

A
CONTEMPLATION
ON THE
RULES
FOR
UNDERSTANDING
THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

VOL. II.

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A C O N T E M P L A T I O N
O N T H E
R U L E S F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G
T H E
H O L Y S C R I P T U R E S.

Three important RULES for understanding the SCRIPTURES in general.---Farther RULES of great IMPORTANCE for knowing the true SENSE of SCRIPTURE, in nine HEADS.---Nineteen glorious CANONS for understanding the PROPHETS, by the learned and excellent VITRINGA. ---RULES for understanding the LAW of GOD. ---Special RULES for understanding the GOSPEL. ---RULES for a right understanding of the whole BOOK of the REVELATIONS, designed especially for pious and inquisitive CHRISTIANS, and young STUDENTS of DIVINITY.

I Hope I may say with great sincerity, and without violating the laws of modesty, that I have given invincible demonstrations of the eternal truth, the DIVINE INSPIRATION, and all-commanding AUTHORITY of the holy Scriptures; founded upon the GOODNESS of the doctrine, the working of MIRACLES, the fulfilment of the PROPHECIES, and the divine and moral CHARACTER

of the great founder of the christian religion. These are evidences of revelation founded on four eternal pillars in the very nature of GOD--- his richest goodness---his almighty power---his unbounded fore - knowledge---and his eternal rectitude and holiness. They bid defiance to all the most furious and artful attacks of earth and hell, and will triumph over all its adversaries in time, and when time shall be no more.

Our next delightful work to which we are naturally and rationally led, is to enquire, with the utmost ardour and attention, into the true sense and meaning of the Scriptures.

To what purpose will it be for me to demonstrate the divine authority of the Scriptures, if we do not understand them in their true sense, and make a proper application of them as the rule of our faith, worship, and practice? Let us therefore enter on this most precious and important subject with the utmost attention of thought, and with intense delight of the affections.

I will first lay before you three glorious CANONS for the general understanding of the whole body of Scripture; and then proceed by degrees to more particular rules for the investigation of the genuine sense of the special parts of the word of GOD.

CANON I.

C A N O N I.

Grounded on the PERFECTIONS of GOD.

Let every sense of Scripture be agreeable to all the DIVINE PERFECTIONS. Therefore that sense must be false and absurd which tends to reproach the essential perfections and glory of GOD; or which tends to degrade the personal glory of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Such a perverse sense must be disagreeable to Scripture: the great design of which is to display to the very utmost the glory of the DIVINE PERFECTIONS, and the DIVINE PERSONS.

And let it be farther observed, that every doctrine which tends to lessen, obscure, or disparage the richest GRACE of GOD, as though it were not sovereign, absolute, and free; or that the whole of our salvation was not to be ascribed to sovereign grace---or the PURPOSE of GOD, as though it were mutable and depended on the will of man in order to its being executed---or his POWER, as though it were to be controuled, or could be finally resisted or rendered ineffectual by the enmity, obstinacy, infidelity, impenitence, and rebellion of man---or as if the PROVIDENCE of GOD had nothing to do with the will, or he had given us powers and faculties, which he could not, or would not govern---or the HOLINESS of GOD, as though he could allow of *any* sin, without shewing his hatred of it---or the

JUSTICE

JUSTICE of GOD, as though he could bear with any sin without the real and full punishment of it---or the TRUTH of GOD, as though he could tell a lye, make declarations, and speak words, and yet never execute his threatenings or promises:---such doctrines of the Socinians are not agreeable to the divine perfections; they cannot therefore contain the true sense and meaning of the holy Scriptures, but are infinitely dishonourable to GOD, exceedingly and eternally injurious to the souls of men, and must certainly be false.

C A N O N II.

OR, GENERAL RULE for understanding the true SENSE of the SCRIPTURE.

The ANALOGY of FAITH.

Every doctrine you would found on the Scripture, must be agreeable to the analogy of faith.

For those doctrines cannot be founded on Scripture which are contrary to the analogy of faith.

For the understanding of what we mean by the analogy of faith, let it be observed, that no young student or preacher is for one moment fit or qualified to teach or instruct the church, who is himself chargeable with scepticism, or at a loss to determine what is the mind and will of Christ, as though he knew not where to set his foot, or hesitated about those great, important, and
glorious

glorious discoveries of the gospel, which are not mentioned slightly ; or, by the bye, occasionally ; but are plainly, clearly, and strikingly revealed, and are to be found in every part of the gospel ; so that we must depart from the known sense of words if we deny them : and we must deny and renounce the general sense and experience of all true christians, if we deny and renounce these common principles.

