**Part one**

**Chapter One**

**Canon Law-1**

## 1.1. Definition of Terms

**Canon law** (from Greek *kanon*, a 'straight measuring rod, ruler, cane or reed, bar or a measuring stick') is a set of ordinances/*decrees* and regulations made by legitimate ecclesiastical authority (Church leadership), for the government of a Christian organization or church and its members as a visible society. A canon was originally a rule adopted by a church council; these canons formed the foundation of canon law. The term canon was also from classical time onward used in figurative sense to designate a grammatical rule in ancient Greek language.

## 1.2. The history and Development of Canon Law

Canon law has had a long history of development throughout the Christian era. Not a static body of laws, it reflects social, political, economic, cultural and ecclesiastical changes that have taken place in the past two millennia. During the periods of social and cultural upheaval (disturbance) the church has not remained unaffected by its environment. Thus, canon law may be expected to be involved in the far reaching changes that have come to be anticipated/*expected* in the modern world.

Canon Law in the Christian Church has its basis in the Bible. The Canons adopted by the Apostles at the Council of Jerusalem in the first century has developed into a highly complex legal system encapsulating/*summarizing* not just norms of the New Testament, but some elements of the Hebrew (Old Testament). The New Testament in Acts 15 recounts the "Jerusalem Council". Church leaders gathered to decide a crucial issue involving theology, ethics, and discipline. The council decided that Gentile converts to Christianity were not obligated to keep most of the Law of Moses, including the rules concerning circumcision of males. The Council did, however, retain the prohibitions on eating blood, meat containing blood, and

meat of animals not properly slain, and on fornication and idolatry, sometimes referred to as the Apostolic Decree.

The case was presented largely by citing what the Spirit had done in the church in accepting Gentiles as fully the equal of those who had been Jews. The decision was rendered in terms of combining audacity/boldness and reticence/silence.

A church is understood as a community founded in a unity of faith, a sacramental fellowship of all members with Christ as Lord, and a unity of government. The church cannot exist without authority i.e., binding rules and organizational structures and that religion and law are mutually inclusive (comprehensive). Thus the calling of the church leader to office is regarded as important in the organizational structure and, like every other fundamental vocation (calling) in the churches that accept the validity of canon law, it is also viewed as sacramental and linked to the priesthood.

The function of canon law in liturgy, preaching and social activities involves the development of maintenance of the church to be the most serviceable for the personal life and faith of members of the church and for its vocation in the world. This function is thus concerned with a continual adaption of canon law to the circumstances of the time as well as to personal needs without altering its foundation and essential nature since the Apostolic time.

The New Testament, the writings of the Apostolic fathers (the second generation Christian writings) and the Pseudo-Apostolic writings (documents attributed to but not written by the Apostles) contain the oldest descriptions of the customs existing in the east from the 2nd century until the 5th century. The sources of all the others are the Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles, 2nd century, the Didasscalia Apostlorum (the teaching of the Apostles, 3rd century), and the Traditio Apostolica (Apostolic Tradition), attributed to Hippolytus written in Rome about AD 220 but far more widely distributed in the east.

From these documents the constitutions Apostolicae (Apostolic Constitutions), in which 85 Canones Apostolicae (Apostolic Canons) were included, were composed. During the period that followed Constantine's grant of religious toleration, many Synods held in the East legislated, among other things, various disciplinary rules, or canons.

The Oriental Orthodox Churches over a period of several centuries, but primarily during the 5th and 6th centuries, developed bodies of canon law that reflected their isolation after the Arab conquest in the 7th century. Among these churches are the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (in Syria), the Malankaran Syrian Orthodox Church (India), the Armenian Apostolic, and the Coptic Orthodox Church (in Egypt). Another independent church is the Ethiopian Orthodox *Tewahido* Church, though these churches developed an extensive body of canon law throughout their histories.

The Greek Orthodox churches have collected canons and commentaries in a work known as the rudder, it is meant to "steer/guide" in the church. The Orthodox Christian Tradition in general treats its canons more as guidelines and corrective laws, the bishops adjusting them to cultural and other local circumstances. The Ecumenical Councils canons are used as *nomi* (laws), and kanones (rules). The dogmatic decisions of the Councils are to be obeyed rather to be treated as guidelines, since they are essential for the church's unity.

In the Greek tradition, the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) which the Oriental Orthodox Churches did not accept possessed a chronological collection of the canons of earlier councils. This *Syntagma canonum* (body of canons), or corpus *canonum orientale* (Eastern body of Canons), was subsequently complemented (added) by the canons attributed to other 4th and 5th century councils, canonical letters of 12 Greek Fathers and of the 3rd century Latin bishop of Carthage, Cyprian, and the *Consttitutiones Apostolicae*.

The systematic collections-and there were many of them-contained canon of councils, ecclesiastical laws (*nomoi*) of the emperors, or both together

(nomocanons). The first known Greek collection of canon that is preserved is the *colectio* 50 *titulorum* (Collection of 50 titles), after the model of the 50 titles of the work known as the *pandecta* (accepted by all), composed by patriarch John Scholasticus about 550. He composed from the novels (*Novellae Constitutiones post Codicem*) of Justinian the *Collectio* 87 *capitulorum* (Collection of 87 chapters).

The *collectio tripartite* (tripartite collection), from the end of the 6th century and composed of the entire Justinian ecclesiastical legislation, was the most widely distributed. The *Nomo-canons* were expressions of the fusion of imperial and church authority. The *Nomo-canons 50 titulorum* (Canon Law of 50 titles) from about 580, composed of the works of John Scholasticus, remained in use until the 12th century. The edition of the *Nomo-canons* 14 titulorum (Canon Law of 14 Titles) was completed in 883 and accepted in 920 as law for the entire Eastern Church.

### 1.3. Understanding the Church from Canonical Perspective

Church means in its simple meaning is a gathering place or a house of prayer. Much has been told about the attribute of the church: the Church is Apostolic, holy, united and universal. In this section we shall see the canonical nature of the church.

Basically the church has spiritual and social nature. But the canonical tradition is not specified to its social nature. This nature is too much related to its mission towards the perfection of human nature and the enlightenment of God's great creation through obedience and righteousness.

The most important mission of the church is to unite the will of God with the will of man in order to preach the kingdom of God on the Earth. Human beings are obliged to respect and love their Creator and fulfil their earthly mission to the entrance of the kingdom of God being ready and complete.

In canon law the church should be understood as the body in which canons are created, formulated, interpreted and excited (motivated). However,

the church, according to the teaching of Christ, the canon cannot take or use physical force as the state laws. The church imposes its own laws on the disobedient of the laws and regulations. Anyone found quitted (left) or blame-worthy will be subject to penance or confession. The church does not force any one to join its institution, but any member of the church is obliged to obey to its rule and regulations.

## 1.2. The Church and Law

The church law is a general name given to all rules and regulations of the church. The law of the church includes canon law, dogmas, Creeds and orders being claiming unquestioned obedience.

- Canon Law is official proclamation given by the church fathers at ecumenical council or particular synod.
- The church has a private jurisdiction over its members by way of confession and penances.
- Other name for the church law is ecclesiastical law or religious law.

The law is divided into two main parts: they are natural law and conventional law.

- Natural law is called the law of God. It is a divine law that is known to man through inheritance of an eternal law of nature. The natural law makes us to know and accept the idea of law. It inspires truth, right and just.
- The law made by human beings constitutes the conventional law. The other name of conventional law is ecclesiastical law.

