

**5. Began.** This word notes cause and effect. The specific inquiry about the signs of the approaching time prompts Jesus to lead them against being misled by supposed signs. **Lead you astray.** Lead you to think and act as though the end were near, when it is not (2 Thes. 2: 2, 3).

**6. In my name.** Professing to have come forth from God, as Christ had, I am he. Each one pre-establish his kingdom with power and great glory, and to bring on the end of the world (ver. 22). Such false Christs would the more easily lead people astray, because the real Christ himself had appeared in a humble guise.

**7. Wars.** The Jews would never voluntarily destroy their own beautiful temple; a foe would do so, hence the rumor of impending war would seem a certain indication that the prophecy was about to be fulfilled. **Be not troubled.** With the fear of the immediate full-fledged of my words. **The end.** The last of the intervening events.

**8. Nation... against nation.** The troublous times that preceded the year 70 are clearly enough indicated here. No less than four Roman emperors were assassinated one after another. There were various insurrections of the Jews here and there, which occasioned much bloodshed. **Earthquakes.** Besides the well-known overthrow of Pompeii and Herculaneum, four or five earthquakes, in addition to the one at Jerusalem A. D. 67, are recorded. See also, according to Kendrick, remarks the frequency and destructiveness of earthquakes at this period. **Famines.** In Acts 11: 28 we read of one of them. **Beginning.** It would be natural for Christians, with the occurrence of each startling event, to conclude that the time had come and Christ was about to return. It would be easy to mistake what was only a beginning for the consummation. **Travail.** Literally, birth-pangs. The distress and commotion would usher in a new era.

### III. Personal Signs (vers. 9-13).

**9. Take heed to yourselves.** Do not think of yourselves as about to take part in the solemnities of a closing era; there is much serious experience for you to meet before you can enter upon the new era. You really need to inquire, not so much when the kingdom of God is to come with power, as to ask whether you yourselves are to endure the trying times which shall precede that event. **Councils.** Either the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem or the lesser Jewish judicial bodies in other places, to whom the Romans committed certain judicial authority. Thus Peter and John were brought (Acts 4: 7); Stephen (Acts 7: 12); Paul (Acts 22: 30). **Synagogues.** That these places of worship were also used as places of punishment is clear from Matt. 10: 17; Acts 22: 19. **Governors.** Representatives of the Roman emperor, rulers of Roman provinces. **Kings.** Persons, like the Roman emperor, clothed with the highest civil authority. Paul certainly was brought before such a tribunal, as doubtless were other apostles. **Testimony.** The demeanor of the disciples and apostles of Christ always impressed the civil authorities before whom they were brought. So it was in the case of Felix, Agrippa, Lysias, and others. Paul tells that of his very confinement as a prisoner in Rome had contributed to the spread of the Gospel, while he was sure that his death would magnify the Lord (Phil. 1: 12, 20).

**10. First.** Before the series of events with which the destruction of the temple is connected can happen. **Unto all the nations.** Not later than A. D. 62 Paul wrote the Colossians that the Gospel had been preached in all creation under heaven (1 Col. 1: 8; 2 Tim. 4: 17). To these Galileans, who had never yet been outside the province of Syria, the world was practically co-extensive with the Roman Empire. They did not suspect that one of their deadliest foes would become an apostle to the Gentiles and for long years traverse the empire as a most eloquent advocate of the truth, and spend his ripest years and give his mightiest testimony to the Gospel in the very capital itself. They little dreamed that Rome would become within their life-time a center of Gospel illumination. It is clear, then, that for them the prophecy was marvelously fulfilled in that phenomenal spread of Christianity during the lapse of a single generation, which ushered in the fall of Jerusalem and the temple worship. To us, in this era of steam and electric communication, to whom the whole globe is little larger than the Roman Empire was to them, it seems fair to expect that these words are

yet to be more literally fulfilled, and that the universal preaching of the Gospel must precede the return of Christ.

**11. Lead you.** By force. **Deliver you up.** Make accusations which compel the council to formally ex-amine you. Surely there is enough before the time about which they have inquired to occupy their attention. **Be not anxious beforehand.** As the dignity of the tribunal and the possibility of condemnation might lead you to do. Many of these trials, if not all, would be so entirely the result of prejudice that no regular line of defense could well be anticipated. The trial itself would frequently develop unexpected methods of escape (Acts 23: 6). A calm demeanor, begotten of trust in God, would generally be more effectual than argumentation. Besides, their ultimate aim should be not to escape, but to extend the knowledge of the Gospel (Acts 26: 29). **Whoever shall be given up.** These words have nothing to do with ordinary preparation for the pulpit, but refer to great emergencies. **The Holy Ghost.** The Holy Spirit, who is the reprover of unbelievers (John 16: 8) and the living source of revelation (1 Cor. 2: 10), will use their testimony to bring men to a knowledge of the truth.

**12. Brother shall deliver up brother.** Well may they take heed to themselves, for before the time prophesied they shall be called to endure extraordinary tests. Well may they expect Jehovah to interfere when the Jewish nation turn against the divine Messiah and his upright followers, and visit them with the same vengeance which they would mete out to malefactors. Acts 7: 59; 9: 1, 2; 11: 19.

**13. Hated.** Saul hated Christians very heartily before his conversion (Acts 26: 11). Tacitus speaks of them as a hated race. The cause, John 15: 18, 19. See how well Peter remembered the lesson, 1 Pet. 4: 12-19. **For my name's sake.** Because they are identified as Christians, John 7: 7. **Endureth.** In spite of hatred and persecution continues to openly acknowledge that he is a Christian. **To the end.** Till the temple is destroyed, in their trial death in our case (Rev. 2: 10). **The same.** He who endures, but so other. **Shall be saved.** Shall not lose their life when Jerusalem is destroyed; in our case, shall be with Christ after death. Phil. 1: 23.

### III. Application.

[REMARK TO THE TEACHER. There are many points of application in this lesson. What ones you will use, and what you will ignore, must be decided by your knowledge of the different individuals whom you teach. Unless this lesson can be shown to have to do with average human life, it cannot be made interesting. But it can be, and the discovery of a natural connection between various phases of the truth and individual souls will prove as profitable as it is exciting.]

1. The instability of earthly things, ver. 1, 2. Do you feel the impressiveness of this truth, and can you make it so to your pupils? Heb. 12: 25-29; 2 Pet. 3: 10-12.

2. The disciples take their private questions to Jesus. Have all your pupils this confidence?

3. Jesus does not give a specific reply to their question, but his answer is a spiritually profitable one. Study the art of giving edifying responses to hard questions.

4. Has not the warning of ver. 5 peculiar appropriateness just now to some member of your class?

5. Has not the young Christian in these days temptations to apostasy as dangerous as those mentioned in ver. 9-13?

6. The writer has seen manifestations of the hatred spoken of in ver. 13. Have you?

### English Teacher's Notes.

Nor long ago I happened to read in the newspaper that an old building in Vienna, which for many years had been a favorite resort for great numbers of people, was about to be pulled down. It seemed difficult to understand that there should be any particular emotion connected with such an event, but it did call forth an extraordinary burst of sentiment, and the last gathering there, which was