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ORTHODOXY AND HERESY
ACCORDING TO SAINT EPIPHANIUS OF CYPRUS

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MA THESIS

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ABSTRACT

ORTHODOXY AND HERESY ACCORDING TO SAINT EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS

BY

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Graduate of the University of Athens

Heresy and Orthodoxy have been much discussed terms in theological studies from ancient times to the present day and various opinions and beliefs have been expressed on them. In this thesis, we have tried to gather the thought of Epiphanius on these terms on the basis of his works *Panarion* and *Angyrotos*. We have tried to let the texts of our author lead us to clear conclusions and this has meant that we made extensive use of the writings under examination. In this effort we are conscious that we have stood closer to Epiphanius' own methodology, namely his use of relevant texts, whereby the historical continuity of the faith of the Church, which lies at the root of her experience, is more adequately exposed.

The thesis comprises three parts, dealing consecutively with a) Epiphanius' life and work, b) Epiphanius' views of Heresy and c) Epiphanius' views of Orthodoxy. In part a) we provide a brief account of Epiphanius' person and historical context, as well as his perception concerning his heresiology. In part b) we explore Epiphanius' sources for his account of heresy, his methodology, as well as his views on such central topics as the beginnings and development of heresy, the difference between schism and heresy, truth and heresy, church and heresy, Scripture and heresy, the devil and heresy and, finally the meaning of heresy suggested by the appellations which Epiphanius uses in his descriptions of it. In part c) we provide a general introduction on Epiphanius' understanding of orthodoxy, an account of the presuppositions of orthodoxy and the main contents of the orthodox faith as Epiphanius expounds them which comprise the topics of Theology/Triadology, Christology and Ecclesiology.

In our conclusion we stress that, according to St. Epiphanius, Orthodoxy is the divinely provided and regulated truth which precedes the ecclesiastical life of the community and is expressed via all the manifestations of this life. By the same token, Heresy is any deviation from this divine and primordial truth as appropriated through and manifested in ecclesiastical life. As far as priority goes in respect to Orthodoxy and Heresy Epiphanius' view is contrary to that of Walter Bauer. For Epiphanius Orthodoxy precedes Heresy. The difference between these two views seems to lie in their choice of context. Bauer explores his topic in the context of historical and 'scientific' methods to which he subordinates his ecclesiastical data. Epiphanius develops his topic in the context of ecclesiastical tradition and life without neglecting the historical and scientific data. In Epiphanius' view ecclesiastical life and history do not constitute a field of friction and confrontation between diverse ideologies and interpretations. Rather they constitute a living and unbreakable foundation of orthodoxy, which is expressed in the theory and practice of the Church.



Ὁ ἍΓΙΟΣ ΣΕΦΑΝΙΟΣ

ΕΥΕΡΟΥ



1702

Hanc S. EPIPHANII, Episcopi Constantiæ Cypri, imaginem depinxit Joannes Adolus Leuosi² enjis naviū indiligens pictor ex peruetusto quodam exemplari quod extat in Constantinopolitano anti-
 quissimo monasterio Sula dicto, vulgò τὰ ἕξ μαρμάρια, id est sex marmora appellant. illud nunc
 Armeniis annuo inposito census habitandum Tyrannus permittit: olim Patriarchium fuit.

**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED WITH FILIAL LOVE
TO OUR SPIRITUAL FATHER, GERON AND VERY REV.
ARCHIMANDRITE ATHANASIOS FATHER SUPERIOR OF
THE HOLY MONASTERY OF TROODITISSA
AND ALSO TO OUR NATURAL PARENTS
ANDREW AND PANAGIOTA**

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

INTRODUCTION

PART ONE: EPIPHANIUS' LIFE AND WORK

1. The historical person
2. The historical context
3. Epiphanius' position concerning his heresiology

PART TWO: EPIPHANIUS' VIEWS OF HERESY

1. General introduction
2. The sources of Epiphanius' account of heresy
3. Epiphanius' methodology
4. The beginning and development of heresy
5. Distinction between schism and heresy
6. Truth and heresy
7. Church and heresy
8. Holy Scripture and heresy
9. The Devil and heresy
10. Epiphanius' appellations of heresy as clues to its meaning

PART THREE: EPIPHANIUS' VIEWS OF ORTHODOXY

1. General introduction
2. The presupposition of sound Theology
3. Theology
4. Christology
5. Ecclesiology

EPILOGUE

SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

PROLOGUE

The study of the works of any of the Fathers of the Church, especially that of St. Epiphanius Archbishop of Cyprus, also presupposes faith and spiritual experience similar to those of the Father concerned. Being mindful of this fact we have striven, within our feeble mental powers to gain access to the spirit and mind of the Saint and comprehend His deeper, spiritual thoughts on the two topics we had to deal with in the present study, namely: Heresy and Orthodoxy.

Heresy and Orthodoxy have been much discussed terms in theological studies, from ancient times to the present day and varying opinions and beliefs have been expressed on them. A most critical era for those terms was that of St. Epiphanius, i.e. the 4th century. During that era, the Church was challenged with varying opinions and views from various persons and groups, and was forced to define more precisely the correct "view and opinion" (δόξα και γνώμη) over against the erroneous ones. It was this agonising effort of the saints that led the Church to define the terms of Heresy and Orthodoxy.

In this thesis, we have tried to gather the thought of Epiphanius on Heresy and Orthodoxy on the basis of his works "Panarion" and "Anagyrotos". We have tried to let the texts of our author lead us to clear conclusions. This has meant that we had to make extensive use of his writings. This effort has proved quite fruitful, and stands closer to St. Epiphanius' methodology, the use of relevant texts from heretical or orthodox circles in order to present the historical continuity of the one faith of the Church which lies at the root of her experience.

Our sense of responsibility towards the Saint has led us to immerse ourselves in this topic with both awe and care. Thus we found that in Theology Saint Epiphanius stresses the variety and diversity of those facets of the life of the Church which refer to unity. If in our effort to comprehend the thoughts of the Saint, we had to lose either of these two conditions - diversity or unity (ποικιλία και ένότης) - then we would have surely lost the essence of truth. We hope that our investigation of these works may lead to the correct theological and ecclesiastical way and in turn, to truth with certainty.

During the course of this research, a great but enjoyable effort, as well as material support from various persons and moral encouragement were required. We would, therefore,

like to express our gratitude, to our much respectable Geron, the Very. Rev. Arcimandrite Athanasius, our Father Superior at the Holy Monastery of Our All - holy Lady Trooditissa of Cyprus, especially to our Most Reverend Bishop of Limassol Chrysanthos, and last but not least to our Supervisor Very. Rev. Protopresbyter Dr. George Dragas of the University of Durham for their multifarious support and love displayed during that course.

Most of all, however, we are deeply grateful to our holy Father St. Epiphanius Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, whose living presence during the period of our studies at Durham was our perfect guide and patron. May the One God in Holy Trinity, through Saint Epiphanius' prayers enlighten every man on the way of Orthodoxy.

ARCHIMANDRITE CRISTOPHOROS TSIAKKAS

DURHAM Easter Term 1995

INTRODUCTION

Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, an ecclesiastical and historical figure of the 4th century, was a very important and significant man of the Church. Constant references to him and his activities were made during his own life time. Although he was not the "*greatest*" author and intellectual of his time, he was a lion in defence of the apostolic and orthodox faith of the Church with all the strength of his gifted intellect and holy soul.

Several of the more recent researchers have described Epiphanius as an illiterate, naive, fanatical, reactionary and shallow heresiologist and characterised his greatest work as an "*insult*", rather than as a presentation and refutation of the known heresies of his time.¹ It seems that such a view is due to the fact that modern researchers have studied the works of Epiphanius not so much in order to draw out the spirit of the Father and his agonising effort for the defence of the truth, as to recover the historical facts, which, for one reason or another, are useful for scientific and historical research.²

¹ See for example the following comments: G. Florovsky. *Eastern Fathers of the 4th century*, ed. Pournara, Salonica pp 367-369 (in Greek); Edward James M. , *A History of Iconoclastic Controversy*, London, p. 134; F. M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, SCM Press LTD, p.133.

² For example see the following works: a) Marc. Bregman, "The parable of the lame and the blind: Epiphanius' quotation from an apocryphon to Ezekiel", *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. 4 (1991) pp 125-138. b) J. M. Lieu, "Epiphanius on the Scribes and Pharisees", *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. 39 (1988) pp 509-524. c) Elisabeth A. Clark "New Perspectives on the Origenist Controversy: Human Embodiment and Ascetic Strategies", *Church History*, vol. 59 (1990) pp.

The recent translations of his works may help to reverse such a view. The fact, however, that no systematic work on the life and works of St. Epiphanius has been written to this day cannot be overlooked; there exist only certain isolated treatises and these follow the above-mentioned trend. Even the recent and, in some sense, remarkable work of the French author and professor Aline Pourkier, "*L' Heresiologie chez Epiphane de Salamine*", adopts the same attitude as older researchers. Epiphanius is considered important only because through his lengthy work has saved historical facts which would have remained unknown had they not been included in his works.³ In addition, Pourkier does not try to understand the intentions and pursuits of Epiphanius or to study his theology, but rather to determine exactly his sources and methodology. Indeed, she seems to believe that Epiphanius can become known through a literary presentation and analysis presentation of his writings.⁴

145-162. d) Ian Hazlett, "...Epiphanius, the great collector and analyser of heresies" *Early Christianity*, SPCK, London 1993, p. 146. Without wishing to minimise the value of such approaches, we feel that they do not do justice to Epiphanius' real importance. We agree with F.M. Young that, "a good deal of effort has been expended on tracing Epiphanius' sources and estimating their reliability; but very little work has treated Epiphanius as interesting in himself". See her work, "Did Epiphanius know what he meant by Heresy?", *Studia Patristica*, ed. E.A. Livingstone, Pergamon Press, vol. XVII, part one (1982) p.199.

³ Aline Pourkier, *L' Heresiologie chez Epiphane de Salamine*, Beauchesne, 1992, p.19.

⁴ see above p.20: " Tous ces obstacles expliquent aisement que cet auteur soit sans doute le seul des écrivains chrétiens importants du IV^e siècle à n' avoir jamais encore fait l' objet d' un ouvrage d' ensemble. C' était la une lacune à combler et tel est l' objet de notre travail. Pour le mener à bien, nous avons choisi de nous attacher chez Epiphane à l' aspect le plus central de son oeuvre: **L' heresiologie, c' est-à-dire la manière dont il procède pour exposer et régler une hérésie**" . And pp. 22-23, 24-25.

If one is to penetrate the mind of Epiphanius and define it, one should not aim merely at a definition or view, which can "*rightly*" come out of the reading and study of his works. One should rather strive, to discern and to present, on the one hand his spirit and on the other, the deeper motives of his mind.

If this aim is not considered to be an indispensable assumption for the study of his works, then sooner or later, the conclusion will be negative. For this reason, the work of Epiphanius must be approached bearing in mind a) the historical person of Epiphanius, b) the place of Epiphanius in the reality of his historical context, c) the position and thought of Epiphanius concerning the specific methodology that he uses.⁵

⁵ Cf. N. Matsoukas, *Orthodoxy and heresy*, ed. Pournara, Salonica 1992, p.143. "Theology, then, takes history as a whole, tradition and contemporary reality. It cannot be expressed differently according to its authentic contents".

PART ONE

EPIPHANIUS' LIFE AND WORK

CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORICAL PERSON

The 4th century during which Epiphanius lived and acted, is a century of exciting changes, both in the political sector and the intellectual one.⁶ The Roman Empire was not capable anymore of following the expansion of the Christian faith. Persecutions could not stop the tremendous development of ecclesiastical life. The Roman Gantlets, through the illusion and the self-delusion of a strong empire, had believed that they would be able to control or even to destroy the growing power of the Church. However, at exactly that time, the triumphant exodus of the Christians from the catacombs took place.

The devotion of the Christians to their faith, till death, the austere and exact implementation of evangelical messages and their general social contribution to and presence in the Gentiles' world was rewarded by God, through the Great Emperor Constantine.

Thus since A.D 324 the hostility against Christianity grew weak and Christianity gained a protector in the autocrat Constantine and became stronger in the world. In this manner, Christianity had also gained political strength and great importance. The

⁶ G. Florovsky, *Eastern Fathers of the 4th century*, ed. Pournara, Salonica, p.174

reason for this was the fact that those converted to the Christian faith had started to increase more and more. Their number had increased so much that they were mentioned as millions.⁷ A second reason for the power of Christianity was the fact that it had managed to enter all the social strata of the decaying Gentile world and to show great vitality. The rise of the Church from the depths of the earth, and its rapid expansion began to bring the first difficulties. Its leaders were so surprised that "*they had almost lost the measure of the faith*". The great need for better and more effective organisation; the responsibility for the elucidation of the faith and the formulation of dogmas; the increasing trend towards heresy; the philosophical spirit of that time which mingled with the teaching of the Church; the relationship of dependence of the Church on the state and many other staggering problems. These were the challenges which had to be faced by the Bishops of the time of Epiphanius.

It was Heresy alone that had literally shaken and openly threatened the structure and teaching of the Church.

The faithful were seeking to reconcile the evangelical truth with the philosophical and cosmological facts of their time. The philosophical atmosphere was charged with the positions and views of Neoplatonism and Aristotelianism.

Many ecclesiastical authors, who lived in this complex religious and philosophical atmosphere, fell into erroneous beliefs in trying to provide answers to theological problems.

The two big heretical tendencies which mainly caused problems to the Church as a whole at that time were Gnosticism and Arianism. In their wake they left behind various offshoots which resulted in the continuous increase of various heresies.

⁷ V.K. Stephanides, *Ecclesiastical History*, Athens 1978, p.139.

The teaching of Christianity was now a new answer to the eternal quest (ἀπὸ αἰώνων ἀναζήτησις) of man for salvation. The humanisation of God and the divinisation of man were now a reality. Human nature was restored to its ancient and original beauty, and creation was renewed with the consummation and salvation of Christ. In the course of time this restoration of the entire creation (of human nature and of the world) was continued and extended with the body of Christ, that is, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of that time.

Those theologians who remained faithful to this tradition and teaching of the Church and created an orthodox theology were declared Fathers and Teachers. On the contrary, those who defied this tradition (ἀθετοῦν τὴν παράδοσιν) and relied on secular wisdom to explain truth, fell into erroneous beliefs and were declared heretics.

Epiphanius of Cyprus was a pure traditionalist, or and or, if you like, a "fanatical" supporter of this truth. It is for this reason that he enjoyed such fame and prestige during his lifetime as very few men of the Church did. It is also for the same reason that he is recognised as a Father of the one undivided Church.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Epiphanius, according to ancient ecclesiastical historians, was born in Besanduce of Palestine.⁸ His parents were Jewish and they brought up their children according to the law of Moses. Epiphanius lived in the fear of God from childhood. This is depicted very nicely in a simple incident of his life concerning the sale of the beast of burden (donkey), as it is described by his biographer.

When his father died and his family was in an embarrassing financial situation, his mother decided to sell their little donkey, "*for the bodily needs of their house*". Epiphanius did not want to do that because the beast of burden "*is badly trained*". But "*having called upon God who bestowed on Moses grace (τοῦ δοῦναι χάριν τῷ Μωϋσεῖ) to perform the greatest of signs in the face of Pharaoh, he proceeded in accordance with his mother's orders*". Finally, however, he did not carry out the sale because, as he confessed to the buyer, "*I was afraid that God might curse me and punish me through the curse that was born in me*".⁹

Living in this religious spirit, Epiphanius was educated "*strictly and with hard work in the spirit of the law and the elements of the Jewish religion*"¹⁰ by a certain Jew who was a Lawyer and who was called Trypho. His education did not stop with

⁸ cf. Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.32 PG 67,1390A

⁹ PG 41,25BD

¹⁰ PG 41,29B

Trypho. Despite the difficulties, his thirst for knowledge and for the best possible education continue until he reached the point of being called "*quinguelingual*" (Πεντάγλωττος)¹¹ by Jerome.

When he was still young, he became acquainted with Christian monks and decided to embrace the Christian faith. He did not do this at random or by chance, but as his biographer notes, he and his sister "*fell upon their faces and clasped the feet of Lucian crying and saying; we beg you father make us become Christians*".¹²

He becomes a monk at the age of sixteen. Living near the well-known hermit Hilarion, "*He thrived in Christ's favour and best manner*".¹³ The austere life of the hermit was followed by Epiphanius throughout his lifetime.

His relationship with the Great Hilarion and later with the legendary Athanasius the Great as well as the saintliness of his life, caused him to be declared Bishop of the Apostolic Church of Cyprus about A.D 367. His prelacy of more than forty years in the Episcopal throne of Cyprus rendered the island one of the most important centres of the Christian community. The role that he played in the growth of the church of Cyprus was such that he was justly considered as "*Father of Cypriot Autocephaly*".¹⁴

It is also important for the life of Epiphanius to mention the fact that he was endowed by God with the excellent gift (χάρισμα) of accomplishing signs of God

¹¹ Jerome, *Adversus Rufinum* 3.6. F. M. Young, *From Nicea to Chalcedon*, SCM PRESS, 1992, p.132. For the relationship between Epiphanius and Jerome see the important work, J. N. D Kelly, *Jerome, His Life, Writings, and Controversies*, London 1975, pp. 80-82, 195-203 and passim.

¹² PG 41,32C

¹³ PG 41,33C

¹⁴ Benedict Englezakis, *Minutes of the 2nd International Conference on Cyprus*, vol.2, Nicosia 1986, pp. 303-312.

since the beginning of his christian life. The ancient historian Sozomenus mentions *"that around this time Epiphanius was watching over the Cypriot metropolis. He not only proved distinguished in virtues of the community but in many other marvels too while alive, and when he died, God bestowed honours on him"*.¹⁵ At another point, the same historian mentions that when the Saint arrived in Constantinople to talk with the Makroi, (the Tall Brethren) the child of the King happened to be ill. The miraculous fame of the Father that had reached the royal palace made the mother send a servant to Epiphanius to ask him to pray for her child.¹⁶

This privilege, together with his saintliness and an ^{kn} uncompromised devotion to the orthodox faith, made him famous and great in the world of that time. *"Rarely did any religious event of some significance occur during his long life in which he did not feature as a famous person"*, writes John Hacket.¹⁷ As we have already mentioned Epiphanius enjoyed fame and prestige during his lifetime as very few men of the Church did. Indeed *"he had such a reputation for saintliness and spirituality that not only did he attract monks but also many visitors, whilst the Arians who were prevailing then were reluctant to approach him and harm him"*.¹⁸

Epiphanius, had to encounter through this fame and as a shepherd of the Church, the various dangers that were springing up from the cruel mind-set of the 4th century. This mind-set demanded on the one hand the coexistence of Christian truth

¹⁵ Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 67,1501A

¹⁶ See above PG 67,1553D-1556A

¹⁷ John Hacket, *History of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus*, Athens, 1923 vol. 1, p.21,

¹⁸ Protopresbyter G. D. Dragas, Memorandum to the Athens reprint of J. P. Migne PG 41, Athens 1992, p.16.

with the various philosophical tendencies and on the other hand the reconciliation of Christianity with the ancient Greco-Roman world. He refused to compromise between what his Christian conscience dictated to him, and what was contrary to the truth. This led him perhaps to some extremes, such as the polemic against Origen the "person who was driven insane by God" (θεήλατος), as he used to call him.¹⁹ This mistaken confrontation with the great and 'adamant' theologian of the 3rd century, was due to Theophilus' influence, which also set him against John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople.²⁰

Despite all this, his firm adherence to the apostolic tradition of the primitive Church ranks him among the few that remained supporters of Orthodoxy. For this reason his contemporaries do not hesitate to write: "*For not we alone, but all who hear of you, confess that the Saviour has raised you up for us in this generation as a new apostle and herald, a new John [the Baptist], to proclaim what ought to be observed by those who resolve on this course*".²¹

Epiphanius acquired his fame as an orthodox Father because of his sincere and correct faith. His unrelenting attitude rendered him so trustworthy and orthodox that justly Palladius in his letter to him admits that, "*when we were not able to find among us anyone capable of resolving the enquires and able to reveal to us the healthy faith, we were urged to refer the matter to your devoutness*".²² It is remarkable that this reputation of Epiphanius "*is declared and witnessed by reliable witnesses*".²³

¹⁹ PG 43,112B. K. Holl, I, 63,11. See also the work of Elizabeth A. Clark, "New Perspectives on the Origenist Controversy: Human Embodiment and Ascetic Strategies", *Church History*, vol. 59 (1990) pp 145-162.

²⁰ Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 67, 693C-708A.

²¹ Letter of Acacius and Paul to Epiphanius, PG 41,156C. K.Holl, I, 154,8.

Epiphanius was a brilliant witness of the ecclesiastical tradition based on the unshakeable foundation of the teaching of the Scriptures and of the sacred Tradition of the Church. He may have used a controversial method against heresies²⁴ but his firm stance on the ground of the ancient apostolic tradition made him "*Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, a most distinguished man of reverence in life*".²⁵ This was not due to his literary excellence, because surely nobody could maintain that Epiphanius was as important in philological matters as Chrysostom. Indeed according to Photios he was "*simple in speech and rather unpractised in Athenian education*".²⁶ What made him, however, a criterion of Orthodoxy and a successful opponent of impious heresies, or, "*in some occasions, the best one against plots*",²⁷ was his saintliness, as well as his clear stance on matters of faith.

Epiphanius did not have what many people considered as best education or great learning, that is, Greek philosophy. Nor did he have any official diplomas of secular wisdom. This, did not hinder him at all however, from obtaining other higher diplomas which cannot be achieved by many people. Since his childhood, he was taught and instructed by excellent monks. Having spent a lot of time in the study of sacred

²² Letter of Palladius to Epiphanius. PG 43,16B. K.Holl, I,4,4.

²³ Idem.

²⁴ This controversial method against heresies was not only a distinctive mark of Epiphanius but of all the Fathers, who had more or less taken it to themselves to refute all heretical erroneous beliefs. Cf. here Protopresbyter George D. Dragas, "Fathers and Heretics in St. Athanasius' *de sententia Dionysii*", *Church and Theology*, vol. 11, (1992) pp. 442-448, which shows that Athanasius was equally sharp and polemical. See also Aline Pourkier, op.cit. pp. 21-23

²⁵ Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 67, 1552A.

²⁶ Archbishop Photius of Constantinople, *Myriobiblos*, cxxii, PG 4,404.

²⁷ Idem.

writings and spiritual exercises "*he was most distinguished in monastic philosophy*".²⁸ His long life as a monk made his faith and will as strong as copper and steel. He became "*father of monks*" and founder of ascetic monasticism initially at his birthplace and later in Cyprus when he became Bishop there.²⁹ This monastic philosophy rendered him famous throughout the whole world. It is important that very soon "*he had become known everywhere*"³⁰ because of his virtue.