The law of God provides at most place and mercifully look to human beings. Man obtains the mercy of God when he devotes himself confidently to God. The law of God will regulates the actions and activities of sinful person by means of religious law with a view to save him from moral judgement and condemnation.

Ecclesiastical law is composed of

a. **Divine Tradition**: Divine tradition is the foundation of norms derived directly from revelation: “To the married I give this command-not I but Lord” (1Corinthians 7:10).

b. **Apostolic Tradition**: Apostolic tradition is the foundation of the norms derived from the ministry of the apostles: “To the rest I say-I and not the Lord” (1Corinthians 7:12).

c. **Ecclesiastical Tradition**: Ecclesiastical tradition is the foundation of norms derived from the ministry of the episcopacy and ecclesiastical custom.

Ecclesiastical tradition has no right to change the divine or apostolic tradition. But these are theoretical concepts that the theology of canon law and the ecclesiastical jurisprudence use to interpret normativity and legitimacy in canon law.

The purpose of canon law is to ensure the mission of the church-the salvation of the souls. Canons are, therefore, not applied in a purely formalistic way in the case of an individual person. Those who enforce canon law must have a sound judgement in order to ensure that canon law remains faithful to the mission of the Church. The ultimate principle that should govern human conduct is called Moral Law. Moral Law regulates the internal actions and activities in human life. The subject includes the principle of divine will. It sometimes called the divine law because of its nature of human behaviour in relation to God. The law that regulates the external actions and activities of the will of human beings is called civil law and social law. The principles of the church law are different from moral laws and social laws.

God is the origin of both natural and divine laws. His will or the will of God is in fact the law by itself. The founder of church is Jesus Christ and He established the fundamental laws of the church. It is on these fundamental principles that church laws are based.

- Orders regulating the services of the Apostles-Mt. 18:17-18

- Relations of Apostles-Mk. 9:34
- Baptism and Eucharist-Lu. 16:16;Mt. 28:19;John.3:5;Lu.22:19;1Cot.9:23
- About marriage-Mt.5:32;19:3
- About swear or promise-Mt.5:38
- About excommunicating Mt.18:15-18
- About service price-Lu.10:7-12;Mt.10:15;John 12:5,6-13-25
- About relation with state-Mt.22:17-22

Other than these orders which are given by Jesus Christ, in Holy Bible and New Testament, we find other church laws and prescriptions uttered by Apostles' trust in faith, the power given by Christ. The disciples or followers open heartedly gave the following orders.

- About the institute or priesthood in any place-Acts 15:23
- About listing or obeying to the priest-Heb.13:7;1Peter 5:5
- About the quality and duty of the church leaders-1Tim.4,5:22
- About Deacons-1Tim.3
- About the right of the clergy-1Cor.9:6
- Appealing against the clergy-1Tim.5:19
- Serving God-1Cor.11:3-20
- Marriage-Rom.7:1;1Cor.5:1-7,29:5;Eph.5:22
- Relation between church and state-Rom.13:1;Cor.1;Pet.2:13;Tit.3:5
- Relation with nonchristians-1Cor.5:9

### 1.5. The Scope of the Church Law

Universal ecclesiastical laws are promulgated by publication in the official documents unless in particular cases, another manner of promulgation has been prescribed. They come into force only on the date appearing on the particular issue of the document, unless because of the nature of the bind at once. In other word, it can be called a general law. A general law is not the one which is not limited to the particular territory; it is a universal law of the church.

Particular laws are promulgated in the manner determined by the legislator. This can also be understood from the point of applicability of the law will depend on the relation of a universal law. A universal law does not derogate with a special law. A particular law is one which is made for a particular territory.

### 1.3. Apostolic Basis of Church Law

Law as a system of rules for the members of the community is an indispensable part of the church. Humans, living in a society, feel a psychological need for security. This is obtained when all members adhere to common norms of individual conduct; life becomes predictable and the threat of the unknown is removed. This also was the situation for the communities of the church. For members who disregard/disrespect in their conduct the accepted rules, and thereby/thus became the source of disturbance; sanctions had to be created either to secure their conformity or to separate them from the community. This was the primary source of law in the church. Without such norms of conduct, what happens in the community would be unpredictable, would prevent members to foresee/predict the future in the community, and be the cause of utter confusion and disorder.

### 1.4. The Canons

When we speak about canon, it is understood that the law or the canon of the church is obligatory or universal to all Christian society. These fundamental collections of the canons were developed by gradual steps and later on ceased or stopped from issuance of the Nomo-Canon in 14 titles. These canons quoted in the canons of the St. Apostles, the ecumenical councils, the particular synods and canons of 13 St. Fathers. These are Fundamental canons of the oriental Orthodox Churches.

#### 1.6.1. The Content of the Canons are divided into five Categories

a. With religious content
b. With the ethical content
c. With jurisdictional content

d. With character of worshipping
e. The mixed Canons. All of them will be measured by their size and content.

The canons contained in fundamental collection of the canons are the following:

a. The Canons of St. Apostles,
b. The Canons of Ecumenical synod, namely the first ecumenical synods,
c. The Canons of Particular synods,
d. The Canons of the Holy Fathers:-

## Chapter Two

## Canonical Sources

### 2.1. The Sources of Church Law

#### 2.1.1. Holy Scriptures and Traditions

The gospels and all other parts of the New Testament became the first sources of rules and norms for the life of the Christian community. Legal norms of the Old Testament were accorded only a subsidiary/lesser, secondary character, as it was decided in the council of Jerusalem (A.D. 50).

The distinction between Holy Scripture and tradition is not fully justified. It should be noted that the Scripture itself is a divinely-inspired creation of the church and can be thereby characterized as the “written tradition” of the church. Both scripture and tradition are identical as sources of the faith and practice of the early church.

Tradition is of value in the church today if it is legislation that has been continuously maintained since the early days of the church. Perhaps this discipline was also supported by the teaching of the Holy Fathers. The tradition should also possess the confirmation of the true practice of the

church by acts of the pastors, bishops and synods, which orthodoxy was maintained without interruption and is still in force.

### 2.1.2. Early Tradition

While the writings of the Holy Fathers of the first centuries were substantially extended sermons and pastoral encouragement, they also contained principles of a directional nature that became guidelines in the development of legal norms, such as the letters of Clemens (Ca. 95). To these must be added the decisions of a number of local synods.

### 2.1.3. Pseudo-Apostolic Collection

Apostles and other witnesses of Jesus' life were inspired to write the Gospels and the Acts while lesser men tried a little later to collect the traditions which had filtered down to them from the Apostles in the Pseudo-apostolic collection. These writings purported to have as authors or some apostles, without any intention to deceive their readers, who were aware that the contents were compilations of rules followed by the church in the life of the Christian communities, reaching back to the time of the apostles, and which therefore, could be endowed with authority of the apostles. Their acceptance by the churches at large is a sign that they corresponded to the actual state in the communities.

These pseudo-apostolic writings include:

### 2.1.4 Didache

The Didache or teaching of the Twelve Apostles was written in Syria, Palestine, or Egypt by a Christian form Jewish community probable around the end of the first or beginning of the second century. The work contains sixteen chapters: Chapters 1-6 are institution for the catechumens; Chapters7-9 concern baptism by immersion and infusion, fast and the Eucharist; Chapters10-16 give rules for visiting missionaries, apostles, prophets, Sunday observation, election and ordination of bishops and deacons, etc. although the Didache exercised influenced over many other compilations, it has never received the character of a legal code.

