground whenever he made love to Tamar. He also died childless.

Judah, fearful that his youngest son, Shelah, would also go to an early grave if he married Tamar, told her, "Stay as a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up" (Genesis 38:11).

Years went by, Shelah grew up, but Judah didn't marry him to Tamar. After Judah's wife died and the mourning period was over, Judah went with his sheep shearers and his friend Hirah to Timnath, near the home of Tamar's parents.

Tamar was told that her father-in-law was coming for the sheep shearing. She took off her widow's garments, wrapped herself, and—with her face covered by a veil—sat by the side of the road. Judah saw her and didn't recognize her. He approached her and, assuming that she was a harlot, told her that he wanted to sleep with her. "What," she asked, "will you pay for sleeping with me?" "I will send a kid from my flock," promised Judah. Tamar said, "You must leave a pledge until you have sent it." "What pledge shall I give you?" "Your seal and cord, and the staff

which you carry," said Tamar (Genesis 38:16–18). She received the pledges and slept with him. Then she went home, took off her veil, and put back on her widow's clothing.

Judah, a man of his word, sent his friend Hirah with the young goat to receive his pledges back from the harlot. Hirah asked some men, "Where is the cult prostitute, the one at Enaim, by the road?" "There has been no prostitute here," they answered (Genesis 38:21). Unable to find her, Hirah returned to Judah and told him that he couldn't find the harlot. Judah said, "Let her keep them, lest we become a laughingstock. I did send her this kid, but you did not find her" (Genesis 38:23). Three months later, Judah was told that Tamar was pregnant. Judah, furious, ordered that she be brought to him and burned. Tamar, brought to the presence of Judah, showed him the pledges and said, "I am pregnant from the man who owns these things. Can you tell to whom do they belong?" Judah examined them, recognized that they were his, and said, "She is right, because I never gave her my son Shelah" (Genesis 38:25–26). He was never intimate with her again.

Six months later, Tamar gave birth to twins, who were called Perez and Zerah. During their births, the midwife, seeing Zerah's hand, tied a scarlet thread on it, but it was Perez who first came out.

2. (2 Samuel 13:1). 10th century B.C.E.

Tamar, the beautiful daughter of King David and Maacah, was the granddaughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur, a kingdom situated northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Amnon, David's firstborn, developed a passion for Tamar, his half-sister, and, following his shrewd cousin Jonadab's advice, convinced his father that he was sick and that he wished Tamar to bring him food. David sent Tamar to Amnon's house, where she baked cakes for him. Amnon told his men to go out and leave Tamar alone with him. After raping her, he couldn't stand her sight and had her thrown out of his house.

Tamar put dust on her head, tore the ornamented tunic she was wearing, and walked away, crying loudly as she went. Absalom met her and asked her, "Was it your brother Amnon who did this to you? For the present, sister, keep quiet about it; he is your brother. Don't brood over this matter" (2 Samuel 13:20). Absalom gave her ref-

# V

**Vaizatha** (Persian origin: Uncertain meaning)  
(Esther 9:9). 5th century B.C.E.

Vaizatha was one of the ten sons of Haman, the vizier of Persia who wanted to kill all the Jews in the kingdom. His brothers were Parmashta, Arisai, Aspatha, Parshandatha, Adalia, Aridatha, Dalphon, Aridai, and Poratha. All of them were executed when Haman's plot against the Jews backfired.

**Vaniah** (Hebrew origin: *God has answered*)  
(Ezra 10:36). 5th century B.C.E.

Vaniah, a descendant of Bani, divorced his foreign wife during the days of Ezra.

**Vashni** (Hebrew origin: *Weak*)  
(1 Chronicles 6:13). 11th century B.C.E.

Vashni was the eldest son of the prophet Samuel. Vashni and his brother, Abijah, judges in Beer-sheba, were known for taking bribes and perverting judgment. The corrupt and vile behavior of the two brothers caused the elders of Israel to ask Samuel to appoint a king rather than let his sons rule over Israel. Vashni was also called Joel (1 Samuel 8:2).

**Vashti** (Persian origin: Uncertain meaning)  
(Esther 1:9). 5th century B.C.E.

Vashti was the beautiful and independent-minded wife of Ahasuerus, king of Persia, usually identified by historians as King Xerxes I of Persia, son and successor of Darius I, who was defeated by the Greeks at Salamis and became involved in palace intrigues that ended in his assassination. The Bible states that he ruled over 127 provinces, which extended from India to Cush in Africa.

In the third year of his reign, Ahasuerus gave a banquet for all his princes and administrators; it was a great celebration, lasting 180 days, during which he showed off his wealth. After that party was over, the king gave a banquet for all the other people in Shushan—rich and poor. It lasted seven days and was held in the garden of the palace, where everybody drank as much as he wanted. At the same time, Vashti, his queen, gave a banquet for the women inside the palace.

On the seventh day, Ahasuerus, drunk, ordered the seven eunuchs who were his personal servants to bring Queen Vashti, so that everybody could see her beauty. They were to ask the queen to wear her royal crown.

The queen refused to come and show herself in front of the drunken guests. Furious, the king consulted his law experts on how to deal with Vashti's refusal to obey his command.

Memucan, one of his chief advisers, declared, "Queen Vashti has offended not only the king but also his officials and all the people in the empire. Her bad example will make all wives despise their husbands. Therefore, I recommend that the king should issue a royal decree, and make it into a law so that it could never be changed, stating that Vashti should never again appear before the king, and that another worthier woman should be made queen instead." Memucan added, "When this decree will be known in all the empire, women will then treat their husbands with respect" (Esther 1:16–20). The king and his ministers approved the proposal.

Sometime later when the king's anger had calmed down, beautiful virgins from every province were brought to the harem in Shushan. Each was to spend one night with the king. If Ahasuerus did not want to make her queen, the woman was sent to the harem, never again to return to him unless specifically summoned by name. Eventually, Esther, the cousin and adopted daughter of a Jew named Mordecai, was brought to the king, who liked her more than any other girl and so he made her queen. The Bible does not mention what happened to Vashti after she was stripped of her position as queen. It is likely that she was put to death for defying the king.

**Vophsi** (Hebrew origin: *Additional*)  
(Numbers 13:14). 14th century B.C.E.

Vophsi was the father of Nahbi, one of the twelve men sent by Moses to spy the land of Canaan and report back about its cities and its inhabitants.