These doctrines a worthy young preacher is always supposed to believe and love ; and therefore whatever sense of Scripture is not agreeable to these first grand principles, has a tendency to sap and ruin the foundation of our faith, which we must either lay aside and renounce ; and that we resolutely will not do, because we have found Scripture evidence on our side ; or else we must explain every other doctrine we embrace in a full consistency with those clear self-evident or demonstrative principles.

EXAMPLE of the ANALOGY of FAITH.

Thus if we can prove by undeniable and keen arguments, “ That man is guilty before God ; and that this guilt cannot be removed but by an atonement or satisfaction made for it ; and that this atonement or divine satisfaction was really made by the obedience and death of Christ ; and that our JUSTIFICATION and right to eternal life is founded upon it : ” then whatever doctrine

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or notion tends to subvert this, is quite contrary to the analogy of faith.

OBJECTION of the SOCINIANS and others.

That which is agreeable to my faith as a Calvinist, is not a standard to the faith of other men.

We do not deny this.

But, then, that which is agreeable to my faith, is a rule by which I proceed in judging of the truth of doctrines, and in giving the sense of those Scriptures that are supposed to maintain those doctrines; so that persons must either wholly lay aside and reject these essential doctrines, or explain all others consistently with them.

ANALOGY of FAITH farther explained, as a grand
THEOREM.

The analogy of faith is the proportion that the doctrines of the gospel bear to each other, or the close connexion between all the truths of revealed religion.

It is the universal HARMONY that subsists between all the principles of christianity; so that if you destroy one, you destroy them all; and if you hold one, you are obliged to hold them all; otherwise you must incur the charge of being an absurd man, and an inconsistent preacher or writer.

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The ANALOGY of FAITH.

It is the uniform design of GOD in the whole scheme of salvation by Christ. It is the sweet consent of every part of truth to each other, the harmonious connexion of the great doctrines of grace, or the wise adjustment and concurrence of all revealed truths, to promote GOD's grand design in the salvation of men; in which the end and means are so closely connected together, that one of the truths of the gospel cannot be denied, but all the rest must follow its fate, and be likewise denied; nor one of these capital truths be held fast, but you must hold the other truths fast also.

This may be explained and exemplified thro' all the great doctrines of the gospel.

They glorify GOD to the uttermost---they humble the pride of man---they afford strong, i. e. victorious and durable consolation---they advance holiness---they are all consistent, and exempt from all absurdity.

C A N O N III.

The SCRIPTURES promote HOLINESS.

The true and genuine SENSE of all the parts of the SCRIPTURES has a direct tendency to produce and cherish VITAL HOLINESS: therefore whatever sense is put upon Scripture that has no tendency to promote practical godliness, must necessarily be false. For no doctrine is to be reckoned true

that leads to licentiousness, or indulges a man in the least immorality: nor is any inference deduced from Scripture to be considered as just, that has any tendency to impurity of morals: and consequently the ABSOLUTE NECESSITY of holiness, its connexion with salvation, and the obligations which all are under to the performance of every duty which God commands, ought to be strongly urged on the conscience: and likewise faith, which derives strength and grace from Christ, with an hope of obtaining the salvation of our souls, ought to be insisted on: all Scripture must be explained agreeable to our eternal obligations to universal holiness: and we do infinite injury to the Scriptures if we give the least countenance to immorality.

We may lay it down as an eternal AXIOM, or self-evident TRUTH,

“ That NO PRINCIPLE can come from GOD, which gives countenance to SIN; or which supposes, that a *lower* degree of obedience is required of us now, because of our incapacity to yield a perfect and sinless obedience through that depravity which attends us. To accommodate the law to our present weakness is the *worst* kind of ANTINOMIANISM; and to affirm, that we are not under the law, as a rule of action, is downright impudence and licentiousness.*

Nine

* See Mr. Brine's admirable Sermon on Diligence in Study.

II. Nine RULES of great IMPORTANCE to understand the true SENSE of SCRIPTURE, for the USE of young CHRISTIANS.

R U L E I.

