

Theological Hermeneutics

An Outline for the Classroom

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Theological Hermeneutics

INTRODUCTION

§ 1.

Biblical or theological Hermeneutics (*ἡ ἐρμηνευτική, sc. τέχνη, hermeneutica, sc. ars*) is the name applied to that branch of theology in which the principles and rules are set forth by means of which we may discover the true sense of Scripture and give a correct exposition of the meaning which the Holy Spirit has laid down in the words of Scripture. The name “hermeneutics” is derived from *ἐρμηνεύειν*, to explain, expound, interpret, translate. Luke 24, 27; John 1, 38. 41. 42; 9, 7; Acts 9, 36; 1 Cor. 14, 13. Hermeneutics is a branch of exegetical theology and holds the same relation to exegesis as theory does to practise.

§ 2.

The principles and rules of interpretation must not be fixed arbitrarily. They are included in the general laws of human thought and expression. Above all, these principles and rules are based upon the *nature, form, and purpose* of Holy Writ.

NOTE 1. The Scriptures are the revelation of God set forth in human language. 2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21; 1 Cor. 2, 13; 2 Thess. 2, 15. For this reason the exegete must accept the Biblical doctrine of inspiration, of the inerrancy of Scripture, and of the divine origin of its contents. Ps. 119, 160; John 10, 35; 8, 31. 32; 17, 17.

NOTE 2. Regarding their *form*, the Scriptures are a collection of books written at different times and in various places by different authors, under divers circumstances, for various purposes, and in different languages. In their composition the laws of human speech in general and, especially, the rules of the Hebrew and Greek languages were observed; and the so-called historical circumstances connected with their origin wielded a certain influence upon the form and structure of the various books. For this reason correct Biblical exegesis must be both grammatical and historical, and the purpose of Biblical Hermeneutics is to establish principles and rules for such grammatico-historical exposition.

NOTE 3. Regarding their *purpose*, the Scriptures are a guide to our salvation. 2 Tim. 3, 15; John 5, 39; Luke 11, 28. For this reason the exposition of Scripture, for which Hermeneutics lays down the necessary rules, must be not only grammatically and historically correct, but also be truly theological and must agree with the purpose of all

theological activity. Hermeneutics is a “*habitus practicus θεόσδοτος ad sensum Sacrae Scripturae inveniendum atque aliis demonstrandum . . . ad salutem hominum Deique honorem.*” (C. G. Hofmann, *Institutiones Theologiae Exegeticae*, p. 1.) Heb. 5, 14 (ἐξίς, *habitus*, aptitude); 1 Tim. 4, 16; 2 Tim. 3, 17; 2 Cor. 2, 16; 3, 5. 6; Acts 18, 24-28; 1 Pet. 4, 11; 1 Cor. 10, 31. (Walther, *Pastoraltheologie*, p. 2; *Brosamen*, pp. 329-331.)

§ 3.

Since the Scriptures are clear in themselves and may be understood even by simple minds, the absolute necessity of Hermeneutics as a special branch of theology cannot be maintained. Ps. 19, 8. 9; Ps. 119, 105; 2 Tim. 3, 15; 2 Pet. 1, 19. (Luther, V, 334-338; XVIII, 1293. 1681-1684. 1742; X, 473.) On the other hand, Hermeneutics must not be regarded as superfluous. The study of Hermeneutics is very helpful to the theologian in his capacity of exegete, because it shows him how to go about his work systematically. Its principles help him to avoid exegetical errors; they aid him in substantiating his exposition of Scripture and in reassuring himself and others that he has proceeded correctly in expounding the Scriptures; they also serve him as a standard whereby he may test and judge the methods and results of other exegetes. Acts 18, 28; Titus 1, 19. [sic 1, 9?] (Proper use of commentaries.)

§ 4.

A theologian, however, in order to have the proper exegetical qualifications, must not be satisfied with a knowledge of the correct principles and rules of Hermeneutics. He must also have a good reasoning power, a keen judgment, a faithful memory, a knowledge of the original languages of the Bible; he should possess a certain measure of rhetorical, archeological, and historical knowledge; he must be thoroughly familiar with the doctrines contained in the divine revelation; and he must be truly enlightened by the Spirit of God and be a true Christian at heart.

NOTE 1. Luther speaks very emphatically on the necessity of a good knowledge of the Biblical languages: X, 468-475; XIX, 1336; XXII, 6. *Lehre und Wehre*, 31 (1885), 361; *Vom Schriftstudium der Theologen*; 64 (1918), 161; *Die offene Bibel*.

NOTE 2. The necessity of spiritual enlightenment through regeneration is shown in the following Bible passages: Ps. 119, 18; 2 Cor. 4, 6; 1 Cor. 2, 14; Is. 66, 2; Ps. 119, 16. 24. 35. 47. 70. 117. Cp. Luther, XVIII, 1683; VIII, 37; XIII, 1898; XIV, 434-437. (*Oratio, meditatio, tentatio faciunt theologum.*) Baier, ed. Walther, I, 169-171. (*Claritas Scripturae externa et interna; notitia literalis seu historica et notitia salutaris seu fidei.*)

PART I.

Establishing the Text. Biblical Criticism.

§ 5.

The text for the interpretation of which theological Hermeneutics must lay down principles and rules is comprised in the canonical writings of the Old and the New Testament. These writings originated during the period of the Old Covenant and in the first century of the New Covenant.

NOTE. The terms *ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη*, *ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη*, are taken from Scripture. Matt. 26, 28; 2 Cor. 3, 14. In like manner the term *κανών*, in the sense of rule, standard (not in the sense of *ordo*, *numerus*, list, catalog), is based upon Scripture. Gal. 6, 16. Already in the writings of Eusebius we find the expression *τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης γραφάς*. (*Hist. Eccles.* III, 25.) Athanasius says of the *Shepherd of Hermas*: *μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ κανόνος* (*De Decr. Syn. Nic.*; St. Louis ed., p. 33), and the Council of Laodicea, about 360, resolved (No. 59): *ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἰδιωτικοῦς ψαλμοῦς λέγεσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ οὐδὲ ἀκανόνιστα βιβλία, ἀλλὰ μόνα τὰ κανονικὰ τῆς καινῆς καὶ παλαιᾶς διαθήκης*. (Lauchert, *Die Canones der wichtigsten altkirchlichen Konzilien*, p. 78.)

§ 6.

The exegete must for this reason, first of all, endeavor to ascertain the original form of the text. (Textual criticism, verbal criticism, lower criticism.)

NOTE 1. Luther already realized the necessity of textual criticism, IX, 1086; VIII, 1719. 1849. 1852; XIV, 600; but especially in modern times this point has been emphasized and stressed.

NOTE 2. The authenticity, the integrity, and the canonicity of the Holy Scriptures, also considered a part of Biblical criticism (literary criticism, historical criticism, higher criticism), are usually treated in Biblical Introduction, or Isagogics.

§ 7.

The original manuscripts of all the books of the Bible were lost in ages long past, and none of the old copies now extant can be considered correct in every detail. Nevertheless, the sacred text has been handed down to us complete,

without any omissions, and may be found in the sources which are at hand for textual criticism.

NOTE 1. These sources are: 1) the existing manuscripts of the entire Testaments and of portions of them; 2) the ancient translations (Septuagint, Peshito, Vulgate, and others); 3) the writings of the Church Fathers containing quotations from the Scriptures, and also their other writings, from which one may draw a conclusion as to the correct form of the text. For the text of the Old Testament also the New Testament, the Targums, the Talmud, and rabbinical writings are to be considered.