In addition, the fact that his name was associated with the names of men of the Church to whom the Church and history have given the adjective "GREAT", such as Athanasius of Alexandria, Basil of Caesarea, the hermit Hilarion etc., allows us to call him "GREAT" too³¹. The Great Basil writes that he had accepted the letters of Eriphanius as tokens of love and that he writes with theological precision (θεολογεῖ ἐπ' ἀκριβῶς) about the teaching of the persons of the Holy Trinity: "*It comforts my soul considerately, -wrote the Great Basil to the Great Eriphanius- i.e. what was added by your precision to the rest of what is theologised well and accurately; (παρά τῆς σῆς ἀκριβείας τοῖς λοιποῖς καλῶς καὶ ἀκριβῶς θεολογηθεῖσι)*

²⁸ Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 67,1392A

²⁹ PG 43,12A. K.Holl I,1. Hans Lietzmann, *A History of the Early Church* Vol. IV, *the Era of the Church Fathers*, Lutterworth Press London, 1955, p.164.

³⁰ see above Sozomenus, *Eccl. history*.

³¹ Festschrift Johannes Quasten, *Kyriakon*, Verlag Aschendorff Munster Westf, Vol. 1, p.96. Speaking of the companion of Cleopas, the author writes: "A marginal note in codex Mosquensis (Greg. ms. V; Sod. e 75), a copy of the Gospels dating from C. the ninth century, gives him the name Nathanael: "ὁ μετὰ Κλεοπᾶ Ναθαναήλ ἦν, ὡς ἐν Παναρίοις ὁ ΜΕΓΑΣ ἔφη, Ἐπιφάνιος. Κλεοπᾶς ἀνεψιός ἦν τοῦ σωτῆρος, δεύτερος ἐπίσκοπος Ἱεροσολύμων".- "The one with Cleopas was Nathanael, as the GREAT Eriphanius says in his Panarion. Cleopas was a cousin of the Saviour, the second bishop of Jerusalem".

namely that it is necessary to confess the Three Hypostases".³² So Epiphanius, as we see in this letter of Basil, stood next to the Great Fathers of Cappadocia (perhaps even becoming a pioneer) in upholding the exact and correct formulation of the orthodoxy dogmas.³³

In conclusion, we could say that Epiphanius was declared "*great*" because he had "*extreme piety and he was simple in manners*".³⁴ For this reason, his character and greatness go beyond even his own person. This is shown even in his confrontation with St. John Chrysostom, when he infringed illegally on the Episcopal jurisdiction of Chrysostom and conducted ordinations without his permission. The ancient ecclesiastical historian Socrates informs us that as soon as Chrysostom conveyed to him that "*his actions were out of order*" and that there was a real danger of him causing trouble and schism in the Church, he "*departed from the church discreetly*".³⁵

What we have seen so far, leads us readily to agree with the conclusion, that what modern scholars describe as fanaticism and casuist heresiology, had been by the Church and the contemporaries of Epiphanius rightly called "*a distinguished life made brilliant through reverent virtue*".³⁶

³² PG 32,952C

³³ Andreas Theodorou, "The teaching about the procession of the Holy Spirit by Cyril of Alexandria and Epiphanius of Cyprus", *Theology*, Vol. 45 (Athens 1974), p. 478: "The teaching concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit of Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus has a specific meaning and seriousness. This is because the holy Father, in fighting the various heresies which shook the ancient Church, especially those against the holy Trinity, emerges as a most brilliant witness in the field of the teaching of the Trinity, in the ecclesiastical tradition".

³⁴ Sozomenus, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 67,1392A.

³⁵ Idem. PG 67, 705

³⁶ Nicephorus Kallistos, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 146,937B

CHAPTER 3

EPIPHANIUS' POSITION CONCERNING HIS HERESIOLOGY

The case of Epiphanius presents us with a surprising phenomenon. In spite of the fact that he was not a great intellectual, he was able to become a systematic and apologetic theologian through his piety and to leave behind him a rich and valuable piece of work. One finds in this work the mixture of 'scientific' theology (collection of information data and evaluation) with 'popular' (lay) theology (simple expression of piety from within the tradition).

Epiphanius did not become an author just to create a piece of work, but, as all the great Fathers of Church, he wrote at a moment when the Church and its needs demanded this of him.

He sent many letters to various ecclesiastical and political bodies, which, unfortunately, have been lost, and in this way we have lost a valuable archive of texts testifying to the far-reaching contributions of this churchman.³⁷ In 376 he composed the *Panarion*, in response to a petition of two archimandrites and senior priests, Acacius and Paul, from the region of Carthage and Berria of the Coele Syria. The petition letter, which is cited at the beginning of the *Panarion* reveals the deep sorrow of the petitioners who were not able to visit Epiphanius personally in order to listen to

³⁷ See Protopresbyter G.D. Dragas, "Introduction and complete bibliography to Epiphanius" in his Memorandum to the Athens reprint of J. P. Migne *Patrologia Graeca*, Athens vol. 41, 1992, pp. 15-106.

him and learn these spiritual and holy words from his own lips. These petitioners view him as a new apostle, steeped in the original apostolic tradition, to whom they can address their spiritual request: "*All the brethren hope to be established by your prayer on their behalf. Since yours is a benefit given by God to apostles, we urge you to share it without compunction*".³⁸

A little earlier, in 374, he had written his first great work, *Angyrotos*, also in response to a petition by clergy and people from Pamphilia. These petitioners had asked Epiphanius to demonstrate the correct and healthy faith, because none among them was able to respond to such a request. They begged and prayed to this great champion of Orthodoxy, Epiphanius: "*Master save us. We ask your sincere and right faith, which good report brings forth and witnesses of worthy faith testify to and preach we wish you to describe the faith of the Holy Trinity through holy writings and wider and clearer description, and send this to us*".³⁹

Epiphanius also wrote "*About measures and weights*", after an application by the Persian priest Bardion, and "*About the twelve stones*", which he dedicated to Diodorus of Tyre in Phoenice. We shall not elaborate on his works because many researchers have written sufficiently about them.⁴⁰

³⁸ PG 41, 157B. K.Holl, I, 154,29

³⁹ PG 43, 16C. K.Holl, I,4, 7

⁴⁰ See the following works: Otto Bardenhewer, *Patrology*, 1980, pp. 310-315. Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, E. J. Brill, 1987, pp. IX-XXVII. Stylianos G. Papadopoulos, *Patrology*, Vol. II, Athens 1990, pp. 720-731. Schneemelcher, W., "Epiphanius von Salamis", *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, Herausgegeben von Theodor Klauser (Stuttgart, Anton Hiersemann), 5 (1962), pp. 909-927. Nautin, P., "Epiphane (saint) de Salamine", *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, 15 (1963), pp. 617-631.

He endeavoured to produce theological doctrine whilst living in this spirit of responsibility which he carried along as he maintained the sincere and orthodox faith. His theology had one double aim; to protect the flock of the catholic and apostolic Church from heresy which leads to eternal perdition and to lead this same flock to the right doxology of the Trinitarian God, which leads to salvation.⁴¹

Epiphanius did not endeavour to create his own theology. He stated it from the beginning that his sole purpose was to overcome the trouble and wickedness of heresies and to lead the flock of the Church to recovering, the "*clear account of the faith of the holy catholic Church in accordance with the apostles' teaching*".⁴² He wanted to enter the "*desert of heresies*", based on the solid and unshakeable rock of the orthodox tradition, "*in order to protect the readers*" and he would use hard language against heretics and speak about them in harsh phrases.⁴³ He would not do this out of intolerance for, or abhorrence of them. He was led to this method by the necessity of the struggle: "*it is the very necessity for the words of the debate that puts me in such a sweat - to protect the reader and show that their practices, mysteries and teachings are the furthest thing from my mind*", and also "*to prove my independence of them by those words and the intensity of my opposition, and wean some people away from them, precisely by the words that appear too harsh*".⁴⁴

A second reason that made Epiphanius use harsh language, to the point of being accused as a slanderer, was his direct knowledge of the irrational and blasphemous teachings against God and works of the heretics.⁴⁵

⁴¹ PG 41, 177C. K. Holl, I, 171,3

⁴² PG 41, 160A. K. Holl, I, 156,4

⁴³ "or call certain persons "frauds", or "scum", or "pathetic" PG 41, 160C. K. Holl, I, 156, 17

⁴⁴ PG 41, 160C. K. Holl, I, 16-25.

His sensitive nature was shocked when he faced this situation of man that was contrary to his nature. His thought and mind were burdened: "*by the virus of heresies for a long time, that was numbed and disgusted so that he felt like spitting out and vomiting*".⁴⁶ For this reason he asked his readers to forgive him.

Such comments do not permit us to see, the heresiology of Epiphanius as a product of ill feeling or spitefulness.⁴⁷ His criterion is the love of God and the truth which is identified with the true inhomination of the Son and Word of God and the salvation of man. Thus, he presents his final aim and target through the hard presentation of his arguments: "*Count me dear, for I count you dear, and I hate nobody, but the devil and the devil's work and treachery, and I pray for you to come into God's truth and not lose yourself in God's blasphemy*".⁴⁸

⁴⁵ A careful study of the various elements which Epiphanius provides us with for certain of these heresies, causes a real psychological disturbance and excitement. The presentation of these elements may seem exaggerated, but none can prove that they are totally untrue.

⁴⁶ PG 42, 820C. K. Holl, III, 520, 16.

⁴⁷ In a text, about Saint Epiphanius which is included in the "*Philocalia of the vigilant and Ascetic Persons and of Apophthegms of Elders*" E.P.E vol. 1 Salonica 1978, pp. 212-214, entitled "About St. Epiphanius Bishop of Cyprus", the following distinct incident from a meeting of the Saint with his teacher, the hermit Hilarion is mentioned: "St. Epiphanius sent a message to the teacher Hilarion begging him and saying, Let us see ourselves before we come out of our bodies. And when they came together they rejoiced with each other. While they were eating a bird was brought to them. The bishop took it and gave it to the teacher Hilarion. And the Old man said to him. Forgive me but since I took the monastic vows I have not eaten a sacrifice. And the Bishop said to him. Since I took the vows I never let anyone go to sleep while they had a grievance against me, nor do I go to sleep while I have a grievance against anyone. And the Old man said to him. Forgive me for your life is greater than mine".

We finally note that Epiphanius does not merely present historical facts about heresies, as some of the latter historians maintain, but "*on some occasions he succeeds in overcoming treacheries*",⁴⁹ (ἐνιαχοῦ μέντοι ἀριστεύει ταῖς ἐπιβουλαῖς) on the basis of the Holy Scripture and the overall tradition of the Church. That is to say, his work may not be absolutely scientific and systematic, but it definitely represents a theological approach to the problem of heresy, which we shall endeavour to expound in the following chapters of our work.

⁴⁸ PG 43,45B. K. Holl. I, 25, 6

⁴⁹ Photios of Constantinople, PG 4, 404.

PART TWO

EPIPHANIUS' VIEWS OF HERESY

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Scientific methodology demands and it is the usual habit of researchers, that a specific method is to be followed. In order to examine our subject it is usually necessary to clarify the meaning of the terms and to define them in a literary context and a historical era. We believe that in order to develop the present subject, the main focus of which is to define the meaning of heresy in the work of Epiphanius, we cannot apply the aforementioned method literally for it cannot lead us to safe and absolutely scientific results. The significance of the meaning of terms varies considerably according to author and era. The meaning of heresy may in past times or even today have been totally contrary to what it was at the time of Epiphanius or for Epiphanius himself.¹

¹ See the work of F.M. Young, "Did Epiphanius know what he meant by heresy?" *Studia Patristica*, ed. E.A Livingstone, Pergamon Press, vol. XVII, part one (1982), p.199: "Of course, the word αἵρεσις simply means 'division'. Long before it acquired the technical sense of 'heresy', the word was the classical designation of different philosophical schools. In the book of Acts it is used of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Nazarenes, and in the Pauline Epistles it is used to describe 'splinter-groups' or factions".

In philosophy, for example, a heresy is not a group that is cut off from the common body of an original ideology and becomes disestablished locally and ideologically. Heresies are, rather, branches of a school or ideology which have exactly the same position and dogmas as the main body of the group. Thus it is possible to have a different meaning of the same term in two different ideological areas. Even in the same area, we may find two or even more explanations of the same term. The standardised understanding of the Church that heresy is any group which is differentiated dogmatically, or which is cut off from the common body, grows weak as soon as one realises that almost all the Fathers refer to heretics and schismatics. The term heresy becomes more relevant if we take into account the fact that Saint John of Damascus includes Islam among the heresies.²

Consequently, we shall not examine the work of Epiphanius strictly scientifically. Besides, it was Epiphanius himself who did not rely only on scientific method in his work in his anxious effort to safeguard the truth. Ancient orthodox expositors of the Christian truth were fighters who never surrendered and many among them did not have specific words and terms to use during their vigorous fight against the numerous heresies. They had the certainty of the truth which was springing out of orthodox doxology and the way of life of the one God in Trinity. For them the dogmas (Holy Trinity, Christ, Church, etc.) did not consist of abstract perceptions or philosophical interpretations which could only be stated by the use of scientific terms. They were simply expressions of an experience which was becoming realised through correct living of faith in the one body of the catholic and apostolic Church.

² John of Damascus, on heresy, PG 94, 764A- 772B

CHAPTER 1

THE SOURCES OF EPIPHANIUS' ACCOUNT OF HERESY

Epiphanius uses some sources which he defines in order to write his works. We shall study these sources in order to draw the relevant conclusions. We shall mainly try to show that Epiphanius does not write hastily but that his work is a true expression of his pastoral anxiety and a serious work which is grounded in the tradition of the Church. If Church tradition is hasty, then Epiphanius too is a hasty writer, if Church tradition is an expression of her life and authority, then Epiphanius too is a serious bearer and spokesman of this authentic tradition.

One may rightly confront us at this point with Epiphanius' attitude towards reverence for holy icons and may remark that this is not the attitude of the Church. Regarding this matter we wish to observe the following: there existed a particular and difficult situation at the time when Epiphanius lived and acted, as we have already mentioned in the chapter about the historical reality of his era. The Church had to face various challenges and she was very careful at every step she took to specify any reality in relation to the truth. The fact that the Church, up to that time, had not dealt - nor was there such a question - with reverence rendered or not rendered to icons, is a mitigation and an excuse for Epiphanius to be reserved in his mind

concerning this matter, especially he was strongly disposed against any innovation.³ We must also take into account the fact that idolatry still existed and was a danger for the Church which had only recently established herself both spiritually and administratively. This concern of Epiphanius, becomes obvious in the way he dealt with the heresy of the Karpocrasians when he rebuked them about the use of icons saying "for once they have set these images up, they follow the customs of the heathen".⁴ In his letter to the Emperor Theodosius concerning icons, he stresses very clearly that we cannot honour icons because, on the one hand, there is a danger of idolatry and, on the other hand, the Nicene Council which clarified the orthodox faith makes no reference whatsoever to reverence of icons.⁵ We would also totally agree

³ Icon-painting and veneration of icons cannot of course be considered as something new in the 4th century for recent research has proved beyond any doubt that such practises existed within the Church since early Christian times. See, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, ed. John McManners, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 23,35: "A problem ^{is a} wall - painting of the early third century at Rome in the vault of the Aurelii (a group clubbing together for a collective sepulchre). It has been taken to represent an apostle, but the Aurelii may have had only a loose attachment to the church, and their frescos mainly represent philosophers". "The fish was an early Christian symbol. From the second century it was connected with baptism (converts, as little fishes, follow the great fish) and it became associated with the acrostic 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour'. Here it is seen (with an anchor, shaped like a cross and signifying hope) on a tombstone in the catacomb of St.Domitilla, in the early fourth century".

⁴ PG 41, 373C-376A. K. Holl, I, 310, 14-311,10. See more about this subject in the work of Sr. Charles Murray, "Art and the Early Church", *The Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol.XXVIII, part 2, (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1977), pp. 336-345.

⁵ Herman Hennesch. *Textus Byzantini ad Iconomachiam pertinentes*, Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1969, p.45: "Idolatry in the world was engineered by the devil through his

with the view of Professor Moutsoulas regarding this matter, which stresses that Epiphanius's Christology, as it is stated in his works, would refute his attitude if its practical conclusions were drawn out.⁶

The main concern of every researcher is to gather information and to evaluate and present it by making certain necessary comments. This holds absolutely true for Epiphanius too. Like every researcher, he gathered his information, evaluated it and made his comments. What is different about him is the objectivity of his comments: "*I do not create our teaching either from elsewhere or from our own thinking*"⁷. He thus remained faithful to the traditional teaching and he wrote his works

deceit and he sowed and founded this in the world and turned men away from God; and now again after the heresies and the idols he has drawn the faithful down and deceived them. But your piety and your God-given wisdom will understand and will search for dearer meaning as to whether it is fitting for us to have God painted in colours. Who has ever heard this?". C143v ([Holl] Ostrog.). "On account of the erroneous belief of Arius the faith was declared by an Ecumenical Council of our holy Fathers and bishops in the city of Nicea, and it was acknowledged and signed by three hundred and eighteen Bishops who did consider it to have been not recently formulated, but declared its eternity. These Fathers too we follow since our youth like sons, our fathers did and as you do most pious King. It is the faith which states that we believe in one God the Father almighty and the rest of the symbol". C 150v (Holl)} Ostrog.

⁶ "As far as the view of Epiphanius regarding icons is concerned, we wish to remark that there is no reason for anybody to deny the authenticity of the text where he attacks images. It is known that in his epoch the dogma of the veneration of images had not been worked out; if Epiphanius had chosen to draw his own practical conclusions concerning the two natures of Jesus Christ, certainly he would have adopted a different stance. The stand of Epiphanius regarding this question shows his complete tendency to fight all innovation". Elias Moutsoulas, *Religious and Ethical Encyclopaedia*, vol. 5, Athens 1964, p.807.

⁷ PG 43, 132B. K.Holl, I, 77, 6

"like those wishing [to possess] the holy and apostolic and prophetic faith of the fathers from the beginning until now professed in the holy Church of God".⁸ At the same time, being aware of the limited possibilities of his education and knowledge, he asked God to enlighten him and to bestow on him wisdom and knowledge from above so that he might overcome "*the hardship of heresies*" and be led to the truth. And he does not do this with earthly criteria or relying on the "*worthless*" forces of his mind or like "*the Greek authors, poets and chroniclers, who would invoke a Muse when they undertook some work of mythology*".⁹

He was aware that in order to interpret and to determine precisely the mysteries of the incarnated Divine Dispensation (Θείας Οικονομίας) the wisdom from above is primarily needed. Thus, "*I call on the Holy God himself, on his Only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, and on his Holy Spirit, to give our poor mind light, and thus illumine it with the knowledge of his knowledge... I, however, call upon the holy Lord of all to come to the aid of our poverty and inspire us with his holy Spirit, that I may include no falsehood in my treatment of the subject. And having made this very petition according to the measure of faith and in proportion, I know my inadequacy, I beseech him to grant it*".¹⁰

As a result Epiphanius uses as his primary and basic source his knowledge of personal weakness ("*so that he may give our poor mind light, and thus illumine it with the knowledge of him*" and "*so that the holy Lord may come to the aid of our poverty*"), his limitation of the 'outer' (secular) wisdom ("*we know our inadequacy*") and the gift and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, according to the measure of their faith

⁸ PG 42, 245C. K.Holl, III, 177, 9

⁹ PG 41, 173AB. K. Holl, I, 169, 11-20

¹⁰ PG 41, 173A-176A. K. Holl, I, 169, 11-20.

and the capacity to receive divine grace. (κατά τό μέτρον τῆς πίστεως τους καί κατά τήν ἀναλογίαν τῆς δεκτικότητος τῆς θείας χάριτος).

Man cannot know everything and cannot have direct knowledge and experience of everything. For Epiphanius the facts "*are both unutterable and utterable, inexplicable and beyond number, inaccessible so far as man is concerned, and known only to the Lord of all*". Thus it is impossible for the human intellect alone to know and to clarify things. Only the Ruler of all may know all that contingent man is ignorant of.¹¹

Epiphanius also used Holy Scripture as a second, but equally important source. Holy Scripture is the source from which he derived his arguments. It is the basis for his opposition to and refutation of all false opinions. In his work *Angyrotos*, where he opposes the Trinitarian heresies, Ap^olinarianism, the Origenist monks, etc., apart from quoting numerous extracts from Holy Scripture, he makes it clear that what he quotes as his personal way of thinking and explanation is based on the solid foundation of the divine inspiration of Scripture: "*And that this is so, is possible to discover from those things which are spoken of in Holy Scripture*".¹² Epiphanius is fully conscious of the fact that Holy Scripture is the solid foundation of the faith of the Church. It is the word of the revelation of God. Thus, he accepts the challenge of his Asian brothers to write and to present the orthodox faith of the Church: "*And I profess from the divine and Holy Scripture the solid foundation of faith with regard to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and all the rest of the salvation in Christ, and the resurrection of the dead and the physical presence of the One and only [Saviour]; and the Holy Testament, the*

¹¹ PG 41, 176AB. K. Holl, I, 170, 4

¹² PG 43, 65B. K. Holl, I, 35.25

Old and the New, and the other widespread evidence for our full salvation".¹³ Like a bee, he goes through the Scriptures and gathers all the needed information: "gathering from everywhere the evidence of Holy Scripture for the widespread joy and happiness of the faithful who read them".¹⁴

A third source for Epiphanius is the presence in time of the charity of our Saviour towards mankind. He does not use his own criteria, as he says, "*but [borrows] from our life, that is, from the prophets, from the coming of our Saviour and from his divine benevolence. For when he came, it was our life that came and he immediately showed us the light having found us wandering*".¹⁵ This source of Epiphanius is for him the most important. This is why it is defined as his life. It is the manner of his life and the experience which are derived from his personal relationship with the incarnate Logos. Indeed this experience becomes light which enlightens every man who comes towards the source of light. It is an enlightenment which safeguards and absolves man from the delusion of pride, of atheism and heresy.

