

Ezech. 34.

ye chop them in peeces as it were into a Caudron, and as flesh into the pot. &c. And therefore the foresayd Ezechiel pronounceth: Behold I will my selfe vpon the shepherdes, and require my sheepe from their handes, and make them cease from feeding my sheepe, yea the shepherdes shall feed themselves no more, for I will deliuer my sheep out of their mouthes, so that they shall not deuour them any more.

6. Signe. Promoting of vnworthv ministrs.

The sixth signe is in promoting of the vnworthy, and of neglecting them that be worthy. This as Aristotle sayth, is a greaue cause many times of the dissolution of common weales. And oftentimes it so happeneth in the wars of princes, that the content and small regarding of the valiant, and the exalting of others that be lesse worthy, ingendere diuers Kindes & kindlings of sedition. For by the reason partly of the same, partly of the other causes about recited: We haue read not only in books, but haue sene with our eyes, diuers flourishing Cities welneare subuerted. Wher as good men be not made of, but are vexed with sorrow & griefe by the euill: the contentio at length brasteth out vpon the prince, as Haymo reciteth out of Origen. This hath alwayes bene the peruers incredulitye of mans harde heart, that not onely in hearing, but also in seing; yet will they not beleue that other haue perished, vnlesse they also perish themselves.

Haymo.

7. Signe.

The seventh signe is the tribulation of outward policy & commotions of the people, which in a great part is now happened already. And therefore forasmuch as Seneca sayth: Men do complayne commonly that euils onely come so fast: It is to be feared least also the ecclesiastical policy be afflicted not onely outwardly but also in it selfe. And so be fulfilled in vs, that in Ieremy is prophesied cap. 4. Murder is cryed vpon murder, and the whole land shall perish and fodenly my tabernacles were destroyed, and my tentes very quickly. And Ezech. 7. Wherefore I will bring cruell tyrants from among the heathen, to take their houses in possession, I will make the pompe of the proud, to cease, and their sanctuaries shall be taken. One mischiefe and sorow shall follow another, and one rumor shall come after an other; then shall they seek visions in vayne at their prophets, the law shall be gone fro their Priests, and wisdom from their Elders &c.

Ierem. 4.

Ezech. 7.

8. Signe.

The eight signe is the refusing of correction, neither will they heare their faultes tolde them, so that it is hapned to the princes and rulers of the Church, as it is written in the prophet Zach. ca. 7. They stopped their eares that they would not heare: yea they made their hartes as an Adamant stone, least they shoulde heare the law and wordes which the Lord of hostes sent in his holy spirite by the Prophetes aforesaid. Also Esay witnesseth after the same effect. cap. 30. sayth: For it is an obstinate people, lying children and vnfaithfull, children that will not heare the law of the Lord: which say to the Prophetes, meddle with nothing, and tell vs nothing that is true and right, but speake frendly wordes to vs. &c. All this shall be verified when the Prelates begin to hate that which tell them trueth, and haue knowledge, like vnto such of whō Amos speaketh, chapter 5. They beare him euill wil that reprobeth them openly and who so telleth them the playne trueth, they abhorre him. And therefore sayth the Lord to the Church of Ierusalem. Ose 4. Seing thou hast refused vnderstanding, I haue refused thee also, that thou shalt no more be my priest. And for so muche as thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children, and change their honor into shame. And so shall it be like priest, like people &c. And many other sayings there be in the prophets, speaking of the deiecing and casting downe of the priestly honor.

Zach. 7. Refusing of correction in the clergie. Esay. 30.

Truth shēt. Amos. 5.

Ofcc. 4.

Lack of learned priestes.

Besides these foresayde signes and tokens hitherto recited, there be also diuers other: As the backsliding from righteoufnes, the lacke of discrette and learned Priestes, promoting of childre into the Church with such other like. But these being already well noted and marked, you may easely iudge and vnderstand, whether these times now present of ours be safe and cleare from tribulation to be looked for, and whether the word of the Lord be true according to my theame. Iuxta est iustitia mea vt reuelatur, my righteoufnes is neare at hande to bee reuealed. &c. And thus muche of the second part.

The third part or member of the subdiuision.

Now to the third part or member of my subdiuision, which is concerning the false and perilous opinions of some, vpon this word of my theame vt veniat &c. which opinions principally be 4. repugning all agaynst the truth of the canonickall Scripture.

The first opinion.

The first opinion is of such men, who hauing to much confidence in themselves, do think and perswade with themselves, that the Prelates be the Church, which the Lord will alwayes keepe and neuer forsake as he hath promised in the persons of the Apostles. Mathew. 28. saying: And I will be with you to the end of the world. &c. But this is to be vnderstanded of faith, whereof Christ speaketh Luke. 21. I haue prayd for thee, that thy faith shall not faile. Whereof we read Ecclesiast. 40. sayth shall stand for euer. &c. And albeit Charity waxe neuer so colde, yet faith notwithstanding, shall remaine in few, and in all distresses of the world: of the which distresses, our Sauour doth prophesy in many places to come. And least peraduenture some shoulde thinke them-

The church where it is, and in who it consisteth Eccle. 40.

selues to be safe from tribulation because they be of the church, this opinion the Lord himselfe doth contrary in Ieremy the 7. Trust not (sayth he) in false lying wordes, saying: the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, and a litle after, but you trust in wordes and lying counsellis which deceiue you and doe you no good.