NOTE 2. These sources, however, are not of equal value. The value of the manuscripts is determined largely by the following circumstances: whether they are old or of comparatively recent date, whether they belong to the better or less accurate groups, whether they were written carefully or carelessly, whether they were copied by learned or unlearned men, whether they were made from a good or from a poor copy. As to the comparative value of the translations, much depends upon whether they are literal or free; with regard to patristic quotations, whether the Church Fathers wrote Greek or Latin, whether they quoted from the written text or cited from memory, whether they used the original text or a translation, and whether their writings are of an exegetical and polemical or of a homiletical and ascetic nature.

NOTE 3. Modern conjectural criticism, which endeavors to go beyond the existing sources and undertakes to make alterations in the text by offering conjectures, cannot be justified; for, in the first place, there is sufficient source-material at hand; secondly, we must adhere to the text transmitted to us as long as it cannot positively be proved to be false. (P. Ewald changes *κτίσει*, Col. 1, 23, into *κλίσει*; R. Harris, *ἐν ᾧ*, 1 Pet. 3, 19, into *Ἐνώχ*; Klostermann, *וְהָרָא*, 1 Sam. 2, 10 into a supposed reference to the material = *Kattun*; Budde, *וְהָרָא*, Is. 52, 13, into *וְהָרָא*.)

NOTE 4. There are several thousand manuscripts of the Old Testament, the oldest of which have come down to us from the ninth and tenth centuries A. D. (Codex Prophetarum Posteriorum in Petrograd 916/17). They may be divided into two classes: 1) synagog rolls and 2) private manuscripts. The former contain — lawfully — only the Torah and were written, according to strict rules, in the usual square characters on rolls of parchment; they have neither vowels nor accents; some space, however, was allowed between each word and section. The greatest possible care was exercised in writing them, and they were very closely compared with exact copies; consequently they contain a uniform text. The private manuscripts comprise, besides the Torah, also most of the other books of the Old Testament. They, too, were written in square Hebrew characters upon parchment or paper cut into squares and folded. The later manuscripts were written in rabbinical cursive letters with decorated letters and spaces between the different books. They contain the Masora Magna and Parva and often include also a Targum and various rabbinical and critical remarks. Variations in the Old Testament text are comparatively few. (*Kethib* and *Qere*.)

NOTE 5. There are approximately 4,000 manuscripts of the New Testament and of parts of it (about 160 majuscule, or capital-letter manuscripts; about 2,290 minuscule, or small-letter manuscripts; about 1,540 lectionaries). The oldest of these were written between the fourth and tenth centuries (Codex Vaticanus, B, in the fourth century; Codex Sinaiticus; \aleph , in the fourth or fifth; Codex Alexandrinus, A, in the fifth); they are all written with uncial, or capital, letters, without either accents, aspirates, and iota subscriptum, or punctuation and division of words or sections (*scriptio continua*). The later and more numerous manuscripts are in cursive letters and contain accents, as well as marks of punctuation and division. Some of them also contain comments (*codices mixti*) or a translation (*codices bilingues*), particularly a Latin translation (*codices Graeco-Latini*); some of them were rewritten at a later date (*codices rescripti*, palimpsests, Codex Ephraemi, C). The number of variant readings in the New Testament text is very large and is usually estimated to be between 50,000 and 150,000. This, however, does not indicate that it is very difficult or perhaps even impossible to establish the text. By far the greater number of these variant readings can be traced to errors in copying. The remaining variant readings very seldom materially change the sense, whichever reading one may follow. Not a single doctrine of faith would be lost or changed even in a very small degree if one were to use the poorest manuscripts for determining the text. (Adducing variant readings when treating the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible is entirely beside the mark.)

§ 8.

The variant readings now found in the manuscripts were caused by the copyists either unintentionally or intentionally.

§ 9.

Unintentional alterations of the original text are due to the fact that copyists misread the text or failed to hear distinctly what was dictated; or they are due to slips of memory or failure to understand the text.

NOTE 1. Through superficial reading of the text it could easily happen that certain letters were mistaken for similar characters; for example, in the Hebrew כ and ס, ט and ר, ה and ח, ב and מ, י and ו, while in the Greek it was easy to confuse Α, Δ, and Α, Ο and Θ, ΙΙ, Ν, and Μ, Τ and Υ, μ, χ, and η, ρ and σ. Compare the Hebrew text in Neh. 12, 3 and note שְׁבַנְיָה instead of שְׁבַנְיָה, v. 14; 10, 4 (6); 1 Sam. 6, 18, אָבִל instead of אָבִן, vv. 14. 15; 1 Chron. 11, 27, הַהֲרִירִי instead of הַהֲרִירִי, 2 Sam. 23, 25; Judg. 7, 1. Most probably many of the variant readings with regard to numbers may be explained in the same way, since letters were used to represent numbers. 2 Chron. 22, 2: 42 (מ = 40) instead of 22 (כ = 20), 2 Kings 8, 26. 17; 2 Sam. 24, 13: 7 (ז) instead of 3 (ג), 1 Chron. 21, 12. — In the Greek text note Rom. 12, 13 *μυέλαις* instead of *χρέλαις*; 1 Tim. 3, 16 *ὄς* instead of *θεός* (in this instance we must take into consideration the abbreviation *ΘC* = *θεός* in uncial writing). Because the old manuscripts were written with uncial

letters *serie continua*, the last letter of a word may easily, by mistake, have become the first letter of the following word: 1 Thess. 2, 7, ἐγενήθημεν νήπιοι instead of ἡπιοι; or words may have been omitted or added, Luke 9, 49, ἐκβάλλοντα τὰ instead of ἐκβάλλοντα; or the letters may have been transposed, so that a word similar in spelling, but wholly different as to meaning resulted; Mark 14, 65 ἔβαλλον instead of ἔλαβον. It was easily possible for the eye to pass from the beginning or ending of words to another similar beginning or ending, in consequence of which certain parts of the text were omitted. Cp. Matt. 23, where v. 14 is missing in good manuscripts; 1 John 2, 23, where the words ὁ ὁμολογῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἔχει are read in good manuscripts, but omitted in later copies (ὁμοιόαρκτον and ὁμοιοτέλευτον).

NOTE 2. Whenever the text was dictated, mistakes were possible on account of poor enunciation on the part of the person dictating, or because the writer was careless and inexact in writing, so that certain words were interchanged with others of similar sound. Such mistakes also occurred in plain copy-work in which the copyist read the text before him and repeated the words aloud while he wrote them down. Undoubtedly also differences in pronunciation were responsible for some mistakes (etacism and itacism). 2 Sam. 17, 25, יִשְׁמַעֲלִי instead of יִשְׁרָאֵלִי, 1 Chron. 2, 17; 1 Sam. 17, 34, הַי instead of הַיָּ; 1 Sam. 2, 3, לֵא instead of לִי. In the New Testament we find that the pronouns ἡμεῖς and ὑμεῖς were interchanged or mistaken for each other in all the grammatical cases; the same is true of ο and ω, and in consequence of this fact the indicative and subjective moods were interchanged. Compare also Matt. 11, 16, where ἐταίροις is read instead of ἑτέροις; Rom. 2, 17, ἴδε instead of εἶ δέ; 1 Tim. 5, 21, πρόσκλησιν instead of πρόσκλισιν.

