

Chapter 16

Iudith fingeth a canticle of thanksgeuing to our Lord. 22. The people goe to Ierufalem and offer facrifices. 25. She in great honour liueth a widow til her death in good old age. 30. The people haue long peace, and a feaftiual day is intituted in perpetual memorie of her fact.

Then fang Iudith this fong to our Lord, faying:
² Beginne ye to our Lord in timbrels, fing ye to our Lord in cymbals, tune to him a new pfalme, reioyfe, and inuocate his name.

^{3 a)} Our Lord confoundeth battels, Lord is his name.

⁴ Who hath fet his campe in the middes of his people, that he might deliuer vs from the hand of al our enemies.

⁵ Affur came out of the mountaynes from the North in the multitude of his ftrength: whofe multitude ftopped vp the torrentes, and their horfes couered the valles.

⁶ He faid that he would fet my borders on fyre, and kil my yongmen with the fword, to geue my infantes into praye, and virgins into captiuitie.

⁷ But our Lord omnipotent hath hurt him, and hath deliuered him into the hands of a woman, and hath pearfed him.

⁸ For, not by yongmen is their mightie one fallen, neither haue the fonnes of ^{b)} Titan ftrooken him, neither did the high ^{c)} gigantes fet them felues vpon him, but Iudith the daughter of Merari in the beautie of her face diffolued him.

⁹ For fhe put from her the garmentes of widowhood, and put on her the garmentes of ioy, in the reioyfung of the children of Ifrael.

^a S. Ephrem *fer. de 2. Aduentu*, citeth this place as holie fcripture fo teftifying this booke to be canonical.

^b Such gigantes as were before Noes floud, *Gen. 6.*

^c Nor fuch as were after, *Num. 13. Deu. 3.*

¹⁰ She anoynted her face with oyntment, and tyed together her lockes with a crowne, she tooke a new ftole to deceiue him.

¹¹ Her fandals rauifhed his eies, her beautie made his foule captiue, she with a fword cut of his head.

¹² The Perfians did quake at her conftancie, and the Medes at her boldneffe.

¹³ Then did the campe of the Affyrians howle, when my humble ones appeared, withering in thirft.

¹⁴ The fonnes of yongwomen haue pearfed them, and they haue killed them as boyes fleing away: they haue perifhed in battel before the face of the Lord my God.

¹⁵ Let vs fing an hymne to our Lord, let vs fing a new hymne to our God.

¹⁶ Adonai ô Lord great art thou, and noble in thy power, and whom no man can ouercome.

¹⁷ Let euerie creature of thyne ferue thee: becaufe thou faydft, and they were made: thou didft fend thy fpirit, and they were created, and there is none that can refift thy voyce.

¹⁸ The mountaynes with the waters fhall be moued with the foundations: the rockes fhall melt as waxe before thy face.

¹⁹ But they that feare thee, fhall be great with thee in al thinges.

²⁰ Wo be to the nation, that ryfeth vp vpon my kinred: for our Lord omnipotent wil be reuenged on them, in the day of iudgement he wil vifite them.

²¹ For he wil geue ^afyre, and wormes into their flefh, that they may be burnt, and may feele for euer.

²² And it came to paffe after thefe thinges, al the people after the victorie came into Ierufalem to adore our Lord: and forthwith as they were purified, they al offered holocaustes, and vowes, and their promifes. ²³ Moreouer

^a Euerlafting torments of fire & wormes perteyne to the damned bodies, *S. Aug. li. 21. c. 4. Ec. ciuit.* and great paines to the damned foules, efpecially the loffe of Gods vifion.

Iudith offered for an anathema of obliuion al the infru-
mentes of warre of Holofernes, which the people gaue
her, and the canopie that her felf had taken away out of
his chamber. ²⁴ And the people was pleafant according
to the face of fainctes, and for three monethes the ioy
of this victorie was celebrated with Iudith. ²⁵ And af-
ter thofe daies euerie man returned into his houfe, and
Iudith was made great in Bethulia, and fhe was more glo-
rious to al the land of Ifrael. ²⁶ There was alfo chaftitie
ioyned to her vertue, ^a)fo that fhe knew not man al the
daies of her life, ^b)after that Manaffes her hufband was
dead. ²⁷ And on feftiual daies fhe came forth with great
glorie. ²⁸ And fhe abode in her hufbands houfe, ^b)an hun-
dred fiae yeares, and difmift her abra free, and fhe died
and was buried with her hufband in Bethulia. ²⁹ And
al the people mourned for her feuen dayes. ³⁰ And in al
the fpace of her life there was not that trubled Ifrael,
and after her death manie yeares. ³¹ But the day of the
feftiuitie of this victorie is receiued of the Hebrewes in
the number of holie daies, and is worfhiped of the Iewes
from that time vntil this prefent day.

ANNOTATIONS

Deut. 25. v. 5.
Ruth. 3. v. 12.

²⁶ After that her hufband vvas dead.) As yong Tobias and Sara were notable patterns to married perfons: fo Iudith is a like good example to deuout widowes, excelling moft part in manie refpectes. For firft fhe professed this holie ftate of life in the old Teftament, when it was moft rare, the law prouiding that the brother, or next kinfman, fhould marie the widow of him, that died without children, as it femeth she had none, the Greke text affirming that fhe gaue al her goodes before her death to other kinred. *ch. 16. v. 24.* Secondly, fhe was only once married, *ch. 15. v. 13. ch. 16. v. 26.* wheras, it is alfo commendable after twife or oftener mariage at laft to abtaine. Thirdly, fhe was yong, about 36. yeares: for three yeares and a half after that her hufband was

Iudith an example of holie widowhood.

Manie incitementes concurring to the contrarie made her widowhood more excellent.

^a In the Greke, v. 22. *Manie defired her to mariage.*

^b Liuing in al 105. yeares she was widow about fixtie nine: for when she flew Holofernes she was about fourtie yeares old, *ch. 10. v. 18.* and her hufband was then dead three yeares and a halfe before. *ch. 8. v. 4.*

dead, she was called a yong maide. *ch. 12. v. 12.* Fourtly, she was of excellent beautie. *ch. 8. v. 7.* Fiftly exceeding rich. *ibidem.* Sixtly, very noble, especially after the deliuerie of the people from such distresse. *ch. 15. v. 10.* Seuently, for this renowned fact, and for her other great vertue (*ch. 8. v. 8.*) manie principal men desired to marie her. *ch. 16. v. 22.* Eightly, al the people wished much iffue of so noble a ftock. *ch. 16. v. 25.* Nintly, she liued long in the ftate of widowhood, about threecore and nine yeares, from 36. to 105. *ch. 16. v. 28.* Tently, there was great and long peace in al Ifrael, after that she had releued Bethulia. *ch. 16. v. 30.* Al which might easely haue inuited an other to haue married: but her great deuotion, and feruent desire to ferue God in a retired auftere life, fasting & praying, *ch. 8. v. 6.* cutte of al incitements to mariage, and made her before the Gospel, to embrace Euangelical counfel, not commanded, but for better attaining to perfection counfeled by our Sauior and S. Paul. *Mat. 19. 1. Cor. 7.*

Widowhood
an Euangelical
counfell.