

Chapter 3

Ifbofeths forces daily decay, Daud increafeth in powre, and hath manie fonnes. 7. Abner vpon occafion of a flander breaketh from Ifbofeth, and ferueth Daud, bringing Michol to him, and much people of Ifrael. 23. Ioab of emulation and reuenge killeth Abner. 28. For which Daud is offended with Ioab, 31. and mourneth for Abner.

There was made therefore long ftrife between the houfe of Saul, and between the houfe of Daud: Daud profpering and alwaies ftronger then himfelf, but the houfe of Saul decreafing daily. ² And there were fonnes borne to Daud in Hebron: and his firft begotten was Ammon of Achinoam the Iezrahelite. ³ And after him Cheleab of Abigail the wife of Nabal of Carmel: moreouer the third Abfalom the fonne of Maacha the daughter of Tolmai king of Geffur. ⁴ And the fourth, Adonias, the fonne of Haggith: and the fifth Saphathia, the fonne of Abital. ⁵ The fixt alfo Iethraam of Eglā the wife of Daud. Thefe were borne to Daud in Hebron. ⁶ Therefore when there was battel between the houfe of Saul and houfe of Daud, Abner the fonne of Ner ruled the houfe of Saul. ⁷ And Saul had a concubine named Refpha, the daughter of Aia. And Ifbofeth faid to Abner: ⁸ Why diddeft thou go in to my fathers concubine? Who being wrath exceedingly for the wordes of Ifbofeth, faid: What ^aam I a dogges head againft Iuda this day, which haue done mercie vpon the houfe of Saul thy father, and vpon his brethren and neereft freinds, & haue not deliuered thee into the hands of Daud, & haft thou fought againft me that thou mighteft charge me for a woman to day? ⁹ Thefe things do God to Abner, and thefe things adde he to him, vnleffe as our Lord

^a Am I contemptible in thy fight, and yet head of them that oppofe againft Daud, I that haue donne fo much for thee, wil not indure to be reprehended, for a fmal fault. So God fuffereth the maintainers of an euil quarel to fal out among themfelues, wherby the right caufe is aduanced.

hath fworne to Daud, fo I doe truth to him. ¹⁰ That the kingdom be transferred from the houfe of Saul, and the throne of Daud be exalted ouer Ifrael, and our Iuda, from Dan to Berfabee. ¹¹ And he could not anfwer him any thing, becaufe he feared him. ¹² Abner therefore fent meffengers to Daud for himfelf faying: Whofe is the land? And that they fhould fay: Make amitie with me, & my hand fhall be with thee: and I wil reduce vnto thee al Ifrael. ¹³ Who faid: Very wel: I wil make amitie with thee: but one thing I defire of thee, faying: Thou fhalt not fee my face before thou bring Michol the daughter of Saul: and fo thou fhalt come, and fee me. ¹⁴ And Daud fent meffengers to Ifbofeth the fonne of Saul, faying: Reftore my wife Michol, which I betrothed to me for an hundred prepuces of the Philiftijms. ¹⁵ Ifbofeth therefore fent, and tooke her from her husband Phaltiel, the fonne of Lais. ¹⁶ And her husband folowed her, weeping as farre as Bahurim: and Abner faid to him: Goe, and returne. Who returned. ¹⁷ Abner alfo fpake to the ancientes of Ifrael, faying: Both yefterday and the day before you fought Daud that he might reigne ouer you. ¹⁸ Now therefore do fo: becaufe our Lord hath fpoken to Daud, faying: In the hand of my feruant Daud I wil faue my people Ifrael from the hands of the Philiftijms, and of al their enemies. ¹⁹ And Abner fpake alfo to Beniamin. And he went to fpake vnto Daud in Hebron al things which pleafed Ifrael, and al Beniamin. ²⁰ And he came to Daud into Hebron with twentie men: and Daud made a feaft to Abner, and to his men that came with him. ²¹ And Abner fayd to Daud: I wil rife, that I may gather vnto thee my lord king al Ifrael, and may enter a league with thee, and thou mayeft reigne ouer al, as thy foule defireth. When Daud therefore had brought Abner on the way, and he was gone in peace, ²² forthwith Dauids feruantes and Ioab came, hauing flayne the robbers, with a praye exceding great: and Abner was not with Daud in Hebron, becaufe he had now difmiffed him, and he was departed in peace. ²³ And Ioab, and al the armie which were with him, came afterward: it was therefore told Ioab, that Abner the fonne of Ner came to

the king, and he dismissed him, and he departed in peace. ²⁴ And Ioab went in to the king, and said: What hast thou done? Behold Abner came to thee: why didst thou dismiss him and he is gone and departed? ²⁵ Knowest thou not Abner the sonne of Ner, that to this end he came to thee, that he might deceiue thee, and might know thy going out, and thy coming in, and vnderstand al things that thou doest? ²⁶ Ioab therefore being gone from Dauid, sent messengers after Abner, and brought him backe from the cesterne Sira, Dauid being ignorant therof. ²⁷ And when Abner was returned into Hebron, Ioab brought him aside to the middes of the gate, to spake vnto him in guile: and stroke him there in the priuie partes, and he died, in reuenge of the blood of Afael his brother. ²⁸ Which when Dauid had heard, that the thing was now done, he said: I am innocent, and my kingdom before God for euer from the blood of Abner the sonne of Ner, ²⁹ and come it vpon the head of Ioab, and vpon al his fathers house: neither let there fayle of the house of Ioab one hauing a fluxe of feede, and a leper, and houlding the distaffe, and falling by the sword, lacking bread. ³⁰ Ioab therefore and Abifai his brother slewe Abner, because he had killed Afael their brother in Gabaon in the battel. ³¹ And Dauid said to Ioab, and to al the people, that were with him: Rent your garmentes, and be girded with sacke clothes, and mourne before the funeral of Abner. Moreouer king Dauid folowed the beere. ³² And when they had buried Abner in Hebron, king Dauid lifted vp his voice, and wept vpon the graue of Abner: and al the people also wept. ³³ And the king mourning and lamenting Abner, sayd: Not as cowardes are wont to die, hath Abner died. ³⁴ Thy handes were not bound, and thy feete were not loden with fetters: but as men are wont to fal before the children of iniquitie, so art thou fallen. And al the people dubling it wept vpon him. ³⁵ And when al the multitude was come to take meate with Dauid, when it was yet cleere day Dauid sware, saying: These thinges do God to me, and these adde he, if before funne set I shal taft bread or any thing els. ³⁶ And al the people heard,

and al thinges pleafed them which the king did in the fight of al the people. ³⁷ And al the people knewe, and al Ifrael in that day that it was not the kinges doing, that Abner the fonne of Ner was flayne. ³⁸ The king alfo faid to his feruantes: Are you ignorant that a prince and the greateft is flayne this day in Ifrael? ³⁹ But I as yet ^adelicate, and annointed king: moreouer the fonnes of Saruia are hard to me: our Lord reward him that doth euil according to his malice.

^a Weake, being newly receiued king, and not able to punifh ftrong offenders. But Ioab & others were afterward punifhed. *3. Reg. 2.*