NOTE 3. Sometimes the copyist would read a number of words and then try to keep them in mind while he wrote them down; but occasionally words slipped from his memory, and thus mistakes ensued. This accounts for transpositions, omissions, and other mistakes that occurred especially in the listing of names and numbers; in the same way synonymous words and phrases were often transposed, as well as whole verses. 2 Sam. 15, 7, אַרְבַּעַיִם שָׁנָה instead of שְׁנַיִם אַרְבָּעִים (Septuagint and Peshito); 2 Sam. 22, 7, אֶקְרָא and Ps. 18, 7, אֶשְׁנֵעַ; Gen. 46, 20, where the Septuagint has five additional names (cf. also v. 27 according to the Septuagint and Acts 7, 14); 1 Chron. 7, 28 (6, 13) omits the name of the first-born, Joel; cp. v. 33 (18) and 1 Sam. 8, 2. In the Hebrew manuscripts הַיָּהוָה and אֱלֹהֵינוּ are sometimes interchanged, and in approximately 180 passages the Septuagint has a different name for God than is to be found in the Masoretic text. Note in the New Testament: John 16, 22, λύπην μὲν νῦν instead of νῦν μὲν λύπην; Heb. 2, 14, σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος instead of αἵματος καὶ σαρκός; Acts 20, 28, κυρίου instead of θεοῦ; 1 Pet. 3, 13, μίμηται instead of ζηλωταί; Luke 13, 31, ἡμέρα instead of ὥρα; Matt. 22, 37, εἶπεν instead of ἔφη. Interchanges were especially numerous among the prepositions (ἐκ and ἀπό, εἰς and πρὸς) and the particles (καί, μὲν, δέ, οὖν); and the article was often omitted.

NOTE 4. Errors of intellect appear in the incorrect parting or joining of words following one another, which easily happened in *scriptio continua*. Such errors

also occur wherever abbreviations and letters denoting numerals were incorrectly understood and interpreted; explanatory remarks and glosses on the margin of the text were sometimes taken into the body of the text; also introductory words from the lectionaries. Note Ezek. 42, 9, ךְּׁׁׁׁׁׁׁ, where ךְּ should be taken as the article belonging to the following word; Ps. 31, 7, יִתְאַשׁ instead of יִתְאַשׁ (י = יְיָ); Phil. 1, 1, *συνεπισκόποις* instead of *σὺν ἐπισκόποις*; Gal. 1, 9, *προείρηκα μὲν* instead of *προειρήκαμεν*; Rom. 12, 11, *καιρῶ* instead of *κυρίῳ* (κ = *καί*, κρω, κσ = *κύριος*, κρω); 1 Tim. 3, 16, *ὅς* instead of *θεός* (ΘC = *θεός*); 2 Sam. 24, 13: 7 (י) instead of 3 (ג), 1 Chron. 21, 12. Ezek. 46, 22, תִּשְׁׁׁׁׁׁׁ very likely is a gloss; the same is probably true of Rom. 8, 28, *ὁ θεός*, while Luke 7, 31, *εἶπε δὲ ὁ κύριος*, is an introductory phrase. By some mistake of a copyist we read יְיָ שִׁׁ instead of יְיָ in 2 Sam. 23, 20.

NOTE 5. Some variant readings are of such a nature that several explanations regarding their origin are possible (1 Tim. 3, 16, *ὅς* instead of *θεός*, either an error due to careless reading or an error of intellect). As a general rule, therefore, such readings whose origin may be accounted for in one or the other way are to give place to readings whose origin it is hard or well-nigh impossible to explain. (*Lectio difficilior vulgatori praeferatur.*)

§ 10.

Intentional changes of the text in the manuscripts of the Old Testament can be proved in but very few cases. In the manuscripts of the New Testament, however, variant readings may often be found which aim either to correct the language, or to elucidate and embellish it, to improve the orthography, to eliminate historical and harmonistic difficulties and dogmatic objections, or to solve seeming contradictions.

NOTE 1. As examples of linguistic corrections note: Rev. 4, 1, *λέγουσα* instead of *λέγων*; Mark 12, 23, where *ὅταν ἀναστῶσι* was omitted; Luke 1, 64, where *ἐλύθη* was added; Matt. 15, 32, *ἡμέρας* instead of *ἡμέραι*.

NOTE 2. Corrections in orthography are found especially in proper nouns; Matt. 4, 13, *Ναζαρά*, *Ναζαράθ*, *Ναζαρέτ*, *Ναζαρέθ*; *Καφαρναούμ*, *Καπερναούμ*. Note also Phil. 4, 15, *λήψεως*, and *λήμψεως*; Matt. 25, 36, *ἦλθατε* and *ἦλθετε*.

NOTE 3. Historical criticism is apparent in Matt. 27, 9, where *Ἱερεμίου* was either omitted or *Ζαχαρίου* substituted; Mark 1, 2, *τοῖς προφήταις* instead of *Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ*.

NOTE 4. The aim of harmonizing certain passages with others led to intentional changes. In some manuscripts *τρίτη* is read for *ἕκτη*, John 19, 14, because of Mark 15, 25, and *vice versa*. Mark 16, 9-20 was omitted because of chap. 14, 28; 16, 7; Matt. 28, 16; John 20, 19. In 1 Cor. 11, 24, *λάβετε, φάγετε* was added because of Matt. 26, 26; Mark 14, 22.

NOTE 5. Supposed dogmatic difficulties were the cause of textual changes. Compare Luke 2, 33, where Ἰωσήφ replaces ὁ πατήρ; John 7, 39, where δεδομένοι or ἐπ' αὐτοῖς was added to οὕτω ἦν πνεῦμα.

NOTE 6. Efforts were made to avoid seeming contradictions in Matt. 23, 35 by omitting *υἱοῦ Βαραχίου*, cp. 2 Chron. 24, 20; while in John 7, 8 οὐκ was changed to οὕτω.

NOTE 7. Because of the manifest intention of some copyists to change the text for this or that reason, the rule has been established to give preference to such readings as offer linguistic difficulties and exegetical problems over against the easier readings. Discretion, however, must be used in following this rule, and it should not be applied to nonsensical errors in writing or to impossible words and constructions. Luke 3, 33, Ἰαδμεῖν τοῦ Ἰαριεῖ instead of Ἰαριεῖ; Eph. 1, 1, τοῖς οὐσίς without any designation of place (*Proclivi scriptioni praestat ardua. — Brevior lectio praeferenda est verbosiori.*)

PART II.

The Interpretation of the Text. Biblical Hermeneutics.

§ 11.

The Holy Scriptures were recorded in human language, and all Biblical books have come down to us in the languages in which they were originally written. For this reason the exegete, in order to be able properly to expound the Biblical text, should have a full knowledge of the original languages of both the Old and the New Testament.

§ 12.

For a full understanding of any language, and hence also of the original languages of the Bible, it is necessary to know what the words of that language mean, and, furthermore, to understand the manner in which these words are placed together and connected with each other in sentences. (Substance and form of speech. Correct use of both lexicon and grammar.)

§ 13.

Every word has an original etymological meaning and a meaning in actual popular usage (*usus loquendi*). The etymological meaning may either have been retained in popular usage, or it may have been lost.

§ 14.

The *etymological meaning* and the *usus loquendi* of a word may be identical, or they may merely hold some relation to each other, either close or distant.

§ 15.

Knowledge of the original meaning of words, according to their etymology, very often is of practical value to the exegete; however, his first and chief aim should be to understand the meaning of words according to the *usus loquendi*, because in interpreting Scripture he always deals with words as they were actually used to convey a certain sense.

NOTE. It is of practical value to know the etymology of a word in *hapaxlegomena* (Ψ יִלְהָ, Gen. 49, 10; *ἐπιούσιος*, Matt. 6, 11; Luke 11, 3), and whenever etymology has influenced the common usage of any word. Oftentimes, too, etymology will show what viewpoint a certain idea is excellently expressed by a given word (*πίστις*, Heb. 11, 1), or it will make clear why a certain word was chosen from several synonymous expressions (*δοῦλος*, *διάκονος*, *ὑπηρέτης*). It cannot, however, be maintained that in all cases the original meaning as established by etymology had any bearing upon the choice of a certain word; cf. *διάκονοι*, *ὑπηρεῖται*, 1 Cor. 3, 5; 4, 1. And there are many cases where a knowledge of the etymological sense will not aid in getting a deeper insight into the meaning of the words; cf. *πατήρ*, Rom. 4, 16; *τέκνα*, Eph. 2, 3.

§ 16.

