Dzcch.23.

Ofte,2,

Nahum 3.

5. The reforma-

Certaine notes

the tribulation

of the Church

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and followeth more in the fand chapter. Thine eldest fister is Samatia the and her daughters upon thy left hand : But the yongest fifter that dwelleth on thy right hand is Sodoma with her daughters, whose sinnes were these:pride, sulnesse of meate, aboundace and idlenesse, neither retched they they rhand to the poore. And vet neither Sodoma thy fifter with her daughters, hath done so euill as thou and thy daughters: Neither hath Samaria (that is the Synagoge) done half of thy finnes, yea thou halt exceeded them in wickednesse . Take therefore and beare thine owne confusion. &c. Againe in the 23. chapter of Ezechiel. After the Prophet had described at large the wickednesse, corruption, and punishment of the Sinagoge, turning to the Church, farth: And when her fifter fave this, the raged and was madde with luit, loue of riches, and following voluptuousnes. Her fornication and whoredome the committed with Princes and great Lordes, clothed with all maner of gorgeous apparell: so that her pappes were brused, and her brestes were marred. And then speaking of her punishment, faith: Then my hart for looke her, like as my hart was gone from her fifter also. And moreover repeating agains the cause therof, addeth: Thy wickednesse and thy fornications hath wrought thee all this.&c.

The like we finde also in Esay, Ieremy, Ezechiel and in all the other Prophetes, who prophefying all together in one meanings and almost in one maner of wordes: Do conclude with a full a greement and prophecye to come, that the Church shall fall, and then bee punished for her great excesses, and to bee vtterly spoiled except she repent of all her abbominations. Whereof speaketh Oseas chap. 2. Let her put away her whoredome out of her fight; and her aduoutry from her breftes, least I strip her naked and fet hereuen as she came naked into the world (that is in her primitime pouerty) So if the do not it, it that follow of her as in the prophet Nahum; chap. 3. For the multitude of the fornication of the fayre and beautifull harlotte, which is a mailter of witchcraft, yea and felleth the people through her whoredome, and the nations through her witchcraft. And followeth vpon the same: Behold I will vpon thee faith the Lord of hostes, and will pull thy clothes ouer thy head, that thy nakednes shall appeare among the heathen, and thy shame among the kingdomes. &c.

Wherefore by these it is to be understand, that upon this Church the primitiue iustice of God is to be reuealed hereafter. And thus much of the first of the foure members aboue fore-

Now to the fecond member of my theame, Iuxta est: concerning the nearenesse of time. Although it is not for vs to knowe, and fignes, that the momers and articles of time: yet by certaine notes and fignes peraduenture it may be collected and gathered, that whiche I haue here to fay. For the tractation whereof, first I grounde my draweth neare. felfe vpon the faying of the Apostle Paule. 2. Thessal . 2. where he writeth: That voleffe there come a detection first. &c . By the whiche defection. Ierome vltima quæst. ad inquisitiones Ianuarij, gathereth and expoundeth allegoricallye, the desolation of the monarchy of Rome: Betweene the which defolation, and the persecution of the Church by Antechrist, he putteth no meane space. And now what is the state of that common wealth, if it be compared to the maielty of that it hath bene, judge your selues. An other glose there is that fayth, how by that desection is ment: that from the Church of Rome shall come a departing of some o-

s. Note or to-

The Sinagogue and the church compared together in maners.

ther Churches. The fecond note and marke is this, when the Church shalbe worse in maners than was the Sinagoge : as appeareth by the ordinary glose vpon the 3.of Ieremy where it is written. The backflider Ifraell, may feeme inft and righteous in comparison of finfull Iuda. That is, the Sinagoge in comparison of the Churche of God Whereof writeth Origenes saying: Thinke that to be spoke of vs what the Lord sayth in Ezech. 16. Thou hast exceeded thy fifter in thine iniquities. Wherefore now (to compare the one with the other) First ye know how Christ rebuked the Phariseis, who as Ierome witneffeth were then the Clergye of the Iewes: of couetousnesse, for that they suffered doues to be solde in the temple of God. Secondly, for that they did honor God with their lips and not with the r mouth, & because they sayd, but dyd not. Thirdly, he rebuked them, for that they were hypocrites . To the first then let vs see, whether it be worse to sell both Church & Sacramentes, than to fuffer doues to be folde in the Temple or not. The fecond, where as the pharifeis were rebuked for honouring to God with their lips, and not with hart: there be some, which neither honor God with hart, nor yet with lips: And which nevther do well, nor yet fay well, neither do they preach any word at all, but be domb dogs not able to barke, impudent and shameles dogs that neuer have enough, fuch pastors as have no vnderstanding declining & straying all in their owne way, every one geue to couetouines from the highest to the lowest. And thirdly, as for hipocrify there be also some, whose intollerable pride & malice is so manifest and notorious, kindled vp like a fire: that no cloake or shadow of hypocrify can couer it, but are so past all shame, that it may be well verified of them which the Prophet speaketh. Thou

