

Chapter 8

Iudith a moft vertuous, rich, fayre, & renowmed widow, 9. rebuketh the high prieft and ancientes, for their determination to deliuer the citie, if ayde come not in fiue dayes, 14. exhorteth al to penance. 28. They al agree to her godlie aduife, 30. praying for good fuceffe of her intention, which they yet know not.

The third part.
Iudith deliuereth her whole nation from perfecution.

And it came to paffe, when Iudith a widow had heard thefe wordes, which was the daughter of Merari, the fonne of Idox, the fonne of Ioseph, the fonne of Ozias, the fonne of Elai, the fonne of Iammor, the fonne of Gedeon, the fonne of Raphaim, the fonne of Achitob, the fonne of Melchias, the fonne of Enan, the fonne of Nathanias, the fonne of Salathiel, the fonne of Simeon, the fonne of Ifrael: ² and her husband was Manaffes, who died in the daies of barley harueft: ³ for he was occupied with them that bound sheues in the field, and the heate came vpon his head, and he died in Bethulia his citie, and was buried there with his father. ⁴ And Iudith was leaft his widow now three yeares and fix monethes. ⁵ And in the higher partes of her houle she made her felf ^{a)}a fecrete chamber, in which she abode shut vp with her maides, ⁶ and hauing ^{b)}cloth of heare vpon her loynes, she ^{c)}fafted al the daies of her life but Sabbathes, and new moones, and the feaftes of the houle of Ifrael. ⁷ And she was of an exceding beautiful countenance, to whom her husband had leaft much richeffe, and a great familie, and poffeffions ful of heardes of oxen, and flockes of sheepe. ⁸ And she was among al moft famous, becaufe she feared our Lord very much, neither was there that spake an il word of her. ⁹ When she therefore had heard that Ozias had promised, that

The first day
of the moneth.

^a In three fpecial obferuances this holie widow led a moft religious life: In much priuate prayer,

^b in wearing hearecloth,

^c and in much fasting: as it were a perpetual lent, *al dayes but Sabbathes*, & feaftes excepted.

after the fifth day were paſt he would yeld the citie, ſhe ſent to the ancientes Chabri and Charmi. ¹⁰ And they came to her, and ſhe ſaid to them: What is this word, wherein Ozias hath conſented, to yeld the citie to the Affyrians, if withing five daies there come no ayde to vs? ¹¹ And what are you, that tempt our Lord? ¹² This is no word that may prouoke mercie, but rather that may rayſe vp wrath, and inflame furie. ¹³ You ^ahaue ſet a time for the mercie of our Lord, and according to your pleaſure, you haue appointed him a day. ¹⁴ But becauſe our Lord is patient, let vs be penitent for this ſame thing, and ſhedding teares let vs deſire his pardon: ¹⁵ for not as man, ſo wil God threaten, neither as the ſonne of man wil he be inflamed to anger. ¹⁶ And therefore let vs humble our ſoules to him, and being ſetled in an humble ſpirit, ſeruing him: ¹⁷ let vs ſay weeping to our Lord, that according to his wil ſo he doe his mercie with vs: that as our hart is troubled in their pride, ſo alſo we may glorie in our humilitie: ¹⁸ becauſe we haue not folowed the finnes of our fathers, which forſooke their God, and adored ſtrange goddes, ¹⁹ for which abomination they were geuen into the ſword, and into confuſion to their enemies: but we know no other God but him. ²⁰ Let vs humbly expect his conſolation, and he wil require our bloud of the afflictions of our enemies, and he wil humble al Nations, what ſoeuer ſhal riſe vp againſt vs, and the Lord our God wil make them without honour. ²¹ And now bretheren, becauſe you are ancientes in the people of God, and their ſoules depende of you: by your ſpeech comforte their hartes, that they be mindful, that our fathers were tempted to be proued, whether they did worſhippe their God truly. ²² They muſt be mindful how our father Abraham was tempted, and by many tribulations proued, was made the freind of God. ²³ So

^a In this eſpecially they offended, that they prefixed a time, meaning then to yeld the citie, for they ſhould rather haue fought againſt the enemy, then deliuer Gods people to a tyranne, holie thinges into prophane handes, & by their example put Ieruſalem and the temple in like danger. *Rabanus*.

Ifaac, fo Iacob, fo Moyfes, & al that haue pleaſed God, through manie tribulations haue paſſed faithful. ²⁴ But they that did not receiue the tentations with the feare of our Lord, and vttered their impatience and reproch of their murmuring againſt our Lord, ²⁵ were deſtroyed of ^{a)}the deſtroyer, and perished by ſerpents. ²⁶ And we therfore let vs not reuenge ourſelues for theſe things, which we ſuffer, ²⁷ but reputing theſe verie puniſhments to be the ſcourges of our Lord leſſe then our finnes, wherewith as ſeruantes we are chaſtified, let vs thinke them to haue chanced to our amendement, and not to our deſtruction. ²⁸ And Ozias and the ancientes ſayd to her: Al thinges which thou haſt ſpoken, be true, and there is no reprehention in thy wordes. ²⁹ Now therfore pray for vs, becauſe thou art a holie woman, and fearing God. ³⁰ And Iudith ſaid to them: As you know, that which I could ſpeake to be of God: ³¹ fo that which I haue diſpoſed to doe, proue if it be of God, and pray that God eſtabliſh my counſel. ³² You ſhal ſtand at the gate this night, and I wil goe out with myne ^{b)}abra: and pray ye, that as you haue ſaid, in fiue dayes our Lord reſpect his people Ifrael. ³³ But I wil not that you ſearch my doing, and til I bring you word, let nothing els be done, but pray for me to our Lord God. ³⁴ And Ozias the prince of Iuda ſaid to her: Goe in peace, and our Lord be with thee to the reuenge of our enemies. And returning they departed.

^a S. Paul 1. Cor. 10. v. 10. alleaging that happened to the people of Ifrael in the deſert, addeth this word *deſtroyer*, which is only in this place, and not Num. 11. nor 14. nor els in the old Teſtamēt. Which is an other argumēt that this booke is Canonical.

^b Some thinke Abra was a proper name, but whether it was or no, it ſignifieth an handmaide of more honour as we ſpeake: A *maide of honour*.