The tradition of the Church which is expressed through the inseparable union of the faith^{ful} with the body of Christ, but also through the authentic successors of the apostles, is for Epiphanius a fourth safe source. His theology and especially his research concerning orthodoxy and the heresies are based "*on the teaching of the apostles which was clearly stated..., on the confession in defence of the truth, on the teaching concerning the truth and on the faith of the holy, catholic Church*".¹⁶ Indeed he remains so firmly attached to this faith to the very end of his life, that he

¹³ PG 43, 17C. K. Holl. I, 6, 13

¹⁴ PG 43, 132A. K. Holl. I, 77,2

¹⁵ PG 43,132B. K. Holl. I, 77, 8

¹⁶ PG 42, 833B.

runs the risk of being considered by subsequent generations as one who *"refused to follow the accelerating growth of theology"*, because he was dominated by zealotry.¹⁷ What modern scholars call *"negativity"* and *"zealotry"* was for Epiphanius the unambiguous confession of what *"our holy Church believes in accordance with what has been declared to her and has been truly assigned to her"*.¹⁸ This means that Epiphanius does not attempt to create his own theology and to put forward his personal opinions and views about the problems that concern the Church. He knows that other Fathers of the Church, perhaps more capable than him, have formulated and clarified theologically the dogmas of the faith, concerning such matters that had been and continued to be the concern of the Church up to his own times. The Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325) which had formulated the first guidelines of the Church towards the correct exposition of its faith will be for our author the firm indicator of the right path to the truth. This initial expression of the one and only truth of the Ecumenical Council is a major source for Epiphanius. *"This is the faith that was handed on by the holy apostles, in the Church, the holy city, by all the holy bishops together... for the sake of which both yourselves and ourselves and all the orthodox bishops and, collectively, the entire holy and catholic Church, speak as we do to those heresies which have arisen, following the faith which was assigned to those holy fathers,..."*¹⁹

Then, in the general enumeration of his sources, he remarks that he will also use the works of ancient authors.²⁰ These ancient authors who are the genuine formulators of the orthodox faith to whom he often refers, are the following:²¹

¹⁷ Stylianos Papadopoulos, *Patrology* vol. 2, Athens 1990 p.723.

¹⁸ PG 42, 817C. K. Holl, III, 519, 13.

¹⁹ PG 43, 233B. K. Holl, I, 147, 21.

a) **Athanasius the Great**, who *"had a tremendous zeal for the faith and became a defender of the Church... so that he suffered exile and excommunication through the most unjust dynasty of the Arians"*.²²

b) **Saint Irenaeus**: *"But he wept and this is recorded in the Gospel according to Luke in the uncorrected copies and Saint Irenaeus makes use of this testimony in his "Adversus Hereses" against those who wish to say that Christ existed only in appearance. The Orthodox, however, erased this saying, being fearful, and not realising its purpose, or its great strength"*.²³

c) **Eusebius and Clement**: *"For many before me, Eusebius [of Caesarea] , Clement [of Rome] and others, have reported this to him [James son of Joseph] . But they [Ebionites] use certain other books as well, Clement's so-called Peregrination of Peter, if you please, though they corrupt the contents, while leaving a few genuine items. Clement himself fully convicts them of this in his general epistles which are*

²⁰ PG 41, 176C. K. Holl, I, 170, 17. "I am confident that I can give an account of the origins and teachings of some heresies from accurate reports, and of some of the things which others do. Of these things, I know one from the works of ancient authors, another from the report of men who accurately confirmed my notion".

²¹ On Epiphanius' sources see the work of Aline Pourkier. *L' Heresiologie chez Epiphane de Salamine*, Beauchesne, 1992, pp 477-485 and other relevant sections.

²² PG 42, 220C K. Holl, III, 161, 18-162.3. comp. PG 42, 205A. K. Holl, III, 153,20. See also Dechow Jon Frederick, *Dogma and Mysticism in the early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the legacy of Origen*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1975, p.79: "On the other hand, he models that tradition in accordance with the faith of the Nicene fathers as he perceives it. Orthodoxy, to him, means the Nicene faith, and Athanasius is its father".

²³ PG 43, 73A. K.Holl, I, 40,10-15. See also and PG 41,584B. K. Holl, II, 6,9. PG 41, 489AB - 537D. K. Holl, I, 40, 11. K. Holl, I, 398, 19-435,8. K. Holl, II, 6, 10-37,20.

read in the holy churches, because his faith and speech are of a different character than their spurious productions in his name in the Peregrinations "24.

d) Hippolytus: All scholars accept that Epiphanius makes excessive use of Hippolytus' work against heresies although he does not refer to him explicitly.²⁵

Epiphanius, as ^{an}man of learning, zeal and action also uses some practical means from his every day life, apart from these sources. He takes advantage of everything he encounters in daily experience. Thus, much of his information comes "*though love of learning*" ("ἐκ φιλομαθίας"); "*certain things I learned from hearsay*" ("ἐξ ἀκοῆς") and "*some with my own ears and eyes*" ("ἰδίους ὡσι καὶ ὀφθαλμοῖς")²⁶. He may have found much of this information probably from such correspondents as Paul and Acacius. The dispatch of the letter along with the "*common brother*"²⁷, who was to carry it, was most probably, or even certainly, accompanied by some information about the activity of heresies in the area of Chalcedon. This does not mean that he makes illogical use or misuses this information because it is verbal. Epiphanius aims at exactness in his account, thus he avoids beautifying and idealising events. I write, he says, "*not with eloquence of language or polished phrases, but with simplicity of dialect and speech, though with accuracy in the content of what I say*".²⁸

²⁴ PG 41, 396AB-429D. K. Holl, I, 324, 22- 352, 5.

²⁵ See: Aline Pourkier, op. cit.. 21. pp. 482-485, and passim. J.M. Lieu, "Epiphanius on the Scribes and the Pharisees (Panarion 15: 1-16.4)", *Journal of Theological Studies*, 39:2 (1988) pp 510-512. H. Moutsoulas, "S. Epiphanius", *Religious and Ethical Encyclopaedia*, vol. 5. Athens (1964) p.805. F. M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 1983, pp. 138-139. Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis*, 1987, pp.XIX-XXI &c.

²⁶ PG 41, 176B. K. Holl, I, 170, 14.

²⁷ PG 41, 157A. K. Holl, I, 154, 25

The aforementioned sources are, in our opinion the main axis of the structure of the work of Epiphanius. He does not aim at impressing his reader, neither does he try to show off. Being simply aware of his obligations as a leader, he responds to the persistent request of the Christians for exactness of the Orthodox faith.²⁹

The use of all these sources shows that Epiphanius is not as casual as some modern scholars present him. He is a researcher who is fond of learning. We can accept that he was not a totally systematic author in order to be able to classify and to explain the meanings he wanted to convey in a perfect way. We believe that this is due to his troubled life which he spent travelling for pastoral and ecclesiastical purposes.³⁰ The fact that he died and left this transient world on a boat while travelling from Constantinople to Cyprus, confirms how true this is.³¹

The authenticity of the information that Epiphanius gives about the actions and teachings of various groups has been questioned many times. We can make the following remarks regarding this matter: He seems to have relied on information and

²⁸ PG 41, 177A. K. Holl, I, 171, 4.

²⁹ PG41, 176C. K. Holl, I, 170, 22. "In fact, I have also written this work which, by God's will, I have consented to compose, at the request of scholarly sons who goaded my weakness at various ways, and practically forced me to do it. Such a request Your Honour made in writing, my most esteemed brothers and scholarly fellow presbyters, Acacius and Paul, in a letter of recommendation".

³⁰ Benedict Englezakis, *Epiphanius of Salamina, Father of the Cypriot Autocephaly*, Nicosia 1986, p. 307. "The travels of Epiphanius are not less surprising, as far as their aims and distances were covered, they also bear witness to the panchristian authority of man. Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Rome received the visits of Epiphanius sometimes repeatedly".

³¹ Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 67, 703A.

events as he had drawn them from his written and verbal sources. He could not have had direct knowledge and experience of these events. In addition, as is known, the various heretical groups did not let their objectives, aims and pursuits be shown. So it is possible at times to have a combination of information and events as far as the approximation of reality is concerned, without being able to explain it totally. However, we reckon that there is only one fact in the case of saint Epiphanius: the unveiling of lie and deceit and the projection of the one and only true and orthodox faith.³²

³² PG 41, 177BC. K. Holl, I, 171,12-172,4.

CHAPTER 2

EPIPHANIUS' METHODOLOGY

Every researcher uses a specific methodology in order to present his work and to prove his views in the best possible manner. He sometimes describes it and presents it in the introduction of his work and he sometimes lets the reader discover it and define it himself while studying the entire work. In the case of Epiphanius there is no specific presentation of the methodology of his work. Thus, we shall endeavour to present this methodology as we have conceived it through the study of his work.

Epiphanius' methodology starts with the principle that heresy is not only a deviation from the Christian community that is contemporaneous with its time, but also and chiefly an alteration of the orthodox belief which broke away its bond from the original womb and is now exposed without the identity of the ancient tradition.

Every opinion and belief which is contrary to the ancient tradition of the Church - the Church which begins with the animation of Adam and goes as far as the end of the ages - is heresy. For a teaching to be orthodox it must be able to show that it has its roots, its identity and its origin in the ancient and unquestionable unity of the history of Divine Dispensation. Thus, to prove the division of heresies from this reality, Epiphanius states in the introduction of his "*Panarion*" that, just as the ancient naturalists examine their roots in order to establish their origin of plants, in the same way he too will reveal "*the roots and original opinions of the heresies*".¹

According to Epiphanius, the development of the history of the truth has its beginning in the creation and animation of Adam and extends to the Church which appeared after the Incarnation of God the Logos.²

¹ PG 41, 177B. K. Holl, I, 171,13

² PG 41, 181B. K. Holl, I, 174, 17-21. "But in a way, the present faith followed by God's recently established holy catholic Church has existed from the beginning, and

This historical and ceaseless continuity of creation in time constitutes for Epiphanius the criterion and the guiding principle for considering someone a heretic. His entire effort and methodology is aimed at pointing out that heresy is incompatible with orthodoxy, that the various philosophical beliefs and Judaism are incompatible with the Church, in case Christianity is considered as intrusive and parasitical, or even their development. This methodology is followed almost slavishly having one and only one aim: to stress as much as possible the antiquity of the truth and its accomplishment or realisation on the new basis of the same historical continuity, that is the incarnation of God the Logos.

Not only Epiphanius but also all the Fathers use the antiquity of the truth as criterion of orthodoxy. They know that heretics do not hesitate to use every possible method to counterfeit truth.³ The proof by the Fathers that the conceptions of the heretics constitute merely a novelty which has absolutely nothing to do with the tradition of truth, is in this case the "Achilles' heel" of these heretics.

Epiphanius, following this principle, will conclude that heretics are those who do not have the tradition of the Church as an undivided continuity throughout the history of creation. Indeed he bases his entire methodology on this principle.⁴

We thus conclude that the Church, and consequently Epiphanius, as a person who expresses the tradition of the Church, have different criteria and methods from those usually employed. Epiphanius' criteria are historical and spiritual at the same time, and thus he refers constantly to Holy Scripture and the life of the Church as a whole. For the Church, then, and for Epiphanius, heresy is not merely a differentiation

was revealed again later. Indeed anyone who so desires can see, as a true lover of truth that the catholic and holy Church is the beginning of all things from this very scope".

³ PG 42, 253D-256A. K. Holl. III, 182,17. "I will also mention other words that are devised by these heretics; and first of all it is surprising that they use irony to deceive the naive and pure; just as the snake deceived Eve who was pure, in the same way the heretics want to deceive, in the beginning with many and numerous flatteries and with caution and then, with promises and intimidation...".

⁴ PG 43, 129D. K. Holl, I, 76, 20-22. "All heresies lie, for they have not received the Holy Spirit according to the tradition of the Fathers in the Holy Catholic Church of God".

from the Church's dogma and a cutting off from the Church's body. First and foremost, heresy is an alteration of the truth, as life and teaching, an alteration of the truth of salvation, which automatically leads to falling off from the community of saints.⁵

On the other hand, we can discern in our study of Epiphanius' works the following general elements which constitute his methodology. As a rule, these consist of the manner of his writing and the structure of his entire work.

So, we can discern in his entire work a basic pattern which is continually repeated with different variations. This regards the pattern of presenting false opinions and their refutation. Every time that Epiphanius begins to deal with a heresy he follows almost slavishly the following manner of presentation. At the beginning, he presents the various points of biographical information for the given heresy, its roots and false opinions. Then, the refutation of the false opinions of the group follows in accordance with Holy Scripture and Church Tradition. Many times we also notice that our author tries to refute a given heresy by logical arguments, having as an aim to indicate the absurdity of the teaching, the action and generally the whole life of the group.

Generally speaking the ultimate aim of our author is to prove, through his entire argumentation, that heresiarch leaders and their followers are deprived of the possibility of intelligence and enlightenment from God. He also wants to prove that they rely on the dogma of the absurd and thus end up with being blasphemous. It is perhaps for this reason that his methodology often becomes polemical by using harsh and hard expressions.⁶

⁵ PG 43, 172AB. K. Holl, I, 102, 22-29. "And I have written in this manner to anyone who wants the continuity of our life and firm confession which is derived from the Law and the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostles, and which has been kept pure in the catholic Church from the time of the Apostles to our own time; that it was on account of the envy of disorder against the one and true faith that this same faith and hope and salvation of ours was persecuted from time to time by the heresies, but persisted in its own truth; and that as the time went by heresies infected themselves and were alienated from the Church".

⁶ We shall deal with this matter in greater detail in another chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE BEGINNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF HERESY

Epiphanius attempts to offer an account of the various heresies and to explain them as deviations not only from the body of the Church and the Christian communities but also from the original unity of human life at creation. He believes that by revealing "*the roots and origins of the heresies*",¹ that is, the original cause of man's deviation from the Divine source of life and its development, he can help man "*to recognise the dreadful and destructive [devices of heresies] and safeguard himself*"². He begins his account by dividing the history of heresies into basic periods or phases, of heretical life forms. In our opinion Epiphanius does this because he believes that, just as the truth of the divine dispensation (economy) has its own history, likewise heresy has as its own.

Epiphanius' phases of heretical life forms, are as follows : a) **Barbarism**, "*which lasted for ten generations, from Adam to Noah*".³
 b) **Scythianism**, which is "*from the days of Noah and afterwards to the construction of the tower and Babel [Babylon]; and for a few years after the time of the tower, that is to Peleg and Reu*".⁴ c) **Hellenism**, "*which began in Serug's time with idolatry and the submission to it by the people of that era, each of whom followed some sort of*

¹ PG 41,177B. K. Holl, I, 171, 12-13

² PG 41, 177B. K. Holl, 171, 17-18

³ PG 41, 165D. K. Holl, I, 162, 6-7

⁴ PG 41,165D. K. Holl, I, 162, 11-13

superstition, for the sake of a higher civilisation and fixed customs and institutions".⁵

d) **Judaism**, which extends from Abraham to the incarnation of the Lord. "*From the time of Abraham Judaism had received its characteristic feature through circumcision and it was amplified during the lifetime of Moses..*".⁶ e) **The Christian heresies** which comes after the appearance of Jesus Christ. As Epiphanius puts it, "*these heresies have Christ's name only but not his faith, for they have been broken away and split off from it ...*".⁷

A more detailed analysis of these phases, as Epiphanius expounds them, will lead us to a more precise understanding of the beginning and development of heresy.

A) BARBARISM:

This period begins, as we have already noted, with the creation of Adam and goes up to the Flood.

Adam was created by God "*simple and blameless and not having any name, or opinion, or belief, or any other distinct mode of life*".⁸ This means that in original humanity there was no disposition for creating heresies, that is, no groups which would clash with one another in claiming the truth for themselves : "*no different opinion, or belief had changed original humanity, for there was one language, and one race on the earth*".⁹ During this period human unity and society continued to exist, but two categories of people were formed within it. The first category of the impious, consisted of those who acted contrary to their nature as this was bestowed upon them by their

⁵ PG 41, 168A. K. Holl, I, 163, 1-4

⁶ PG 41, 168CD. K. Holl, I, 164, 16-17

⁷ PG 41, 161B. K. Holl, I, 157,19 - 158,1

⁸ PG 41, 117D-180A. K. Holl, I, 172,9-11

⁹ PG 41, 180A. K. Holl, I, 172,20-173,2

Creator and the second, of the pious, consisted of those who acted according to their nature which was bestowed upon them during their creation on the sixth day.¹⁰ The inclination towards impiety or piety was based on man's free disposition (will), because there were no authors and writings to influence people. *"Impiety and piety were [determined] by the natural law and the natural free disposition of each individual's will and not [determined] by a certain teaching or books".*¹¹ "Evil doing" starts entering into the world from the day of Adam's disobedience and later with Cain's fratricide. There is no splitting yet of humanity at this stage. There is a break in humanity's communion with God, inasmuch as man has a tendency to go contrary to his nature. This kind of human activity that goes against the law of nature leads human history to the Flood. After the Flood unity between humanity and natural life is tempora^{ri}ly brought back : *"And the Flood came to pass, and Noah and his household provided the world with a surviving relic. But there was still no difference of opinion, no people that was at all different, no name for a heresy, and no idolatry either".*¹²

The period of Barbarism, which lasted for ten generations, ends in a way with the Flood and the return of the people to the natural life. Epiphanius considers this period as Barbarism because everyone followed his own opinion. The name Barbarism then was given to an era of ten generations, during which there was not one law. Everyone served as his own law, and followed his own opinion.¹³

¹⁰ PG 41, 177D. K. Holl, I, 172, 6-12

¹¹ PG 41, 181B. K. Holl, I, 174, 14-16

¹² PG 41, 180C. K. Holl, I, 173, 17-20

¹³ PG 41, 180C-181A. K. Holl, I, 173, 20-25

B) SCYTHIANISM

The period of Scythianism commences with the termination of the Flood and lasts to the construction of the Tower of Babel . It was named after those who devised the building of the Tower who *"were all called Scythians from the region near Europe which borders on Asia, and which corresponds to the name of the area"*.¹⁴ The main features of this phase continue to be piety and impiety, faith and lack of faith.¹⁵ The first splitting of human society begins to be created five generations after the Flood, when the number of people increased again. Man, relying on his own powers and ignoring God's creative grace, tries to construct a Tower. God however, is not pleased with this autonomy and so *"he dispersed their languages, and divided them from one into seventy-two, to correspond with the number of the men then living ... So they were dispersed right and left over the whole earth"*.¹⁶

Before Scythianism, then, there is no heresy in the sense of different opinion and different adoration . There is simply the first break up of the human community into different groups and races, the prostitution and the contrivance of idols.¹⁷

C) HELLENISM

Hellenism begins with the construction of the Tower and it extends to the election of Abraham by God. From this phase onwards, the deceit begins, mingling and blending of people *"and it is now confusing their ways"*.¹⁸ Development, during this phase, lies in the fact that men are now influenced in the way they form their

¹⁴ PG 41,184A. K. Holl, I, 175,22-176,2

¹⁵ PG 41, 181C. K. Holl, I, 175, 10

¹⁶ PG 41, 184B. K. Holl, I, 176,4-8

¹⁷ PG 41, 189B. K. Holl, I, 178,12

¹⁸ PG 41, 189B. K. Holl, I, 179,2

opinion and belief, by various historiographers and authors, "*having borrowed this from the mythological deceit of the Egyptians*".¹⁹

It is creation that how begins to be worshipped rather than the Creator, and mythical persons begin to be deified. Idolatry and Hellenism begin among men as the doctrine which has come down to us contains man. Human reason produced its own evil, and invented transgression instead of goodness through its own freedom, reason and intellect, but expressed it only with paintings and portraits; not with carved images yet, or reliefs in stone, wood, or silver-plated substances, or made of gold or any other material. It was afterwards that people turned into gods some unfortunate despots, or sorcerers who had deceived the world, and paid homage to their tombs. These much later deified Kronus, and Zeus, Rhea, Hera and the rest of them.²⁰

The division of the human community and the development of various groups with differing conceptions of the truth begins at the end of this period when philosophy, which is another kind of opinion and belief, made its appearance. This occasioned the rise of Greek literature, and later on of the celebrated heresies of the philosophers. These heresies agree in error, and join each other in fabricating a similar knowledge of idolatry and godlessness; but they also conflict with each other because of their own error.²¹

D) JUDAISM

This phase begins with the election of Abraham by God and goes up to the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. We already have with Hellenism the division of society into different groups with different beliefs and opinions regarding the truth and

¹⁹ PG 41, 189B. K. Holl, I, 179, 2-4

²⁰ PG 41, 188A-189B. K. Holl, I, 177, 11-178,13

²¹ PG 41, 200B-201A. K. Holl. I. 183, 4-10

its revelation to men by God. Finally, however, it is not Judaism that pertains to the incubation of heresy but "*the celebrated heresies of the philosophers which sprang up after this time*", that is, the dividing spirit of Hellenism and of the East.²² Judaism goes along with this current, continuing to carry on and to preserve this mentality of division. No abolition of this divisive mentality occurs with the election of Abraham by God, because during this period the creation of different groups still goes on. The presence of Abraham, however, compensates for the truth with respect to the lie of heresy. Thus, Epiphanius considers Abraham as a model of the holy catholic and apostolic Church : "*And God chose Abraham, who was faithful in uncircumcision, with the same characteristic as the holy catholic Church, a most perfect model of godliness, a prophet in knowledge, a follower of the Gospel in life*"²³.

At this point, we ought to register our disagreement with F. M. Young who believes, that Epiphanius' view of Abraham as an example of Christian truth is contradictory to his view of circumcision as the original cause of the Judaic heresy.²⁴ In fact, Epiphanius stresses that "*circumcision was enjoined on this patriarch [Abraham] by God*"²⁵ and thus, circumcision could not be regarded as the original cause of heresy, because ultimately God would be the one who caused it. Besides, Epiphanius does not suggest at all that circumcision is part of the original cause of the heresy of Judaism. We believe that, it was from that moment onwards, i.e. the moment

²² Ibitem

²³ PG 41, 193A. K. Holl, I, 179, 10

²⁴ F. M Young, "Did Epiphanius know what he meant by Heresy?". *Studia Patristica*. ed. E.A Livingstone, Pergamon Press, vol. XVII, part one, 1982, pp. 200-201.

²⁵ PG 41,193B. K. Holl, I,179,16

when God enjoined circumcision on Abraham, that co - existence of Judaism with Hellenism and heresy begins. This is obvious at once from the time designation which Epiphanius employs in this case: "*and so from Abraham thereon the characteristic feature of Judaism originated, after Hellenism*".²⁶ The words '*from thereon*' mean from that time, from now onwards.²⁷ They define the beginning of the heresy of Judaism, as far as time is concerned, and not the cause for it, as Young has imagined.