Assign no irrational or absurd sense to the word of God : never fix any meaning to the Scripture which is contrary to sound reason, or is an outrage upon common sense. Right reason is of great use when it acts in a humble subserviency to revelation. Reason is of use to judge of the evidences of inspiration---to find out the literal sense of the words of Scripture---to compare one part of the Scriptures with another, in order to see their agreement on the same subjects. Reason likewise is of use to discern the force of Scripture arguments to prove any particular point, and to observe the rich imagery and striking figures of eloquence in which the Scripture abounds.

R U L E II.

When you attempt to judge of any divine subjects by reason, be sure that they are such subjects as are within the sphere of reason.

The unity and the natural and moral perfections of God are within the sphere of reason. The plurality of understanding free agents in the undivided being of God is above reason, and out of its sphere. All that reason has to do here is to receive and submit to the truth, as it is re-

vealed by a wise and faithful God; who is so wise as not to be deceived himself, and so faithful that he never will or can deceive us.

R U L E III.

Never bring any principle with you to revelation, but what is evident and clear to your reason; i. e. such self-evident principles, or eternal axioms of truth which shine bright into the understanding and penetrate the mind with evidence and force.

R U L E IV.

Submit your reason humbly to divine revelation in all truths and discoveries of God, which reason could never attain without the light of divine revelation, that God has in infinite condescension and goodness given to man.

R U L E V.

Offer no violence or outrage to the language of Scripture, nor give evasive explanations of it on such subjects as are not branches of natural religion. The Socinians are exceedingly to blame for their violent attempts to reduce all the pure and sublime discoveries of the gospel to the standard and test of their proud depraved reason.

R U L E VI.

Distinguish well between the principles of natural RELIGION and the principles of revealed

RELIGION:

RELIGION : although the former are contained in the Bible, even in their utmost perfection, as well as the latter in their brightest beauty and glory.

R U L E VII.

Observe the real intention and design of the divine writers, and take words and expressions of Scripture in their proper connexion and meaning.

R U L E VIII.

Allow every word of Scripture its obvious and proper sense; that is, the natural sense which Scripture conveys. Let this rule be firmly regarded and strictly attended to, in order to prevent the plagues of error in the church of God.

R U L E IX.

Compare the WORD of GOD with ITSELF. Collect the several parts of Scripture on the same subjects and in the same view. By this means you will have the most striking and beautiful evidence of every doctrine, blessing, and duty, revealed in the word of God, set before your eyes in the most charming and attractive light; and your views of the beauty of truth in this way will be of unspeakable use and pleasure to your soul.

III. We will now give these RULES on a larger SCALE, for the use of STUDENTS of DIVINITY, and young MINISTERS of the GOSPEL.

RULE I.

R U L E I.

Put no absurd SENSE upon the WORD of GOD: what is absurd or repugnant to reason cannot be true. Reason is a ray of light from God, the source of all intellectual light and knowledge; and, therefore, whatever discoveries reason makes, they must be just and true. It cannot be the design of revelation, to extinguish the light of nature: it requires us not to be inattentive to the dictates of our reason; much less, does it oblige us to deny any rational principles, and to believe what we certainly know must necessarily be false. Divine faith is a farther light than reason; but it is not at all contrary to it.

R U L E II.

We ought to be sure, that those subjects whereof we set ourselves to judge by reason, are within its sphere. This is absolutely necessary; for if we pretend to reason about doctrines, which are out of the compass of the light of nature, except as we are assisted by revelation, we shall argue without rules; and, consequently, our conclusions must be, at least, uncertain; if not false, and inconsistent with the nature of those sublime subjects we take into our consideration. Reason clearly discerns, that there is but one God; but it can never prove, that the personal distinction of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and their equality is inconsistent with their
essential

essential unity; which a Socinian suggests it can* : and asserts, that this doctrine is evidently repugnant to reason. But all the reason he is master of will never prove it so. A plurality of Gods is repugnant to reason; but the doctrine of the Trinity infers not a plurality of Gods, but of persons, or of free and understanding agents, in the one undivided being of GOD.

R U L E III.

Bring no principle to revelation, but what is evident to reason. Such principles there doubtless are : as, that there is one GOD.---That he is an infinitely wise, and powerful, and good being. ---That moral imperfection and sin are displeasing to him.---That man is not what he ought to be, and, consequently, that he is not now, such as GOD made him. These are self-evident principles : and it might reasonably be expected to meet with these principles, in a revelation granted to men, in case of such a favour being vouchsafed to them.

R U L E IV.