The exegete must cling to that meaning which a word most generally carried in common usage (*significatus communis sive vulgaris, usus generalis*) unless there are sufficient reasons to compel him to accept some other meaning; for it is evident *a priori* that the speaker or writer would use his words in that

sense in which those to whom he speaks or writes are accustomed to use them. (*Apology*, p. 282 § 9. Luther, XVIII, 1820-1823; XIX, 1312-1315; XX, 249. 910; III, 20, 21.)

NOTE. A distinction should be made between *usus generalis* in the wider and narrower sense. *Usus generalis* in the wider sense is the common use which has been made of a word in any language at all times and in all countries; *usus generalis* in the narrower sense is that use which was made of a word at a certain time or in a certain country or district. (Classical and Hellenistic Greek.)

§ 17.

A special meaning of a word, differing from the *usus generalis*, is often found in certain circles or with certain classes of men (*usus specialis*). Accordingly we may take it for granted that writers who belonged to such circles or classes of men, or who wrote for readers affiliated with them, employed certain words in such an *usus specialis*. Only for sufficient reasons we may deviate from this rule.

NOTE 1. Such an *usus specialis* is found in New Testament Greek on account of the Hebrew influence upon the language (Hebraisms): Gal. 2, 6, *πρόσωπον λαμβάνειν*; Matt. 2, 20, *ζητεῖν τὴν ψυχὴν*; *προστιθέναι cum inf.*, Luke 20, 11. 12; *καὶ ἐγένετο . . . καί*, Luke 8, 1.

NOTE 2. Such an *usus specialis* is also found in words that refer to a certain science, art, or calling, etc., and which have therefore taken on a peculiar meaning: 3 John 13, *κάλαμος, μέλαν*; Eph. 6, 14, *θώραξ*; Luke 2, 1, *ἀπογράφεσθαι*; Rom. 3, 25, *ἰλαστήριον*.

§ 18.

Frequently we find that a writer employs, or a certain book of a writer contains, words altogether or preponderantly in a certain sense, different from the *usus communis*. In the exposition of such a writing we must therefore take into consideration such an *usus specialis* and not deviate from such peculiar use of words, unless the context or some other standard hermeneutical rule argues against its acceptance.

NOTE 1. In the New Testament some words obtained such a new *usus loquendi* because the inspired writers often had to designate such things as had never before been stated either in the classical writings of the Greeks or in the Septuagint (“*sprachbildende Kraft des Christentums*”; Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutik und Kritik*,

p. 68). As examples we may point out the following: *εὐαγγέλιον*, *ἀπόστολος*, *ἐκκλησία* (*usus communis*, however, in Acts 19, 39), *βαπτίζειν* (*usus communis*, Mark 7, 4), *ἡ γραφή*, *οἱ ἐκλεκτοί*, *σάρξ*, *ὁ κύριος*. Cremer, *Biblisches-theologisches Woerterbuch der neutestamentlichen Graezitaet*; v. Zezschwitz, *Profangraezitaet und biblischer Sprachgeist*.

NOTE 2. In order to ascertain the *usus loquendi specialis* of words in the Holy Scriptures or in any single work of a Biblical author, it is necessary for the exegete, first of all, carefully to consider the book which he is investigating; in addition to this he should give careful study to other books by the same author, especially to those whose contents are in any way related to the one in question; then he should carefully examine all the other Biblical books that were written in the same language, and, finally, the Biblical books in general, in order to be able, by comparing all the various passages where a certain word occurs, to determine the sense of such word. Note the use which John makes of the word *λόγος*, John 1, 1. 14; 1 John 1, 1; Rev. 19, 13. Also note the different use of the word *πίστις*, Rom. 3, 28; Titus 2, 10; of *χάρις*, Rom. 11, 6; 6, 17. (The use of concordances.)

§ 19.

The sense of a certain word may also vary in this respect, that it may be used either in a narrower or in a wider sense. Cf. *γῆ*, Matt. 9, 31; 6, 10; *ἄγγελος*, Luke 1, 11; Matt. 11, 10; *ἀδελφός*, Matt. 10, 2; 12, 46; 5, 47; 18, 15; *νόμος*, Rom. 3, 20; Acts 25, 8; Rom. 3, 27.

§ 20.

Furthermore, a word may be used either in its real meaning, or it may be used figuratively.

NOTE 1. Examples of metaphors may be found in Luke 13, 32 and 1 Pet. 2, 5. In explaining such metaphorical expressions, the exegete must, on the one hand, correctly understand the point of comparison, and, on the other hand, he should not carry the comparison beyond the point of comparison. *Ne tropus ultra tertium!* Cp. Rev. 5, 5 and 1 Pet. 5, 8.

NOTE 2. The rule: *Ne tropus ultra tertium!* also applies to the extended metaphor, or parable. Not all the details in a parable are to be explained. Luke 8, 4-15; Matt. 20, 1-16. (Luther, XI, 510.)

NOTE 3. As examples of metonymy compare Luke 2, 30 (*effectus pro efficiente*); Acts 2, 11 (*causa pro effectu*); Luke 22, 20 (*continens pro contento*).

NOTE 4. Examples of synecdoche are found in John 19, 42 (*totum pro parte*); John 1:14 (*pars pro toto*); Rom. 11, 7 (*abstractum pro concreto*).

NOTE 5. A special and peculiar kind of tropes are the anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms of Holy Scripture, that is, figures of speech in which parts of the human body and properties and functions of the human soul are attributed to God. Examples may be found in the following passages: Ps. 8, 4; 18, 16; 34, 16; 104, 2, 29, 30; Is. 30, 30; 49:16; Nah. 1, 3; Deut. 26, 15. — Gen. 6, 6 (1 Sam. 15, 29); Gen. 18, 21; 8, 1; Ps. 13, 2. — Gen. 8, 21; 19, 22; Ps. 104, 32; Jer. 31, 26.

§ 21.

In the same manner as the meaning of a word may vary according as it is used in a wider or in a narrower sense (§ 19), it may have a different meaning also when employed in a tropical sense. Compare *σάρξ* in Luke 24, 39; Rom. 2, 28; John 1, 14; 3, 6. A word used only as copula must never be given a figurative meaning. (Luther, XX, 904-910. 985-992.)

§ 22.

Every word in the Holy Scriptures can have only one intended meaning in any one place and in any one relation. *Sensus literalis unus est.*

NOTE 1. This fundamental rule is based upon Scripture itself. If any particular word should allow of various meanings with the same right, we would be prevented from establishing the real and true sense of the word. This would be, not the right use, but a misuse of language. The very origin and purpose of Scripture, however, forbid any such possibility. 2 Tim. 3, 15-17; Ps. 19, 8, 9. (Luther, XVIII, 1307 f.; IV, 1304-1307; XX, 850.)

NOTE 2. This principle holds good also in such cases where the one true sense is expressed less clearly, where the expounder may not be able to give the intended sense with absolute certainty, and where also orthodox exegetes may voice various opinions (*cruces interpretum*); for example, Gal. 3, 20; 1 Cor. 15, 29; Eph. 4, 9. Cf. *Theological Quarterly*, VI, 110: "Variant Interpretations."

NOTE 3. No disagreement with this principle is implied in passages in which a certain word occurs only once, but which is to be referred to two or three words, in consequence of which a different meaning results from each relation. Cf. Joel 2, 13: "rend."

NOTE 4. This principle does not exclude the fact that one and the same passage may be differently *applied*. This implies not a double sense of the words, but it permits the *one* sense to be applied to different persons, circumstances, and conditions. Gal. 6, 7; 1 Cor. 2, 9; 1, 8.