Samaritanism is included in this phase as a sub - phase. It does not constitute a different phase because Samaritans derive from Judaism: "*Samaritanism and the Samaritans who belong to it, is devised from Judaism. The occasion for it came at the time of Nebuchadnezzar and the captivity of the Jews, before the establishment of heresies among Greeks and the rise of their doctrines*".²⁸ What distinguishes Samaritans from Jews is that they use only the Pentateuch as their Scripture and reject the teaching concerning the resurrection of the dead.²⁹

E) CHRISTIAN HERESIES

The heresy of Simon the Sorcerer introduces us to 'Christian' heresies. The first counterfeit of the revelation of God the Logos, marking the invasion of hellenistic tendencies and Judaic remnants starts to appear within the Christian ecclesiastical community. Man, faced with the great miracle of the personal revelation of God, is unable to accept this challenge and tries to comprehend it using his own logical criteria which are derived from the philosophical and non - philosophical systems that

²⁶ I item

²⁷ John Stamatakos, *Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, ed. "Phoenix" E.P.E. 1972, pp. 340/304

²⁸ PG 41, 169C. PG 41, 161A. PG 42, 836AB. K. Holl, I. 166.9. 157.8

²⁹ PG 41, 225AB. K. Holl, I, 198, 9-14

surround him. This deviation is considered by Epiphanius as man's refusal to comply with, or an effort to become independent from, God and his law.³⁰

As a result, the history of the beginning and the development of heresy according to Epiphanius has the following genealog^{ical} scales: a) The genealogy of one nature, one faith, one society. b) The genealogy of man's rebellion against God and transition from a natural to an unnatural state. c) The genealogy of the entry of impiety and unnatural life into man's life. d) The genealogy of man's fall into idolatry and the delusion and deceit of heresies through the teachings of philosophers. e) Finally, the genealogy of man's effort to become independent from the saving grace of God which is granted to man through the incarnation and the incarnate economy of God the Logos .

SCHEMATIC TABLE OF THE BEGINNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF HERESY

PHASE 1: BARBARISM

From Adam to the Flood.
There is no division of human society, no heresy. Man acts contrary to his nature.

PHASE 3: HELLENISM

From the construction of the Tower, to the election of Abraham by God. This is the beginning of delusion and of differences of opinion and belief, i.e. the beginning of heresy.

PHASE 2: SCYTHIANISM

From the end of the Flood to the construction of the Tower. The first communal division of humanity occurs, followed prostitution and the contrivance of idols. There is still no heresy.

PHASE 4: JUDAISM

From Abraham to the incarnate presence of Christ. The dividing spirit and the division of society into different groups continue to occur.

PHASE 5: THE CHRISTIAN HERESIES

From the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ onwards. The first counterfeit of truth in the first Christian community starts with the heresy of Simon the Sorcerer.

³⁰ PG 41, 188A. K. Holl, I, 177, 15-17.

The following pages will show some basic and useful conclusions drawn from Epiphanius' account of the various phases of the history of heresies.

The meaning of heresy is not simply located in the terms 'division from and disagreement with' the Christian community. In the works of Epiphanius heresy means different "*opinion*" (γνώμη) or "*belief*", (δόξα), as well as fragmentation of the unity of humanity and deviation from its original state or condition. This is why Epiphanius begins his account with Abraham, where this unity can still be found. There is no different opinion or belief there to create different groups with various tendencies and pursuits. Each group and philosophy ends up as heresy. It divides this original unity and creates a diversity and difference of opinion and belief in relation to the one and only truth and life.³¹ Consequently, heresy is not only determined from the data of its relationship with the Christian teaching and community, but also from its relationship with the unity of the history of the one and only truth and faith, which has its starting point in the natural life of humanity in Paradise. Opinions and beliefs are identified with the true faith of the one holy and catholic Church on the basis of how old they are and where their roots and commencement lie.

The rise of many and diverse groups is due to the fact that they are cut off from the body of the one true catholic and orthodox Church, which existed from the beginning and was finally revealed through the incarnate presence of the Lord.³² These

³¹ PG 41, 208AB. K. Holl, I, 187, 12-18 : "At this point - as I said just now - poets, prose writers, historians, astronomers, and those who introduced all other kinds of error turned their minds to a number of bad causes and lines of argument and made men's thoughts giddy and confused. Thus, the first error teaching and mishap arose, i.e. thinking of idols. And thus everything was divided...".

³² PG 41, 181B. K. Holl, I, 174, 17-19.

groups are called through the new reality in Christ to become part of and to unite with the body of Christ, where there is no longer division or difference of opinions and beliefs.³³ In other words, this historical reality of the beginning and development of heresy goes through various phases of human history, being connected first with God's chosen people, Israel, and finally, through the revelation of the new life in Christ, with the Church.

Consequently, Epiphanius's effort to determine whether a group is heretical or not, cannot be considered as arbitrary as F. M. Young maintains.³⁴ The fact that he is not interested in naming right at the start all the groups that derive from Hellenism, does not mean that he deliberately chooses some and ignores the rest. In his analysis of a passage of Holy Scripture from the the Song of Songs (6:7-8), he gives sufficient explanation regarding this matter, when he likens the "*young women*" to the innumerable philosophies of the Greeks. Consequently, the fact that they are not all referred to in the general report of Epiphanius is not indicative of arbitrariness. Besides, he also endeavours at this point to enumerate some of these innumerable schools starting with Thales of Miletus, whom he does not mention along with the other schools in the main list he produces at the beginning of his work.³⁵

We consider it risky to argue, as F. M. Young does,³⁶ that there is a arbitrariness in Epiphanius, given that his thought and effort have a firm and

³³ PG 41, 180C-181A. K. Holl, I, 173,23. See also Colossians 3, 11: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, Barbarian, Scythian, bond man or free man : but Christ is all, and in all".

³⁴ see above footn. 21, p.201

³⁵ PG 42. 788CD. K. Holl, III, 504, 23-34

³⁶ See above footn. 21, p.200: "In very general terms, then, we may say that what Epiphanius meant by 'heresy' was everything that exists outside the one, holy, catholic and orthodox Church".

indisputable criterion and measure for determining whether a group constitutes a heresy or not, which is called the one holy catholic and apostolic Church .

CHAPTER 4

SCHISM AND HERESY

Epiphanius presents the schismatics, just as he does with the heretics, as falling off from the body of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. He differentiates between heresy and schism right at the preface of his letter to the senior priests Acacius and Paul.¹ Despite his claim in this preface that there are a number of heresies and schisms in every volume of his work, he finally considers only two groups as schismatic, the Melitians from Egypt and the Audians from Mesopotamia. Of these two schismatic groups the former is found in the second volume of the second book and the latter in the first volume of the third book.² Our observation concerning the existence of these two groups alone, is confirmed in his work "*Ancoratus*" where he writes, "*I found difficulty and I find difficulty in having to mention the names of so many heresies and to explain their unlawful actions and about the two schisms, namely the Melitians in Egypt who were mentioned above and the Audians in Mesopotamia of whom we also spoke earlier*".³

Thus, the schismatics on ^{the} one hand are differentiated from the heretics ("*the Audians are a schism and not a heresy*")⁴ and, on the other hand, are placed in the same situation as heretics. This is because, both heretics and schismatics "*were divided and split off*" from the body of Christ, becoming alienated from the union of the orthodox Church and at the same time cut off from the community of the Holy Spirit⁵.

¹ PG 41, 160D. K. Holl, I, 156,28-157,1 "And here are the contents of the entire work which includes the three volumes, volume one, two, and three. These three volumes I have divided into seven Sections, with a certain number of heresies and schisms in each, making eighty in all".

² PG 42, 12AB. 336B. K. Holl, III, 2,3. 230,4

³ PG 43, 41B. K. Holl, I, 22,27

⁴ PG 43, 40D. K. Holl. I, 22,3.

Thus, the identification of the schismatics with the heretics lies in the fact that by trying to become autonomous both of them cause a breach in the Church's unity; the heretics directly alter the dogma and the ethos of the faith, whereas the schismatics, whilst keeping the dogma, alter the ethos and the coherence of the faith to the extent that they finally counterfeit the Church's proclamation and law.⁶

Despite all this, schismatics are not fully identified with heretics. Schismatics do not differentiate their faith from that of the catholic and apostolic Church. For example, Audians have a good life and behaviour and they have faith as far as all other points are concerned, like the catholic Church.⁷ Melitius too "*created a schism but did not change the faith*". Their differentiation and removal from the community lies in the fact that they want to decide about matters of faith "*privately*" and not ecclesiastically, and also "*with manifest desire for excessive justice*" which inhibits them from communicating with bishops and senior priests.⁸ Epiphanius places the problem of schism in its canonical dimension, and, thus, defines it as any refusal to obey the visible head of the Church, that is, the Bishop, or the community of the Catholic and Orthodox Church.⁹

Schismatics then, whilst they "*do not have a different faith*",¹⁰ they excommunicate themselves and fall off from the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church because they break the link of their union with it.¹¹

⁵ PG 41, 161B. K. Holl, I, 157,24

⁶ PG 43, 41B. K. Holl, I, 22,27. "For those who did not receive the Holy Spirit did not learn the depth of God and were broken up into the pieces of these heresies and into schisms with their pretensions sophistry; for having relinquished truth, they followed many paths, thinking sometimes thus and sometimes otherwise".

⁷ PG 42, 336B. K. Holl, III, 230,5

⁸ PG 43, 41AB. K. Holl. I, 22,19.

⁹ Panayiotis Trempeles, *Dogmatics of the Orthodox Catholic Church*, vol.2, p. 332n

¹⁰ PG 43, 41B. K. Holl, I, 22.20-21

¹¹ PG 42, 340C. K. Holl, III, 233,24: Epiphanius notes about Audius that "he excommunicated himself from the church".

The same manner of thinking and the same explanation regarding heretics and schismatics prevailed during the first years of Christianity.¹² This is immediately obvious in the teaching of Paul where the act of schism turns at once against the body of the Church and causes a break - up of unity.¹³ Besides ^{the} Apostle Paul, whilst writing to the Corinthians, also makes clear the division between heresy and schism.¹⁴

Consequently, we could say that saint Epiphanius remains faithful in this matter too - to the traditional faith and teaching of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

¹² See, Ian Hazlett, *Early Christianity*, 1993, pp. 218-228. (Schism and Church unity).

¹³ "So that there should be no sense of division (schism) in the body, but that all its organs might feel the same concern for one another". 1 Cor. 12,25

¹⁴ "For first of all, when they come together in the church, I hear that there are divisions (σχίσματα) among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they who are approved may be make manifest among you" 1 Cor. 11, 18-19.

CHAPTER 5

TRUTH AND HERESY

Heresy is presented in the anti-heretical work of Epiphanius as deviation from the truth. The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church is considered to be the basis of the truth, since, according to Epiphanius, it unites the ancient womb of humanity with the generations to come.¹ Heresy does the exact opposite: it breaks up this historical continuity and the community of life as it deviates from the Church.² It is important to examine how Epiphanius understands this deviation and the causes which, in his opinion, lead to it, as well as the results of it.

Heresy is not self-existent as truth is, nor has heresy always been co-existent with the truth. Originally there was no different opinion and belief in primitive humanity. By the words "primitive humanity, old times" we mean here the first man and woman.³ Heresy is created by man, i.e. it is the creation "*of heretical human opinion which has been propagated by misguided persons*".⁴ Such an activity of man is against the truth.⁵

¹ PG 41, 181BC. K. Holl, I, 174, 13-175,8

² PG 41, 161B. K. Holl, I, 157,24-158,1

³ PG 41, 181C. K. Holl, I, 174,21-175,7

⁴ PG 41, 176B. K. Holl, I, 170,8-9

⁵ Truth here has its absolute meaning and interpretation. It denotes not an object which man can elaborate and comprehend through intellectual operations, but the specific truth of being which is identified with the person of the Logos of God, who said to his disciples "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father

According to Epiphanius, man's effort to become autonomous from God the source of truth, is the first reason for the estrangement of his outlook (mind). Adam's rebellion against God's will introduced evil doing into the world.⁶ From the moment man comes into conflict with his Creator, his mind is troubled and the route that he follows is a route against his nature, against the truth. This route of autonomous existence has its own history and development. It follows various stages before taking its final form which is consummated in the absolute denial of salvation.⁷

Man's personality is gravely afflicted and changed by his unnatural deviation from the truth. The gifts which were bestowed upon him by God are used illogically. Man himself, by using his volitional and intellectual capacities illogically "*invents transgression instead of goodness*".⁸

Man's deviation into autonomy is vividly described by Epiphanius in his account of the construction of the Tower of Babel. Those who started this Tower, "*joined together and consulted one another about building a tower and a city*".⁹ This "*one another*" shows exactly their straying away from the creative grace of God. For this reason "*God was not pleased with the work of their foolishness*".¹⁰ Deviation from the truth does not bring about mere failure in the creative pursuits of humanity. It goes beyond this, inasmuch as it incurs the breaking up of human existence through loss of identity and point of reference. Here are Epiphanius' characteristic remarks

but by me" (John 14, 6)

⁶ PG 41, 180A. K. Holl. I, 172, 17-20

⁷ See the chapter on "the beginning and development of heresy", of the present work.

⁸ PG 41, 188A. K. Holl, I, 177,16-18

⁹ PG 41, 184A. K. Holl, I, 175,21-22

¹⁰ PG 41, 184B. K. Holl, I, 176,3-4

concerning the consequences of man's tower construction: "*They were dispersed right and left over the whole earth, with some going back where they came from and others further east, while others reached Libya*".¹¹

This route of heresy is marked by ignorance and illiteracy. Man's mind is troubled and inverted "*towards the contention of ignorance*" and cannot comprehend and approach the truth.¹² In his effort to become autonomous he does not have the power any longer to distinguish spiritual from earthly things. Because "*their intellect foiled them*" they cannot understand that "*Holy Scripture teaches spiritually indeed about most things in life and about the knowledge of the Lord*". Thus, Epiphanius notes with perplexity: "*A great wonder emerges, o children of the faith of the Church, namely, how the contentious have turned true things into alien ones and those things which are said figuratively into true ones through their own mistakes*".¹³

Heretics are unable to comprehend that man sees and knows about God as much as God unveils to him and, thus, deviate from the truth. A heretic tries to reach the truth of the knowledge of God with his own mind alone. As a result he creates the false impression that he knows him. On the contrary, he, who knows God as he unveils him self to him, is aware that God remains incomprehensible in the infinity of his essence. This is what Epiphanius writes in this connection as he advances his refutation of Anomius' heresy: "*When Anomius and his followers left the way of the truth and deviated from it, they misunderstood God's oracles. Thus they inverted their mind towards thoughts and choices of words, which led them away from the truth and made them fall out with heaven*".¹⁴

¹¹ PG 41, 184B - 185A. K. Holl, I, 176,7-9

¹² PG 43, 88A. K. Holl, I, 49,1

¹³ PG 43, 108C - 109A. K. Holl, I, 61,24-26

Consequently, their effort to comprehend and interpret the revealed truth of God in a meditating and thoughtful manner has led them to diversions - "*they were diverted*" - from it. Thus they are led into total ignorance, with the result that they are deprived of the deification experience of the saints. Although they see and hear, they do not understand. For example, the Jews "*not being worthy of the heavenly knowledge... although they knew that the Christ is God, they were ignorant of his perfect glory*".¹⁵

When Epiphanius refers to the Arians, who maintained that the prophets too could comprehend God with their intellect, he makes a clear distinction between "*perceiving*" (συνιέναι) as an intellectual understanding of God, and "*seeing*" (ὁρᾶν) as a personal experience of God, which man can enjoy from God: "*But do not talk again in a manner giving dramatic substance to things. The prophets saw not with their eyes but with their mind, they knew as they saw, for this is what Isaiah says: 'I am wretched, because I became ecstatic, for being a man and having dirty lips and staying with people who have dirty lips too, I saw the Lord Sabaoth. The prophet did not say, I understood, but I saw. I did see, and did not see as it was possible to me. I saw truly, but I could not see how the infinity of the incomprehensible is'*".¹⁶

According to Orthodox Theology man can comprehend God's revelation in the sense that he comes to know that "**God is**"¹⁷ and not "**what God is**". Heretics, however, who do not have this criterion of the truth, alter the meaning and nature of the truth on the basis of their own intellectual activity. It is precisely this alteration

¹⁴ PG 42, 532CD. K. Holl, III, 350,20

¹⁵ PG 43, 65CD. K. Holl, I, 36,8-13

¹⁶ PG 43, 112AB. K. Holl, I, 63,3-10

¹⁷ PG 43, 113C. K. Holl, I, 65,4-5

that Epiphanius sees in the case of the Arians who distort the truth and, as a consequence, are led to the denial of the truth ("*they make the truth disappear*").¹⁸ A heretic tries to reach the truth based on his own weak powers. God, however, cannot be understood through the wisdom of this world. Man's mind cannot be raised by itself to the level of knowledge of the divine. Comprehension of the truth cannot in any case be anthropocentric.¹⁹ Nor can it move from below upwards. The orthodox procedure has its direction from what lies above to what lies below. God is revealed to man in time and those who truly search for him follow the way of the apostles; "*who found God through his comprehensible nature, that is the incarnate one*".²⁰ It is through this revelation and personal encounter with the truth, that alterations of the faith cease to exist and matters of heresy are dissolved.²¹

The first and final result of the deviation from the truth, according to Epiphanius, is that the heretic does not see the truth as it is in its entirety and, as a consequence, he distorts it. Although he sees only in part, he understands it and interprets it as an entirety because he does not have the required spiritual presupposition. Epiphanius presents this absolutising of the part (or partial) by the heretics, as he turns against the allegorical interpretation of the truth by means of presenting two really beautiful and pictorial examples. Someone, he says, goes to a

¹⁸ PG 43, 109A. K. Holl, I, 62, 1

¹⁹ PG 43, 93C. K. Holl, I, 53, 4-5. "And all this is incomprehensible and unknown to men".

²⁰ PG 43, 81CD. K. Holl, I, 46, 7-8

²¹ PG 43, 77A. K. Holl, I, 42, 14-17. "For how could the dispensation of God be found to be in truth in truly, if it did not have the required use of the incarnation? It is with this that Christ demonstrated to us the solutions of all matters raised by the heretics".

plain or a mountain and gazes at the sea from there. This is a fact. If he says, however, that he did not see the sea, he would not tell a lie but the truth. This is because he did not "see" (οἶδε) the depth, or the width, or the hollow. The same happens with man. We see man but "*we do not know his extension*". These examples lead Epiphanius to his final conclusion, which constitutes the irrefutable criterion of knowledge of the truth and of avoidance of any diversion : "*We truly know as far we are capable. We do not know what anything [ultimately] is*".²² (Εἶδομεν γὰρ ἀληθῶς ὡς χωροῦμεν, οὐκ οἶδομεν καθὼς ἐστίν).

The truth, for Epiphanius, is the criterion for distinguishing between what is orthodox and what is heretical. Thus, the ample use of this word in his writings is justified. His ultimate aim is to prove the superiority of the truth over against heresy and the deviation of heresy from the truth. We consider it important to quote here the most significant expressions of Epiphanius, out of the numerous ones he uses, in order that we come to comprehend better his anxious effort to safeguard the one and only true faith.

Such expressions are as follows :

1. "*And the defence of the truth, and the exposition of the truth... since my discussion is for the truth's sake, and my work is for the sake of piety*".²³
2. "*Anyone willing to make an impartial (φιλαλήθως) investigation can see, from the very object of it, that the holy catholic church is the beginning of everything*".²⁴
3. "*For they do not teach as the church does; their message does not accord with the truth*".²⁵

²² PG 43, 109BC. K. Holl, I, 62, 14-21

²³ PG 41, 160B. K. Holl, I, 156,7-14

²⁴ PG 41, 181B. K. Holl, I, 174,19-21

4. *"All those who live according to the true faith are saved and they do not deny the truth of the preaching which is His true evangelical teaching".*²⁶
5. *"So that those who believe in truth and have the faith of the truth may learn that he was truly in^hominated and he was truly baptised".*²⁷
6. *"Those who keep the faith, the purity, the hope and the commandments of the Lord have true faith as it was taught to them and confirmed to them and they truly believed in it".*²⁸
7. *"All those of you who associate with friends of the good are consoled by the preface on the subsequent heresies and by the confession of the truth and the teaching of the truth, and the faith of the holy catholic Church".*²⁹
8. *"And to understand that the exactness is not false but true and that it was foretold by the entire Old Testament and that the presence of Christ and the evangelical teaching is beyond any doubt".*³⁰
9. *"Because this our holy Church believes as it has been preached in it and as it has been truly commanded".*³¹
10. *"Learn not to utter blasphemy, you who are fighting the faith, ... but always believe that the Father truly gave birth to that Son who is his image".*³²

²⁵ PG 42, 852AB. K. Holl, II, 216,3-4

²⁶ PG 42, 809C. K. Holl, III, 515,16-18

²⁷ PG 42, 812C. K. Holl, III, 516,19-21

²⁸ PG 42, 820A. K. Holl, III, 519, 19-21

²⁹ PG 42, 833B

³⁰ PG 42, 853C

³¹ PG 42, 885A

³² PG 43, 25B. K. Holl, I, 12,8-10

11. *"Let us not remove ourselves from that which is in front of us, let us not remove ourselves from the truth".*³³

12. *"And how do they dare to call the Holy Spirit different from God those who are possessed rather by passion and not by the truth and who do not learn the true voice of the trustworthy and holy Paul the Apostle?"*³⁴

13. *"Because those who had not received the Holy Spirit did not find out the depths of God, they fell into these heresies and into these schisms through the pretext of dispute. For having abandoned the truth they followed many routes, sometimes thinking differently and about different things".*³⁵

14. *"For I do not hate anybody except the devil and the works of the devil and ill faith, and I hope that you reach the truth of God and that you do not ruin yourself with blasphemy against God".*³⁶

15. *"So, is truth a myth and is everything told allegorically?"*³⁷

16. *"So we have gathered all these and laid them out, wishing not to reject anything from what has been written, but led rather by the simplicity, to be faithful to God, in what he has written to us in truth and bestowed to us as route of the truth and our salvation".*³⁸

³³ PG 43, 28C. K. Holl, I, 14, 6-7

³⁴ PG 43, 36D. K. Holl, I, 19,9-12

³⁵ PG 43, 41B. K. Holl, I, 22,27-31

³⁶ PG 43, 45B. K. Holl, I, 25,5-8

³⁷ PG 43, 120C. K. Holl, I, 69,1-2

³⁸ PG 43, 128AB. K. Holl, I, 73,26-74,3

17. *"So the holy Church received these mysteries; but terrible enemies arose against it who are considered as belonging to it but who do not come from the true faith of the apostles of the Lord".³⁹*

³⁹ PG 43, 228C. K. Holl, I, 144,14-16

CHAPTER 6

THE CHURCH AND HERESY

Saint Epiphanius's heresiology could be considered as a purely ecclesiastical approach to the problem of heresy. Both at the beginning of his work and in its development and to its end, he has the life and tradition of the Church as his starting point, whereby he judges and refutes the false opinions of the heretics.

