

Who was Hananiah in the Bible?

Hananiah is a popular name in the Old Testament. It basically means “the Lord has given” or “the Lord has been gracious.” The name appears several times in the Old Testament. Here are all of the Old Testament characters with the name Hananiah, placed in roughly chronological order:

- Hananiah, son of Shashak is listed in a record of the tribe of Benjamin, recorded in 1 Chronicles 8:24.
- Hananiah son of Heman was among the Levitical musicians selected near the end of David’s reign to serve in the temple (1 Chronicles 23:1-5; 25:1-4). While the temple was not built until after David died, he wisely made provision for its construction and operation while he was still alive (1 Chronicles 28:11-19).
- Hananiah was a military officer under King Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:11).
- Hananiah son of Azzur was a false prophet who opposed Jeremiah. At God’s command, Jeremiah was prophesying Babylonian victory over Judah and the surrounding nations (Jeremiah 27:1-15). Even in this moment of His judgment against Judah, God was still gracious: “Bow your neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon; serve him and his people, and you will live,” God commanded the king of Judah through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 27:12). Jeremiah donned a physical yoke to symbolize the metaphorical yoke of Babylon, which would be placed upon the people of Judah (Jeremiah 27:2-7). Hananiah, who claimed to be one of God’s prophets, confronted Jeremiah in the temple and issued a counter prophecy, claiming that God would shatter the power of Babylon and restore the temple treasures and people Nebuchadnezzar had taken. (Jeremiah 28:3-4). He even took

Jeremiah's yoke and broke it as a public denial of Jeremiah's prophecy. After hearing from the Lord, Jeremiah predicted Hananiah's imminent death, which came to pass only two months later (Jeremiah 28:15-17). This and subsequent events demonstrated that Jeremiah was a true prophet and Hananiah a false one. Claiming to speak on behalf of God is a serious matter, and Hananiah was judged for his false predictions (Jeremiah 28:15-16).

- Hananiah, the father of Zedekiah is only identified in relation to his son (Jeremiah 36:12). Zedekiah was one of the officials of King Jehoiakim who heard the word of the Lord read by Baruch, scribe of Jeremiah, and was afraid.

- Hananiah, the father of Shelemiah and grandfather of Irijah, is an otherwise unknown biblical figure who is mentioned in connection to his grandson (Jeremiah 37:13). Irijah was a "captain of the guard" in Jerusalem during the reign of Zedekiah. He confronted and arrested Jeremiah under the belief that the prophet was attempting to defect to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 37:13-14).

- Hananiah son of Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David, likely born around or after the fall of Judah (1 Chronicles 3:19, 21).

- Hananiah was the original name of one of Daniel's friends. Renamed "Shadrach" by the Babylonian authorities, he demonstrated incredible faith in the face of martyrdom, and God miraculously rescued him from certain death (Daniel 1:7; 3:1-30).

- Hananiah, descendant of Bebai was one of the Jews who returned to Israel following the Babylonian captivity. He had married a foreign woman and agreed to send her away in accordance with Ezra's demands (Ezra 10:28).

- Hananiah was a commander whom Nehemiah placed in charge of Jerusalem, along with Nehemiah's brother Hanani (Nehemiah 7:2). Hananiah the commander was described as "a man of integrity" who "feared God more than most people do" (Nehemiah 7:2).
- Hananiah the perfumer joined the wall-rebuilding project under Nehemiah in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 3:8).
- Hananiah son of Shelemiah was another Hananiah in Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah. He worked to repair a different section of the city wall (Nehemiah 3:30).
- A fourth Hananiah was noted to be in Judah during the time of Nehemiah. He was the head of a priestly family and participated in the dedication of Jerusalem's restored wall (Nehemiah 12:12, 41).
- Yet another Hananiah is mentioned in the book of Nehemiah as signing a communal pledge to follow God's commandments (Nehemiah 10:23). This man could be the same as one of the other Hananiahs mentioned in the book of Nehemiah.

God uses people of all names and backgrounds for His glory, and He is willing to bring anyone into His family. While your name matters, your relationship with God matters far more.