

ing ouer a place, resteth not in the same: but rested in thys wilderness for a time, times, and halfe a time, that is. 1260. yeres from the first coming of the faith into Britaine vntill this present.

A time, times, and halfe a time expounded.

In saying for a time, times, and halfe a time, there is a going forwarde from the greater to the lesse. The greatest time that we name, is a 1000. yeres, there is a time; and the next time that is lesse in the singular number, is one 100. yere. In the plural number, times signifie that there be mo hundredths then one, at lest 200. yeres. wherefoze if they be put vnder a certaine number, it must nedes be that they be two, but the same two cannot fitly be called some times, except they be hundredths. For in that, that there is a going downe from the greater to the lesse, when as it is layde a time, times, and halfe a time, and that the number of a 1000. is likely assigned for a time: it must nedes folow that times must be taken for hundredths, and half a time for 60. because it is the greater halfe of an hundredth yeres, though that 50. be the euen half. And when that the serpent lent the water of the persecution after the woman to cause her to be drowned of the flood: then did the earth, that is to wit, the stabilitynes of faith helpe the woman, by supping vp the water of tribulation. For in the most cruel persecution of Dioclesian and Maximian against the Christians, when as christianny was almost enery wher rooted out: yet did they in this kingdom stand continually in the faith, vnmoueable. And so, considering that the Britons, were conuerted to the faith of Christ, as you would say, by an election and piking out amongst all the nations of the heathen, and that after they had receiued the faith, they did neuer starte backe from the faith for no manner of tribulation: It is not to be meruailed if in their place the calling of the Gentiles, be made manifest to the profitting of the gospel of Iesus Christ, by the reucaling of Antichrist.

Persecution in Dioclesian time swalo weed v p, looke page. 77.

But besides this, me seemeth that Ezechiel doth specially speake of them, whereas hee speakech of the fall of the prince of Tyre, saying: for as much as thy heart is lifted vp as if it were the hart of God, therefore behold: I wil bring vpon thee, some of the strongest of the heathen, & they shall draw their naked swords vpon the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy comelines, and they shall slay thee, and pull thee out, and thou shalt die in the slaughter of the same persons, in the heart of the sea.

This prince who sayth, that he himself is God, & doth sit in Gods chaire in the heart of the sea, doth signify (as most likely it seemeth to me) that Antichrist shall be destroyed by the most mighty persons of the Gentils folke, through the sword of the worde of God. Because that amongst the Gentiles, there haue bene none moze strong then the Britones, either in their body or their faith, & in their boldly warres there haue bene none moze mighty then they. For neuer in warres haue they bene vanquished, but by their owne sedition or treason. But how many kingdomes haue they conquered? Yea, and nocher by the most mighty city of Rome, could they be driuen out of their kingdom, vntill that God sent vpon them pestilence and famine: whereby they being wasted, were compelled to leaue their countrey, which thing I haue not hard of any other people. Now, in the faith, haue they bene amongst all the people, the strongest, as before is sayd, because that by no tribulation, could they be compelled to forsake the faith. wherefoze of them, this seemeth to me to be vnderstanded. The Ibiol bying vpon thee, some of the most strongest people, & they shall draw their naked swordes, &c. By these things it may plainly apere, why at this tunc (rather then in tunc past) thys matter is stirred vp: and why in this kingdom (rather then in other kingdomes) the calling of the Gentiles is disclosing of, to the verifying of the Gospel, through the disclosing of Antichrist.

A friend to the Welchmen.

The strong faith of the Britons.

Tales of Antichrist.

A false imagination of Antichrist.

But soasmuch as many tales and fables are tolde of Antichrist and his coming, and many things whych doe rather souce then instruct the hearers, are applied to hym out of the scriptures of the prophets: we will chiefly wyte those things which are spoken of hym, and we will shewe that the same fable spring from the error of people imagining, & from no truth of the scriptures prophesying. Now then they do say, that Antichrist shall be borne in Babylon of the tribe of Dan, & conceived of the mixture of man and woman in sinne, because that Christe was borne of a virgin, and conceived of the holy ghost. They say, that he shall be an ill fauoured personage, because that it is wrytten of Christ: comely and beautifull is he, beyonde the sonnes of men. They say that he shall preach thre yeres and an halfe where Christ preached, & that he shall circumsise himselfe, and say that he is Christ, and the Medias sent for the saluation of the Jewes. And they say, that he shall 3. manner of waies seduce the people by false miracles, giftes, and toz-