### 2.1.5. Apostolic Tradition

The Apostolic Tradition is ascribed to Hippolytus who was for a time an antipope, who wrote it in Greek in Rome around 215-218. It is composed of thirty-two chapters, which chiefly concern the structure of the church leadership: bishops, priests, deacons, confessors, readers sub-deacons, widow, and virgins in addition to norms on the enrolment in the Christian community, on fasts, prayer, the Eucharist and funerals.

### 2.1.6. Didascalia of the Apostles

The Didascalia (the teaching) of the Apostles, composed around 230, purports to explain the decision of the council of Jerusalem (AD 50). Divided into 26 chapters, it is the first attempt of a collection of all canon law.

### 2.1.7. Ecclesiastical Canon of the Holy Apostles

The Ecclesiastical Canon of the Holy Apostles, written ca. 300 is composed of thirty canons, each assigned to an apostle. It contains a superficial translation of the Didache norms on the appointment of bishops and clergy, the widows and deaconess, the participation of the women in religious functions, etc.

### 2.1.8. Apostolic Constitutions

The Apostolic constitutions are the most important and in size the largest of these collections. The work is ascribed to Clement of Rome (Ca. 90), who is supposed to have written down the oral teachings of the Apostles, but composed around 360-380 in Syria or Palestine. It contains an enlarged Didascalia and a revised Didache. It also includes a Syrian liturgy under the name of St. Clement.

### 2.1.9. Apostolic Canons

The Apostolic Canons comprises 85 disciplinary norms prepared around the end of the 4thcentury, probably by the same author as the apostolic constitutions. The first fifty canons were accepted into the collection prepared by Dionysius Exiguus in Rome in the first decades of the 500s, and as such they entered all subsequent western canonical collections.

The main pseudo-apostolic compilations were the Didascalia and the apostolic constitutions, around which these were in circulation numerous other smaller ones under various titles, similar to those now known from Arabic, Syria, Coptic and Ethiopian sources, while they were later superseded by systematic collection, their contents and spirits was incorporated in the basis of Eastern Canon Law.

### 2.1.10. Canonical Collections

In third century, the Collegial and poly synodic nature of the church governance was manifested with collection of numerous synods or assemblies of bishops on a provincial or regional level. The synods enacted (passed) many regulations to provide a uniform system of doctrine, the worship of God, rules of private conduct, and norms. After Christianity had been sanctioned (authorised) as the obligatory religion of the Roman Empire, the synod movement expanded during subsequent centuries when the Christian emperors employed it to achieve unity and peaceful cooperation among the population. The enactments of these local and the ecumenical councils were soon collected into compilations.

### 2.1.11. Syntagma Canonum

***Syntagma Canonum*** (a body of a canon) is a canonical collection made in 1335 by Matthew Blastares, a Greek monk about whose life nothing certain is known. This compilation was widely used, with extensive changes, as evidenced by translations in nearly all languages employed by the church of the fourth and fifth centuries (Latin, Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopian, Armenian and Georgian). It is based on local councils such as of Ancyra (314), Neo-Caesarea (ca 320), Gangra (342), Antioch (341), Laodicea (343 to 380), and later also enlarged by addition

of canons from the first 3 ecumenical councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), and then Chalcedon (451). This *syntagma canonum* was paralleled by local collection of individual churches, such as those of Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Ethiopian, and Armenian churches.

### 2.1.12. John Scholastikos

The systematic collection of Johannes (503-577) was of permanent importance. He was a lawyer who had become a priest in Antioch and later was elevated to the patriarchal throne of Constantinople (564-578). He based his work on an unknown prior collection *sexaginta Titulorum* (Collection of sixty titles). His synagogue canons (collection in fifty titles) were prepared in Constantinople in 550. These "titles" correspond (agree) to the division of Justinian's pandects. Johnnes continued his compilatory work in emerged and enlarged editions.

### 2.1.13. Nomo-Canons

A nomocanon (Greek: Νομοκανών, Nomokanōn; from the Greek *nomos* - law and *kanon* - a rule) is a collection of ecclesiastical law, consisting of the elements from both the Civil law and the Canon law. Nomocanons form part of the Oriental canon law of the Eastern Catholic Churches, and are also used by the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Collections of this kind were found only in Oriental canon law. The Greek Church has two principal nomocanonical collections.

The first nomocanon, in the sixth century, is ascribed, though without certainty, to John Scholasticus, whose canons it utilizes and completes. He had drawn up (about 550) a purely canonical compilation in 50 titles, and later composed an extract from the Justinian's Novellae in 87 chapters[1] that relate the ecclesiastical matters. To each of the 50 titles was added the texts of the imperial laws on the same subject, with 21 additional chapters, nearly all borrowed from John's 87 chapters.[2] Thus the **Nomocanon of John Scholasticus** was made.

The second nomocanon dates from the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (610–641), at which time Latin was replaced by Greek as the official language of the imperial laws. It was made by fusion of Collectio tripartita (collection of Justinian's imperial law) and Canonic

syntagma (ecclesiastical canons). Afterwards, this collection would be known as **Nomocanon in 14 titles**.

This nomocanon was long held in esteem and passed into the Russian Church, but it was by degrees supplanted by **Nomocanon of Photios** in 883.

The great systematic compiler of the Eastern Church, who occupies a similar position to that of Gratian in the West, was Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople in the 9th century. His collection in two parts—a chronologically ordered compilation of synodical canons and a revision of the Nomocanon—formed and still forms the classic source of ancient Church Law for the Greek Church.[3]

Basically it was Nomocanon in 14 titles with the addition of 102 canons of Trullan Council (see Canon law), 17 canons of the Council of Constantinople of 861,[4] and three canons substituted by Photios for those of the Council of Constantinople in 869. Nomocanon in 14 titles was completed with the more recent imperial laws.

The name *Nomo-Canon* (from vomos, state law; kanon, church law) was given since the eleventh century to collections combining state and church legislation, as a rule on religious subject. For the following centuries the *nomo-canon* was practically only the canonical source, especially when the various versions were augmented (increased) with legislation from the later Eastern Roman Emperors. This collection served then principles of the various Orthodox Nations of Eastern and Southern Europe until the late 1700s as books of civil law.

From among the numerous *nomo-canons* shall be mentioned the *nomo-canons* of fifty titles, a constitution of the work of John Scholastikos. The great patriarch Photius was involved with the compilation of the *nomo-canons* under his name and with the *nomo-canons* of fourteen titles.

### 2.1.14. Synods

The Greek word “synod” derives from “syn” –together and “odos”-road, way, therefore a synod is the coming together of several people sharing a common element, in this case the Christian bishops, and Synods is assigned either the character of ecumenical assemblies or of non-ecumenical (local) councils.

### 2.1.15. Patriarchs

The writings of some patriarchs, rarely given as response to concrete inquire, as well as the acts of patriarchal synods, especially the synods of Constantinople, an assembly of bishops coincidentally/*accidentally* present in the capital, were occasionally incorporated into the body of canon law.

#### 2.1.16. Liturgical and Penitential Book

Their legislative contents refer mostly to the worship of the church, fast and abstinence, observation of Holy days; sins and penances; external transgressions and punishments, etc.

