

Chapter 18

King Dauid difpofeth his armie in three partes, geuing ſpecial charge to faue Abfalom aliue. 9. VVhom neuertheles (hanging by the heares of his head in an oke) Ioab killeth: 16. and faueth the common people. 19. VVhich Dauid vnderftanding greatly bewayleth Abfalom.

Dauid therefore hauing viewed his people, appointed ouer them tribunes & centurions, ² and gaue the third part of the people vnder the hand of Ioab, and the third part vnder the hand of Abifai the fonne of Seruia the brother of Ioab, and the third part vnder the hand of Ethai, who was of Geth: and the king ſaid to the people: I alfo wil goe forth with you. ³ And the people answered: Thou ſhalt not goe forth: for whether we ſhal flee, it wil be no great importance to them of vs: or whether the halfe part of vs ſhal fal, they wil not greatly care: becauſe thou alone art accounted for ten thoufandes: it is better therefore that thou be in the citie to ayde vs. ⁴ To whom the king ſaid: What ſeemeth good to you, that I wil doe. The king therfore ſtoode befide the gate: and al the people went forth by their troupes, by hundredes and by thoufandes. ⁵ And the King commanded Ioab, and Abifai, and Ethai, ſaying: ^a)Saue me the child Abfalom. And al the people heard the King commanding al the princes for Abfalom. ⁶ The people therfore went out into the filde againſt Ifrael, & the battel was fought in the foreſt of Ephraim. ⁷ And the people of Ifrael was flayne there of Dauids armie, and there was made a great flaughter in that day, of twentie thouſand. ⁸ And the battel there was difperſed vpon the face of al the earth, and there were manie moe, whom the foreſt had confumed of the people, then they whom the fword deuoured in

^a Dauid moued with compaſſion towards his fonne Abfalom, being in actual rebellion againſt him prefigured Chriſts cōpaſſion, towards his perfecuters, being his creatures, praying for them in his paſſion. *S. Ambroſe in Pſal. 118. v. 108.*

that day. ⁹ And it chanced that Abfalom mette the feruantes of Daud, fitting on a mule: and when the mule was gone in vnder a thicke oke and a great, his head ftucke to the oke: and he hanging betwen heauen and earth, the mule that he rode vpon paffed through. ¹⁰ And one fawe this & told Ioab, faying: I faw Abfolom hang vpon an oke. ¹¹ And Ioab fayd to the man that told him: If thou faweft him, why didft thou not nayle him to the earth, and I had geuen thee ten ficles of filuer, and one belt? ¹² Who fayd to Ioab: If thou wouldeft pay downe in my handes a thoufand peeces of filuer, I would not lay my handes vpon the kinges fonne: for in our hearing the king commanded thee, and Abifai, and Ethai, faying: Keepe me the child Abfalom. ¹³ Yea and if I had done agaynft my life boldly, this could not haue beene hid from the king, and thou wouldeft haue ftand agaynft it? ¹⁴ And Ioab fayd: Not as thou wilt, but I wil fet vpon him before thee. He tooke therefore three lances in his hand, and thruft them in the hart of Abfalom: and when as yet he panted for life fticking on the oke, ¹⁵ there ranne ten yong men the fquyers of Ioab, and ftriking they killed him. ¹⁶ And Ioab founded the trumpet, and ftayed the people, that they should not purfew Ifrael fleeing, willing to fpare the multitude. ¹⁷ And they tooke Abfalom, and caft him in the forreft; into a great pitte, and they heaped vpon him an exceding great heape of ftones: but al Ifrael fled into their tabernacles. ¹⁸ Moreouer Abfalom had erected to himfelf, whiles he yet liued, a title which is in the kinges Valley: for he faid: I haue ^a)no fonne, and this fhall be a monument of my name. And he called the title by his name, and it is called The hand of Abfalom, vntil this prefent day. ¹⁹ And Achimaas the fonne of Sadoc faid: I wil runne, and tel the king, that our Lord hath done him iudgement of the hand of his enemies. ²⁰ To whom Ioab faid: Thou fhalt not be meffenger this day, but thou fhalt carie the meffage an other day: to day I wil not

^a Al his fonnes being dead, for he had once three fonnes & a daughter. *chap. 14. v. 27.*

haue thee carie the meffage, for the kinges fonne is dead. ²¹ And Ioab faid to Chufai: Goe, and tel the king what thou haft feene. Chufai adored Ioab, and ranne. ²² And againe Achimaas the fonne of Sadoc faid to Ioab: What letteth if I alfo runne after Chufai? And Ioab fayd to him: Why wilt thou runne my fonne? thou shalt not be caryer of good tydinges. ²³ Who answered: But what if I runne? And he faid to him: Runne. Achimaas therefore running a nere way out went Chufai. ²⁴ And Dauid fate between the two gates: and the watchman that was in the toppe of the gate vpon the wal, lifting vp his eies, faw a man running alone. ²⁵ And crying out he told the king: and the king faid: If he be alone, there are good tydinges in his mouth. And he making haft, and coming neerer, ²⁶ the watchman faw an other man running, and crying alowde in the toppe, he faid: There appeareth vnto me an other man running alone. And the king faid: And this is a good meffenger. ²⁷ And the watchman: I behold, faid he, the running of the former, as it were the running of Achimaas the fonne of Sadoc. And the king faid: He is a good man: and cometh bringing good newes. ²⁸ And Achimaas crying, fayd to the king: God faue thee ô king. And adoring the king before him flatte to the earth, he faid: Bleffed be our Lord thy God, who hath shut vp the men that haue lifted vp their handes againft my lord the king. ²⁹ And the king faid: Is the child Abfalom fafe? And Achimaas fayd: I faw a great tumult, when thy feruant Ioab fent, ô king, me thy feruant: other thing I know not. ³⁰ To whom the king: Paffe, fayd he, and ftand here. ³¹ And when he had paffed, and ftood, ³² Chufai appeared: and coming he fayd: I bring good tydinges my lord king: for our Lord hath iudged for thee this day of the hand of al that haue ryfen againft thee. ³³ And the king fayd to Chufai: Is the child Abfalom fafe? To whom Chufai answering, fayd: Let the enemies of my lord the king become, as the child, and al that ryfe againft him vnto euil. ³⁴ The king therefore being made forie, went vp into the high chamber of the gate, and wept. And thus he fpake, going: My fonne Abfalom, Abfalom my fonne: who would

graunt me that I might die for thee, Abfalom my fonne,
my fonne Abfalom.