half gotte the face of an Harlot, then wouldest not blush &cc. 3. Note or The 3.figne and token of tribulation approching neare to the token, Church, may well be taken of the to much vnequall proportion feene this day if the church. Where one is hungry and starueth, another is dronke. By reason of which so great inequality, it cannot be that the state of the Church as it is now, can long endure. For like as in good harmony to make the musick perfect, is required a moderate and proportionat equality of vorces, which if it do much exceed it taketh away all the fiveet melody : So according to the sentence of the Philosopher, by to much immoderate inequality or dispariety of citizens, the comon wealth falleth to ruine. Cotrary, where mediocrity, thar is, where a mean in equality with some proportion is kept ; that pollicy stander firme & more fure to continue. Now among at the politicke regiments of the gentils, I thinke none more is as be found in histories, wherin is to be seene so great and exceeding oddes, then in the policye of Priestes: Of whom some be so high, that they exceed all Princes of the earth; some againe be so base, that they are vider all rascals, so that such a policy or common wealth, may well be cal-

led Oligarchia. This may we playnely fee and learne in the body of man', to the which Plutarchus (writing to Thracinius) doth semblablye compare the common wealth. In the which body, if the fuftinace received should all runne to one member, so that that member should be to much exceedingly pamposed, and all the other parts to much pined, that body could not long continue: So in the body of the wealth ecclefialtical, if some who be the heads be so enormely ouergrown in riches and dignity, that the weaker members of the body be scant able to beare them vp, there is a great token of diffolution and ruine shortly. Wherupon commeth well in place the faying of the Prophet Efay. Euery head is ficke, euery hart is full of forrow, of the which heads it is also spoken in the Prophet Amos.chap.6. Wo be to the secure and proud wealthye in Sion, and to fuch as thinke themselves so sure vpon the mout of Samaria, taking themselues as heads and rulers ouer other.&c. And moreouer in the fayd prophet Efay it followeth: Fró the top of the head to the fole of the foot, there is no whole part in all the body, to witte: In the inferiours, because they are not able to liue for pouerty:in the superiours, because for theyr excessive riches, they are left from doing good. And followeth in the same place: But all are woundes and botches and strypes, beholde here the daunger comming, the woundes of discorde and denision, the botch or fore of rancor and enuy, the swelling stripe of rebellion and mischiefe.

The 4 figne is the pride of Prelates. Some there have bene 4. Signe. which fondly have disputed of the pouerty of Christ, and have inueyed agaynst the Prelates, because they line not in pouertye of the farnts. But this phantafy cometh of the ignoraunce of mosrall Philosophy and dininity, and of the defect of naturall prudence for that in all nations, and by common lawes, priests have noted. had and ought to have wherewith to fustayne themselves more honestly then the vulgare fort, and Prelates more honestly than the subjectes. But yet hereby is not permitted to them their great horses, theyr troupes of horsemen, their superfluous pompe of theyr wayting men and great famylyes, whyche scarcely can bee maynteyned without pride, neither can be susteyned with safe iustice, and many not without fighting and iniuries inconveniet: not much vnlike to that as Iustine the historician writeth of the Carthaginenses. The family (fayth he) of so great Emperours was vntolerable to such a free Citty . In semblable wise, this great pride in the Church of God (especially in these dayes) doth moue not to few to due reuerence, as many to indignation; and yet mo to those thinges aforesayde, which thinke no lesse but to doe sacrifice to God if they may robbe and spoile certaine fatte priests and parsons namely such as neither have nobility of bloud, and lesse learning to beare themselves ypon but are lyers, servile and fraudulent, to whome the Lorde speaketh by his Prophet Amos fourth. Heare you fatted kine of Samaria, ye that doe poore men wrong, and oppresse the needye, the daye shall come vpon you.8cc.

The fift figne is the tyranny of the Prelates and Prelidentes, which as it is a violent thing, so it cannot be long lasting. For as Salomon fayth, Sap. 16. For it was requisite that (without any excuse) destruction shoulde come vpon those whiche exercised tyranny. The property of a tyraunt is to feeke the commodity not of his subjectes, but onely his will and profite. Such were the Pastours that fedde not the Lordes slocke, but fed themselues: of whom and to whom speaketh the Prophet Ezech.34. Woe bevnto those Pastours of Israel that seede themselues. Shoulde not the shepheardes feede the flockes? With many other threatninges agaynft them in the fayd chapter. Wo be vnto them which reioyce at the transgressions of such whom it lieth in theyr power to codemne, neither do they feeke what he is able to pay, to whom crieth Micheas the Prophet 3. chap. Ye hate the good and loue the e-uill, ye pluck offinens skinnes and the flesh from the bones; ye eat Micheas. 3. the flesh of my people, and flay of their skin: ye break their bones,

A Sermon nade be odi 👍 1230 J

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Oligarchia, is where a fewe beare al the fway, and all the rest be nothingworth

Efay. T.

Amos

Prideof. Prelates

Amot.4.

5.Signe.

The tyranny of pre-Ezech.34.