It is reasonable wholly to submit our reason, to the instruction of the word of GOD, in all articles, which that, independent of revelation, could never discover. The light of nature, is a safe and sure guide, with respect to the certainty of
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* Dr. Foster's Rules for the profitable reading the Holy Scriptures, vol. i. of Sermons, page 255, 256.

of some truths: but there are others of the greatest moment, which are absolutely out of its reach, viz. how sin might be atoned for---how a guilty creature, which has lost an interest in divine approbation, may be justified in the sight of God---how depraved man may become holy and happy. These are things of the utmost consequence. Of each of these, reason is entirely ignorant; and it must so be, because they come not within the compass of natural religion. Reason cannot doubt of the felicity of innocents; but it can never resolve whether criminals shall be happy, or in what way it will become the perfections of God, to recover them from deserved ruin. This is evident; for the light of nature cannot make discoveries of truths, that are not contained in that law, which it was under in its state of perfection; it is absurd to suppose, that it is capable of making such discoveries. And since none of these things are included in, or pointed out, by the law, reason must necessarily be totally unacquainted with either of them. Hence, it follows, that the only proper business of reason, in these points, is to consult what revelation delivers on those heads, and entirely to give up itself to the instruction of the word of God, and readily and thankfully embrace what is expressed in the holy Scriptures relating to those subjects, without the least hesitation or dispute. It is a base corruption of natural religion,

to maintain, that it is an easy thing for sinners to appease God, and a difficult matter for them to affront, i. e. offend him. It is a fundamental principle of the religion of nature, that constant obedience entitles to life, and that moral imperfection subjects to misery and death. 'Tis no rational principle, that men may transgress the law of their maker with impunity, or fail in the practice of their duty, without giving offence to the deity. And it is false, that we assert that God has consigned over any of his creatures to irremediable and endless misery, without any regard to their actions, or qualifications.

R U L E V.

Put no force upon the language of Scripture; nor endeavour to give evasive explications of it, especially on such subjects as are not branches of natural religion, under a pretence of framing rational sentiments concerning them. That is not to act the part of modest learners, in points of doctrine, wherein we certainly ought; but the part of those, who need no instruction from heaven, relating to principles that are of the greatest importance, and which we could never have acquired the least knowledge of, without a supernatural revelation. Reason ought not to dictate or object, on the peculiar doctrines
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of christianity, because it can know nothing about them, but by the writings of the Old and New Testament; and, consequently, it ought to be content only to learn, and confess its ignorance.

R U L E VI.

As revelation inculcates the principles of natural religion, and also other principles, it will, I apprehend, conduce very much to our right understanding of the Scriptures, carefully to distinguish those principles. In the former, reason may, I think, be allowed to judge concerning them: but as to the latter, its only proper business is to explain the sense of the words, expressions, and phrases of the sacred pages; for it ought to embrace that, as the true meaning of the language of Scripture, on the latter subjects, which it naturally imports. Either men, by the light of nature, independent of revelation, may acquire the knowledge of all the doctrines delivered in the Bible, or they cannot: if they cannot, then it is demonstrable, that reason hath no other rule of interpreting the language of holy writ, on those subjects, than this, which ought ever to be attended to, viz. the obvious, and natural sense it conveys. If this rule had been observed, as it is highly reasonable it should punctually be, the church of God would have
 been

been free from numerous heresies, with which, in almost all ages, she has been pestered.

R U L E VII.

Let the expressions of Scripture be considered in their connexion, and the real design of the divine writers be carefully observed. If they discourse of temporal punishment, do not apply what they say on that subject to the eternal condition of men. This error the Arminians are guilty of in discoursing on the xviiith chapter of Ezekiel: And if the holy pen-men treat of the eternal state of mankind, do not interpret what they say on that point, of the external condition of bodies and nations of men. This is a notorious mistake, which the Arminians also fall into, in the explanation, or rather perversion of the ixth chapter of the epistle to the Romans. By the former, they endeavour to establish their opinion, that it is the will of GOD, that all men should be eternally saved; whereas, the eternal salvation of none is treated of in that chapter; and therefore, all they urge from it, in favour of their sentiments, is impertinent, and foreign to the scope of the divine writer. And by the latter, they would prove, that it is the pleasure of God, to afford to some bodies of men greater external privileges, than to other nations. Whereas, it is the future state of men, that is there discoursed of; and, consequently, all their

reasoning upon that place is forced and unnatural.

R U L E VIII.

