The error has mainly arisen from  
supposing that the parallel warning of St.  
Luke (ver. 20), “ When see Jerusalem  
encompassed with armies, then her desolation  
draweth nigh,” is identical in meaning  
with our text and that of St. Mark. The  
two first evangelist, writing for Jews, or  
as Jews, give the *inner or domestic* sign of  
the approaching calamity: which was to  
be seen in *the temple*, and was to be the  
*abomination* (always used of something  
caused by the Jews themselves, see 2 Kings,  
xxi. 2—15: Ezek. v. 11; vii. 8, 9; viii.  
6—16) which should *cause the desolation*,  
—the last drop in the cup of iniquity.  
Luke, writing for Gentiles, gives the *outward  
state of things* corresponding to this  
inward sign. That the *Roman eagles cannot be meant*, is apparent: for the sign  
would thus be *no sign*, the Roman eagles  
having been seen on holy ground for *many  
years past*, and at the very moment when  
these words were uttered. Also holy place  
must mean *the temple*: see reff.

Now in searching for some event which  
may have given such alarm to the Christians.  
Josephus’s unconscious admission is  
important. The party of the Zelots, as we  
learn, had taken possession of the temple.  
In the next section he tells us that they  
chose one Phannius as their high priest,  
an ignorant and profane fellow, brought  
out of the field. I own that the above-  
cited passages strongly incline me to think  
that if not this very impiety, some similar  
one, about ora little before this time, was  
the sign spoken of by the Lord. In its  
place in Josephus, this very event *seems* to  
stand a little too late for our purpose (4.D.  
67, a year after the investment by Cestius): but the narrative occurs in a description of the atrocities of the Zelote,  
and *without any fixed date*, and they had  
been in possession of the temple from the  
very first. So that this or some similar  
abomination may have about this time  
filled up the cup of iniquity and given the  
sign to the Christians to depart. Whatever it was, it was a *definite, well-marked  
event,* for the flight was to be immediate,

*on one day* (see ver. 20), and universal  
from all parts of Judaea. Putting then St.  
Luke’s expression and the text together, I  
think that some *internal desecration of,  
the holy place by the Zelots* coincided with  
the approach of Cestius, and thus, both  
from without and within, the Christians  
were warned to escape. See Luke xxi. 20.

**whoso readeth, let him understand]**  
This I believe to have been an ecclesiastical  
note, which, like the doxology in ch. vi. 13,  
has found its way into the text. If the  
two first Gospels were published before the  
destruction of Jerusalem, such an admonition would be very intelligible. Thewords  
*‘may* be part of our Lord’s discourse directing attention to the prophecy of Daniel  
(see 2 Tim. ii. 7: Dan. xii. 10); but this  
is not likely, especially *as the reference to  
Daniel* does not occur in Mark, where  
these words are also found. They *cannot*  
well be the words of the Evangelist, inserted  
to bespeak attention, as this in the  
three first Gospels is wholly without example.

**16—18.]** {16} The Christian Jews  
are said to have fled to *Pella*, a town described by Josephus as the northernmost  
boundary of Perea. Eusebius says they  
were directed thither by a certain prophetic  
intimation, which however cannot be this ;  
as Pella is *not on the mountains*, but beyond them (but in order to reach it would  
not they have to fly exactly over [so literally  
here] the mountains? See note on ch.  
xviii, 12) :—Epiphanius, that they were  
warned an angel.

**17.**] A person  
might ran on the flat-roofed houses in Jerusalem  
from one part of the city to another, and to the city gates. Perhaps however this is not meant, but that he should  
descend by the outer stairs instead of the  
inner, which would lose time.

**19, 20.**]  
{20} It will be most important that so sudden  
a flight should not be encumbered, by personal  
hindrances, or by hindrances of   
*accompaniment*, see 1 Cor. vii. 26; and that  
those things which are *out of our power to  
arrange,* should be propitious,—weather,  
and freedom from legal prohibition. The  
words **neither on the sabbath day, are**