### 2.2. Different kinds of councils/synods

**a. Ecumenical synods**: it is the meeting of all bishops/patriarchs all Christians all over the world. The issue and the decision must be ecumenical; to a certain extent the evolvement of the state was necessary.

**b. Local synods**/particular synods: it is regional council where the issue concerns some churches

**c. Patriarchal synods**: this can be understood into two ways, the first is that when the patriarchs of different autocephalous churches meet and the second is when a particular synod is led by an autocephalous patriarch in his see.

**d. Diocesan council**: it is the meeting under the diocesan bishop.

**e. Parish council**: it is the council of a single church.

### 2.3. The relation between Canon Law and Church Councils

Church Councils were from the beginning bureaucratic exercise. Written documents were circulated, speeches made and responded to votes taken, and final documents published and distributed. A large part of what we know about the beliefs of heresies comes from the documents quoted in councils in order to be refuted or indeed only from the deductions (references) based on the refutations. For all councils canons (Greek=*kanones*) “rules” or “rulings” were published and survive. In some cases other documentation survives as

well. Study of the canons of the church councils is the foundation of the development of canon law, especially the reconciling of seemingly contradictory canons or the determination of priority between them. Canons consist of doctrinal statements and disciplinary measures—most church councils and local synods deals with immediate disciplinary concerns as well as major difficulties of doctrine. Eastern Orthodoxy typically views the purely doctrinal canons as dogmatic and applicable to the entire church at all times, while the disciplinary canons are the application of those dogmas in a particular time and place; these canons may or may not be applicable in other situations.

## Chapter Three

## Ecumenical Councils

## 3.1. Council of Nicaea (325)

### 3.1.1. The First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325)

The First Ecumenical Council was held in Nicaea (accelerate), in 325 on the occasion of the heresy of Arius (Arianism). In order to expedite the assembling of the council, the Emperor Constantine placed at the disposal of bishops the public conveyances and posts of the empire; moreover, while the Council lasted he provided abundantly for the maintenance of the members. The choice of Nicaea was favourable to the assembling og a large number of bishops. It was easily accessible the bishops of nearly all the province, but especially to those of Asia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Greece and Thrace. The sessions were held in principal church, and in central hall of the imperial palace. 318 fathers gathered. The council was opened by Constantine with the greatest solemnity. Eusebius of Caesarea and his two abbreviations, Socrates and Sozomen, as well as Rufinus and Galasius of Cyzicus, report no details of the theological discussions.

On July 25, 325, in conclusion, the fathers of the council celebrated the Emperor's twentieth anniversary. In his farewell address, Constantine informed the audience how averse/oppose he was to dogmatic controversy; he wanted the Church to live in harmony and peace. In a circular letter, he announced the accomplished unity of practice by the whole Church in the date of the celebration of Christian Passover (Easter).

The council promulgated twenty new church laws, called *canons*, (though the exact number is subject to debate), that is, unchanging rules of discipline. The twenty as listed in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers are as follows:

**Canon 1-on the admission**, or support, or expulsion of clerics mutilated by choice or by violence,

**Canon 2-Rules** to be observed for ordination, the avoidance of undue haste, the position of those guilty of a grave fault,

**Canon 3**-All members of the clergy are forbidden to dwell with any woman, Canon except a mother, sister, or aunt,

**Canon 4**-Concerning episcopal elections,

**Canon 5**-Concerning the excommunication,

**Canon 6**-Concerning patriarchs and their jurisdiction,

**Canon 7**-Confirms the right of the bishops of Jerusalem to enjoy certain honours,

**Canon 8**-Concerns the novations,

**Canon 9**-Certain sins known after ordination involve invalidation,

**Canon 10**-Lapsi who have been ordained knowingly or surreptitiously must be excluded as soon as their irregularity is known,

**Canon 11**-Penance to be imposed on apostates of the persecutions of Licinius,

**Canon 12**-Penance to be imposed on those who upheld (supported) Licinius in his war on the Christians,

**Canon 13**-Indulgence to be granted to excommunicated persons in danger of death,

**Canon 14**-Penance to be imposed on catechumens, who had weakened under persecutions,

**Canon 15**-Bishops, priests and deacons are not to pass from one church to another,

**Canon 16**-All clerics are forbidden to leave the church. Formal prohibition for bishops to ordain for their diocesea cleric belonging to another diocese,

**Canon 17**-Clerics are forbidden to lend interest,

**Canon 18**-Recalls to deacons their subordinate position with regard to priests,

**Canon 19**-Rules to be observed with regard adherents of Paul of Samosata who wished to return to the church, and

**Canon 20**-On Sunday and during the paschal season prayers should be said standing.

### 3.1.2. The First Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381)

The First Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (Ancient Greek: Κωνσταντινούπολις *Konstantinoúpolis*) was a council of Christian bishops convened in Constantinople in AD 381 by the Roman EmperorTheodosius I.[1][2] This second ecumenical council, an effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom,[3] confirmed the Nicene Creed, expanding the doctrine thereof to produce the Niceno–Constantinopolitan Creed, and dealt with sundry other matters. It met from May to July 381 in the Church of Hagia Irene and was affirmed as ecumenical in 451 at the Council of Chalcedon.

In general council formulated seven canons; four of them are doctrinal canons, whereas the three ones disciplinary attributed to the Council and accepted by both the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The Roman Catholic Church accepts only the first four because only the first four appear in the oldest copies and there is evidence that the last three were later additions.

**The first canon** is an important dogmatic condemnation of all shades of Arianism, and also of Macedonianism and Apollinarianism.

**The second canon** renewed the Nicene legislation imposing upon the bishops the observance of diocesan and patriarchal limits.

**The third canon** reads:

> "The Bishop of Constantinople, however, shall have the prerogative of honour after the Bishop of Rome because Constantinople is New Rome."

**The fourth canon** decreed the consecration of Maximus as Bishop of Constantinople to be invalid, declaring "that [Maximus] neither was nor is a bishop, nor are they who have been ordained by him in any rank of the clergy".

This canon was directed not only against Maximus, but also against the Egyptian bishops who had conspired to consecrate him clandestinely at Constantinople, and against any subordinate ecclesiastics that he might have ordained in Egypt.

**The fifth canon** might actually have been passed the next year, 382, and is in regard to a *Tome* of the Western bishops, perhaps that of Pope Damasus I

**The sixth canon** might belong to the year 382 as well and was subsequently passed at the Quinisext Council as canon 95. It limits the ability to accuse bishops of wrongdoing.

**The seventh canon** regards procedures for receiving certain heretics into the church.

### 3.1.3. The First Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431)

Nestorius' doctrine, Nestorianism, which emphasized the distinction between Christ's human and divine natures and argued that Mary should be called *Christotokos* (Christ-bearer) but not *Theotokos* (God-bearer), had brought him into conflict with other church leaders, most notably Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria. Nestorius himself had requested the Emperor to convene the council, hoping that it would prove his orthodoxy; the council in fact condemned his teachings as heresy. The council declared Mary as *Theotokos* (God-bearer).

The Council declared it "unlawful for any man to bring forward, or to write, or to compose a different (ἑτέραν) Faith as a rival to that established by the holy Fathers assembled with the Holy Ghost in Nicæa". It quoted the Nicene Creed as adopted by the First Council of Nicaea in 325, not as added to and modified by the First Council of Constantinople in 381.