Allow every word its proper sense, and do not attempt to explain away the true meaning of a scriptural term, though you may find it used, in a lower and different sense, sometimes: as the anti-trinitarians do the term of God, when it is applied to Christ. Do not pervert the sacred Scripture in those places where the important doctrine of Christ's satisfaction is treated of, by criticising on prepositions; and think, that momentous truth is sufficiently refuted, if you can shew, that Hebrew particles, and Greek prepositions, by which the full sense of that doctrine is expressed, are used to different purposes, in some instances, and on other subjects. This sort of criticism the Socinians deal much in: they run through the Scripture, and if they can but find, that those particles and prepositions are used in a different sense on other subjects, and in other places, they will rashly insist upon it, that such a meaning, those particles and prepositions cannot have, when used on that subject. This is bold and impertinent trifling with the word of God, whatever shew of learning there is in it. This part Dr. Foster acts, in relation to the term eternal, when it is applied by the apostle Jude to the punishment inflicted on the inhabitants of Sodom

Sodom and Gomorrah; he restrains it to temporal punishment. Because, as I suppose, he can dare to charge GOD with cruelty, if he should punish criminals without end.

R U L E IX.

Compare the several parts of sacred writ together. By this means you may obtain the most convincing evidence of particular divine truths, and of the truth of revelation in general. But see well to it, when you compare one part of the Scripture with another, that the holy writers treat of the same subjects, and that they consider them in the same view. If you fail in this, you will unavoidably make them contradict one another, and run yourself into dangerous mistakes. This is a fatal error, into which the Socinians and Arminians fall, in comparing what the apostle Paul and the apostle James deliver, concerning justification. The apostle Paul treats of the matter of our acceptance with GOD, and most clearly and fully proves, that not our own works, but that the obedience of Christ, is the sole foundation of our justification, in the sight of GOD. And the apostle James shews us what faith is, which embraces that great benefit, and what are the genuine effects of that faith. The evident design of the former is to establish the doctrine of justification by faith, without our personal works: and the intention of the latter is,

is, to shew that good works certainly attend and flow from that faith, which apprehends the justifying righteousness of Christ, and that no man hath sufficient ground to conclude upon his justification, who is not the subject of such a faith.

N. B. These rules, by that great and excellent man, the Rev. Mr. John Brine, are the best of the kind I ever met with; and I do, from thirty years experience, recommend them to all my fellow-christians, and especially to students of divinity and young ministers of the gospel.

IV. CANONS, OR EXCELLENT RULES for understanding the PROPHETS of the OLD TESTAMENT, by the very learned and judicious VITRINGA; with some additions.

C A N O N I.

Take the utmost pains, and use the best means to know the true SUBJECT of the prophecy: that is, what the prophet precisely speaks of; whether of himself, or of others; of things in his own time, or of things to come; and whether he speaks properly and literally, or in a figurative manner.--- Acts viii. 34. I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

CANON II.

C A N O N I.

In omni interpretatione prophetiarum opera primo danda est, ut subjectum prophetiæ probe dignoscatur.

C A N O N II.

Attend accurately to all the CHARACTERS which are applied to that SUBJECT in the prophecy; for if the subject is not mentioned by name, it may be found out by the clear and distinct characteristics of it. Such are many of the brightest predictions concerning the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This is a sure rule.

C A N O N III.

From the *literal* SENSE never depart, if all the known and principal attributes agree with the prophecy.

C A N O N IV.

If the attributes by no means agree with the subject expressed in prophecy by its own name, we must think of another subject, or object, answerable to it; which is mystically called by this name, because of the agreement between the
type

C A N O N II.

Ut in accuratam & distinctam subjecti notitiam perveniatur, attendendum est diligentissime ad omnia attributa & characteres, quæ ad subjectum illud in prophetia applicantur.

C A N O N III.

A literalis sensu subjecti, proprio suo nomine appellati; nunquam discedendum est, si attributa omnia, vel notabiliora, subjecto prophetiæ quadrent. Canon certus, & magni usus.

C A N O N IV.

Si attributa nequaquam convenient subjecto, suo nomine in prophetia expresso: cogitandum est de subjecto alio *antitipico*, quod mystice, ob convenientiam typi & anti-typi, hoc nomine appelletur. De canonis hujus certitudine & usu nemo dubitat. Exempla sunt in Elia, Mal. iv. 5. Davide, Jer. xxx. 20. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. Salomone, Pf. lxxii. 1. Edomo, Jes. lxiii. 1.

type and anti-type. EXAMPLES of this you may see in Edom, David, and Elijah.

