

Chapter 43

The famine presssing the land, Iacob willeth his sonnes to goe againe into Ægypt to bye more corne: 3. who refusing to goe without Benjamin, 11. he is sent with them, and presents and double money, lest the former were brought back by error. 16. Ioseph feign Benjamin, 23. deliuereth Simeon, and intertaineth them all at dinner.

In the meane time the famine did oppresse al the land very fore. ² And the prouision being spent, which they had brought out of Ægypt, Iacob said to his sonnes: Goe againe, and by vs a litle victual. ³ Iudas answered: That same man denounced vnto vs vnder attestation of an oath, saing: You shall not see my face, vnlesse you bring your youngest brother with you. ⁴ If therefore thou wilt send him with vs, we will goe forward together, and will buy necessaries for thee: ⁵ but if thou wilt not, we will not goe: for the man, as we haue often said, denounced vnto vs saing: You shall not see my face without your youngest brother. ⁶ Ifrael said to them: You haue done this to my miserie, in that you told him that you had another brother also. ⁷ But they answered: The man asked vs in order our progenie: if our father liued: if we had a brother: and we answered him consequently to that which he demanded: could we know that he would say: Bring hither your brother with you? ⁸ Iudas also said to his father: Send the boy with me, that we may get forward, and may liue: lest we and our little ones die. ⁹ I take vpon me the boy: require him of my hand, vnlesse I bring him againe, and restore him to thee, I will be ^aguiltie of sinne against thee for euer. ¹⁰ If delay had not bene made, we had bene come now the second time. ¹¹ Therefore Ifrael their father said to them: If it must needs be so, do that you will: take of

^a Guilt of fine is a greater bond then the life of Rubens sonnes; which he offered, & Iacob yielded not therto: & yet granted to this offer of Iudas.

the best fruites of the land in your vessels, and carie to the man for presents, a courtesie of rofen, and of honey, and of incense, of mirre, of terebinth, and of almonds. ¹² Double money also carie with you: and recarie that you founde in your sakes, lest perhaps it was done by an error: ¹³ but take also your brother, and goe to the man. ¹⁴ And my God almightie make him fauorable vnto you: and send backe with you your brother, whom he keepeth, and this Benjamin: as for me I shall be defolate without children. ¹⁵ The men therefore tooke the presentes, and the double money, and Benjamin: and went downe into Ægypt, and stood before Ioseph. ¹⁶ Whom when he had seene, and Benjamin withal, he commanded the steward of his house, saying: Bring in the men into the house, and kill victimes, and prepare a feast: because they shall eate with me at noone. ¹⁷ He did that which was commanded him, and brought the men into the house. ¹⁸ And there being fore afraid, they said one to another: Because of the money, which we caried backe the first time in our sakes, we are brought in: that he may turne vpon vs a false accusation, and forcibly bring both vs, and our asses into bondage. ¹⁹ Wherefore in the verie dore stepping to the steward of the house, ²⁰ they spake: Sir we desire thee to heare vs. Now once before we came downe to buy provision: ²¹ which being bought, when we were come to the Inne, we opened our sakes, and found our money in the mouthes of the sakes: which we haue now brought againe in the same weight. ²² But we haue brought other money besides, to buy the thinges that are necessarie for vs: our conscience is not priue, who put it in our bagges. ²³ But he answered: Peace be with you, feare you not: your God, and the God of your father hath geuen you treasures in your sakes. For the money, which you gaue me, I haue for good. And he brought forth Simeon vnto them. ²⁴ And being brought into the house, he fetched water, and they washed their feet, and he gaue prouender to their asses. ²⁵ But they made readie the presentes, till Ioseph should come in at noone: for they had heard that they should eate bread there. ²⁶ Therefore Ioseph came in to his house, and they

Calumniam.

offered him presentes holding them in their handes, and a)they adored prostrate to the ground. ²⁷ But he courteously refaluting them, asked them faying: Is the old man your father in health, of whom you told me? Is he yet liuing? ²⁸ Who answered: Thy feruant our father is in health, he is yet liuing. And bowing themfelues, they adored him. ²⁹ And Ioseph lifting vp his eyes, fawe Benjamin his brother of the fame mother, and faid: Is this your young brother, of whom you told me? And againe: God, faith he, be merciful vnto thee my fonne. ³⁰ And he made haft because his hart was moued vpon his brother, and teares brake forth: and entring into his chamber he wept. ³¹ And when he had washed his face, comming forth againe, he refrained himfelfe, and faid: Set bread on the table. ³² Which being fet downe, to Ioseph apart, and to his brethren apart, to the Ægyptians alfo that did eate with him apart (for it is vnlawful for the Ægyptians to eate with the Hebrewes, and b)they thinke fuch a feaft prophane) ³³ they fate before him, the firft begotten according to his firft-birth, and the youngeft according to his age. And they maruailed out of meafure, ³⁴ taking the portions that they receiued of him: and the greater portion came to Benjamin, fo that it exceeded c)by fiue partes. And they dranke and were d)inebriated with him.

ANNOTATIONS

³⁴ Inebriated.) Not that they did eate or drinck to much, or fel into exceffe, but competently. As the earth is faid to be inebriated with raine (*Pfal. 64.*) being fufficiently watered, and fo made fructful, not drowned, nor ouerflowed, for fo it is vnfructful. *S. Hierom. Tradit. Heb. S. Aug. q. 144. fuper Gen.*

Moderation to be vfed in feasting.

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- ^a They now adore him, whom they fold, left they fhould adore him. *S. Greg. ho. 22. in Ezech.*
^b See *Exodi. 8. v. 26.*
^c Euerie one hauing fiue portions, Benjamin had duple. *Iosephus li. 1. Antiq.*