In addition to its condemnation of Nestorianism, the council also condemned Pelagianism and formulated the following canons:

- **Canon 1-5** condemned Nestorius and Caelestius and their followers as heretics
- **Canon 6** decreed deposition from clerical office or excommunication for those who did not accept the Council's decrees
- **Canon 7** condemned any departure from the creed established by the First Council of Nicaea (325), in particular an exposition by the priest Charisius.
- **Canon 8** condemned interference by the Bishop of Antioch in affairs of the Church in Cyprus and decreed generally, that no bishop was to "assume control of any province which has not heretofore, from the very beginning, been under his own hand or that of his predecessors ... lest the Canons of the Fathers be transgressed.

## 3.4. Councils Accepted by Greek Orthodox Church

### 3.4.1. Council of Chalcedon (451)

One hundred and fifteen (150) bishops under Pope Leo the Great and the Emperor Mercian defined the two natures (divine and human) in Christ against Eutychus, who was excommunicated. 30 canons were issued.

### 3.4.3. The Second Council of Constantinople (553)

One hundred and sixty-five (165) bishops under Pope Vigilius and Emperor Justinian I, condemned the errors of Origen and certain writings (the three Chapters) of Theodoret, of Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia and of Ibas, Bishop of Edessa; it further confirmed the first the four general councils, especially that of Chalcedon whose authority was contested by some heretics. It assembled on 5 May 553 in the great hall attached to Hagia Sophia Cathedral.

### 3.4.4. The third Council Constantinople (680-681)

Under Pope Agatho and Emperor Constantine Pogonatus, the council was attended by the patriarchs of Constantinople and of Antioch, 174 bishops, and the emperor. It put an end to Monothelitism/Monothelism by defending two wills in Christ, the Divine and human, as two distinct principles of

operation. It anathematized Sergius, Pyrrhus, Paul, Macarius, and all their followers. The council did not debate assisted. 22 canons were issued.

## 3.5. Councils Accepted by the Roman Catholic Church and Some Greek Orthodox Churches

### 3.5.1. The fourth Council of Constantinople (869)

Under Pope Adrian II and Emperor Basil numbering 102 bishops, 3 papal legates, and 4 patriarchates, consigned to the flames the Acts of an irregular council brought together by Photius against Pope Nicholas and Ignatius the legitimate Patriarch of Constantinople; it condemned Photius who had unlawfully seized the patriarchal dignity. The Photian Schism, however, triumphed in the Greek Church, and no other general council took place in the East.

### 3.5.2. The first Lateran Council (1123)

The council was held at Rome under Pope Callistus II. About 900 bishops and abbots assisted. It abolished the right claimed by lay prices, of investiture with ring and crosier to ecclesiastical benefices and dealt with church discipline and the recovery of the Holy Land from the infidels.

## 3.6. Councils Accepted by the Roman Catholic Church

### 3.6.1. The Second Lateran Council (1139)

The council was held at Rome under Pope Innocent II with an attendance of about 1000 prelates and Emperor Conard. Its object was to put an end to the errors of Arnold of Berescia.

### 3.6. 2. The third Lateran Council (1179)

The council took place under Pope Alexander III, Frederick I being emperor. There were 302 bishops present. It condemned the Albigenses and Waldensesand issued numerous decrees for the reformation of morals.

### 3.6.3. The fourth Lateran Council (1215)

The council was held under Innocent III. There were present the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, 71 archbishops, 412 bishops, and 800 abbots the primate of the Maronites, and St. Dominic. It issued an enlarged creed (symbol) against the Albigenses, condemned the Trinitarian errors of Abbot Joachim, and published 70 important reformatory decrees. This is the most importantcouncil of the Middle Ages, it makes the culminating point of ecclesiastical life and papal powder.

### 3.6.4. The first Council of Lyons (1245)

The council was presided by Innocent IV. The patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, and ZAquileia (Venice), generally, 140 bishops attended the council. Moreover, Baldwin II, Emperor of the East, and St. Louis, King of France were some of the attendants of the council. It excommunicated and deposed Emperor Frederick II and directed a new crusade, under the command of St. Louis, against the Saracens and Mongols.

### 3.6. 5. The Council of Lyon (1274)

Pope Gregory X, and together with other patriarchs of Antioch and Constantinople, 15 cardinals, 500 bishops, and more than 1000 other dignitaries conducted the council. It effected a temporary reunion of the Greek Church with Rome. The word filioque was added to the symbol of Constantinople and means were sought for recovering Palestine from the Turks. It also laid down the rules for papal elections.

### 3.6. 6. The Council of Vienne in France (1311-1313)

The council was held under the order of Clement V, who the first among the Avignon Popes. The patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria, 300 bishops (114 according to some authorities), and three kings—Philip IV of France, Edward II of England, and James II of Aragon—were present. The synod dealt with the crimes and errors imputed to the Knights Templars, the Fraticelli, the Beghards, and the Beguines, with projects of a new crusade, the reformation of the clergy, and the teaching of Oriental language in the universes.

### 3.6. 7. The Council of Constance (1414-1418)

It was held during the great Schism of the west, with the object of ending the divisions in the church. It only became legitimate when Gregory XI had formally convoked it. Owing to this circumstances it succeeded in putting an end to schism by the election of Pope Martin V, which the Council of Pisa (1403) had failed to accomplish on account of its illegality. The rightful Pope confirmed against Wyclif and Hus. This council is thus only ecumenical in its last sessions (XLII-XLV inclusive)and with respect to the decrees of earlier sessions approved by Martin V.

### 3.6. 8. The Council of Basle (1431)

Pope Eugene IV, and Sigismund Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire were the honourable attendants of the council. Its object was the religious pacification of Bohemia. Quarrels with the Pope having arisen, the council was transferred first to Ferrara (1438), then to Florence (1439), where a short-lived union with Greek Church was effected, the Greeks accepting the council's definition of controverted points. The Council of Basle is only ecumenical till the end of the twenty-fifth session and of its decrees Eugene IV approved only such as dealt with the extirpation of heresy, the peace of Christendom, and the reform of the Church, and which at the same time did not derogate from the rights of the Holy See.

### 3.6. 9. The Council of Trent lasted eighteen years (1545-1563)

The council was presided under the five popes, Paul III, Julius III, Marcellus II, Paul IV, and Pius IV, and under the emperors Charles V and Ferdinand. There were present 5 cardinal legates of the Holy See, 3 patriarchs, 33 archbishops, 235 bishops, 7 abbots, 7 generals of monastic orders, and 160 doctors of divinity. It was convoked to examine and condemn the errors promulgated by Luther and other Reformers, and to reform the discipline of the church. Of all councils it lasted longest, issued the largest number of dogmatic and reformatory decrees, and produced the most beneficial results.

### 3.6. 10. Fifth Lateran Council, sat from 1512 to 1517

The council was held under Popes Julius II and Leo X, the emperor being Maximilian I. 15 cardinals and about 80 archbishops and bishops took part in it. Its decrees are chiefly disciplinary. A new crusade against the Turks was also planned, but came to naught, owing to the religious upheaval in Germany caused by Luther.

### 3.6. 11. First Vatican Council (1869-1870)

The participants of the council were summoned to Vatican by Pius IX. It met 8 December, 1869, and lasted till 18 July, 1870, when it was adjourned; it is still (19908) unfinished. There were present 6 archbishops-princes, 49 cardinals, 11 patriarchs, 680 archbishops and bishops, 28 abbots, 29 generals of orders, in all 803. Besides important canons relating to the faith and constitution of the church, the council decreed the infallibility of the Pope, as shepherd and teacher of all Christians on the earth, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or moral to be held by the whole church.