NOTE 5. The so-called *sensus mysticus* or *allegoricus* of a passage is also to be considered as such an *application*. This allegorical sense is not a second sense of the words, but a second meaning of the contents of the words. Gal. 4, 21-31 (*ἀλληγορέω*, allegory, v. 24: *aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendo*, Quintilian). Scripture alone can indicate where an allegory is to be accepted. (Origen and the allegorists of the ancient and medieval Church; fourfold sense of Scripture:

*Litera gesta docet; quid credas allegoria;
Moralis, quid agas; quo tendas, anagogia.)*

(Cf. Luther, IV, 1304-1307; I, 610-627. 950; XXII, 1343 f.; III, 152 f. 1389-1391; XVIII, 1303; IX, 565-569; VIII, 1540-1545.)

§ 23.

Unless there are cogent reasons to the contrary, the exegete must take it for granted that the author has used his words according to their real meaning, and that he wishes to have them so understood.

NOTE 1. The literal meaning (*sensus literae*) of a word should therefore in all cases be accepted as the intended sense (*sensus literalis*), unless sufficient reasons prompt us to accept a trope. (Luther, XVIII, 1820-1823; XX, 249. 910; III, 21; XIX, 1312-1315; XXII, 1345.)

NOTE 2. However, if there are valid exegetical reasons for departing from the literal meaning of words, the exegete should not hesitate to do so, instead of clinging to the *sensus literae*. 1 Cor. 3, 13-15; Matt. 19, 12; 16, 6. 12.

§ 24.

In establishing the *sensus literalis*, it may be necessary to abandon the *sensus literae* because of the *usus loquendi generalis* (§ 16), or the *usus specialis* (§§ 17, 18), or on account of the context (§§ 25-27), or on the presumption that the author surely would not have contradicted himself (§ 28), or, finally, because of an “article of faith” (§ 36). (Cf. Luther, § 23, NOTE 1.)

NOTE. Sometimes a tropical meaning is connected even with the *usus communis* of a word; cf. *παράπτωμα*, Gal. 6, 1. But this is especially true of the *usus specialis*; cf. *οἰκοδομή*, 1 Cor. 14, 5; *ἀκαθαρσία*, 1 Thess. 4, 7.

§ 25.

We may speak of a close or more distant context, as well as of a context preceding or following a particular passage of Scripture.

NOTE 1. The close, or direct, context of a word consists of those parts of speech which have syntactical connection with the word in question. The more distant, or indirect, context consists of those parts of speech which show a logical connection only with the part comprising the direct, or immediate, context. By its very nature the immediate context, as a general rule, takes precedence of the indirect relation, and the same is true regarding the preceding and the following context.

NOTE 2. The divisions of chapters and verses commonly used in Bible editions, also the punctuation usually employed, cannot act as decisive factors in the judging of any context; indeed, in a number of cases they are positively wrong. Is. 52, 13-15 (belongs to chapter 53); 1 Cor. 14, 33b (belongs to verse 34); Luke 23, 43 (a comma should be placed after σοι instead of after σήμερον).

§ 26.

Every exposition of a word or of an entire passage must agree with the context. (Luther, VIII, 380 f.)

§ 27.

In considering the context, it is necessary to give careful attention to the rules of grammar, that is to say, to the manner in which the words are connected with, or related to, each other. No interpretation is to be accepted which does not agree with the established rules of grammar.

NOTE 1. Wherever various relations and connections of words are possible, both from a grammatical and a logical viewpoint, the nearer reference should, as a general rule, be given the preference rather than the more distant reference, because the closer connection of the words naturally corresponds with the closer connection of the author's thoughts. For example, note the various ways in which *πάσιν ἀνθρώποις* can be construed in Titus 2, 11.

NOTE 2. A study of the particles is of special importance in determining the relation certain parts of a sentence bear to each other.

NOTE 3. The context often shows which parts of his discourse the author wishes to have emphasized. Means for such emphasis are: deviation from the usual and common sequence of words, John 3, 16 (*οὕτως*); repetition of the same or of similar terms or expressions, Gal. 1, 8, 9; insertion of pronouns even in such passages where the discourse would be intelligible without such insertion, Deut. 18, 19; John 1, 50; redundancy of words expressing the same thought, 1 Pet. 1, 4.

§ 28.

The complete agreement of Scripture with itself must be accepted *a priori* as a basis in its interpretation. This claim must under no circumstances be surrendered, because the divine origin of the Scriptures makes impossible any inconsistency of thought or speech, any contradiction, or even the smallest error. 2 Tim. 3, 16; 2 Pet. 1, 21; 1 Cor. 2, 13; Ps. 119, 160; John 10, 35. Another point that must not be lost sight of in this connection is the fact that the Scriptures would not be suited to be the source and rule of all doctrine if we could not *a priori* assume their inerrancy and perfect harmony. 2 Tim. 3, 15-17; Ps. 19, 8-10. (Luther, XV, 1481; XIX, 1073; XX, 798; IX, 356; VI, 177.)

NOTE. For this reason it is absolutely wrong to state that a real contradiction* does, or even may, occur in the Holy Scriptures. However, there may be some so-called seeming contradictions (*ἐναντιοφαινόμενα*) which occasionally baffle the exegete, who, perhaps, for the time being, cannot, without further study, solve the difficulty; or they may even be of such a nature that he will never understand them, not until he enters eternal life, 1 Cor. 13, 9. 10. (Luther, XVI, 2185; VI, 873; II, 1978.) In order to solve such seeming contradictions, it is necessary, first of all, closely to consider the original text, the context, and parallel passages. Cf. 1 Cor. 10, 8 and Num. 25, 9 (v. 4); Matt. 27, 9 and Zech. 11, 12. 13 (Jer. 32, 6-15); note also § 10, NOTE 3; 1 John 1, 8 and 3, 9; Gen. 47, 31 and Heb. 11, 21; Acts 9, 7 and 22, 9 and 26, 14; Luke 24, 4 and John 20, 12; Mark 16, 5; Matt. 28, 2. 5. (*Lehre und Wehre*, 39, 33: "Angebliche Widersprüche in der Schrift." Nineteenth Report of the Synodical Conference, 1902, p. 5.)

§ 29.

The inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures carries with it absolute assurance of the fact that all passages from both the Old and the New Testament which deal with the same matter, and to the extent in which they treat of the same matter, must be considered as being in full agreement with one another — *analogia* (the correct relation, agreement) *Scripturae parallelismus realis*. Any exposition of a passage, therefore, which does not agree with all its parallels is untenable.

NOTE 1. A distinction is to be made between *parallelismus verbalis* and *realis*. A verbal parallelism is said to exist between two or more passages if the identical

* Aristotle, *Metaphys.*, 4, 3: *Τὸ αὐτὸ ἅμα ὑπάρχειν τε καὶ μὴ ὑπάρχειν ἀδύνατον τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐτό.*

expressions occur either in the same or in a different sense. Rev. 1, 18 and 5, 13; Ex. 15, 18 and 21, 6. A real parallelism is said to exist if two or more passages of Scripture treat of the same matter either in identical or in different terms and words. Eph. 1, 7 and Col. 1, 14; Luke 21, 33 and 1 Pet. 1, 25.

NOTE 2. This *analogia Scripturae* is founded upon the fact, previously stated, that the Holy Ghost, who is the Author of the whole Bible, can neither err nor contradict Himself. For the same reason also this rule holds true, that one can show proof, or argue, from a real parallelism. *Parallelismus realis est argumentativus*. Compare Gen. 32, 24 with Hos. 12, 4; Ex. 3, 2 with Matt. 22, 31; Is. 6, 1 with John 12, 37. 41. It should, however, be noted that the cross-references to parallel passages as we find them in our Bible editions are not always reliable.

§ 30.

