

Vs. 9, 10. *Burnt the house of the Lord* ; and so ended the first temple, built by Solomon, after an existence of four centuries. The chief treasures of the city had already been taken away, and now the sacred vessels were carried off, and probably the ark itself. *The king's house* ; likely the palace erected by Solomon, which took 13 years to build, and which stood south of the temple. *Brake down the walls* ; which Nehemiah was later to rebuild.

Vs. 11, 12. *The rest of the people* ; those remaining after the deportation described in ch. 24 : 14, 15. *Of the multitude* ; better, of the artificers. *Left of the poor* ; under the supervision of a Babylonish ruler, Gedaliah.

Light from the East

NEBUCHADNEZZAR—To the student of the Bible the name Nebuchadnezzar calls up a picture of Jerusalem in ruins, the temple site abandoned and the Jews in exile. And Nebuchadnezzar did not shrink from such deeds. In the East India House Inscription,

he says : "In lofty confidence in Marduk I have passed through distant lands, far-away mountains, from the upper sea to the lower sea, steep paths, closed roads, where the step is imprisoned, where there was no place for the foot, difficult roads, thirsty roads. I have destroyed the rebellious, captured enemies, ruled the lands, permitted the people to flourish, but the bad and evil have I put away among the people." But he wanted to be known in later times not as a man of war, but as a man of peace; not as a destroyer, but as a builder. If the inscriptions are any true index to his work, he was infinitely more concerned with putting away evil-doers from among his people, with building walls, with extending the irrigation works of his land, than with crushing a tiny Jewish rebellion. It was all for the greater glory of his own god Marduk and of his own city Babylon. "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" (Dan. 4 : 30.)

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



A few miles northeast of Jerusalem, the road to Jericho descends a hillside in broad, irregular zigzags, which make the slope somewhat easier to travel. At the foot of the steep incline the road crosses a broad, level space of nearly bare ground ; then it descends to a still lower level where there are bush-grown pastures and some cultivated fields. That pasture reaches off 5 or 6 miles ahead, and then the long dim bulk of a great ridge of higher ground looms up across the Jordan in Moab, and meets the sky. It was probably along this road that Zedekiah and his party fled from Jerusalem high up amongst the hills. On part of the bare level ground stood, in ancient times, the city of Jericho. It is now the miserable village of er-Riha, containing about 300 inhabitants. The rich patches of barley and wheat, with the gardens of the ecclesiastical establishments, give a hint of the great fertility so fully developed in former times. A dozen isolated palms represent the splendid groves of the past. There is a handsome Russian hospice in the neighborhood and a small Greek church. Two good