### 3.6. 12. Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)

The council focused on the renewal of the Roman Catholic liturgy “according to the pristine norm of the fathers”; pastoral decrees on nature of the church and its relation to the modern world; restoration of a theology of communion; promotion of scripture and biblical studies; ecumenical progress towards reconciliation with other churches.

### 3.7. The Canons of the Particular Synods

Canons of the Particular Synods have a character of obligation power for all churches. These canons are acknowledged by all churches. These synods are eleven in number.

### 3.7.1. The Synod of Ancra

It was held at Ancra in Galatia in 314 under the chairmanship of Antioch Eighteen episcopes from Asia-Minor and Syria have participated. Twenty-five

canons were issued on the convocation of the synod and on the discipline of the church in general. Especially to solve the problem of those who wanted to return to church after they left the church due to the persecution.

### 3.7.2. The Synod of the Neo-Caesarea

It was held after the synod from Ancra in 314 upto 325. Twenty-four episcopes have participated. Seven chapters of 15 canons were issued.

### 3.7.3. The Synod of Gangra

The supporters of Arius were creating confusion in the church; they were teaching exaggerated ascetism, it was held the synod in the middle of the century in 340 in Gangra. The chairman was Eusabius of Nicimedia. In the synod 13 episcopes were participated and 20 canons against the supporters of Arius formulated but 21 forms the epilogue of the whole canons. The same number and order of canons is found in pravila and pedalion. At beginning it found the title encyclical of the synod to the episcopes then in the first collection followed 20 canons, but the later one 10, both collection consist of 20 canons and in the second of the canon 9 is united with the 10.

### 3.7.4. The Synod of Antioch

With the occasion of blessing new churches ion Antioch on the half of the year 341 were assembled where 100 episcopes after the blessing have gathered in order to decide on uniform administration of the church. Placket episcope of Antioch persuaded the synod and issued 25 canons which were printed in the collections of the church and have a special honor in orient as well as in the west.

### 3.7.5. The Synod of Laodocia

In the 343 was held synod in laodocia in which it was participated by a number of episcopes from Asia-Minor in which it was issued 60 canons which contains different purposes even though their division is special. They were accepted in the collection of the canon.

### 3.7.6. The Synod of Sardica (Sophia)

It was held in 343 with the scope of stabilizing harmony between the episcopes of the east and the west which was broken because Arian relations and their position against St. Athanasius the great. The synod has had 376 members from which 300 were Latins and 76 oriental. The chairman of the synod was well known Hosius episcope of Cordova. After the rejection of all the accusations brought against Athanasius and strengthening the synod of Nicaea. The synod issued 21 canons regarding to discipline of the church.

### 3.7.7. The Synod of Constantinople

The cause of the synod was the quarrel between two episcopes: Agapei and Bagadei everyone damming/blocking the metropolitan throne in Arabia. The synod was held in Constantinople in 394 in order to reconcile them.

### 3.7.8. The Synod of Cartage

The motive of the convection of the synod is about the question raisedif the Pope of Rome has right to receive application against the decision of the synod of the church of Aricaa. The synod was held inCartigina in 419 under the chairmanship of Augustine the Archbishop of Cartage. The participants were 217 episcopes the principal meetings were two. After the discussion on the issue it was decided that the Pope has a right to receive the appeal against the decision of the synod of the African church. Some canons were issued regarding the discipline of the church. Some revision was made over all canons which were delivered by the synod of the African churches which were passed after 348. The fathers of the synod of Carthage in 419 have discussed over all canons which were passed before and admitted for the church of Africa the following canons of the 14 synods:

**A.** The Synod of Carthage 348
The Synod of Carthage 390
The Synod of Carthage 393
The Synod of Carthage 401 June 16

The Synod of Carthage 401 Sept13
The Synod of Carthage 403
The Synod of Carthage 404
The Synod of Carthage 405
The Synod of Carthage 507
The Synod of Carthage 409
The Synod of Carthage 410
The Synod of Carthage 418

**B.** The Synod of Hippo 393

**C.** The Synod of Mileve

### 3.8. The Canons of the Fathers

The Holy Fathers of the church who have issued different canons are the following:

a. Dionysius of Alexandria (247-265)-4 canons
b. Peter of Alexandria (300-311)-15 canons
c. Gregory of Neo-Caesarea (328-373)-3 canons
d. Basil the Great (370-378)-92 canons
e. Gregory of Nyssa (372-ca-395)-8 canon
f. Gregory the theologian (372-ca-390)-1 canon
g. Amphilochius of Iconium (374—400)-1canon
h. Timothy of Alexandria (381-385)-18 canons
i. Cyril of Alexandria (412-444)-5 canons
j. Theophilos of Alexandria (385-412)-14 canons
k. Gennadius of Constantinople (458-471)-1 canon
l. Cyprian of Carthage (248-258)-1 canon.

### 3.9. A List of Criteria for the Canonization of Saints in the Orthodox Church

Canonization was always considered by the Church to be the fact of the work of God's holiness in the Church, revealed through a graceful ascetic of righteousness. This is why at all times the main condition for canonization was true sanctification and holiness of a righteous person. Metropolitan Juvenalian of Krutetsk and

Kolomenskoe stated the following criteria of the Orthodox ascetics' holiness in his report during the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church:

a. Church's faith in the holiness of the canonizing ascetics as people, who have pleased God and related to the coming of the Son of God on earth and the preaching of the Holy Gospel (canonization of forefathers, fathers, prophets and apostles).

b. Martyrdom for Christ and torments for Christ's faith (canonization of martyrs and confessors).

c. Miracles performed through the prayers to the saint or by their Holy Relics (canonization of venerable saints, silentiary saints, pillar ascetics, passion-bearers, fool-for-Christ saints etc.)

d. High hierarchal service in the Church.

f. Special service to the Church and God's people.

g. Virtuous, righteous and holy life.

h. In the 17th century, according to Patriarch Nektarios, the following three things were acknowledged as the reasons of people's true holiness:

1. irreproachable/*blameless* Orthodox faith;
2. performing all the virtues and fighting for faith even with his life;
3. revealing supernatural signs and miracles by God.

i. Often it happened so that glorifying of a saint by people was considered the evidence of his holiness even during his lifetime.

Although there were many reasons for canonization of saints in various periods of the Church history, one thing remained unchanged: canonization of saints is the work of God's holiness; it has always occurred with the blessing and according to the will of the Church.

### 3.9.1. Requirements for Sainthood in Roman Catholic Church

a. waiting for five years
b. becoming a 'servant of God'
c. showing proof of a life of 'heroic virtue'
d. Verifying miracles
e. Canonisation

## CHAPTER Four

## HOLY SCRIPTURES

### 4.1. The Canon of SCRIPTURES

All Scriptures are written with the inspiration of the spirit of God or are the breath of God. They are also described as Holy Books containing the word of God (Fiteha-Negest Art. 2) Illustrating that Holy Books are breath of God or are written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God the Apostles St. Paul sates in 2 Timothy 3:16 “all Scriptures is God-breathed and is useful for teaching rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.” Saint Cyril of Alexandria also wrote that “Holy Books are the breaths of God.” (Faith of Fathers 78:67). Hence, all that is written in the Scriptures is the absolute truth. Nothing can be added or deducted from it. It can neither be modified nor changed. It was written by Holy men guided by the Spirit of God. (2 Pet. 1:20 Mat. 5:18, Luke 16:17).