ments. So that whom he shall not be able to overcome w' miracles nor with giftes, those shall he goe about to overcome with diuers kinds of tozments. And those that he shall seduce, will he marke with hys tokens in their forehead or hands. He shall sit in the temple of God, and cause himselfe to be worshipped as God. He shall fight (as they say) with the 2. witnelles of Christ, Enoch & Iely, and shall kill the, and he himselfe shall finally be slaine with lightning. To this imagined man of their own imagination, but of none of the prophets foreshewed (at least in no such wyse as this is) do they apply the prophets, as this of Daniel: when y continual sacrifice shall be taken away, & abomination shall be placed to desolation: What is (say they) when the worshipping of God shall be taken away, & desolation (to wit, Antichrist) shall abominably shewe forth himselfe to be worshipped, then shall there be 1290. dayes: that is to say, 3. yeres and a halfe. And this time doe they say is the time, times, and halfe a time. And when it is sayde in Daniell: Blessed is hee that waiteth for, and cometh to a 1335. dayes. This do they say, is thus to be vnderstanded. 45. dayes of repentance to such as haue worshipped Antichrist: whych 45. dayes added to the 1290. make 1335. dayes, which dayes they that shall reach vnto, shall be called blessed.

The Scripture & Prophets not rightly vnderstanded, touching Antichrist.

They apply also to thys Antichrist, this saying of the Apocalips: I saw a beast rising vp out of the Sea, hauing 7. heads, and 10. horns, who had power geue him to make 42. moneths, which moneths (as they say) do make 3. yere & a halfe, in which Antichrist shall raigne. And many other things there are tolde, and applied vnto this imagined Antichrist, & are not truly grounded vpon the scriptures.

Touching these 42. moneths, see aboute page. 397.

Now, let vs shew the errors of this fable. First of al, if there shall come such one (saying expressly that he is Christ) what Christian would be seduced by him, though he should do neuer so many miracles: neither shall he come after the manner of a seducer, which shall shew himselfe an expresse aduersary. Neither is it likely that the Jewes can be seduced by such a one, seeing that Christ is not promised vnto them of the stocke of Dan by any of the prophets, but of the stocke of Iuda: nor yet is he promised to the to be a king warlike, but peaceable, taking warre away, & not making warre.

The old imagination touching Antichrist confuted.

For of Christ sayeth Esay: And in the last dayes, shall there be prepared the mountaine of the house of the Lorde, in the toppe of the mountaines, and it shall be exalted about the hilles: and to it, shall all the nations haue great recourse, and manye people shall goe and say: Come, let vs go vp to the mountaine of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and hee shall teache vs his wayes, and wee shall walke in his pathes. For out of Sion shall there goe a lawe, and the word of the Lord from Ierusalem, and he shall iudge the nations, & reprove much people. And they shall turne their swordes into plowshares, and their speares into sitches. There shall not a nation lift vp it selfe against an other nation, nor yet shall they bee any more exercised to warre. And againe: A little babe is borne to vs, and a sonne is geuen to vs, and his Imperiall kingdom vpon his shoulder, and his name shall be called: The great counsaillour: The mighty God: The father of the world to come: The Prince of peace. His Empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no ende of his peace. He shall sit vpon the seat of Dauid, and vpon his kingdom: that he may make it stedfast and strong in iudgement, and in iustice, from henceforth & for euermore. Zachary doeth say of Christ: Reioyce thou greatly, O thou daughter Sion, be thou exceeding merie, O daughter Ierusalem: Beholde thy king shall come a righteous person, and a Sauior vnto thee, and yet he a poore man, and getting vp vpon an asse, euen vpon a yong colt of the she asse. And I wil scatter abroad the chariot of Ephraim, and the horse of Ierusalem. And the bow of warre shall be dispersed, and he shall speake peace to the nations, and hys power shall be from the sea to the sea, and from the floud vnto the borders of the earth.

Antichrist cometh not so grossely as the papists imagine.

Esay. cap. 2.

Esay 2.

Esay 9.

Zach. 9.

Antichrist cannot come of the tribe of Dan.

By which thinges it is manifest, that the wise Jewes knewe well enough, Christ to be promised to them of the stocke of Iuda and not of the stocke of Dan: & that he was geuen, all to peace & not to warre: wherefoze it is not likely, that they can be seduced by such a one. But if there should haue bene tunc to come some such singular Antichrist, then would Christ (seeing he to ged his) haue sayd somwhat vnto the of him. Now, of one singularly doth he not speak: but of many saying. Many shall come in my name, & say, I am Christ: and they shall seduce many persons. But now let vs see, how the prophesies in Daniell, & the Apocalips (aforesayd) be falsly and erroneously applied to the same imagined Antichrist. For in Daniell the ix. chapter thus it is wrytten. And after 72. weekes shall Christ be slaine, and they which will deny him shall not be his people. And the Citie and sanctuary, shall a people, with their Captain that shall come with them destroy, whose end shall be vnto desolation, and after the end of the war a determined destruction. Now, he shall in one weeke confirme his couenant

Daniel. 9.