The Church, as the starting-point, development and end of creation, that is, the established traditional life, where truth, actions and a whole variety of events prevail, specifies the truth and preserves it from the teachings of the heretics. Thus, Epiphanius, through "*the secured tradition and defence of the truth*", rejects the various heretical teachings and goes on to present the orthodox faith, which is a reproof of the heretics, in accordance with "*the holy Bride who is united with Christ from the moment of his incarnation, was created along with Adam, revealed through Moses, proclaimed prophetically by Isaiah, revealed in Christ and exists with Christ and is praised by us*".¹ Throughout this course, i.e. from the roots and the cradle of creation to the last days, there is a unity of historical continuity, truth and life, which has the body of the Church as its central pivot. Heretics are cut off from the Church when they try to break up this archetypal and, at the same time, new and developing unity.

Epiphanius, perceiving the unity of humanity and the age long hidden will of God the Trinity for man's salvation, does not hesitate to consider Abraham, who had lived before Christ, as a characteristic member of the Apostolic Church.² For Epiphanius the Church has its existence in the creation of Adam, who, before the fall, was in community with his Creator and acquired the knowledge of God the Trinity: "*Anyone willing to make an impartial investigation can see, from the very object of it, that the holy catholic Church is the beginning of everything. Adam, the man formed first, was not formed with a circumcised body, but an uncircumcised one. He was no*

¹ PG 42, 772CD. K. Holl, III, 495,23-29

² PG 41, 193A. K. Holl, I, 179,10-13

idolater, and knew God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, for he was a prophet".³ Thus every man, who, before or after Christ, communicates with the grace of God, is a member of God's community. Epiphanius makes an anatomic incision in theology with this view about the Church, stressing the historical unity of the Divine dispensation (Θεία Οικονομία) with the truth. Truth is not an abstract term. Truth is realised by men as theory and practice when it is referred to God, i.e. when it has God the Trinity as its beginning, development and final reference. Those who express this truth are children of God, that is, members of his Church.

The Church, then consists of the faithful and genuine members, who remain devoted to the faith transmitted to them and who inherit the Kingdom. On the contrary heresies and schisms *"have only an attachment of subconscious's to the Logos"*.⁴ For this reason they cannot be considered as children of the Church and of God, because they do not have the integrity required. They do not have this integrity because they divided the unity of the Church *"when they were cut off like branches, denounced as heresies those who were named with the name of Christ, but were not his, because for some slight concern they set themselves apart and were alienated from him together with their children who were not righteous either, went astray were merely named with the name of the Church"*.⁵

Whoever is incorporated into the body of the Church through baptism, is obliged to maintain this unity. If a member breaks this unity, then he ceases to have and to express the safe and orthodox worship (doxology) of God the Trinity and falls into heresy: *"Baptize them in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, i.e. in the dominical appellation of the Trinity, the sacred and royal seal, in order to prove, through the name, that there has been no alteration of the one unity. For where the candidates to be baptized are called forth in the name of Father, the worship of God is assured; in the name of the Son, the invocation is no less assured; in the name of Holy Spirit, the bond has not been cut nor alienated because he bears the seal of the one Godhead"*.⁶

³ PG 41, 181BC. K. Holl, I, 174,19--175,2

⁴ PG 42, 784A. K. Holl, III, 501,26

⁵ PG 42, 772BC. K. Holl, III, 495,12-17

⁶ PG 41, 277BC. K. Holl, I, 231,10-17

Heresy as teaching and way of life wears away the life of the Church by bringing about traumatic experiences. However, the unity of the Church, with its everlasting and eternal source, the One God in Trinity, averts every substantial alteration and division of the one catholic Church by the heretics. The Church is built on the solid and unshakeable rock of the teaching of the Apostles inspired by the Holy Spirit and "*the pillars of Hades can not prevail against her, i.e. the pillars of heresies and of the heresiarchs*".⁷ Because the nature of the Church is clearly holy and connected with the Holy Spirit, the relation of people with it is determined by their relation to the life of the Church as a whole in the Holy Spirit. Heretics are alienated from the unity of the orthodox Church for they have not received the Holy Spirit, nor have they learnt the depths of God, but were subdivided into these heresies and schisms through the pretext of irritating mockery.⁸ Thus, a heretic becomes hostile to the body of the Church and is cut off from it. When Epiphanius refers to the heresy of the Arians he will note that they use words ironically for in their mind they turn against the Son of God believing that the Son is totally different from the Father.⁹

The heretics, then, are cut off from the Church, where the means of salvation exist, the incarnate Logos himself. This leads to the conclusion that he who turns against the body of the Church, causing a division in its harmonious and natural existence, turns at the same time against its Head, Christ, who is the Saviour of the Church. Thus, the eternal and unchangeable criterion of the true faith, which is called "*true incarnation*"¹⁰ (ἀληθινή ἐνανθρώπησις) of the Logos of God, exists in the Church as a unity of one historical continuity and reveals to people the way to perfection. Every alteration of this criterion brings automatically the deportation from "*God's flock*".¹¹

We must stress at this point that the Church expels them from its body with the only aim of safeguarding its members from deceit. The Church cannot tolerate some sick members who deliberately corrode its healthy teaching because, they endanger the

⁷ PG 43, 33A. K. Holl, I, 16,23-24

⁸ PG 43, 41B. K. Holl, I, 22,26-29

⁹ PG 43, 108A. K. Holl, I, 61,4-7

¹⁰ PG 42, 809D - 812A. K. Holl, III, 512,24-516,7

¹¹ PG 43, 212B. K. Holl, I, 131,10-13

integrity of the orthodox faith, which is identified with salvation. When, for example, the heresy of the Phrygians (also called Montanists or Tascodrygitans) comes to oppose the Church's teaching on virginity and marriage, as well as on eating certain foods, then the Church will refute the deceit and in contrast to them *"the Holy Church will honour virginity and praise celibacy, purity and joyfulness and will honour and accept marriage. At the same time it will forbid fornication and prostitution"*.¹²

The final aim of the Church with regard to heresies, which is therapeutic, is discerned in this way of confrontation. The Church was given to humanity by God in order to lead human beings through the bath of spiritual rebirth back to God and to the one knowledge of truth. The Son and Logos of God, the second person of the one and undivided Trinity, was incarnated exactly for this purpose. When he sent his disciples to preach the Gospel to the nations, teaching them the truth and baptising them *"in the dominical name of the Trinity, the sacred and royal seal"* (εἰς τὴν Κυριακὴν ὀνομασίαν τῆς Τριάδος, τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ βασιλικὴν σφραγίδα) he aimed at one and only ^{one} purpose: the conversion of the nations from wickedness to the truth and from heresy to the one unity: *"And he lived with them in truth, not in appearance; by his instruction he taught them to proclaim the kingdom of heaven in truth. He indicated the greatest and supreme mystery to his disciples in saying: Make disciples of the nations, that is, convert the nations from wickedness to the truth, from heresies to the one unity"*.¹³

The Church wants and pursues the salvation of all. Even the *"concubines"* (παλλακίδες), that is the heresies, have a place within the true life of the Church, if they show the will to understand and accept the evangelical truth as it was once and for all revealed by the incarnate Logos of God.¹⁴ The evangelical truth brings salvation to those who accept it freely and naturally. It is offered as a gift to everybody irrespectively of their spiritual or material state. Epiphanius designates this gift by the word *"donations"* (δόματα). These *"donations"* have as distinctive marks, on the one hand the gift and love of God - *"just as these heresies are like concubines and their children are accepted as donations"* - and on the other hand, their free acceptance,

¹² PG 41, 868B. K. Holl, II, 230,26-28

¹³ PG 41, 277B. K. Holl, I, 6-10

¹⁴ PG 41, 161B. K. Holl, I, 157,19-23

without any changing of them by man - "so that they may come to know the truth through them, if they want to. But if they do not want to, but turn to Herod, although they are told not to turn to Herod but to follow another route in order to reach their own country, i.e. if they do not carry out what they are ordered to do, they received the donations in vain, just like the arrival of these others, who turned to Herod, since these heresies falsify the teaching of the holy oracles in a similar manner".¹⁵

In conclusion, it can be said that, according to Epiphanius, the territory of heresies is a terrible desert, flooded with spiritual thirst, whereas the Church is considered to be and is a harbour, the safe basis, the rock for man's salvation.¹⁶

Establishing this understanding of heresy, Epiphanius tries to interpret or, better still, to adjust to this theological approach of the problem, the passage of the book of the Song of Songs from the Old Testament, which says: "*There are sixty queens, eighty concubines, and countless young maidens, but there is one who is my dove, my perfect one*".¹⁷

The one and perfect "*dove*", that is the Church, who is born from faith and the Holy Spirit and is endowed by the Logos, is differentiated both from the "*queens*" and from the "*concubines*" and the "*young maidens*". God uses the personal construction "*my dove*" and "*my perfect one*" in order to denote on the one hand his personal and undivided unity with the Church and on the other hand his opposition to the groups existing outside the Church.¹⁸

The "*queens*" represent the generations from Adam to Christ's appearance.¹⁹ The "*concubines*" represent the eighty heresies which Epiphanius enumerates in his anti-heretical work.²⁰ The "*maidens*" represent all the philosophical currents before and after Christ which are not mentioned by Epiphanius, as well as the life style of every other man.²¹

¹⁵ PG 42, 788B. K. Holl, III, 504,11-20

¹⁶ PG 42, 776BC. K. Holl. III, 496,25-497,24

¹⁷ PG 42, 777BC. K. Holl, III, 498,28-499,1. Song of Songs, 6, 7-8

¹⁸ PG 42, 777C. K. Holl, III, 499,1-3.

¹⁹ PG 42, 780A - 781A. K. Holl, III, 499,18-500,26

²⁰ PG 42, 784AB. K. Holl, III, 502,2-11

²¹ PG 42, 788CD. K. Holl, III, 504,23-34.

SCHEMATIC PRESENTATION OF THE PASSAGE FROM
THE SONG OF SONGS (6, 7-8)

60 QUEENS

These are 62 generations from Adam to Christ's appearance. In order to be brief 60 are enumerated. These are also mentioned by the Evangelist Matthew. They were thus named as honoured for being part of the genealogical tree of Christ's presence.
(PG 42, 777C - 780A - 781A)

80 CONCUBINES

The origins of the concubines are Barbarism, Hellenism, Scythianism, Judaism, Samaritanism. These 5 groups are the mothers and 75 are from them by nature. These were divided from the body of the Church and they are to be found on the one side amidst the Queens before the presence of Christ and on the other side amidst the Church after Christ's presence. They have nothing to do with God's legitimate children.
(PG 42, 784BC)

INNUMERABLE
MAIDENS

These are innumerable and represent every philosophy and every man and social group who are not connected with the Church and have become independent from God in one way or another.
(PG 42, 788CD)

ONE PERFECT DOVE

The one perfect dove constitutes the one and only Church who *"is born from one faith through the Holy Spirit. being one and only and only begotten to the one who gave birth to her"*.
(PG 42, 777BC - 781D)

CHAPTER 7

HOLY SCRIPTURE AND HERESY

It is a fact that heretics always seek to base their false opinions on Holy Scripture and on some sort of historical arguments.¹ Historiography, however, proves to us that heresies are numerous and differentiated from each other, altering the meaning and teaching of the Scriptures, whereas orthodoxy is one and only, just as its teaching, as well as its tradition, is one. Epiphanius, in his extensive anti-heretical work, underlines two main tendencies of the heretics in their use, or rather misuse, of Holy Scripture. The first one refers to the breaking up of the unity between the Old and the New Testament and the second, to the distortion and misinterpretation of passages from both. On the other hand, his work stresses and praises at the same time the unity and harmony of the two Testaments. In the chapter that follows, we shall examine as briefly as possible the aforementioned points.

1. THE VIOLATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE BY THE HERETICS

A distinctive feature of the heretics is the fact that they reject part of Holy Scripture, isolating one historical era at the expense of another, mainly introducing elements which are alien to the writings and the spirit of the orthodox teaching. For example the Valentinians, who do not admit the resurrection of the flesh and discard the Old Testament, reading the prophets and accepting them only in so far as they can

¹ PG 42, 348B. K. Holl, III, 237,26. PG42, 509B. K. Holl, III, 336,11-30

be interpreted in ways that resemble their own heresy and introducing certain other mythologies.² This violation of the Old Testament brings about the breaking up of the unity and continuity of Holy Scripture with the result that the heresiarch is obliged to introduce "*some other mythologies*" in order to support his teaching and, thus, ends up with a distortion of the one true faith.

In the case of the Simonians, we notice that the violation and the breaking up of Holy Scripture also brings about a moral degradation to the point that obscenities are employed in the celebration of the sacraments. The rejection of God's law and the absolutization of human potential on the part of man inevitably leads to a fall from the truth and to the creation of man-made teachings.³ Heretics unlawfully steal passages from Holy Scripture, which at the beginning they mutilate, like other buccaneers, and then, beautify them with anthropocentric meanings and arguments and present them as the truth. But, "*the Truth is unadorned, stands on its own without suffering defeat nor needing adornment*".⁴

Heretics reach the point of rejecting and violating Holy Scripture, either because of gnostic views, or because of adherence to philosophical theories, or even because they are influenced by Judaic teachings. In addition, some others begin with moral philosophy assumptions, or try to understand with their logic some of the moral teachings of Christ, in this way isolating one teaching at the expense of another, or even one historical era over against others. For this reason, we observe that almost all heretics, whether it is Marcion, or Kerdo's followers, or the Ebionites, or the

² PG 41, 284CD. K. Holl, I, 236,23

³ PG 41, 289C - 293C. K. Holl, I, 242,20-244,27

⁴ PG 42, 280A. K. Holl, III, 197,1-3

supporters of any other group, follow the same divisive line irrespective of purposes and existential necessities.

Thus, the rejection of Holy Scripture by the heretics may often have as a basis personal reasons of a heresiarch which end up with the heresy itself. A typical example of this is the heresiarch Marcion who, after a moral fall, i.e. having seduced a girl, and following the refusal of the ecclesiastical authorities to give him communion, "*he grew haughty and angry and introduced a dogma of three first principles, the good, the just, and the evil one; and also said that the New Testament is foreign to the Old and to the One who is the Speaker in it*".⁵ This dualistic opinion of Marcion, which is based on Greek dualism, as one may really understand, constitutes a direct offence against the teaching of Holy Scripture and its unity, having as a result the alteration of the Church's dogma. We could say that in this example we encounter the typical combination of personal moral fall and uncritical acceptance of these which justify this fall.

¹ The historical continuity and unity of the two Testaments, the Old and the New, were always a *since qua non* for the Church. The truth was identical with the sacred historical facts of the Old Testament, as well as with the Incarnation of Christ, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and generally the whole sacred history of the Divine Dispensation in Christ. The distortion and rejection of this historical continuity, i.e. God's saving work, inevitably led to heresy. Kerdo's followers were led to docetism and dualism between good and evil exactly for this reason. They rejected the Old Testament as "*alien to God*" and forbade its use.⁶ By this action they brought about a

⁵ PG 41, 580D. K. Holl, II, 3,6-9

⁶ PG 41, 692CD. K. Holl, II, 91,6-14

distortion to the universality of the faith, differentiating the Christian dogma and dividing the Christian community.⁷

As the heresies enter into the bosom of the Church, carrying with them the confusion of Hellenic and Judaic opinions, they are directly responsible for the most ruthless and typical distortions and violations of Holy Scripture. They fail to comprehend and get to know the real meaning that Scripture carries. Thus, on the one hand whatever Holy Scripture says is true for them who accept them with faith and, on the other hand, *"those who did not believe and misinterpreted it, consider it differently"*.⁸

Another reason for the rejection and fragmentation of Holy Scripture is that on the one hand Judaism cannot accept the incarnate Logos and the historical continuity of the Divine Dispensation and as a result is ^{le}servily turned in on the limits of the law, refusing whatever else exists outside or beyond it. Thus, an anti-Judaic mentality is formed among some Christians which results in some of them ending up with the rejection and violation of the Old Testament. On the other hand, others, faithful to Judaic opinions, change the faith of the New Testament and, generally, the dogma of the Church. In this case, we could mention the Ebionites who, being bound to their

⁷ PG 41, 693CD. K. Holl, II, 93,1-8. "The fool says that both the Law and the prophets belong to the evil and opposing principle, whereas Christ belongs to the good one. Why, then, did the prophets predict the things that were patterned after Christ, unless the power that spoke in the Law, the prophets, and the Gospels was one and the same? As he says, *Lo, here am I that speak in the prophets* and so on. And why did the Lord in the Gospel also cry out saying, *Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me also, for he wrote of me?*"

⁸ PG 42, 820A. K. Holl, III, 519,22-24

Judaic origins, radically differentiate themselves from the Church's teaching concerning Christ.⁹

In addition to the above, there is the invasion of Hellenistic elements into the life of the Church, wherever Christians cannot comprehend the difference between religious- philosophical theories and the teaching of Holy Scripture about God and the world, the result of which is the creation of dualism and antinomian heresies. We know from ecclesiastical historiography that the Gnostics had been the main representatives of this tendency. Epiphanius refers to them characteristically: "*These [Gnostics], are closely associated with this Nicolaus... Speaking about a book they call Noria, they mix falsehood with truth and alter the Greeks' legendary recital and imagination by the meaning of Greek superstition*".¹⁰ The rejection of the expressed and saving truth of Holy Scripture by the Gnostics led to the division and violation of the truth. Thus, we have the refusal both, of the perfect incarnation of the Logos and of the salvation of man as a whole. Valentinus, for example, maintains that Christ did not take up flesh, but has brought his body down from above and passed through the Virgin Mary like water through a pipe.¹¹ The gnostic Saturnilus maintains that only the spiritual part of man, which he calls "*spark*", is saved.¹²

According to our holy man the violation and rejection of the unity of Holy Scripture by the heretics is not only due to external influences, but also to the spiritual

⁹ PG 41, 405BC. K. Holl, I, 333,5-334,6

¹⁰ PG 41, 332AB. K. Holl, I, 275,12-18

¹¹ PG 41, 488A. K. Holl, I, 396,9-11

¹² PG 41, 300B. K. Holl, I, 249,13-14. "And thus the spark will surely be saved, but the whole of man must perish".

infrastructure in general and to the personal relation of man with the whole life of the Church.

Knowledge and understanding of Holy Scripture are accomplished through the grace and gift of God. The heretics do not know the spiritual meanings of its letter, because "*they neither knew the Scriptures nor the power of God*".¹³ The heresy of the Anomoians is a typical case of distortion of Holy Scripture by heretics. They used passages from Scripture, "*claiming that they speak from the Scriptures*", but they go on afterwards to shape the spirit and meaning of the written statements as their mind understands them and not as the Lord delivered them.¹⁴ The reason for this perversion is unbelief (ἀπιστία). Lack of faith drives out the grace of God and, as a result, man cannot comprehend the truth revealed to him. Thus, "*it is characteristic for the faithful to confess Scripture and for the unbelievers to discard the grace*".¹⁵ Faith means the acceptance of the teaching and life of the Church in the Holy Spirit.¹⁶

2. THE UNITY - HARMONY OF THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Epiphanius exalts the unity and the historical continuity of the Old and New Testaments in his anti-heretical work in order to stress the unity of the whole tradition in history.

Thus, pondering Epiphanius' endeavour to confront all the known heresies and especially his persistent stresses on the unity of the Old and New Testament, we can

¹³ PG 42, 520BC. K. Holl, III, 343,5-9 and Mark.12,24

¹⁴ PG 42, 524D. K. Holl, III, 346,3-6

¹⁵ PG 43, 113C. K. Holl, I, 65,2-3

¹⁶ PG 41, 201C. K. Holl, I, 184,10-11. "Where did you get the guidance for your teaching? Or, which Holy Spirit has spoken to you from heaven about your deceit?"

only presume that without this unity of the one tradition, truth cannot exist. The source and the beginning of truth is one, God. The "pumps" (ἀντλητήρες), however, that draw up the one and only truth are two, the Old and the New Testament. In other words, there is one ancient tradition which is presented as newⁱⁿ an endless historical continuity. In fact, the new tradition is the old one and at the same time, the old tradition is the new one! Every human belief that is not based on this tradition causes division from the one unity and is considered heretical:

"So let nobody divide the Old from the New Testament, nor the New from the Old. For it is only one and the same harmony in both. If the ignorant and inexperienced sees two pumps pumping in a well, and thus presumes that, since the pumps are different, so are the waters, let him hear the truth from the wise: Taste of both pumps and see that they are two, but there is only one well. Thus, there is one Lord, one God, one Spirit, who spoke in the law and in the prophets and in the Gospel. Hence, there are neither two Old Testaments nor two New Testaments; for there are not two who gave them, but one who makes the Old old, and the New, new; he does not cancel out the Old in order to render it to oblivion, but puts the Old to rest, and adds the second as inheritance of wealth".¹⁷

¹⁷ PG 42, 165C - 168A. K. Holl, III, 128,18-29

This unity becomes a critical test for the heretics, safeguarding at the same time the boundaries of the faith and refuting every invasion that attempts to afflict the Church. In his refutation of Marcion's heresy - the greater part of which deals with the unity of Holy Scripture - Saint Epiphanius will stress this unity as control and security of the orthodox faith. Thus, he will note in Marcion's case: *"Paul assents to the Law saying that it is holy, and to the commandment in it, in order to expose you, o Marcion, and teach us that the Law is of the holy One, whose commandment is also holy, and who is himself holy and good. Therefore, since the commandment is a good God's, it is called good, and since it is a holy God's, it is called holy. Since it is a just God's, it is called just. For he who proclaims it then and now is holy, just and good, he is also One. Therefore his commandment then and now, in the Law and the New Testament, is also holy, just, and good"*.¹⁸

This historical continuity and unity of the Old and New Testaments is a historical course and disclosure of the same reality and of the same events. Indeed, there are two phases that describe the development and the end of the same thing. Both phases speak of and are also directed towards exactly the same important event: the incarnate presence of the second person of the Holy Trinity and man's salvation through him.¹⁹

Whatever precedes the revelation of the incarnation constitutes a type of the future realisation of this truth. Naturally, Epiphanius does not claim that during the period of the types truth did not exist. This is because it is from the same source, God,

¹⁸ PG 41, 805B. K. Holl, II, 177,16-25

¹⁹ PG 41, 709B. K. Holl, II, 106,20-25. "But others were exactly like the Gospel and the Apostle, unchanged by Marcion, and yet capable of exposing his whole case. By these it is shown that the Old Testament agrees with the New and the New with Old. Again, other sayings from the same books give intimation that Christ has come in the flesh and has been made a perfect man among us".

as we have seen earlier, that the one and only truth is revealed in one way then, and in another later. Thus, ^{to} the Old is adjoined the New Testament, where it achieves its fulfilment. Nothing is lost, or changed, throughout this transitional procedure from the one phase to the other. This adjoining has in no case whatsoever the meaning of absorption and disappearance, but, of fulfilment alone. For this reason the Law is not cancelled out but fulfilled.²⁰

The Old Testament is the type which is organically and substantially linked with the second phase of the same historical continuity and reality, the New Testament. The type of the Law does not have merely a typological relationship with the revelation of the truth. It obtains a dynamic and substantial relationship in the Church. The types in the unfolding history of Divine Dispensation become manifestations of the truth. Thus Epiphanius notes: "*All these sacred books taught Judaism and the observances of the Law till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. They would have been all right under the Law's guardianship, had they accepted the Christ whom their guardian, I mean the Law, foretold to them and prophesied so as to learn of the Law's fulfilment, not its abolition, by accepting Christ's Godhead and incarnate presence. For the types were in the Law, but the truth is in the Gospel*".²¹ This means that any other view of the unity of Holy Scripture and any other attempt to divide the one Testament from the other, or to degrade their authority, constitutes a heresy.