It is written that there were times when the Lord either revealed himself, made His voice heard or acted through the one that he willed and commanded "Write down these Words” (Exodus 34:27, Deut. 31:19, Isaiah 8:1) 81 are the Old Testament and New Testament Books which have been accepted as canonical books of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church.

The 85th canon of the Apostolic Constitution read like this: To all you Clergymen and Laymen let the following books be venerable and sacred: Of the Old Testament, the Five of Moses Namely, **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers,** and **Deuteronomy**; the one of Jesus of Nave (Commonly called Joshua in English); the one of Judges; the one of Ruth; the four of the Kingdoms; two Paralipomena of the Book of Days; Two of Esdras; one of Esther; three of the Maccabees; one of Job; one Psalter (commonly called the Psalms in English and also in Greek); three of Solomon, Namely, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs; twelve of the Prophets; one of Isaiah; one of Jeremiah; one of Ezekiel; one of Daniel; outside of these it is Permissible for you to recount in addition thereto also the Wisdom of very learned Sirach by way of teaching your younger folks. Our own books, that is to say, those of the New Testament, comprising four Gospels, Namely, that of Matthew, of Mark, of Luke, and of John; fourteen Epistles of Paul; two Epistles of Peter, three Epistles of John; one of James; one of Jude; two Epistles of Clement; and the Injunctions addressed to you Bishops through me, Clement, in eight

books, which ought not to be divulged to all on account of the secret matters they contain) and the Acts of us Apostles.

On this base the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has the largest Bible of all. The Ethiopia Old Testament comprises the books of the Hebrew Bible as well as all of the deuterocanonical books listed above, along with Jubilees, I Enoch, and Joseph ben Gorion's (josippon's) medieval history of the Jews and other nations. The new Testament canon is made up of thirty-five books, joining to the usual twenty-seven books eight additional texts, namely four sections of church order from a compilation called Sinodos, two sections from the Ethiopic Book of the Covenant, Ethiopic Clement, and Ethiopic Didascalia. Some scholars argued that the NT is only twenty-seven books, but then the Old Testament books are divided differently so that they make up 54 books instead of 46. In both cases the total number of books comes to 81.

### 4.1.1. The Canon Approved By the Synod of Laodicea (C.A.D. 363)

Canon 59: Let neither private psalms nor any uneconomical books be read in church, but only the canonical ones of the New and Old Testament. Can. 60. [After listing the books of the Old Testament, the canon continues:] And these are the books of the New Testament: four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles, seven Catholic Epistles, namely, one of James, two of Peter, three of John, one of Jude; fourteen Epistles of Paul, one of James, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, one to the Ephesians, one to the Philippians, one to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Hebrews, two to Timothy, one to Titus, and one to Philemon.

### 4.1.2.The Canon of Athanasius (A.D. 367) From Athanasius 'Thirty-Ninth Festal Epistle (A.D. 367).

Again [after a list of the Old Testament books] it is not tedious to speak of the [books] of the New Testament. These are, the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. After these, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles called Catholic, of the seven apostles: of James, One; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul the apostle, written in this order: the first, to the Romans; then, two

to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians; then, to the Philippians; then, to the Colossians; after these, two of the Thessalonians; and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastl, that to Philemon. And besides, the Revelation of John. These are fountains of Salvation, that the who thirsts may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone the teaching of godliness is proclaimed. *Let no one add to these; let nothing be taken away from them. . .*

### 4.1.3. The Canon of Gregory of Nazianzus (A.D. 329-89)

This canon, included among Gregory's poems (I, xii. 5 ff.), was ratified by the Trullan Synod in 692. It is in iambic verse, the lineation of which (but not the rhythm) is preserved, so far as possible, in the translation. Only the New Testament part is given here. [List to books of the Old Testament….]. But now count also [the books] of the New mystery; Matthew indeed wrote for the Hebrews the wonderful works of Christ, and mark for Italy, Luke for Greece, John, the great preacher, for all, walking in heaven. Then the Acts of the wise apostles, And fourteen Epistles of Paul, and seven ecumenical [Epistles], of which James is one, Two of Peter, three of John again. And Jude's is the seventh. You have all. If there is any besides these, it is not among the genuine [books].

### 4.1.4. The Canon Approved By The Third Synod of Carthage (A.D. 397)

The first council that accepted the present canon of the books of the New Testament was they Synod of Hippo Regius in North Africa (A.D. 393); the acts of this council, however, are lost. A brief summary of the acts was read at and accepted by the Synod of Carthage, A.D. 397. Can. 24. Besides the canonical Scriptures, nothing shall be read in church under the name of divine Scriptures. Moreover, the canonical Scriptures are these: (then follows a list of Old Testament books). The (books of the) New Testament: the Gospels. four books; the Acts of the Apostles, one book; the Epistles of Paul, thirteen, of the same to the Hebrews one Epistle, of Peter, two of John, apostle, three; of James, one: of Jude, one; the Revelation of John. Concerning the confirmation of this canon, the transmarine Church shall be consulted. On the anniversaries of martyrs, their acts shall also be read.

### 4.1.5. The Canonization of the Holy Scriptures

**A. Clement (1st Century C.E.):** the third bishop of Rome and author of a letter (1 Clement) written to the church at Corinth about 95 C.E.

**B. Ignatius (ca, 35-107 C.E.):** Bishop of Antioch in Syria and author of letters to several churches; Ephesians, Magnasians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrmeans. He also wrote a letter to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna,

**C. Muratorian Canon:** The oldest extant list of New Testament writings, discovered in the 18th Century by L.A. Muratori in an 8th Century manuscript. The list generally thought to date from the 2nd Century.

**D. Tatian (2nd Century C.E.):** A native of Assyria, Tatian was a Christain apologist and author of the Diatessaron, a history of the life of Christ compiled from the four gospels and used in the Syriac church until the 5th Century C.E.):

**E. Irenaeus (Ca. 130-200 C.E.):** Bishop of Lyon, Gaul (France). Around AD 185, Irenaeus claimed that there were exactly four Gospels, no more and no less, as a touchstone of orthodoxy. He argued that it was illogical to reject Acts of the Apostles but accept the Gospel of Luke, as both were from the same author. In Against Heresies 3.12.12[7] he ridiculed those who think they are wiser than the Apostles because they were still under Jewish influence. This was crucial to refuting Marcion's anti-Judaizing, as Acts gibes honor to James, Peter, John and Paul alike. At the time, Jewish Christians tended to honor James (a prominent Christian in Jerusalem described in the New Testament as an apostle and pillar, and by Eusebius and other church historians as the first Bishop of Jerusalem) but not Paul, while Pauline Christianity tended to honor Paul more than James.

**F. Eusebius (CA. 260-340 C.E.):** Bishop of Caesarea. His Ecclesiastical History, a multivolume history of the church down to ca. 300, was published ca. 325 C.E.

**G. Constantine (CA. 274-337 C.E.):** Roman emperor whose policy was to unite the Christian church to the secular State by the closest possible ties. His laws and letters are a chief primary source for the relations of Christianity and the State from 313 on wards.

**H. Council of Nicea (325 C.E.):** The first ecumenical counsel of the Christian church called by Emperor Constantine who feared that disputes within the church would cause disorder in the empire. The Nicene Creed was a result.

