

### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was the last King of Judah? **Zedekiah.**  
What great king came against Jerusalem?  
**Nebuchadnezzar.**

How long did the siege last? **A year and a half.**

What did King Zedekiah do at last? **He ran away by night.**

Who followed him? **Nebuchadnezzar's army.**

What became of Zedekiah? **He was taken prisoner.**

What dreadful sight did he have to see? **His two sons killed.**

What was then done to him? **His eyes were put out.**

Where was he taken? **To Babylon.**

Where did he spend the rest of his life? **In prison.**

What was done to Jerusalem? **It was burned.**

What did the soldiers break down? **The walls of the city.**

What was done with the people? **Many were killed.**

Where were others carried? **To Babylon, to be slaves.**

What would have saved all this trouble? **Obedience to God.**

What should we learn from this story? **That God punishes sin.**

### Words with Little People.

WHAT SIN DOES. { Binds with chains.  
                          { Makes eyes blind.  
                          { Leads to captivity and death.

### Whisper Prayer.

"Teach me thy way, O Lord."

### General Statement.

Angered by the revolt of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar determined to put an end to the perfidious and inconsiderate monarchy of Judah. He raised an immense army from his subjugated nations, captured the outermost fortresses of the kingdom, and marched to Jerusalem, intending to destroy it. The siege lasted a year and a half, and was one of the most desperate known to history. There were at this time few stronger fortifications in the world than Jerusalem, but Zedekiah evidently trusted too much in its strength. As the crisis approached the slaves were liberated that they might help in defending the walls. But Pharaoh of Egypt also claimed Judah as part of his empire, and as soon as possible sent an army to its relief. Nebuchadnezzar was compelled to raise the siege to meet this new foe. Immediately the grasping spirit of the Jews asserted itself, and the bondage of the slaves was renewed. But the Egyptians were not so strong as the Chaldeans, and soon the siege was again begun; and the Chaldeans made a breach in the walls and entered the city. Zedekiah fled, but was captured and taken to Riblah, where Nebuchadnezzar was encamped. His sons were slain before his eyes, and he was cruelly blinded and led as a slave to Babylon. About a month later Nebuzar-adan was deputed to carry out the systematic destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of its population.

### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 1. Besieged it.** The narrative in Second Kings tells us that "he pitched against it and built forts round about;" that is, "he drew lines of circumvallation, with a ditch, to prevent any going out of the city. On this rampart were erected his military engines for throwing missiles into the city."—*J., F., B.*

**2. The eleventh year.** That the besieged were able to hold out so long is astonishing, especially when we take notice of the poor rabble inclosed within the walls; but there is every evidence that the fortifications of Jerusalem at this time were unsurpassed in strength. **The ninth day.** This day was memorable for the breach made in the city walls. The parallel passage gives the reason. The famine prevailed, and there was no bread for the people. The starved soldiers were no longer capable of making a strong resistance. **The city was broken up.** In more modern phraseology, the northern wall was broken through, and the city lay defenseless before its conqueror.

**3. The princes.** The general officers. **The middle gate.** There were two "cities," the upper, which was the same as Zion, and the lower, separated by a wall. The "middle gate" was simply the passageway through this wall. Possibly stout warriors might have maintained themselves a little longer by holding this gate, but all stout hearts had failed.

**4. Saw them.** A terrible sight—by night, and seen by flicker of torches. **The men of war.** The advance guard of the Babylonian army. **They fled.** The Chaldeans came from the north side of the city; the king fled toward the south. **By the way of the king's garden.** At the pool of Siloam. **The plain.** The Arabah, or valley reaching from the Sea of Galilee southward. Near Jericho the plain is about eleven miles broad. This was really the only way open before him.

**5. The Chaldeans' army pursued.** The troops surrounded the city and the king had little chance. **Plains of Jericho.** According to