This *analogia Scripturae*, however, does not imply that the Scriptures speak in the same plain and complete way of a certain matter in all passages treating of the matter. In view of this fact the general rule results that we must consider the less clear or plain passages in the light of the clearer passages, which method of procedure must never be reversed. *Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur*. (*Apology*, p. 396, § 35. Luther, v, 334-338; xx, 327. 856; III, 1386; XI, 2335; XVIII, 1293.) All doctrines of faith and all rules of life are revealed in clear terms. (*Formula of Concord*, p. 988, § 50. Luther, XVIII, 1742.)

NOTE 1. In accordance with this general rule we must expound the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament, the New Testament being the clearer portion of Holy Writ.

*Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet,
Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet.*

(Luther, III, 1882. 1884.)

NOTE 2. In like manner figurative passages or metaphorical expressions touching upon a certain matter must be expounded in the light of such passages as speak of the same matter plainly and in proper terms. Compare Rev. 20 with Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 17, 21; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4; 2 Thess. 2.

§ 31.

Every doctrine of Holy Scripture is set forth at some place or other very clearly, in proper terms, as the main theme of the discourse (*sedes doctrinae, loci classici, dicta probantia*). In all such cases the principles laid down in § 30 apply.

All passages dealing with a certain doctrine are to be understood and expounded according to the *sedes doctrinae*. Compare Matt. 20, 1-16; 22, 1-14, and Eph. 1, 3-6; Rom. 8, 28-30; Acts 13, 48; 2 Thess. 2, 13. 14. (*Formula of Concord*, pp. 986-990. Luther, XX, 23.)

§ 32.

Special care should be exercised by the exegete lest he make improper use of a verbal parallelism, or regard a passage as a true parallelism where this is not the case.

NOTE 1. An improper use of verbal parallelism is made when the Bible student accepts a certain word in one passage in the same sense which it has in some other passage. Compare Is. 44, 3 with John 3, 5, Gal. 3, 16 and v. 29. The context must always be carefully noted whenever parallel passages are to be considered. (Luther, XX, 281. 783; XIX, 1317.)

NOTE 2. Simply because of the recurrence of identical or similar sentences two passages cannot with certainty be termed a *parallelismus realis*. Cf. Hos. 10, 8; Luke 23, 30; Rev. 6, 16. — Matt. 10, 24; Luke 6, 40; John 13, 16. — Rom. 3 and 4; Gal. 2 and 3 and Jas. 2, 14-26. (See *Apology*, pp. 188-192; *Formula of Concord*, p. 930. — Matt. 5, 32; 19, 9; Mark 10, 11. 12; Luke 16, 18 and 1 Cor. 7, 10-15. Luther, VIII, 1056-1058.)

NOTE 3. It is especially important that we distinguish between real and seeming parallel passages in the exposition of shorter historical accounts, and in harmonizing them with passages that are, or are not, parallel. Cf. Matt. 21, 12. 13; Mark 11, 11. 15-17; Luke 19, 45. 46 and John 2, 14-16. — Matt. 5-7 and Luke 6, 20-49. (The use of good harmonies of the gospels.)

NOTE 4. A *parallelismus realis* can be safely established only when Scripture itself testifies to that effect. For this reason it cannot be fully ascertained in some instances whether we have a real parallelism or not. Cf. Matt. 26, 6-13; Mark 14, 3-9 and John 12, 1-8, or even Luke 7, 36-50.

§ 33.

A *parallelismus realis* indubitably exists in Holy Writ 1) between a parable and its explanation; 2) between a historical account and a reference made to it; 3) between a prophecy and an account of its fulfilment; 4) between a quotation and the passage quoted.

NOTE. As examples of the first class note the following: Matt. 13, 24-30 and vv. 36-43; Luke 8, 4-8 and vv. 9-15; as examples of the second class: 1 Sam. 21, 6 and Matt. 12, 1-8; Gen. 15, 6; 17, 10, and Rom. 4, 9-12; Ex. 3, 6 and Luke 20, 37, 38.

§ 34.

There is a close connection between the Old Testament prophecies and their fulfilment in the New Testament. This relation has been fixed by God Himself, and therefore no one has a right to change it or to ignore it. (Luther, XIII, 1760. 1861.) The same relation exists also between the prophecies and the inspired account of their fulfilment. For this reason the Christian exegete must always keep in mind that the divine record of the fulfilment of the prophecies plainly shows how God's foreordained plan has been carried out, and that the account of such fulfilment clearly points the way in which he must understand and expound the prophecies. Compare Hos. 11, 1 with Matt. 2, 15; Jer. 31, 15 with Matt. 2, 17 [sic also v. 18]; Is. 11, 1 with Matt. 2, 23 (John 1, 46); Num. 21, 8, 9 with John 3, 14, 15; Gen. 22, 18 with Gal. 3, 16; Ps. 41, 10 [sic 9?] with John 13, 18. (Luther: *Von den letzten Worten Davids*, III, 1880. *Lehre und Wehre*, 30, 42: "Weissagung und Erfuellung.") — Besides, the following rules must be observed: —

1. In the exposition of a prophetic verse or any passage of the Old Testament it is imperative closely to search the New Testament for a passage which is expressly recorded as the fulfilment of this particular prophecy. If the exegete finds its fulfilment thus recorded, then he need investigate no further, but may rest assured that he has obtained the absolutely correct sense of the passage and even the meaning of each particular word. Compare Is. 7, 14 with Matt. 1, 22, 23 and, in connection with this, Luther, XIII, 668; XX, 1802; Micah 5, 1 [sic 5, 2] with Matt. 2, 5, 6. The usual parallel references given in the common editions of the Bible are very helpful aids in this work; however, independent investigation should always be made.

2) In case no passage can be found in which a particular prophecy is expressly recorded as having been fulfilled, an investigation should be made to find out whether in a particular person or a particular event all the essential parts of the prophecy are found to have been fulfilled. If this is the case, the exegete is justified in considering the two passages as being related to each other, especially if no other historical person or event shows all the details of the respective prophecy. Compare Dan. 11, 36-39; 12, 1 with 2 Thess. 2, 3, 4; 1 Tim. 4, 1-3; Matt. 24, 15, 21, 22 (Dan. 7, 25; 9, 27; 12, 7, 11; Rev. 11, 2, 3; 12, 6, 14) and in

connection with this also the *Apology*, p. 234, § 24; 319 §§ 19-21; 370, § 25; 398, §§ 44-47.

3) A prophecy pointing directly to the New Testament is found where reference is made in the Old Testament to the discontinuation of the Levitic form of worship and to the abolition of the Old Covenant (compare Jer. 31, 31-34 with Heb. 8, 6-13); also where it says that many heathen will participate in the salvation of Israel; or where a glorious reconstruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah is announced. Compare Is. 11, 10-12 with Rom. 15, 9. 12; Amos 9, 11. 12 with Acts 15, 14-17. (Against Chiliasm.) (Luther, XIV, 47. 49.)

4) The prophets of the Old Testament often speak of the blessedness of Christ's kingdom, both the Kingdom of Grace and the Kingdom of Glory, in terms that seem to refer to temporal blessedness and earthly glory; but such statements are to be considered and expounded as relating to spiritual blessedness. Note Is. 2, 2-5; 11, 6-9; 60, 17-20; Joel 3, 18; Amos 9, 13. 14; Micah 4, 1-5 and also Luke 17, 20; John 18, 36. (Against Chiliasm.)

5) Messianic prophecies occurring very abruptly in historical narratives should not confuse the exegete and keep him from gaining the true intended sense. Note the verses preceding and following Is. 7, 14; Micah 2, 12. 13; see also Luther, XIV, 1025f. Another common error of exegetes with regard to Messianic prophecies must be avoided; he must insist that these prophecies may have only *one* meaning, not two or more. Direct Messianic interpretation over against the so-called typical interpretation. Compare the modern exposition of 2 Sam. 7, 12-16; Ps. 22 (Luther, XII, 169-171.)

§ 35.

