

Chapter 21

How to feke out a fecrete murtherer. 10. Wemen taken in battel may be maried, and afterwardes can not be fold nor made bondwemen. 15. The eldefte fonne may not be depriued of his birthright for hatred of his mother. 18. A ftubburne fonne muft be ftoned to death. 22. VVhen one is hanged on a gibbet, he muft be taken downe the fame day, and buried.

Vhen there shal be found in the Land, which our Lord thy God wil geue thee, the corps of a man flaine, and he that is guiltie of the murder is not knowne ² thy ancientes, and iudges shal goe forth, and meafure from the place of the corps the diftance of euerie citie round about: ³ and which they fhall perceiue to be neerer then the rest, the ancientes of that citie shal take an heifer out of the heard, that hath not drawen yoke, nor ploughed the ground, ⁴ and shal bring her to a rough and ftonie valley, that neuer was ploughed, nor receiued feede: and in it they shal ftrike of the necke of the heifer: ⁵ and the priestes the fonnes of Leui shal come, whom our Lord thy God hath chofen to minifter to him, and to bleffe in his name, and at their word euerie matter dependeth, and whatfoeuer is cleane or vncleane muft be iudged. ⁶ And the ancientes of that citie shal come to the flaine perfon, and shal wash their handes ouer the heifer, that was ftrooken in the valley, ⁷ and shal fay: Our handes did not fheede this bloud, ^anor our eies fee it. ⁸ Be merciful to thy people Ifrael, whom thou haft redemed O Lord, and impute not innocent bloud in the middes of thy people Ifrael. And the guiltie of bloud shal be taken from them: ⁹ and thou shalt be free from the innocents bloud, that was fhed, when thou shalt haue done that which our Lord hath commanded thee. ¹⁰ If thou goe forth to fight againft thyne enemies, and our Lord thy God deliuer them in

^a By this ceremonie and abiuration they purged them felues, that they were not negligent in doing iuftice.

thy hande and thou leade them away captiue, ¹¹ and seeft in the number of the captiues a beautiful woman, and loueft her, and wilt haue her to wife, ¹² thou fhalt bring her into thy houfe: who fhall haue of her hare, and payre her nailes, ¹³ and put of the rayment, wherein she was taken: and fitting in thy houfe, fhall mourne her father and mother one moneth: and afterward thou fhalt enter vnto her, and fhalt sleepe with her, and ſhe fhall be thy wife. ¹⁴ But if afterward ſhe content not thy mynde, thou fhalt let her goe free, neither canft thou ſell her for money, nor oppreſſe her by might: becauſe thou haſt humbled her. ¹⁵ If a man haue two wiues, one beloued, and the other hated, and they haue begotten children by him, and the ſonne of the hated be the firſtborne, ¹⁶ and he meaneth to diuide his ſubſtance among his ſonnes: he can not make the ſonne of the beloued the firſt borne, and preferre him before the ſonne of the hated, ¹⁷ but the ſonne of the hated he ſhall acknowledge for the firſt borne, and ſhall geue to him of thoſe thinges, which he hath, al duple: for this is the beginning of his children, & to this are dew the firſt birth rightes. ¹⁸ If a man begette a ſtubborne and froward ſonne, that wil not heare the commandementes of his father and mother, and being chaſtened, contemneth to be obedient: ¹⁹ they ſhall take him, and bring him to the ancients of his citie, and to the gate of iudgement, ²⁰ and ſhall ſay to them: This our ſonne is froward and ſtubborne, he contemneth to heare our admonitions, he geueth himſelf to comeſſation, and to ryote and bankeringes: ²¹ the people of the citie ſhall ſtone him: and he ſhall die, that you may take away the euil out of the middes of you, and al Iſrael hearing it may be afrayde. ²² When a man hath offended ſo that he is to be puniſhed by death, and being condemned to die is hanged on a gybbet: ²³ his bodie ſhall not remaine vpon the tree, but the ſame day ſhall be buried: becauſe he is ^a)accuſed of God that hangeth on a tree: and thou

^a Myſtically, he is curſed that perfiſteth in finne, as it were hanging on the tree, by which our firſt parents finned.

shalt not contaminate thy Land, which our Lord thy
God geueth thee in poffeffion.