²⁰ PG 41, 796A. K. Holl, II, 170,8-11. "The phrase "*On account of the Law*" is not in the Apostle, and this is a fiction of your own. But even were the apostle to say, "*on account of the Law*", he said it in full agreement with his own Lord, not in order to destroy the Law but to fulfil it".

²¹ PG 41, 213BC. K. Holl, I, 192,9-17

It would be interesting to see at this point how the Saint conceives of the relationship of the type to the truth through the unity of Holy Scripture. Adherence to the type of the Law hinders man from being adjoined to the new reality in Christ. In fact, it breaks up history into two and refuses to follow and to be substantially adjoined to the new phase of becoming. By refusing the fulfilment and adjoining of the Law to this new evangelical truth man refuses in reality the entire history of the incarnate presence of the Lord. In his confrontation with the heresy of the Simonians Epiphanius will emphatically note and stress this truth: *"And since the Lord has said, "I am not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil", how can there not be one Godhead and the same spirit of the New and the Old Testament? Indeed, in order to show that the Law was proclaimed by himself and given through Moses, while the grace of the Gospel has been preached by himself and his presence in the flesh, he told the Jews, "Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me also, for he wrote of me" ".²²*

Faithful to this theology, Epiphanius points out that no one is saved by a formal typological adherence to certain provisions of the Law, because this incurs the break up of the one truth and faith. Indeed, this is so because type and truth belong to the one process/route towards the fulfilment of the history of the Divine Dispensation. Thus when Epiphanius addresses the Ebionites, who were boasting about their implementation of circumcision, he reminds them that this provision has no connection whatsoever with the truth and salvation, since it is not fulfilled in the Gospel which constitutes the fulfilment of the Law as a whole. Consequently, every type which does not follow the orthodox dynamic process that leads from the Law to the Gospel,

²² PG 41, 293AB. K. Holl, I, 244, 11-17

where it is finally fulfilled, resembles the types and provisions of the gentiles which have no-connection whatsoever with what God commands to human beings.²³

3. THE INTERPRETATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

The interpretation of Holy Scripture always begins from the presupposition of understanding the truth as such. Those who remain faithful to orthodoxy are not interested in the modernisation of the truth through the employment of new and impressive formulations, but in the content of the truth. The Church is the criterion of this content, that is, the tradition.²⁴ Thus, the question put to every heretic is whether he accepts the teaching about the orthodox faith as a whole, as it is expressed in the one historical continuity of the community.²⁵ The supporters of orthodoxy always look back, as it were, to the revealed truth and every step they take forwards they link it directly to the back-ground of truth. If it is not linked to the whole, then, it is rejected as false opinion and was considered as heresy. This is why Epiphanius, in his criticism

²³ PG 41, 469AB. K. Holl, I, 379,24-380,3. "But why does Ebion boast of circumcision, when both idolaters and Egyptian priests have it? So do the Saracens, also called Ishmaelites, and the Samaritans, the Idumaeans and the Homerites. Most of these do this, not because of the Law, but from some senseless custom".

²⁴ PG 42, 429B. K. Holl, III, 286,16-17. "But we of the catholic church who have received the confession of faith from the divine Scriptures hold that the Father is Father of the Son like himself, and the Son is like the Father, from which Father he is regarded as the Son".

²⁵ PG 42, 349A. K. Holl, III, 238,25-28. "And that God has been revealed to people has been said many times, and we do not deny it; for if we deny the Holy Scriptures, we shall not be true and we shall find ourselves denying the truth, or if we reject the Old Testament we shall no longer belong to the catholic Church".

of the false opinions of Aetius exposes him by saying to him: "*What is the use of arguing with you, since you are totally different from Christians, from prophets, apostles and evangelists, from martyrs and all the saints, from those who are ready to test you on the day of judgement, for they suffered torture unto death, flogging, rending of the flesh, being thrown to the beasts and into fire and stabbing in order not to deny the Son of God and that he was truly born of God?*"²⁶

Patristic interpretation of Holy Scripture was carried out and ought to be carried out on the basis of this view. The Fathers were not in a hurry to express any hasty or rough and ready interpretation of what was spoken in it, because they were fully aware of the point pursued by it. The term that Epiphanius uses in order to show this deep feeling about the meaning of what is expressed by Holy Scripture is important. What Holy Scripture says is most perfect, because in every case the truth is expressed "*dispensationally*" (οἰκονομικῶς).²⁷ That is, its meaning and interpretation are specified by the 'when', the 'how' and the 'why' it was expressed. Consequently, the interpreter is in need of "*an alert mind given by the Lord*" so that he may discern what has been spoken "*dispensationally for every need and in every place*".

Holy Scripture is the history of all the events which are divine interventions in the created world and in history and which have only one aim: to reconnect humanity with God.²⁸ Thus, through the historiography of Holy Scripture, we have the direct

²⁶ PG 42, 565AB. K. Holl, III, 372, 14-20

²⁷ PG 42, 312A. K. Holl, III, 216,3-10.

²⁸ PG 42, 497CD. K. Holl, III, 330,8-23. "As this is so, we must make sure not to get away from the truth, but to confess the truth, not by speaking for God, but thinking with piety, in order not to be destroyed ... and the testimonies of this safeguarded life

presentation of communication between God, who is the unapproachable God in his essence- for as Creator he is above all creation approachable-only in his glory and the revelation of his will-, and the created and finite man. In other words, we have a revelation of God's will to man and not a discovery of it on the part of man. Thus, we can understand Epiphanius' exhortation to the heretics: "*Search the Holy Scriptures and learn the power of the Holy Spirit and this Spirit that knows the Father and the Son will reveal to you the knowledge of the Son and Logos, so that you may not be led astray from the truth and lose your own soul*".²⁹

Consequently, the interpretation of Holy Scripture has to be centred on Christ and the Church in order to be orthodox. Any other interpretation kills the spirit of Holy Scripture, which enlivens men with regard to the faith of the Church and, finally, remains in the letter of Scripture which is void of content and deadly in essence. (κατὰ τὴν οὐσία γράμμα τῆς Γραφῆς). The interpreter must obtain that key which will help him to break the barrier of the letter and discover what is hidden behind the letter. This can be achieved through the Holy Spirit which is given in the Holy Church of God through the Son:

"Let us understand the power of Scripture, so that the letter may not become death to us. For the letter, it says, kills, whilst the spirit quickens. Let us receive the spirit in order to benefit from the letter. The letter does not kill, but there is life in the letter; it kills him who approaches the letter in a manner void of understanding

are all found throughout the entire Scripture".

²⁹ PG 43, 52D - 53A. K. Holl, I, 28, 18-21

and him who does not have a mind that perceives, that opens the letter and reveals what is hidden in it. Thus, the Holy Father gave to the Church both his only - begotten Son who is genuinely born from him, and the Holy Spirit, in one knowledge of concordance and one bond of perfection. Thus, so that we might carry the seal in the name of the perfect Father and God and receive the seal in the name of the divine and perfect Spirit".³⁰

Naturally, interpretation never destroys the letter or the symbol (*It does not destroy the letter, for life is in the letter; it destroys him who approaches the letter imprudently and who does not have the Spirit that speaks and opens the letter and reveals what is in it*). On the contrary, interpretation reveals and enhances both in their organic relation to reality, because it underlines the aforementioned relation revealing what substantial thing is hidden behind the image and the symbol. This is carried out only in the new reality in Christ, the Church.³¹

Allegorical interpretation finds its correct place within this perspective. When this interpretation does not destroy the letter and the spirit of Scripture, but endeavours to discover what lies behind the shell of the letter, then it becomes a theological method. It borrows the types from the historical events of God's revelation

³⁰ PG 43, 57CD. K. Holl, I, 31,9-20

³¹ PG 41, 564C. K. Holl, I, 455,4-8. "Since all these were images and allegories, they were transformed when the truth appeared. Outwardly and in bodily observance, they were abrogated; spiritually they were adopted, with the names remaining the same but the actions altered".

and through the interpretation of the symbols and images, offers us the one undivided truth.³²

Whilst on the one hand Epiphanius accepts the allegorical interpretation, on the other hand he appears to be very conservative as regards its absolute use.³³ More specifically, when he turns against Origen, of whom he has a dislike, he will fight hard against all arbitrary allegory and its absolutization.³⁴ It is a fact that bad use of this method of interpretation leads to wrong conclusions. There is the danger, which the saint points out, that the true word of Holy Scripture is interpreted as if expressed allegorically and that what is expressed figuratively is true.³⁵ For this reason, when this method is used a lot of thoughtfulness and the grace of God are needed. For, what is revealed are gifts of God to man "*given by grace*"³⁶ and are recognised by him according to the spiritual purity and ability that he has at the moment he investigates them.³⁷

At this point we would like to stress that the Church from very early times established the number of the canonical books of Holy Scripture for reasons of safeguard and defence. It must be noted, however, that this action did not have any particular theological significance, because the Church never counted on any specific

³² PG 43, 109B. 97CD-100A. K. Holl, I, 62,10-13. 55,24-56,5

³³ PG 43, 120C. K. Holl, I, 69,1-2. "So then, truth is a myth and everything is said allegorically".

³⁴ PG 43, 112B. K. Holl, I, 63,3-65,15

³⁵ PG 43, 108C-109A. K. Holl, I, 61,24-26. "I wonder exceedingly, o sons of faith and the Church, how these contentious persons turned what are true to strange and have erroneously considered what have been spoken figuratively as true".

³⁶ PG 43, 113C. K. Holl, I, 64,18

³⁷ PG 43, 109B. K. Holl, I, 62,20-21

texts in order to establish its teaching. The Church's theology always based its interpretation of passages of Holy Scripture on the living tradition and experience of the community, rather than on the letter or a passage of Scripture. The following text of Epiphanius, where he refutes the false opinions of Aetius, is very enlightening for our subject:

"For if you were born of the Holy Spirit and if you had studied the Prophets and Apostles, you should have studied from the beginning of the creation of the world to the times of Esther, in twenty-seven books of the Old Testament numbered as twenty-two, (books) and in four holy Gospels and fourteen Epistles of Saint Paul the apostle and in the Epistles before these, together with the Acts of the Apostles which were written during the same period and the Catholic Epistles of James and John and Judas, and in the Revelation of John and in the Wisdom of Solomon, I mean Solomon and his son Sirach, and in general all in all the Holy Scriptures and you would have yourself come to understand that you brought to us a name (term) which has now here been long down... and has never been mentioned by divine Scripture".³⁸

That which makes man to realise the necessity of the written Law and to live correctly according to its precepts is not any rule of this Law, but the communion of the Holy Spirit and the discipleship in the words of the Prophets and the Apostles. The phrase *"for if you were born of the Holy Spirit and had studied the Prophets and the*

³⁸ PG 42, 560D. K. Holl, III, 369,16-28

Apostles" designates exactly the relation of communion in the Holy Spirit which man needs to have along with the entire community which is called the Church. It is only through this relation that he will be able to see what is hidden behind the letter of the Law and will reach, through true knowledge, the deifying experience of the Spirit of the Word of God revealed to him. This also gives the true dimension of the phrase "books inspired of God". These are born and created through and in relation to the whole history of the Divine Dispensation. It is only through this ontological relation that they can be considered as inspired of God. That is, they are defined as inspired of God by the bearer of the work of the Dispensation, the Church. These do not have and cannot claim to have by themselves arbitrarily a divine and literal inspiration.³⁹

Finally, Saint Epiphanius, in relation to the above point and to his entire doctrine concerning Holy Scripture, distinguishes two kinds of knowledge in Holy Scripture: "*one in energy (κατ' ἐνέργειαν) and one in theory (καί κατὰ εἶδησιν)*".⁴⁰

The theoretical knowledge of Holy Scripture specifies its theoretical comprehension. In this case, whilst man sees and elaborates the words of Scripture, he does not have direct knowledge and experience of what Scripture ultimately wants to transmit. Thus, one may have knowledge of the word of God's revealed truth, but he may not be able to comprehend its spiritual depth.⁴¹

Contrary to this knowledge there is the active one which specifies the empirical and practical knowledge of Holy Scripture.⁴² In this case, man comes in direct contact

³⁹ PG 42, 817D. K. Holl, III, 519, 13-14. PG 43, 52D-53A. K. Holl, I, 28,18-21. PG 41, 201C. K. Holl, I, 184,10-11

⁴⁰ PG 43, 53A. K. Holl, I, 28,22-23

⁴¹ PG 43, 53B. K. Holl, I, 29,3-7

⁴² PG 43, 53C. K. Holl, I, 29,12-13

not only with the letter of the word of God's revealed truth, but also with the knowledge and living experience of God himself to whom he is led through the letter. So then "*Holy Scripture knows of knowledge, theoretically and actively*" and this is why man who is naturally mortal, must rely for his knowledge on the perfect, everlasting and eternal God who has the perfect knowledge of all things.⁴³

⁴³ PG 43, 53D - 56B. K. Holl, I, 29,26 - 30,15

CHAPTER 8

THE DEVIL AND HERESY

The teaching of the Church regarding the devil has a prominent place in the work of Saint Epiphanius, especially regarding the relation of the devil to the creation and to the activities of the heresies. In this chapter we shall try to enter the thought of the Saint and to explore his explicit teaching on this subject too, drawing the necessary conclusions.

The devil is not an impersonal condition or the negative element in God's creation.¹ Neither can he be regarded as everlasting, or ingenerate.² Besides the doctrine of dualism which teaches of two causes (ἀρχές), one of a good God and one of an evil God who is identified with the Devil, is to be rejected as unacceptable.³ The devil is a particular being who was created just like the rest of the angels.⁴ His fall is not due to his nature, but to his cunning will and malicious envy for man's glory. Lucifer's choice had as its aim his personal exaltation in an autonomous way: *"Lucifer too was a star of the Morning Light. How did this bearer of Morning Light fell from*

¹ PG 41, 432BD. K. Holl, I, 353,12-354,9. PG41, 833C. K. Holl, II, 200,16-24

² PG 41, 1101BD. K. Holl, II, 445,17-446,14

³ PG 41, 852AB. K. Holl, II, 215,14-216,4. "These people too say that there are certain principles, that of the devil, which is directed against God's creatures and is not subject to God, but is powerful and acts as through its own authority and not as one depraved".

⁴ PG 41, 1101D - 1104A. K. Holl, II, 446,15-18.

heaven? He was a morning star of the light, but he fell and was shattered on the earth, as he suggested evil to man. For God hates the proud and hinders arrogant thoughts".⁵

This does not mean that as soon as man falls, the devil acquires rights over him. The power and authority of the devil over man is relative and depends absolutely on man's intention. Man's fall is due to the misuse of his free will (αὐτεξούσιον) and his free choice. Despite the fact that "*man possesses free will and is self-controlled and has his own self-determined will and self-control^{ed} choice towards heresy, as it was said, having received the good.... he rejected God's command having been deceived by the devil and having been persuaded towards disobedience in various ways".⁶*

Throughout the long history of the human race we cannot see anywhere any irresponsible action of man forced ⁱⁿ from outside. Temptation by Satan constitutes the beginning of a mutiny against the law and will of God by man who has every power to oppose his firm refusal to the challenge or succumb to it.⁷ Naturally sin and fall are connected with the devil. He is the one who fights the plans of God and who accuses man to God. In other words, every time sin is committed, there is a repetition of the challenge of the original evil serpent to the human beings, "*you will be like gods*" without God,⁸ which is ultimately aimed at bringing confusion to the communion of love between man and God.⁹ Every time man sins and becomes independent from the grace of God, his Creator, we have exactly the same presuppositions and the same

⁵ PG 41, 1104B. K. Holl, II, 447,10-14

⁶ PG 41, 1105A. K. Holl, II, 448,12-18

⁷ PG 42, 504A. K. Holl, III, 333,2-9.

⁸ Gen. 3, 5

⁹ PG 42, 641AC. K. Holl, III, 416,1-30

results that took place when the first created couple of human beings committed the violation.¹⁰ Consequently, we can say that the effort of the first couple to become independent of God is not alien to the life of humanity in the ensuing years. Committing the original sin was the beginning of a mutiny and effort on the part of man to become independent of God and subsequent human history was a continuation of it on the same basis: man's free consent to sin and the simultaneous hope of the expectation of redemption by God.¹¹

Thus, according to Epiphanius man's original and final result of his deviation from the source of salvation or, better, from the Saviour himself, is the deception of man by the Devil. The Devil, who is envious of man's glory, which springs from his creation in the image of God, invents from time to time various ways to lead man to perdition. Thus, the following "artifices" of the devil, which are designed to lead man astray, can be discerned in human history: *First through ignorance, second through idolatry, sometimes through maliciousness and finally through the deceit and fraud of heresies.*¹²

By all this, Epiphanius does not claim, of course, that man is under the power of the devil, nor that the devil has unlimited and uncontrolled power over him. The devil, out of envy, invents various methods in order to "*destroy man's place in haven*",

¹⁰ PG 42, 521C. K. Holl, III, 344,16-345,4

¹¹ PG 41, 1172C. K. Holl, II, 495,11-19

¹² PG 42, 533A. K. Holl, III, 350,32-351,3. "For the devil, wishing to destroy the race of man, being overcome by envy for man's glory, worked out various arts, first through ignorance, second through idolatry, sometimes through maliciousness and now finally through the deceit and fraud of heresies so that he will destroy man's place in heaven".

but man must use his own intention and will, identifying it with the evangelical command "*do not be seized by the deceptive teachings of the devil*".¹³

Man's action, then and now, whenever he takes the field against the law of God, amounts to an action of communion with the devil and his works over against God. Consequently, he turns against his own nature, since it is his nature to be in communion of love with God and God's works.¹⁴ When one studies the whole historiography of heresies, one ascertains from the start that all heresies, from the most "ascetic" to the most degenerate ones, participate in communion with the devil and his works in one way or another, going against the law of God. For example, within the heresies of dualism we find the view that a wedding belongs to the Devil and that women and the opposition to every material good must be considered as coming from him.¹⁵ These intrigues of man's enemy were aimed at man's estrangement from his Creator through ruining and exterminating every material element. Besides, asceticism and temperance did not aim at man's moral and spiritual perfection. One could say that the final aim of this was the crushing of human personality, which was serving the plans and aims of the devil.¹⁶

¹³ PG 42, 533A. K. Holl, III, 350,31

¹⁴ Epiphanius often refers to and, at the same time, distinguishes between natural life, which is the condition of communion of love between man and his Creator, and the unnatural life, which is identified with falling from this communion. PG 41, 181BC. K. Holl, I, 174,12-175,13

¹⁵ PG 41, 833BC. K. Holl, II, 200,16-24. "They also claim, as the Archontics have done, that a woman is the work of Satan. Hence, they say that those who have marital intercourse do Satan's work". PG 41, 852B. K. Holl, II, 216,11-13. "They never partake of wine, saying, that it is of the devil and that those who drink it and use it are lawless folk and sinners".

¹⁶ PG 41, 853B. K. Holl, II, 218,15-219,4

Contrary to ascetism almost total debauchery was presented as the means of man's perfection. The use of obscene and immoral acts with the so-called aim of conquer^{ing} the flesh which originated from the devil was, in fact, aimed at forming among Christians a weak Christian consciousness.¹⁷

The Church in fighting these views, was hard and uncompromising and even aggressive in many cases. The ethos and the dogma of the faith, but, most of all, man's salvation, were directly in danger. Thus, contrary to these heresies the holy Church glorified virginity and singleness, and praised purity and joy and, at the same time honoured and accepted modest marriage. It forbade prostitution, adultery and debauchery.¹⁸ In this way we can comprehend the austere and, on several occasions, almost excessive and sarcastic language that Epiphanius uses to confront these heresies. More specifically his work was really difficult whenever he had to confront individuals and groups that came from the bosom of the Church. Therefore he had to use aggressive and strict language at a time when the consciousness of the faithful and the Church in general had not been totally formed and the danger of deviation was very serious. This was a time when a purely theoretical teaching could very easily lead the wavering faithful to heresy.

Thus, the devil acquires and has authority over those individuals who turn to him and comply with his wishes willingly. He deceives those who do not have the knowledge and courage of God and ignore his law.¹⁹ He becomes father "*by deceit*"

¹⁷ PG 41, 320D-321ABC. 956CD-957AB. K. Holl, I, 267,14-268,17. II, 312,27-313,22

¹⁸ PG 41, 868B. K. Holl, II, 230,26-28

¹⁹ PG 41, 644CD. K. Holl, II, 52,26-30. "Being no longer able to deceive the masculine power of reason, which received its strength from the Lord, the devil turned

(κατὰ τὴν ἀπάτην) of those who follow his way willingly. And people become associates of the devil and his devils, not by nature, of course, but in opinion and by free choice.²⁰ At this point we could mention the classic example of the Satanists who, supposedly in order to deceive Satan and fearing his strength, were enslaved to him willingly.²¹

The apparent, however, strength of the Devil, which deludes and misleads those who are deceived in their mind,²² is unveiled and weakened right from the moment when he managed to mislead man into committing the act of his fall. This is the case because God has never stopped from loving his creature. He allowed physical death as a consequence of the fall, not as a punishment, but as a protection, so that man may not go on sinning eternally and evil may not become immortal.²³

As a result, the problem of death is inseparably connected with the Devil's action and man's co-operation with it.²⁴ Naturally, death is not permitted by God as a kind of punishment for man's mutiny against his law. Neither is God's justice

to the feminine power, that is, to human ignorance, since he could not fool sound reason".

²⁰ PG 41, 660BC. K. Holl, II, 67, 15-17

²¹ PG 42, 760BC. K. Holl, III, 486, 23-30

²² PG 41, 644C. K. Holl, II, 52, 17-19. "But later, after Christ's incarnation, the devil coughed up the entire poisonous and wicked intent of his malice and spat it out; for in his duped mind he proposed himself for glorification and worship as God".