Regarding quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament, it must not be overlooked that such quotations are by no means all reproduced *verbatim*, as is the case with Lev. 18, 5 in Rom. 10, 5; Ps. 32, 1. 2 in Rom. 4, 7. 8; on the contrary, they are often rendered very freely and with great variation. Such modification in form, however, does not stand as an argument against the doctrine of verbal inspiration, but rather confirms it. The only correct explanation is that the Holy Spirit, who is the Author of the entire Holy Scriptures, quotes from His own writings.

NOTE. In some cases the Old Testament text has been amplified, as may be seen from a comparison of Luke 4, 18 and Is. 61, 1. In other instances it has been

condensed; compare Matt. 4, 15 with Is. 9, 1. Sometimes the sentences are rearranged; compare Rom. 9, 25 with Hos. 1, 10; 2, 23. Or two passages are combined into one, but the name of only one of the two authors is mentioned; compare Matt. 27, 9. 10 with Zech. 11, 12. 13 and Jer. 32, 6-15; Mark 1, 2. 3 with Mal. 3, 1 and Is. 40, 3. Occasionally passages are quoted correctly *ad sensum*, though the words say the very opposite; compare Matt. 2, 6 with Micah 5, 2. In many quotations simply the translation of the Septuagint is retained; compare Rom. 4, 7. 8 with Ps. 32, 1. 2; Rom. 10, 5 with Lev. 18, 5. This practise is followed even in such passages where the Septuagint has not rendered an exact translation, but where the intended sense was retained; compare Luke 3, 6 with Is. 40, 5 (52, 10); Heb. 10, 5 with Ps. 40, 7. However, where the latter is not the case, the quotation is given in an exact translation from the Hebrew text; compare Matt. 2, 15 with Hos. 11, 1; Rom. 11, 35 with Job 41, 2. Time and again, however, the Holy Ghost has not bound Himself to the wording of either the Septuagint or the original text, but has alluded in a free way to a passage of the Old Testament; compare Eph. 5, 14 with Is. 60, 1; or He has simply given a free rendering of a Scriptural truth; compare John 7, 38 with Is. 58, 11; 44, 3; 55, 1. Or He has used words of the Old Testament, but given them a new sense; compare Rom. 10, 6-8 with Deut. 30, 11-14 (Luther, III, 1613); 1 Cor. 14, 21 with Is. 28, 11. 12 (Luther, XI, 12; XIII, 2073). *Lehre und Wehre*, 32, 77: “Die Form der alttestamentlichen Zitate im Neuen Testament.”

§ 36.

The divine inspiration of the entire Holy Bible, as a matter of course, implies that all parts of the Scripture are in harmony with each other. An exposition, therefore, which does not agree with any doctrine clearly revealed in its *sedibus doctrinae* cannot be regarded as tenable. No exposition must contradict the so-called *analogia fidei*, that is, the “certain and clear passages of Scripture.” (*Apology*, p. 440, § 60.)

NOTE 1. Our old theologians understood Rom. 12, 6 to mean that all prophecy must agree with the creed (*κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*; *ἀναλογία* = a correct relation, agreement; *πίστις* = *fides, quae creditur*); but this is not to be understood as meaning that the theologian must first formulate a harmonizing whole or a system from the single doctrines of Scriptures which must not be violated by any exposition. (Cf. *Lehre und Wehre*, 49, 321: “*Gebrauch und Missbrauch der Analogie des Glaubens*”; 50, 405: “*Ueber die Analogie oder Regel des Glaubens*”; 52, 481: “*Schriftauslegung und Analogie des Glaubens*.” *Theological Quarterly*, XII, 193: “The Analogy of Faith and Rom. 12, 6.”)

NOTE 2. Wherever the *analogia fidei*, an “expressed article of faith,” calls for it, the exegete must abandon the *sensus literae* in establishing the *sensus literalis*. Gen. 6, 6; 11, 5; Ps. 119, 73; Is. 11, 6-9. (Luther, XX, 213 f.)

NOTE 3. The fundamental principle of insisting upon the “clear Scriptures” in the *sedibus doctrinae* is a weapon by which we may expose the exegetical fallacies of

false teachers; for example, of the Romanists with reference to Jas. 2, 14-26; of the Reformed with reference to John 6, 51-63; of the Chiliasts with reference to Rev. 20.

NOTE 4. The principle of insisting upon the *analogia fidei*, however, must never be turned against itself. If in any passage of Holy Writ a doctrine is clearly and plainly set forth as in its *sedibus doctrinae*, we must not change the meaning of that passage nor the doctrine contained therein because our human reason cannot harmonize such doctrine with a doctrine revealed just as clearly and plainly in other passages of Scripture as in its *sedibus*. On the contrary, the student of Scripture should leave both doctrines just as they have been revealed in their separate *sedibus* and in humble, childlike faith accept both. 1 Cor. 13, 9. (*Formula of Concord*, p. 1080, § 53; Luther, XII, 1484; *Lehre und Wehre*, 26, 257: “Was soll ein Christ tun, wenn er findet, dass zwei Lehren, die sich zu widersprechen scheinen, beiderseits klar und deutlich in der Schrift gelehrt werden?” 51, 9: “Die Verteidigung falscher Lehre zieht die Faelschung des Schriftprinzips nach sich.” — Compare the following doctrines: that Christ has a truly human body, and that He is bodily present in the Sacrament everywhere; the unity of the divine essence and the three divine persons; the *gratia universalis* and the *electio particularis*; that man is saved through the grace of God alone, but that, on the other hand, if any man is lost, it is entirely his own fault.

§ 37.

Also those truths must be considered as giving the true sense of a certain Scripture-passage which are gained by proper conclusions made from such passage and, therefore, are actually contained in it. Compare Ex. 3, 6 with Matt. 22, 29-32; Luke 20, 37, 38; — Ps. 32, 1, 2 with Rom. 4, 6-8.

NOTE 1. Since such a conclusion must be drawn from the *sensus literalis* of a certain passage in a logical and correct manner, this cannot be done until the *sensus literalis* itself has been firmly established. Many errors, however, have occurred because logically correct conclusions were drawn from an erroneous conception of a particular passage; or the reasoning itself was fallacious, though based upon a correctly understood Scripture-passage. Note, for example, the Reformed exposition of John 6, 63, the anti-Trinitarian exegesis of Deut. 6, 4, and the synergistic explanation of Mark 1, 15. (Luther, XVIII, 1819 f.)

NOTE 2. Deductions of general truths from Bible-passages such as are made especially in sermons are also covered by this rule.

NOTE 3. Furthermore, this rule also covers the deduction of dogmatic, catechetical, homiletic, and other theological principles from the words of Scripture; as, for example, Gal. 1, 8; Heb. 5, 12-14; Acts 20, 20, 27; also the compilation into larger doctrinal chapters of the single doctrinal statements contained in the various passages of Scripture, as, for example, Concerning God, Concerning the Person of Christ, Concerning the Sacraments.

§ 38.

In view of all these facts the only authentic expositor of the Bible is the Bible itself. Human reason, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, acts merely as the instrument through which the exposition takes place; it therefore is never to be regarded as the norm or judge according to which the sense of Scripture may be established. 2 Pet. 1, 20; 1 Cor. 2, 14; Matt. 16, 17; Eph. 4, 18. (Rationalism.) This applies also to what is termed enlightened and regenerated reason. 2 Cor. 10, 5. (Luther, III, 1386; XI, 2335 f.; XIII, 1899. 1909.) *Scriptura Sacra est sui ipsius legitimus interpres.*

§ 39.

The Church can in no wise act as judge with regard to the sense of Scripture. Compare *Canones et Decreta Concilii Tridentini*, Sess. 4, Decr. 2 (Romanism.) (Luther, IX, 1361-1363; XVIII, 1294.)

