

to the overthrow of *Jehoiakim*, *Leconiah*, and *Zedekiah*?

A. They do indeed give this explanation, but you will only have to think one moment to see how little value is to be placed in their opinion on a subject of this kind. They were themselves involved in the guilt which caused the overthrow of their kingdom, and besides the thing was hidden from their eyes. But the contempt which our Lord showed for their teachings is quite sufficient to turn away the thoughts of Christians from those selfish and envious men.

Q. I admit not much value attaches to the opinions of the Rabbis, for they certainly were blind guides; but can you show any better way of understanding the passage?

A. Yes, certainly, and our conversation thus far has but prepared the way for the astonishing thing which our covenant-keeping God is now revealing to his believing people. The study of the conquest of Jerusalem reveals two facts. The first is that Zedekiah was taken and blinded, his sons put to death and he with others deported to Babylon. Jeremiah 52:1-11, Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against and round about. So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And in the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him. And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till day of his death."

The second fact is this: Jeremiah the prophet fled by divine direction at this time into Egypt, taking with him a rem-