Ieremy. 7.

The second opinion is of them, which deferre tyme; for this they well graunt, that the Church shall abide trouble, but not so shortly: thinking thus with themselves, that these causes & tokens afore recited, haue bene before at other times as well in the church. For both by Gregory and Bernard holy doctores, in time past the Prelates haue bene in like sort reprehended, both for their bribinges, for their Pompe and pride, for the promoting of persons and children vnfitte vnto ecclesiastical functions, and other vices moe, which haue reigned before this in the Church of God more than now, and yet by God his grace, the Church hath prospered and stand. Doe ye not see, that if an house haue stand and continued ruinous a long season, it is neuer more neare the fall thereby, but rather to be trusted the better? Moreover, many times it commeth so to passe in Realmes and Kingdomes, that the posterity is punished for the sinnes of the predecessors. Whereof speaketh the booke of Lamentations the 5. chapter. Our fathers haue sinned, and are now gone, and we must beare their wickednesse. &c. Agaynst this cogitation or opinion well doth the Lord aunswere by the Prophet Ezechiel chapter 12 saying: Beholde thou sonne of man the house of Israel sayeth in this manner. Tush as for the vision that he hath seene, it will be many a day or it come to passe: It is farre of yet, the thing that he prophecieth. Therefore say vnto them, thus sayth the Lord God: The wordes that I haue spoken shall be deferred no longer, looke what I haue sayd, shall come to passe sayth the Lord. &c. We haue seene in our dayes thinges to happen, which seemed before incredible. And the like hath bene seene in other times also: as we read written in the booke of Lamentations chapter. 4. The kings of the earth nor all the inhabitaunce of the worlde would not haue beleueed, that the enemy and aduersary shoulde haue come in at the gates of the City, for the sinnes of her priestes, and for the wickenesse of her Elders that haue shedde Innocentes blood within her. &c. by Hierusalem, as is sayd, is ment the Church.

The 2. opinion.

Thren. 5.

Ezech. 13.

Thren. 4.

The third opinion or error is very perilous and peruerse, of all such as say, veniat, let come that will come: Let vs conforme our selues to this world, and take our tyme with those Temporiers which say in the booke of wisdom. Sap. 2. Come let vs enjoy our goodes and pleasures that be present, and let vs vs the creature as in youth quickly. &c. Such as these be, are in daungerous case, and be greatly preiudicial to good men in the Church: And if the heades and rulers of the Church were so vile to haue any such detestable cogitation in them, there were no place in hell to deepe for them. This Church founded by the Apostles in Christ, consecrated with the blood of so many Martyrs, enlarged and increased with the vertues and merites of so many Sayntes, and indued so richly with the deuotion of so many secular princes, and so long prospered hitherto: If it now shoulde come into the hands of such persons, it shoulde fall in great danger of ruine, and they for their negligence and wickednes well deserued of God to be cursed, yea here also in this present world to incurre temporall tribulation and destruction, which they feare more: by the sentence of the Lord saying to them in the booke of Prouerbes cap. 1. All my counsels ye haue despised, and set my correctio at nought. Therefore shall I also laugh in your destruction, when tribulation and anguish shall fall vpon you.

The third opinion, or errour.

Sap. 2.

Prouer. cap. 1.

Fourthly, an other opinion or errour is of such as being vnfaithfull, beleue not any such thing to come. And this errour seemeth to haue no remedy, but that as other thinges & other kingdoms haue their endes and limittes set vnto them, which they cannot ouerpasse: So it must needes be, that such a domination & government of the Church haue an end, by reason of the demerites and obstinacies of the gouernors prouoking and requiring the same: like as we reade in the Prophet Ieremy cap. 8. There is no man that taketh repentance for his sinne, that will so much as say, wherefore haue I done this? But every man runneth forth still like a wilde horse in a battell and the Prophet Ieremy in the 13. chapter of his prophesy: Like as the man of Inde may change his skinned, and the Cat of mountayne her spottes; so may ye that be exercised in euill, doe good. Whereunto also accordeth that which is written of the same Prophet, chap. 17. speaking of Iuda signifying the Church: The sinne of Iuda (sayth he) is written in the table of your hartes, and grauen fo vpon the edges of your altars with a penne of Iron, and with an Adamant elau, which is as much to say, as indelible, or which cannot be raced out: as also Ezechiel speaking of the punishment, chapter 21. sayth: I the Lord haue drawne out my sword out of the sheath, and cannot be reuoked. Notwithstanding, all these signifye no impossibility, but difficulty, because that wicked men are hardly conuerted: for otherwise the Scripture importeth no such inflexibility with

The fourth opinion, or errour.

Ierem. 8.

Ierem. 13.

Ierem. 17.

Ezech. 21.