1. EDMOM. Ifai. lxiii. 1. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?---See Dr. Lowth on Ifaiah.

2. DAVID. Jer. xxx. 9. They shall serve the LORD their GOD, and David their king. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. I will set up one shepherd, my servant David---I will be their GOD; and my servant David, i. e. the beloved, a prince among them.---Who sees not the glorious Jesus represented here!

3. ELIJAH. Malachi iv. 5. I will send you Elijah the prophet, i. e. John the baptist, in the spirit and power of Elijah.

C A N O N V.

If the SUBJECT will bear a *literal* and a *spiritual* sense, then take in both senses. Thus you must interpret Egypt and Edom as denoting the persecuting enemies of the church. Thus you must understand BAEYLON as denoting the cruel and idolatrous church of Rome.

CANON VI.

C A N O N V.

Si in prophetiis agatur de subjecto, nomine expresso, quod tam propriam quam mysticam interpretationem sustinere potest; orationis autem prophetiæ attributa ejusmodi sint, ut eorum aliqua rectius convenient subjecto, *mystikos* sumpto, alia rectius de eo prædicentur *grammatikos*: censendum est, subjectum prophetiæ non esse simplex, sed complexum, & prophetam, a spiritu actum illuminatumque, sic esse loquentum ut de utroque intelligi voluerit, & lectorem commonescere de sensu mystico, sive allegorico, literalis sensui involuto.

C A N O N VI.

Carefully attend to the beginning and end of the prophetic sermons. This rule is of special use in the sublime discourses of *Isaiah*, which begin at the xlth chap. with *John the baptist*, and the true Godhead and personal ministry of the Lord *Jesus Christ*.

C A N O N VII.

Those beautiful and glorious predictions, which describe the more visible beginning of the time of *Christ's kingdom*, and the end of that time, commonly give a narration of the chief things of the church in a continued series or regular order.

The interpretation of *Isaiah*, from chap. liv. to

C A N O N VI.

In prophetiis continuis, quæ per titulos, sive inscriptiones, unæ ab aliis non distinguuntur, probe est attendendum tum ad initium & terminum concionum prophetiarum: tum ad epocham temporis, in qua visus prophetici scena figenda est, & terminum, in quo desinit. Prius usum præcipue habet in concionibus *Jesaiæ*; quæ caput quadragesimum libri illius sequuntur. Estque discrimen illud sæpe difficilius, & tamen magni momenti in prophetiarum interpretatione, ne tanquam continua accipiamus quæ divisa distinctaque sunt. Posterius plane necessarium est in psalmis & visis prophetarum recte exponendis, scenam enim visorum eorundem sequitur interpretatio. Sume exemplum ex *Pf. xxiv. 1. Jes. vi. 1.*

C A N O N VII.

Probabile est, prophetias illas, quarum terminus a quo manifeste demonstrat initium temporis regni *Christi*, terminus ad quem illius temporis finem, præcipua ecclesiæ fata continua serie enarrare, nisi quid obstat, quod nos ad anteriora tempora retrogradi jubeat.

to chap. lx. depends on this canon, or theological rule.

The beginning of this most sublime of all prophecies, in chap. liv. without all doubt, is to be applied to the beginning of the kingdom of Christ, under the CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION. The end of the prophecy in Isai. lx. falls upon the most flourishing state of that kingdom, in its meridian beauty, or noon-tide glory; which is to follow the conversion of the Jews, and the restoration of the afflicted Gentile church. Isai. lix. 19--21. Which glorious state of the kingdom of Christ is beautifully described through the lxth chapter.---It is very probable, therefore, that all that is intermediate, treats of the affairs of the church of Christ, which should take place between the beginning and the end of those times.

C A N O N VIII.

Some prophecies admit of resumptions and repetitions of words, and retrograde or back steps, and detached pieces belonging to former times, which are inserted for the sake of illustrating this or that part of the prophecy.

CANON IX.

C A N O N VIII.

Et tamen observandum, prophetias aliquas continui contextus subinde *epanalepseis* resumptionses, repetitiones dictorum, & retrogrados saltus, atque etiam *episodia* sive lacinias, ad superiora tempora pertinentes, quæ hujus vel illius partis prophetiæ illustrandæ causa contextui inseruntur.