²³ PG 41, 1105BC. K. Holl, II, 449, 9-12.

²⁴ PG 41, 1101A. K. Holl, II, 445, 7-13. "I will say that because he became independent in order to be able to choose of the good and having received this capacity, the enemy of the good, which is envy, bewitched him. For God created man to be incorruptible and made him an image of his own immortality, and is not pleased when men are lost. Death entered in to the world because of the devil's envy".

embarrassed by the disobedience of man who has been his beneficiary. The embarrassment does not affect the impossible God, but returns to man himself because of trespassing of the natural limits of his free will which was given to him by God through justice.²⁵ So death, which is specified as differentiation and separation of soul from body,²⁶ is given by God so that evil, which was created by man's disobedience, and the consequences of evil, may not become immortal, but "*every evil that was born in the body may die with its dissolution*".²⁷

At this point another obvious question emerges. Will death remain immortal? Saint Epiphanius answers: "*Why did he sent Christ to the earth from heaven, if he wanted man to remain dead for ever without tasting life?... sin had to die first through death, so that afterwards death might melt away sin and man may rise and become pure to try life*".²⁸

So, the perfect incarnation of the second person of the Holy Trinity abolishes the possibility of death and him who has the power of death, that is, the Devil,²⁹ and bestows on mankind the possibility of obtaining eternal bliss once again: "*I call perfect man, everything that is in man, and whatever man is, and anything that man might be. This is the man that the only-begotten assumed so that in the perfect man he might*

²⁵ PG 41, 1105B. K. Holl, II, 449,2-4. "It is a great insult to disobey Gods' laws by trespassing the just boundaries of free will".

²⁶ PG 41, 1104C. K. Holl, II, 448,6-7

²⁷ PG 41, 1105BC. K. Holl, II, 449,11-12

²⁸ P G41, 1108BC. K. Holl, II, 450,23-451,7

²⁹ Hebrews, 2,14

perfectly work out the entire task of salvation as God, without neglecting anything from man which neglect could become food for the devil"³⁰

This powerful saving act of the love of God towards his creature does not bring about the end of the Devil's operations. The devil continues to deceive and to slander men with the ultimate aim to lead them away from the salvation which was achieved through the Cross of the Lord. For this reason both sin and heresies will "reappear" until the day of the Lord's second coming, when final judgement will be passed with justice: *"For the impious still act profanely, and the unjust show more avarice, and the fornicators and adulterous and idolaters all transgress; and the devil is at work and the heresies reappear; and deceit is operative until the Only Begotten Son of God brings about that day and gives justice to each one"*.³¹

³⁰ PG 43, 157C-160A. K. Holl, I, 95,8-12

³¹ PG 42, 276AB. K. Holl, III, 194,21-25. PG 43, 56B. K. Holl, I, 30, 19-25

CHAPTER 9

EPIPHANIUS' APPELLATIONS OF HERESY

AS CLUES TO ITS MEANING

One of the methods that Epiphanius uses for the refutation of the false opinions of the heresies is characterised as polemical and most of the times it is so. This method and attitude of Epiphanius, consisting of the use of various appellations, was noted by all researchers of his works and became the subject of various comments and evaluations regarding the person of the writer.

We have sufficiently dealt with these appellations, as well as with the evaluations of the researchers, and the attitude of saint Epiphanius concerning this specific methodology in the first part of this work. In this chapter we shall try to examine the same appellations to see through them what Epiphanius' aim is and what he wants to convey by using them. We shall also examine whether such qualifications can be used by a person of the Church and whether Holy Scripture uses this kind of "polemical" methodology. As is natural, we cannot refer to all the appellations that exist in the works of Epiphanius. We shall limit ourselves to certain of these by making a selection in order to be able to deduce the conclusions that are necessary. In addition, we shall examine in this chapter some typical expressions of Epiphanius which are not insulting but specify in a characteristic manner the meaning of heresy.

1. APPELLATIONS

I. *"Since we shall be telling you what the appellations (ὀνόματα) of the heresies are and will be exposing their unlawful deeds which are like poisons and toxic substances..."*¹

Here the actions and works of the heresies are called "*poisons*" (ιοί) and "*toxic substances*" (δηλητήρια). The word toxic substance has exactly the same meaning with the word poison. Both words specify the juicy substance that comes out of reptiles or plants, which, coming into contact with any living organism, causes paralysis and (spiritual) sometimes even death. Here Epiphanius uses these words metaphorically to point to the danger of spiritual paralysis and death which the different heresies cause with their teaching. This is why he calls his main work against heresies "*Panarion, or chest of remedies for victims of wild beasts' bites*".²

We often encounter the use of these words in Holy Scripture too with exactly the same meaning. This leads us to the conclusion that our writer may well have borrowed them from the Bible, but it is also reasonable to suppose that he may have also borrowed them from the science of Physiology and Zoology.³

The main extracts of Holy Scripture which mention these phrases are:

1. "*Their throat is an open grave, they use their tongues to deceive, the venom of asps is under their lips*".⁴ 2. "*But no human being can tame the tongue, a restless evil, full of deadly poison*".⁵ 3. "... *At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder*".⁶

¹ PG 41, 157CD. K. Holl, I, 155,12

² PG 41, 157D. K. Holl, I, 155,15-16

³ PG 41, 177BC. K. Holl, I, 171,6-172,4

⁴ Romans 3,13. Psalms 5,10. 139,4

⁵ James 3, 8

II. *"It is a work in three Volumes and contains eighty Heresies which stand symbolically for wild animals or snakes".⁷*

However cruel this definition may seem at first sight, it states in reality on the one hand what the heresies try to cause to the body of the Church and, on the other hand, the condition to which man is led once he becomes autonomous from the grace of God.

When the beasts become infuriated and attack their victim, then, they seek to subdue and destroy it. This is what the heresies attempt to do when they turn against the body of the Church. But man too, when he falls from the saving grace of God, becomes infuriated and resembles the wild beasts. This is what Holy Scripture teaches too: 1. *"Man being in honour cannot understand, he is like the beasts that perish".⁸* 2. *"One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons". This testimony is true."⁹* 3. *"..and his mind was made like that of a beast..".¹⁰*

But when he calls them *"riddles of wild snakes"* (έρπετων αινίγματα) he means that their intentions are dark and ambiguous. For *justus*, reptiles and especially the snake, come crawling on the ground in a cunning way to cheat their victim to be, so heresies use exactly the same method in order to cheat and to mislead the faithful.

III. *" I hear that someone is thinking something new about saint Mary, the Virgin*

⁶ Proverbs 23, 32

⁷ PG 41, 157D - 160A. K. Holl, I, 155, 16-18

⁸ Psalms 48(49) 12.20

⁹ Titus 1, 12-13

¹⁰ Daniel 5,21

and that he dares strike her with some blasphemous insinuation, so that everywhere our time is like an evil snake, or a poisonous beast lurking in the dark and striking everybody with its bites, someone in the face, another one on the heel, someone else on the hand; so that nobody escapes the bite of faith".¹¹ " ...We happened to fulfil the promise of proclamation against all heresies ... and having stepped upon it with the shoe of the Gospel like a many-legged chameleon obscure, formless, breathing an ill smell".¹²

First of all, we can discern and note in the aforementioned examples the knowledge of Epiphanius regarding the subjects of Physiology and Zoology. This is apparent at once in the introduction of his work, where he notes the names of writers who were famous regarding these subjects at that time. He states from the beginning that "*in this same manner*" he will try to overthrow heresies with these writers.¹³ This attitude of Epiphanius leads us to the conclusion that when he wrote his work on the Heresies, the knowledge and images he had of these subjects influenced his manner of thinking. He tried to adapt metaphorically the properties and irresponsible - instinctive actions of the animals and plants to the 'responsible' and conscious actions of the heretics.

We believe that Epiphanius did not have any intention to insult the heresies, nor was he devoid of logical and theological arguments as Aline Pourkier maintained.¹⁴ It is

¹¹ PG 42, 705CD. K. Holl, III, 455,3 - 456,4

¹² PG 42, 773AB. K. Holl, III, 496,6-10

¹³ PG 41, 177AB. K. Holl, I, 6-15. It is not by chance that the work "Physiologos" (PG 43, 517-534) was attributed to Epiphanius despite of the fact that nowadays this work is considered doubtful.

¹⁴ Aline Pourker, *L' Heresiologie chez Epiphane de Salamine*, Beauchesne, 1992, pp. 494-495.

clear that the information a writer has before he begins writing a work, radically influences his manner of thinking and consequently the structure of his work. Besides, the aforementioned appellations could not be considered as insults, because we encounter them in Holy Scripture too, bearing more or less the same meaning. "*White wa^{sh} tombs, snakes, brood of vipers etc.*,"¹⁵ are expressions which the Lord used to expose the internal hypocrisy of the Pharisees. This did not mean that the Lord was deliberately insulting. It is quite natural for anyone who wants to expose a problem to use examples with a negative content from everyday reality.

IV. "*Oh brave sophists and twisters of words*".¹⁶

We see our writer using here an ironical play of words to speak of heretics. On the one hand, they are "*brave*" and on the other they are defined as "*sophists*", that is, cheats and twisters of the words of the Gospel. In this particular case Epiphanius uses this ironical method, which he likes very much, to expose the blasphemous teaching of the Arians. He uses this method not because of lack of arguments, but in order to accentuate the arguments which will follow or those that had been produced on another occasion.

We encounter a similar expression of play of words in the teaching of saint Paul from where probably Epiphanius has taken it: "*For although they knew God, they did not honour him as God, or give thanks to him, but became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fool, and*

¹⁵ Matthew 23, 26-33

¹⁶ PG 42, 289D. K. Holl, III, 203,25

exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, or birds, or animals, or reptiles".¹⁷

V. *"Feel ashamed, you with an insensible heart, according to what is written. But their heart has been corrupted".¹⁸*

As we have already noted Epiphanius often resorts to appellations from Holy Scripture in order to designate a heresy or a heresiarch. In this case the heart, that is, the consciousness of Arius, is qualified as "*corrupted*", because it cannot comprehend and accept the relations of the persons of the Holy Trinity which are revealed in the Church. He uses this qualification according to "*what is written*" (γεγραμμένο) in Holy Scripture. But whenever a qualification is not according to "*what is written*", Epiphanius' usually endeavours to justify it by logical or, mostly, biblical arguments. For example when he refers to Arius' "*stupid sayings*", he produces both logical and biblical arguments to prove that Arius' teaching is indeed vain and thoughtless.¹⁹ One could finally say that the use of harsh expressions within the framework of the battle which every anti-heretical Father undertakes is unavoidable. This is all the more so as the arguments of the heretics are usually based on obviously false and deceitful facts and their continuous persistence in these obliges the writer to use harsh expressions in order to expose their teaching as unsubstantiated and its contents as detrimental to the salvation of people.

Let us now see certain parallel extracts from Holy Scripture which are connected with the aforementioned appellations: 1. "*And he (our Lord) looked at*

¹⁷ Romans 1, 21-23

¹⁸ PG 43, 68B. K. Holl, I, 36,31-32

¹⁹ PG 43, 69AD. K. Holl, I, 37,25--38,26

them with anger, grieved at the corruption of their heart,..."²⁰. 2. "*They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance which is in them, due to the corruption of their heart*".²¹

VI. "*What vain fancies of those who think of such things*".²²

An operation or act is qualified as vain when it has absolutely no positive result, no matter how hard one tries and despite the means that one uses. The acts of heretics are characterised as vain because in the final analysis, they lead to their own loss.

Here are some parallel extracts from Holy Scripture: 1. "*But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions and quarrels over the law, for they are unprofitable and futile*".²³ 2. "*If any one thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, this man's religion is vain*".²⁴

VII. "*For the vainglorious will speak again*".²⁵

It is a fact that most heresies were created solely out of the ambition of group leaders. Consequently, the definition "*vainglorious*" can be used to qualify a heretic. Besides, the word is literally very appropriate, because heresy means splitting from the

²⁰ Mark 3,5

²¹ Ephesians 4,18

²² PG 43, 72D. K. Holl, I, 40,5-6

²³ Titus 3,9

²⁴ James 1,9

²⁵ PG 43, 80D. K. Holl, I, 44,25



Church and the grace of God and thus, heretics remain in reality outside the glory of God and the Church.

Other parallel extracts from Holy Scripture which may be recalled here are the following: 1. "*Let us not become vainglorious, provoking one another, envying one another*".²⁶ 2. "*Vainglory entered the world through man and this is why man's end was quickly invented*".²⁷

VIII. "*And there is much insanity in those saying these*".²⁸

The darkening of man's mind because of sin and of defection eventually leads to intellectual madness, or insanity and this, in turn, to misunderstanding of the true faith. We believe that the use of this appellation by Epiphanius has exactly this meaning and not the meaning of mental retardation. Every man who turns against God is intellectually deceived: "*The fool says in his heart "there is no God"*".²⁹ Foolishness is the result of lack of communion with God and God's works.

The following parallel extracts from Holy Scripture can be recalled here:

1. "*For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is insane*".³⁰ 2. "*For there are many insubordinate men, vain talkers and insane, especially those of the circumcision party*".³¹

²⁶ Galatians 5,26

²⁷ Wisdom of Solomon 14,14

²⁸ PG 43, 105B. K. Holl, I, 60,13

²⁹ Psalms 14,1

³⁰ Galatians 6,3

³¹ Titus 1,10

IX. *"Thus, many talk allegorically about Paradise too, like Origen, who is pursued by God, because he wanted to bring imagination rather than the truth to bear upon life".*³²

'Pursued by God' (θεήλατος) is he who is struck by God because he goes against God's law and will. In this case, Origen, said to be such, because, according to Epiphanius, he distorts God's truth by his imagination. Consequently, every heretic who, in one way or other, goes against God's truth, runs the risk of finally becoming an enemy of God and for this reason he is said to be one who is pursued by God.

We also find the same phrase in Solomon's Wisdom, where the holy writer describes how the elements of nature became means of punishment for the Egyptians and means of blessing for the Israelites: *"At times the flame became gentler in order not to burn the animals that were sent against the impious and on seeing this, to understand that they are led^{β3} to God's judgement"*.³⁴

We can discern in the aforementioned appellations Epiphanius' intention in using his polemic method, which is partly related to the exposition of the meaning of heresy. The saint does not attempt to present his era historically through his work, that is, he does not write history, but is merely concerned with defending his faith. Thus, according to his ability he uses all the means he has at his disposal. At times he uses dogmatic and purely ecclesiastical language to define exactly the dogma and faith of the Church. On other occasions he uses harsh and polemical language in order to expose evil dogmas and to warn the faithful about the dangers of heresy.

³² PG 43, 112B. K. Holl, I, 63,11

³³ Θεήλατος - Ἐλαυνόμενος = Pursued by God. See Ioannis Stamatakos, *Dictionary of the Ancient Greek Language*, E.P.E. 1972, Athens pp. 444.

³⁴ Wisdom of Solomon 16,18

We discern in Epiphanius' mind his tendency and aim on the one hand to unveil the wickedness and stupidity of the heretical systems by showing their errors and, on the other hand, to oppose to them the correct dogmas of the Church in order to strengthen and uphold the faithful.

In conclusion we can say that Epiphanius uses these appellations with the double aim of a) exposing heresies and their perversion and b) urging the Christians to avoid them.

2. TYPICAL EXPRESSIONS

I. PSYCHICAL AND CARNAL (ΨΥΧΙΚΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΣΑΡΚΙΚΟΙ).

According to Epiphanius man is created by God in both, his body and soul, out of nothing.³⁵ At the beginning man is called "*earthly*" (χοϊκός) and "*psychical*" (ψυχικός).³⁶ Both aspects of man's creation the "*earthly*" and "*psychical*" were destined to transcend their creaturely limitations and become divine (θεοποιηθῶν). They were destined to make from the image to the likeness of God this dynamic process towards perfection, according to grace, was not carried out, and man continued to live cut off from the communion of God's love, and to be "*earthly*" and "*psychical*".

Thus, every time that man is cut off from communion with his Creator and diverts himself from the right faith and path, he becomes "*earthly*" and "*psychical*". In other words, man's spiritual divination caused by his cutting himself off from communion with the Holy Spirit, renders the entire man mortal and spiritually non-existent. As Holy Scripture puts it, "*Those who are led by his Spirit, live in God, and*

³⁵ PG 43, 116A. K. Holl, I, 65,12-13. "we think of soul and body as creatures"

³⁶ PG 43, 113D-116A. K. Holl, I, 65,9-15

those who are considered to be dead are earthly and psychological".³⁷ All human beings are dead without the Holy Spirit. It is only through the indwelling of Christ and his Spirit inside them that they are enlivened and preserved as spiritual beings.³⁸

Whoever remains in the state of the fall and sin, cannot comprehend the depth of God's mysteries. Thus not accepting the Holy Spirit and being carnal, he considers these as foolishness and, generally, misinterprets them.³⁹ The law of God becomes for them a refutation of their false and deceitful teachings: "*The psychological ones are questioned as not understanding the wisdom of the Son, or rather the word of Wisdom*".⁴⁰

The heretics, falling from the saving truth of the Church, which enlivens human beings through the Holy Spirit, end up being "*deaf and devoid of the Holy Spirit*" and, consequently, remain in their "*corporeal*" (σωματική) and "*earthly*" (γεώδη) condition.⁴¹ Aetius' case is an example of such spiritual decay, since he distorts the true teaching of the Church regarding the relations of the persons of the Holy Trinity. He "*belittles*" the Holy Spirit, as he underestimates his relation to the other persons of the Trinity and, thus, he is characterised by Epiphanius as carnal and psychological.⁴²

³⁷ PG 43, 137A. K. Holl, I, 81,3-5. PG 42, 480C. K. Holl, III, 317,21-23

³⁸ PG 42, 229D. K. Holl, III, 168,14-18. "They do not know either the power and goodness or the dispensation (economy) of God's wisdom, being psychological and earthly; thus they are questioned by the Holy Spirit as being devoid of him and of the gift of the Holy Spirit, which seals every man".

³⁹ PG 42, 325B. K. Holl, III, 224,14

⁴⁰ PG 43, 45D. K. Holl, I, 25,23-25

⁴¹ PG 43, 212BC. K. Holl, I, 131,14-19

⁴² PG 42, 564B. K. Holl, III, 371,12-15

Whoever, then, wants to overcome the condition of the "*psychical*" and the "*carnal*" and to reach out to the true spiritual condition of God's likeness, is called to unity with the body of Christ. For the Son and Logos of God united with his incarnation the carnal with the divine, reviving the former by restoring it to its ancient and original beauty.⁴³

2 FAITH-FAITHLESSNESS-BAD FAITH. ΠΙΣΤΙΣ-ΑΠΙΣΤΙΑ-ΚΑΚΟΠΙΣΤΙΑ

These words are keys for comprehending the meaning of heresy in the works of Epiphanius.

The existence of heresy is due to human faithlessness and bad faith concerning the revealed law of God. The cause of human faithlessness is intellectual deceit.⁴⁴ It is also lack of understanding and correct comprehension of the meaning of the faith that distorts the intellect and results in faithlessness.⁴⁵ On the other hand, understanding and experiencing God's truth cannot be achieved merely through human intellectual procedures. When humans remain self-centred, autonomous human acts do not produce any positive results, because "*they [God's things] are impossible for all men, and alien for the faithless*".⁴⁶ Contrary to the faithless, the faithful experience the reality of the divine truth, partially during their earthly life and completely in the Kingdom of heaven according to the Lord's promise.⁴⁷ Consequently, the difference between the faithful and the faithless lies in the fact that the former base their salvation

⁴³ PG 43, 169A. K. Holl, I, 101,4-9. PG 42, 328AB. K. Holl, III, 225,16-24

⁴⁴ PG 43, 173D. K. Holl, I, 105,5

⁴⁵ PG 42, 820A. K. Holl, III, 519,22-24

⁴⁶ PG 42, 777AB. K. Holl, III, 498,18-19

⁴⁷ idem.

and whole life in general on the saving grace of God, whereas the latter, on their own human powers, consciously rejecting the grace of God.⁴⁸

Epiphanius makes an important distinction between *faith*, *faithlessness* and *bad faith*. *Faith* is the acceptance of the whole truth as it is expressed and lived in the life and teaching of the Church. *Faithlessness* is the complete rejection of the truth of God. *Bad faith* is the understanding of the truth on the basis of anthropocentric procedures, resulting in erroneous understanding and distortion.⁴⁹

Bad faith is regarded as worse than *faithlessness*.⁵⁰ This is because *faithlessness* rejects the truth 'naturally', without introducing alien elements and misinterpretations. As such it can accept and comprehend the true faith more easily and, thus, be corrected. *Bad faith*, on the other hand, by altering the essence of the correct teaching, creates a new teaching absolutizing it and living it out as the truth. This absolutization of the relative, partial and deficient renders repentance and return to the true faith impossible. Consequently, every heresy is born out of and sustained by *bad faith*.

⁴⁸ PG 43, 113C. K. Holl, I, 65,2-3

⁴⁹ PG 43, 184B. K. Holl, I, 111, 21-112, 2. "But it is typical of the faithless to say that he did not rise again; and it is typical of those of bad faith to say that that part which fell asleep did not rise again; it is typical of the faithful, however, to say that this body rose again so that it might become for us the hope of truth". PG 43, 172C. K. Holl, I, 103, 7-9. "The faithless totally reject the resurrection, whilst those of bad faith, like a mob and stupidly, fall away from the hope which is according to the truth by thinking of the meaning of resurrection in this manner".

⁵⁰ PG 43, 32BC. K. Holl, I, 16,5-9. "Wherefore another new, or rather, bad faith has entered into life for bad faith is worse than faithlessness since, when faithlessness accepts faith it can be corrected, whereas bad faith cannot be rectified and is saved with difficulty, unless a grace from above comes to rescue it".