## 4.2. THE NECESSARY OF CANON FOR THE BIBLE

So long as the living voice of prophets and apostles was to be heard, there was no pressing need of a canon of Scripture. Under the inspiration of God they knew what was inspired, and what was not. But as soon as these men were dead—and with them inspiration to these particular people ceased—it became necessary that their writings be gathered together to know what were their messages to the churches, and to preserve those writings from corruption.

Another reason why a canon was necessary was to preclude the possibility of additions to the number of inspired works. Already numerous writings were extant purporting to be inspired. Hence the question arose, Which of these are really inspired? What is the extent of inspired literature?

Still another and potent reason for the formation of the canon lay in the fact that the Emperor Diocletian issued in A.D. 302 an edict that all the sacred books should be destroyed by fire. Hence the question arose as to which books rightly deserved the name of inspired and sacred.

### A. OLD TESTAMENT CANON.

The formation of the Old Testamen canon was gradual, and was composed of the writings which spread over many centuries. The approximate time line for the formation of the OT canon is 1600-1400 years. Moses commanded that the books of the law be placed in the ark. (Deuteronomy 31:9,26, Cf. 2 Kings 22:8 Joshua 24:26; 2 Samuel 10:25.)

Then were gathered and placed in the temple the historical and prophetical books from Joshua to David's time. On the construction of the temple Solomon deposited in it the earlier books (2Kings 22:3, Isaiah 34:16), and enriched the collection with inspired writings from his own pen, and also some prophetic writings. So we find Daniel (9:2 R.V.) referring to "the books," Isaiah to "The book of the Lord" (29:18, 34: 16).

After Solomon's day a succession of prophets arose, Jonah, Amos, Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Micab, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, and Habakkuk.

These all flourished before the destruction of the temple, and enlarged the collection of existing sacred books by valuable additions.

After the Babylonian capture, when the temple was rebuilt and worship re-established, then doubtless were added the writings of Haggai and Zechariah. About fifty years after the temple was rebuilt Ezra made a collection of the sacred writings (Neh. 8:2,3,14). To this collection were added the writings of Nehemiah, Malachi, and Ezra. It is a fact of history that Nehemiah gathered the "Acts of the kings and the Prophets, and those of David," when founding a library for the second temple, 432 B.C. (See 2 Maccabees 2:13)

The canon of the Old Testament in the form we now have it, was the work of Ezra and the Great Synagogue. This fact is borne witness to in the most ancient Jewish writings. The Great Synargogue was composed of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. There is no doubt but that such a collection of books existed in the time of our Lord and the apostles (Luke 24:27,44).

**B. NEW TESTAMENT CANON**

The persecution of Diocletian (302 A.D.) brought to the front the question of the sacred literature of the church. The persecutors demanded that the Scriptures should be given up. This the Christians refused to do. Hence the question became urgent—What books are apostolic? The answer lies in our New Testament. There were at that time many false and spurious gospels and epistles. Careful, prayerful, and deliberate examination, however, proved which were genuine and which were false. The genuine were received by the church as the inspired writings of the apostles and others whose names the books bear. Thus arose the New Testament canon.

There is much evidence to indicate that the Canon of the Old Testament was fixed by the about the year 400 B.C. largely as a result of the work of Ezra and Nehemiah and a council of Jews known as the Great Synagogue, which met after the return from the Babylonian captivity. Long before that time, however, many of the books we now have in the Old Testament had been agreed upon as inspired. In the case of the New. Testament the fixing of the Canon was done mainly at the council at Carthage in 387 A.D., although the

evidence points to the selection of the books as early as about the year 100A.D.

### 4.3. The List of OT and NT accepted by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

**A. Old Testament Book**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Genesis | 1 |
| 2. | Exodus | 1 |
| 3. | Leviticus | 1 |
| 4. | Numbers | 1 |
| 5. | Deuteronomy | 1 |
| 6. | Joshua 2 | 1 |
| 7. | Judges | 1 |
| 8. | Ruth | 1 |
| 9. | Ydith | 1 |
| 10. | 1st and 2nd Samuel | 1 |
| 11. | 1st and 2nd kings | 1 |
| 12. | 1st Chronicles | 1 |
| 13. | 2nd Chronicles | 1 |
| 14. | Ezra and Nehemiah | 1 |
| 15. | Ezra Sutuel | 1 |
| 16. | Esther | 1 |
| 17. | Tobit | 1 |
| 18. | Maccabean | 1 |
| 19. | 2nd and 3rd Maccabean | 1 |
| 20. | Job | 1 |
| 21. | Psalms of David | 1 |
| 22. | Proverbs of Solomon | 1 |
| 23. | Tegsats (Adomitions) Of Solomon | 1 |
| 24. | Ecclesiastes | 1 |
| 25. | Song of Songs | 1 |
| 26. | The Wisdom of Solomon | 1 |
| | **Total** | **26** |

**B. The Books of the Prophets**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Isaiah | 1 |
| 2. | Jeremiah | 1 |
| 3. | Ezekiel | 1 |
| 4. | Daneil | 1 |
| 5. | Hosea | 1 |
| 6. | Amos | 1 |
| 7. | Micah | 1 |
| 8. | Joel | 1 |
| 9. | Obadiah | 1 |
| 10. | Jonah | 1 |
| 11. | Nahum | 1 |
| 12. | Habakkuk | 1 |
| 13. | Zephamiah | 1 |
| 14. | Haggai | 1 |
| 15. | Zechariah | 1 |
| 16. | Malachi | 1 |
| 17. | Sirak | 1 |
| 18. | Joseph Ben Gurion | 1 |
| 19. | Jubilee | 1 |
| 20. | Henock | 1 |
| | **Total** | **20** |
| | **Sub Total 20 + 26 =** | **46** |

**B. Book of the New Testament**

**The Four Gospels**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Matthew | 1 |
| 2. | Mark | 1 |
| 3. | Luke | 1 |
| 4. | John | 1 |
| 5. | Act | 1 |

**C. Epistles**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Romans | 1 |
| 2. | 1 Corinthians | 1 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3. | 2 Corinthians | 1 |
| 4. | Galatians | 1 |
| 5. | Ephesians | 1 |
| 6. | Philippians | 1 |
| 7. | Colossians | 1 |
| 8. | 1 Thessalonians | 1 |
| 9. | 2 Thessalonians | 1 |
| 10. | 1 Timothy | 1 |
| 11. | 2 Timothy | 1 |
| 12. | Titus | 1 |
| 13. | Philemon | 1 |
| 14. | Hebrews | 1 |

**D. The Seven Epistles**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | 1 Peter | 1 |
| 2. | 2 Peter | 1 |
| 3. | 1 John | 1 |
| 4. | 2 John | 1 |
| 5. | 3 John | 1 |
| 6. | James (Jacob) | 1 |
| 7. | Jude | 1 |
| 8. | Revelations | 1 |

**E. Books of Order**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Zion | 1 |
| 2. | Orders | 1 |
| 3. | “Gitzew” | 1 |
| 4. | Abtlis | 1 |
| 5. | 2 Books of Covenant | 1 |
| 6. | Cliemintos | 1 |
| 7. | Didascalia | 1 |
| | **Total** | **35** |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Books of the Old Testament | 46 |
| 2. Books of the New Testament | 35 |
| **Total** | **81** |