NOTE. Lutheran theologians are indeed required to see that no exposition of any Bible passage contradicts any *doctrine* contained in the Lutheran Symbols, as the *norma normata* of all doctrine; but this request does not conflict with the above-mentioned rule. In observing this requirement, the symbols are neither set *above* nor even on a *par* with Scripture, but the cause and justifying ground for this requirement is contained in the principle that no interpretation is to be admitted that stands in opposition to the so-called *analogia fidei*. (§ 37.) Just as certain as the doctrine of the Lutheran Confessions rests in all its parts on the Holy Scriptures as the *norma normans*, being taken directly from Scripture, just so sure will any deviation from this doctrine in the exposition stand in opposition to the aforementioned principle. (*Formula of Concord*, pp. 852. 853, §§ 9. 10.)

§ 40.

The expositor will be able to ascertain the true sense of the Scriptures in proportion as he is able correctly, clearly, and fully to grasp the thoughts and ideas contained in the Word. This necessitates that he not only occupy himself with determining the *meaning* of the words, but that he also grasp the full *content* of each word and transmit the result of his studies to those who are entrusted to his instruction. For this purpose he will find the study of the so-called preparatory and supplementary branches of exegetical theology very helpful, such as Bible History, Biblical Archeology, Biblical Geography, Biblical Natural History, Biblical Psychology, etc.

§ 41.

As previously stated, the exegete must closely observe the original languages of the Bible and the grammatical rules of such languages. But he must also pay attention to a number of historical matters in order to be able to understand books that are in themselves historical products or contain more or less historical facts. The exposition must be grammatico-historical.

NOTE 1. Distinguish between the historical *circumstances* under which a book was written and its historical *contents*. As to the historical *circumstances*, the following points are to be considered: the person whom the Holy Ghost inspired to write the book; the person, or persons, to whom the message of the book is addressed or for whom it was meant in particular; the place, the time, the cause, and the purpose of the book. (Biblical Introduction.) With regard to the historical *contents*, we must consider the persons written about, the things touched upon, and the places, times, and incidents making the subject of the discourse.

NOTE 2. The persons whom God inspired to write the Holy Scriptures are rightly called the instruments of the Holy Spirit; for they did not speak in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but the Holy Spirit spoke through them. 2 Pet. 1, 21; 1 Cor. 2, 13; Matt. 10, 20. This does not, however, imply that the holy writers, while engaged as instruments of the Spirit of God, were entirely divested of their individuality, or of peculiarities induced by time, place, nationality, intellectual endowments, station, education, surroundings, and moods. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit purposely employed various and variously disposed men as instruments, in order that the various books of the Bible might each bear the stamp of individuality, according to the peculiarities of the men employed. Heb. 1, 1; 1 Cor. 12, 4. (*Lehre und Wehre*, 32, 284: "Was sagt die Schrift von sich selbst?") Furthermore, experience shows that the variety met with in the different writings is an aid in bringing home the truths and effects of the Word of God to different readers and hearers of it according to their individual peculiarities. (St. Paul-St. John; Isaiah-Amos; Job; Epistle to the Hebrews; Luther on Ps. 118 and the Epistle to the Galatians.)

NOTE 3. While expounding a text, the exegete should constantly keep in mind the mental attitude, or mood, of the writer, because the choice of expressions, the structure of the sentences, and, in general, the whole character of the discourse depends largely on such frame of mind, or mood. The mental attitude of the writer may be gathered either from the passage itself or from some parallel reference; at times one may be able to perceive it in the general bearing and acts of the persons described. Jer. 9,1; 2 Cor. 10, 13; Galatians and Philippians. Compare Luke 19, 45.46 with Matt. 21, 12. 13. Acts 14, 14-17. Luke 18, 13.

NOTE 4. The expositor must also note whether the author himself is speaking, or whether he quotes the words of another person. If the latter happens to be

the case, he must be careful to note just who that other person is, how the author is disposed toward the words spoken by that other person, as well as where the quotation begins and where it ends. For example, compare Gen. 16, 10. 13; Is. 8, 17. 18 with Heb. 2, 13; Ps. 2. As a rule, the author of a book is to be considered as speaking unless there are cogent reasons for regarding the words as those of another speaker; and furthermore, any person who is introduced as speaking must be considered as continuing the discourse as long as there is no plain indication that his speech is ended, and that the writer himself is speaking again. Heb. 1, 2-4. 5-11. 12-17; John 3, 10-21 (not only 10-15). — We should also never lose sight of the fact that even where the words of wicked people are cited in the Scriptures, the historical account is correct, even if what was said is false in itself or said under false pretenses. Ps. 14, 1; John 8, 48; Mark 1, 24; John 11, 49-52. It should also be noted that in the same discourse judgment is sometimes passed upon such speech. Is. 28, 15; Jer. 18, 12.

NOTE 5. Also the frame of mind of the speaker must be considered as continuing and effective so long as the text does not indicate that another mood is to be noted. Compare Phil. 3, 18 with 4, 1; Matt. 16, 17-19 with v. 23; Ps. 73.

NOTE 6. It is also important carefully to consider the persons to whom the writing is addressed, since contents and manner of expression are influenced by the character of the persons spoken to. Comp. Acts 17, 22-31 and 13, 16-41; 22, 1-21. Here, too, the rule obtains that we must regard the same persons as being spoken to until sufficient reasons make it quite evident that the discourse is directed to some one else. Comp. Rom. 1, 18-32 and 2, 1-29.

NOTE 7. A proper consideration of the period of history to which a discourse belongs, or in which a book was written, is of importance to the exegete; for this often explains the peculiar style of writing, certain expressions become clearer, the richness of the contents becomes more apparent, and niceties are brought into the foreground, all of which might otherwise be incorrectly understood or entirely overlooked. Note Rom. 13, 1-7, the Gospel of St. John, the Second Epistle to Timothy, the books of Ezekiel and of Haggai. For this reason the expositor will find a knowledge of the origin of the Biblical books to be of great practical value to him, and in addition he may gain a decided advantage, through close study, of the political, social, and religious conditions of the time in question. (Luther, VI, 4. 8-11.)

NOTE 8. When interpreting Scripture, it is also of some import to know where the writings were composed, since the place where a book was written sometimes has bearing on its contents and the style of writing. Compare the books of Esther and Daniel, the epistles to the Romans and to the Ephesians.

NOTE 9. To know the occasion and cause for the writing of a book is important for the exegete because he then will be able to understand the special objects in view at the time of writing and better to grasp the entire scope of the author, as well as his various arguments and expressions. Furthermore, such a knowledge will be of great service in the application of such Scripture-passages and the use of their arguments

under similar circumstances and for similar purposes. Note Galatians, Thessalonians, the Gospel of St. John, and the First Epistle of St. John.

§ 42.

A systematic and consistent observance of a sound grammatico-historico-theological method forbids an arbitrary and presumptive procedure in interpreting a Biblical book or a Scripture-passage.

NOTE. In accordance with what has been previously laid down, the exegete who follows out sound methods will always take into consideration the meaning of a word, the *usus loquendi*, the context, the parallelisms, the so-called *analogia fidei*, and historical circumstances.

§ 43.

The correctness of any exposition may be proved either by showing that the method of procedure was correct in which a certain sense was evolved, or by demonstrating that all other possible ways of explaining the passage are wrong. A false exposition of a text may be refuted either by pointing out the wrong steps taken in reaching the conclusion, or by showing that another exposition of the text is the only correct one.

§ 44.

In order correctly to understand the contents of the Holy Scriptures, the exegete must be able to understand occurrences and conditions of the inner spiritual life of a regenerated person. The regenerated man differs from the natural man in his view of everything spiritual, 1 Cor. 2, 14, 15, and therefore only such a person as has already felt the power of God's Word in regeneration can, in the real and full sense of the word, be a theological exegete. (Cf. § 2, Note 3; § 4, Note 2.)