3. FAULTY INTELLECT

Heresy as a condition of estrangement and alienation from the truth is due to and finds the cause of its existence in man's initiation into a belief which is intellectually faulty.⁵¹ Intellectual fault arises whenever man, forgetting his origin and the limits of his own being, attempts to understand God with his own efforts and independently of divine grace.⁵² It is exactly at this point that we find the faulty intellect of a heretic. Starting with clearly personal pursuit and earthly thoughts, he tries to interpret or even to adapt human data to the truth of God. But *"to assign human passions to God is unbecoming, for God speaks clearly; your minds are not like my mind; for God is not like man"*.⁵³

Thus, by distorting the word of God and misinterpreting it *"according to their mind"*,⁵⁴ heretics turn against God and fall away from the truth. True faith depends on God's instruction, that is, on his mercy and grace. Whoever receives this instruction, can understand the correct knowledge concerning God, whereas anyone who is independent of God's instruction finds everything distorted and corrupted.⁵⁵

The darkening and distortion of man's mind leads to misunderstanding of the divine commandments and, consequently, to heresy. Thus, *"those who project their mind unwisely... and there is a need of prudence so that one may see God, as well as faith in him and his words, and in those things which are granted and donated and*

⁵¹ PG 41, 177D. PG 43, 65D. K. Holl, I, 36,16-17

⁵² PG 43, 313D-316A. K. Holl, III, 218,10

⁵³ PG 43, 101C. K. Holl, I, 58,13-17

⁵⁴ PG 43, 93C. K. Holl, I, 53,11-12

⁵⁵ PG 43, 89CD-92A. K. Holl, I, 51,19-23

*exist... for every heresy is a lie, having not received the Holy Spirit, according to the tradition of the fathers in the catholic Church of God "*⁵⁶

4. KYRIOKTONOI (Murderers of the Lord)

Epiphanius calls murderers of the Lord those who dismiss and fight the divine perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁷ Jews are the first to be considered as murderers of the Lord, because, being ignorant and rejecting the Divinity of the Lord, they led him to his death on the Cross.⁵⁸ Second, Epiphanius calls 'Jews and Murderers of the Lord' those who "*dare to divide and to alienate the Son from the the Father's essence and do not consider that the Son must be equally honoured as the Father, nor that he is born of the essence of the Father*".⁵⁹ Consequently, the rejection of the Lord's Godhead and his perfect incarnation mortifies the body of the Lord, that is, the Church, and introduces heresy and in perdition: "*The holy Church, then, has received these mysteries; but terrible enemies, who are said to be from those of the household, though they are not of the true faith of the Lord's apostles, arose against it; for if they were from them, they would have stayed with them; but because they are illegitimate and intermixed they are seized once again by a bad wish for the smell of the fish and figs of Egypt, blaspheming the Son of God from above and from below*".⁶⁰

⁵⁶ PG 43, 129CD. K. Holl, I, 76,16-22

⁵⁷ PG 42, 224A. K. Holl, III, 163,17.

⁵⁸ PG 43, 228BC. K. Holl, I, 143, 29-144,7

⁵⁹ PG 43, 228D-229A. K. Holl, I, 144,14-20

⁶⁰ PG 43, 228C. K. Holl, I, 144,14-20

EPIPHANIUS' VIEWS OF ORTHODOXY

PART THREE

GENERAL

Orthodoxy has to do on the one hand with the teaching and formulation of the correct dogmas of the faith and on the other hand with the living practice of the correct faith in the community of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

In order to be an orthodox theologian and to interpret the truth correctly one must be aware of both of these basic assumptions, without which, one cannot have correct opinion and belief concerning the truth as it is revealed by God to men.

In order to consider the meaning or sense of orthodoxy in Saint Epiphanius, we must examine how the aforementioned assumptions are presented in his texts. Having examined these texts we could say that there are four main domains where orthodox correct teaching and life of the Church are expressed: a) The presupposition of sound Theology, b) Theology, c) Christology and d) Ecclesiology. All these domains of orthodox teaching are linked organically into a single unity whereby one can be guided exactly so as to learn the particular sections of the orthodox teaching and life of the Church; for example, cosmology, anthropology, soteriology, eschatology. So, we shall examine Orthodoxy in Saint Epiphanius through this prism; the Saint says characteristically about himself that he will not write and that he will not express anything of his own, but only what has been revealed in the life of the Church through the Logos of God himself.¹

CHAPTER 1

A: THE PRESUPPOSITION OF SOUND THEOLOGY

Theology is understood primarily as an experience of the revelation of God through the events of human history. The interpretation of this experience can be discerned and/or described only by someone who is a purified, enlightened and deified theologian, "*just as anyone could comprehend according to his gift that was given to him by the Divinity*".² Therefore, Theology as an interpretative function of the truth must express and be based on the experience of Christian life in Church. The events lived together with the confession of the prophets, the Gospels and the apostles, which are kept unadulterated in the catholic Church, constitute the sovereign expression of Christian life. Any deviation from this experience leads to estrangement from the Church and, consequently, to heresy.³ Thus, the formulation of orthodox Theology assumes from the very beginning the personal participation and living experience of him who endeavours to talk theologically about what is being discussed. The theologian expresses and interprets the truth about God according to his own doxology (worship), experience and belief, being aware that he is in danger of fall^{ing} from the grace of God if he relies on his own powers.⁴ Orthodoxy as a divine experience, and not primarily as an intellectual and anthropocentric condition, is confirmed and is

¹ PG 41, 173AB-176A. K. Holl, I, 169,1-23

² PG 42, 809AB. K. Holl, III, 514,25-515,1

³ PG 43, 172AB. K. Holl, I, 102,22-109,6

⁴ PG 42, 352D-353A. K. Holl, III, 241,1-10

preached, and controls heresy through "*those who possess a divine mind*". (νοῦν θεϊκόν κεκτημένους)⁵ This means that man, as a totally fulfilled being, accepts the dogmas and believes in them not simply as theoretical and abstract notions. He who is endowed with the word and enlightened by the Holy Spirit is able to know and understand both the created reality and the mysteries of God and to experience them.⁶

Thus, one may comprehend the fact that the content of orthodox Theology is simple, comprehensible and always in accordance with the biblical teaching and the apostolic Ecclesiastical tradition and life, as this is expressed through the general life of the community, i.e. the way of worship, the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils etc. Orthodox Theology never endeavours to impress people by embellishing its dicta. The theologian knows that the limited process of human reasoning can become unstable in dealing with the infinite nature of God. Thus he does not risk understanding and interpreting it with his mind. The essence of salvation is to live the mystery of the incarnation of Christ, which is a scandal and foolishness for many people.⁷ Consequently, according to Saint Epiphanius, he who bears the genuine and orthodox teaching must simply and clearly "*persuade all those that listen to him, on the basis of Holy Scripture, by teaching, by preparing the way, by instructing, not to neglect but to keep this holy faith of the catholic Church, as received from the holy Apostles of the Lord by the holy and only Virgin of God*".⁸

⁵ PG 42, 232C. K. Holl, III, 169,15-18

⁶ PG 42, 269CD. K. Holl, III, 191,24-27. "But the words are divine, for they are expressed by the Holy Spirit, and those who have not received the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit are ignorant of them; for of such kind who have been aforementioned are those who have unstable thoughts and stupid minds and fall into harmful and inferior aberrations".

⁷ PG 42, 585D-588A. K. Holl, III, 384,13-24

Due to the existence of heretical teaching which is basically the corruption of the true faith totally irreconcilable with the entire life of the Church an answer must be given every time that the challenge of heresy is expressed; not in order to safeguard the truth, because truth, being self - existent, does not need any support, but in order to protect the faithful from deviations.⁹ Orthodoxy' main mission and duty is to protect and to safeguard the sound dogmas from heresy which "*corrupts*" and destroys true faith.¹⁰ It is for this true faith that its devoted supporters fight and struggle enduring every suffering and torment.¹¹

Consequently every sound understanding, experience and interpretation of the content of ecclesiastical life, together with an unyielding stand for it, is sound Theology both in theory and practice.¹² The whole problem is not to provide new knowledge but the attainment of perfection through the body of Christ that possesses the absolute truth.¹³ Thus in Orthodox Theology and life, the faith and the law of the

⁸ PG 43, 232Ab. K. Holl, I, 146,12-17

⁹ PG 41, 160C. K. Holl, I, 156,18-22. "It is the very necessity for the words of the debate that puts me in such a sweat - to protect the reader and to show that their practice, mysteries and teachings are the furthest thing from my mind". PG 42, 821B.K. Holl, III, 521,9-10.

¹⁰ PG 42, 221CD. K. Holl, III, 162,29-163,8. "The so-called bishops who are such only in appearance, have corrupted the true faith of God; these have to give an account about the faith, and for the persecutions of the Church, and for such great evils and murders which occurred on account of them".

¹¹ PG 41, 412C. K. Holl, I, 339,22-24. "Eusebius of blessed memory, the bishop of Vercelli in Italy, was Josephus' guest, since Constantius had banished him for his orthodox faith".

¹² PG 42, 320C. K. Holl, III, 221,11-12. "But it is necessary that we speak in an orthodox manner and think in an orthodox manner so that we may not perish".

¹³ PG 42, 777A. K. Holl, III, 498,8-15

Church exist in a close and organically united state within which man is asked to live.¹⁴

The belief in the consubstantiality of the persons of the Holy Trinity and in the perfect incarnate presence of Christ and in the other articles of the faith, is fulfilled and made perfect when the laws are kept, i.e. the commandments of God, as these are expressed in the Holy Scriptures and in the tradition of the Church.¹⁵

Thus, Theology is to be expressed according to its authentic content, it must take into account sacred history as a whole, which includes Church tradition as this is expressed in the life of the community and contemporary Christian reality. The course that must be followed in such a case is: The prophets, as they knew the discarnate Logos; Christ himself, as the incarnate Logos; the Apostles, as they preached the incarnate presence of the Logos ⁱⁿ the Creed and the faith of the Fathers of the Church. These constitute the unity of the historical continuity and, by extension, Orthodox Theology: *"But that God is one for us in the Law, in the Prophets and in the Gospels and in the Apostles, has been announced and proclaimed and believed in the Old and the New Testament, namely, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"*.¹⁶

¹⁴ PG 42, 832AB. K. Holl, III, 525,3-22

¹⁵ PG 42, 821CD-824A. K. Holl, III, 521,21-32. These laws as they are referred to by Epiphanius are: monasticism, marriage, priesthood, participation in the sacraments and the appointed services, fasting, prayer, study of the Holy Scripture, abstinence and training, repentance, etc. PG 42, 824A-832B. K. Holl, III, 521,32-525,22.

¹⁶ PG 42,885C. PG 43, 116D. K. Holl, I, 15-17. "For the representation started since Moses and the sea, and the representation was revealed since John and the gift was perfected in Christ".

CHAPTER 2

B: THEOLOGY

The Theology of Epiphanius is the Theology of Nicaea. His entire theological orientation is centred on the faith of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea. Having this as his starting point, Epiphanius attempts to explain theology.¹ At the time Epiphanius lived, the clarification and development of the doctrine of the Trinity held a prominent position.² The doctrine of the Trinity is for him the quintessence of the Theology of the Church.³ This refers to 'who God is' and to 'what knowledge of God' man may have.

For Orthodox Theology God is not an impersonal universal power which imbues the world, but a true and transcendent existence that is revealed as Holy Trinity God: "*Hence the Father is true God, and the Son a true God, true is also the Holy Spirit, being the spirit of God, and spirit of truth, Trinity counted in one*".⁴ The entire Theology of Epiphanius is based on this doctrine. All other subjects are not as important, but are conjoint to the trinitarian doctrine and are determined according to their relation to it: "*Thus, the holy Father gave his only begotten Son to the Church, who was born from him and his Holy Spirit, in a knowledge of concord, in one connection of perfection; in the same way that we will bear the seal in the name of the*

¹ PG 43, 233A. K. Holl, I, 147,21-23. PG 42, 353CD. K. Holl, III,242,2-8. PG 42, 448B

² PG 42, 397BC. K. Holl, III, 297,4-6

³ Father George D. Dragas, *The meaning of Theology*, Darlington 1980, p.60. "St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, uses the term theology in connection with his defence of his doctrine of the Trinity".

⁴ PG 43, 21BC. K. Holl, I, 9,11-13

*perfect Father and God, and in the name of the perfect Son and God, and in the name of the divine and perfect Spirit".*⁵

God is at the same time one and three. This is so because there is a clear distinction between the common being (essence) of the one Godhead and the three persons that constitute it. Thus, "*the Godhead is not said to be one and two, neither unity and unity but unity in Trinity and Trinity in unity from one and only kind (μονοειδώς) and with one ^{and} only name (μονωνύμως), one God, the Father in the Son, a Son in the Father with the Holy Spirit*".⁶ The being of God is one and this indicates the one Godhead. Consequently the unity of the Trinitarian God refers to the cause of his existence i.e. to his being essence: "*The being is not different from the Godhead, neither is Godhead different from the being*".⁷ We thus have an everlasting relation of three persons which is specified, a) by the cause of their existence,⁸ b) by the identity of being or essence, i.e. the fact that the three persons are consubstantial⁹ and c) by the distinction of the persons.¹⁰

The Father is unbegotten, the Son is begotten and the Holy Spirit proceeds: "*So the Father is unbegotten and uncreated and incomprehensible, the Son is begotten but he is uncreated and incomprehensible. The Holy Spirit always, unbegotten, uncreated, without a brother (συνάδελφο), not the father's brother (πατράδελφο), not a forefather (προπάτορα), not a grandchild (ἔγγονον), but from the same being (essence) of the Father and the Son*".¹¹ These 'hypostatic idioms', as they are called, are incommunicable; that is, every person has his own particular hypostasis. The Father is unbegotten and not begotten or projected (πρόβλημα); the Son is begotten and not unbegotten or projected; and the Holy Spirit is projected and

⁵ PG 43,57CD. K. Holl, I, 31,15-20

⁶ PG 43, 57D-60A. K. Holl, I, 31,21-24

⁷ PG 43, 28A. K. Holl, I, 13,10-11

⁸ PG 43, 29AB. K. Holl, I, 14,23-15,10. PG 42, 597C. K. Holl, III, 391,4-9

⁹ PG 43, 25ABC. K. Holl, 12,5-13,4

¹⁰ PG 43, 33D-26AB. K. Holl, I, 17,24-18,16

¹¹ PG 43, 28D-29A. K. Holl, I, 14,18-22. PG 43, 153A. K. Holl, I, 91,18-19. "If the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, he will receive from me, says the Lord".

not unbegotten or begotten. Nevertheless, the hypostases as attackers of the one essence constitute the one undivided Godhead:

"Each one of the names has only one name (μονώνυμον), and not a second one. For the Father is called Father and he has nothing comparable, and is not united with another Father, so that there may not be two gods; and the Son is unique (μονογενής) and true God from true God, who does not have the name of the Father, nor a name foreign to the Father but is from the one Father; the Son is called unique so that he can be called by one name only; and God from God, in order that one is called God the Father; and the Holy Spirit is called unique (μονογενής), Son's name nor the Father's appellation but being called Holy Spirit, he is not foreign to the Father. For the unique Son says, the Spirit of the Father, which proceeds from the Father, and will receive from me, so that he may not be considered foreign to the Father and to the Son, but of the same essence, of the same Godhead, the divine Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of God, the Spirit the Comforter, called by one name alone and having nothing comparable, nor being equal to any other spirit, nor being called with the name of the Son or named with the name of the Father, so that the unique names may not be synonymous (ἵνα μὴ τὰ μονώνυμα ὀνόματα ὁμώνυμα ὑπάρχει)".¹²

The need to confute the trinitarian heresies, such as those of Sabellius and Paul of Samosata, which either abolished the peculiarities and the reality of the hypostases - persons (Sabellianism),¹³ or identified the essence with the persons (Samosateanism),¹⁴ leads saint Epiphanius to the Theology of one essence and hypostases. In order to render clearer the hypostatic peculiarity of the persons in the Trinity he mainly uses three terms: *Person, hypostasis and self-subsistence*. (Πρόσωπον, ὑπόστασις, ἐνυπόστατον).¹⁵ In this way, the peculiarity of the divine persons is extolled and at

¹² PG 43, 29AB. K. Holl, I, 14,23-15,10

¹³ PG 41, 1052ABCD. K. Holl, II, 391,17-392,18

¹⁴ PG 42, 13AB. K. Holl, III, 3,9-4,8

¹⁵ PG 42. 20D. K. Holl, III, 8,13-15. PG 42, 813A. K. Holl, III, 517,3-4. PG 41, 1057B. K. Holl, II, 394,28-30

the same time their essential unity is secured: *"For God is one, a Father in a Son, a Son in a Father with a Holy Spirit; and thus there is a holy one resting among holy ones; a Father true and subsisting, and a Son true and subsisting, and a Holy Spirit true and subsisting, the three being one Godhead, one essence, one doxology (worship), one God ... For the Father is Father; the Son is Son, The Holy Spirit is Holy Spirit; but the Trinity is not foreign from the unity and the identity"*.¹⁶ The persons of the Holy Trinity are self- subsisting (ἐνυπόστατα), i.e. they differ from each other, but each hypostasis is a bearer of the common essence. There is an innermost relation between the persons, so that they are glorified together, they are worshipped together as one unity and identity. The consubstantiality of the persons is discerned clearly and absolutely by their difference (ἕτερότητα). Thus, in Epiphanius' orthodox Theology we have *another [person] and another [person] and another [person] (ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος)* whereby the difference of the persons is maintained, and not *another [essence], another [essence], another [essence] (ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο)*, consubstantiality of the persons would be denied.¹⁷

Another subject that is touched upon by Epiphanius in relation to the Theology of the Holy Trinity has to do with the relations between the persons of the Trinity. The one and only God of one essence has one will and one lordship. The essence is fulfilled in such a manner through the persons, so we have one God in essence, who is made known in three persons. As a result of the natural and everlasting relations of the persons there is an interpenetration and an indwelling among them: *"Everything that belongs to my Father is mine, says the holy Logos of God himself. What else are those of the Father than these? Is the name God of the Father? The same is of the Son too. Is life of the Father? The same is of the Son too. Is light of the Father? It is clearly of the Son too. Is immortality of the Father? Just so of the Son. Incomprehensibility is both of the Father and of the Son. Everything of the Father is of the Son. If moreover everything of the Father, is his [the Son] too, the knowledge which is in the Father also exists in the Son and in the Holy Spirit"*.¹⁸

¹⁶ PG 43, 36AB. K. Holl, I, 18,8-17

¹⁷ PG 42, 21CD. K. Holl, III, 9, 10-16

¹⁸ PG 43, 45AB. K. Holl, I, 24,27-25,2

This unity and community of the persons is united even more by the one holiness, by the one worship and by the one doxology (worship).¹⁹

This theological elaboration of the trinitarian doctrine rests exactly upon the everlasting relations of the persons on the basis of the one essence. The common knowledge (γνώσις) of the persons, the communion between them and the one doxology denote a dynamic movement in the Godhead which stresses, "*the wholeness of perfection*".²⁰

Through the everlasting relations and the communion movement of the persons we also move to their 'economic' relations that is, to their manifestation (revelation) in the world.

Whereas the relations of the everlasting Trinity are incommunicable and have absolutely no relation to creation,²¹ the acts and common will of the economic Trinity²² communicate the revelation of God to the world. The Son is incarnated without any alteration of his Godhead. The Father being incorporeal, constitutes the primary cause, and the Holy Spirit, co-operating (συνευδοκῶν), brings about the perfection of the saving and economic work of the Holy Trinity: "*For the Trinity dispenses all aspects of this great revelation without intermission, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Son flesh, the Father remaining incorporeal, and the Holy Spirit is also incorporeal; co-operating and willing the Son becoming flesh, but remaining unchangeable. Everything was dispensed by the Holy Trinity for the salvation of men*".²³ Thus, whilst there is a Trinity perfect in itself as far as self subsistent movement of nature in the everlasting relations of the persons goes, without suffering any natural causation, since the hypostatic relations of the persons are impassible and everlasting,

¹⁹ PG 43, 61BC. K. Holl, I, 33,17-20

²⁰ PG 42, 272BC. K. Holl, III, 192,14-21. PG 42, 552B. K. Holl, III, 364,10-15

²¹ PG 42, 229BC. K. Holl, III, 167,33-168,10

²² At this point, it must not be thought that is reference is made to two different Trinities and Godheads: rather a distinction is made between the divine essence and the everlasting inner relations of the divine Trinity, which can not be shared, and the uncreated divine energies as they are revealed by the Godhead itself to the world through the work of Divine Dispensation, which can be shared.

²³ PG 42, 308B. K. Holl, III, 213,30-214,3

in the economic Trinity the relations of the persons reveal the common will and act as the cause of the creation and maintenance of the world. In other words there is the same theological perspective both in the eternal as well as in the economic Trinity: the one Godhead of the three consubstantial persons and their everlasting relations, as well as the movement and the communion of the energies of the Trinity towards the creatures whereby they are called to perfection through this communion.²⁴

At this point, before proceeding to the further development of our subject, we would like to mention as briefly as possible the subject of the procession of the Holy Spirit in the teaching of Saint Epiphanius. As it is known because of some obscurities, or, better, difficulties of meaning in the teaching of the Saint, in the West theologians have endeavoured to support and establish the doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son too (*Filioque*).²⁵ But a careful study of the complete teaching by S. Epiphanius on the Holy Trinity, as will be seen leads to the conclusion that in no case whatsoever can this doctrine be maintained.

The teaching of S. Epiphanius regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit is based on the solid and unshakeable foundation of the teaching of the Lord, as it exists and is expressed in Holy Scripture. The words of the Logos of God, "*who proceeds from the Father and will receive from me*", are the directive line of Epiphanius for his teaching on this matter. Many passages in his work repeat and stress the self-subsisting being of the Holy Spirit, his consubstantiality with the other persons of the Trinity, his procession from the Father alone and his reception by the world through the Son in time. "*But what are you [Noetian] saying imbecile? Would those who truly respect the Trinity consider it as polytheism? i.e. those who are sons of the truth and of the only catholic Church? ... Thus the Church certainly preaches one God, the Father and the Son. Because the Lord says 'I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, we are both one;' that is one Godhead and one will and one lordship. It is from the Father that the Holy Spirit proceeds, being subsisting and truly the perfect Spirit of the truth,*

²⁴ PG 42, 677A. K.Holl, III, 438,9-11. "The truth has not its power according to the will of men, but according to its guiding wisdom and its economic infinity"

²⁵ Martino Jugie, A.A, *De Processione Spiritus Sancti, ex fontibus revelationis et secundum orientales dissidentes*, Lateranum, Nova series, AN.II N.3-4, Facultas Theologia Athenaei Seminarii Romani, Romae MCMXXXVI, pp. 143-146.

who enlightens everything, who receives from the Son, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of Christ. Thus the Church knows one Godhead; one God, the Father of the truth, the perfect and self-subsisting Father, the perfect and subsisting Son, and the perfect, holy and subsisting Spirit, one Godhead, one power, one lordship".²⁶

It would be relevant to mention a few more passages from the teaching of Epiphanius about this subject so that his manner of thinking may be further clarified.

1. *"He is called the Spirit of true piety, and he is said to be the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and receives from the Son and he is not foreign to the Father and to the Son".²⁷* Epiphanius, refuting the false opinions of the Montanists, notes emphatically the everlasting procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and his reception by the world through the Son in time. Neither does he neglect to stress the consubstantiality of the persons: The Spirit *"is not foreign to the Father and to the Son"*.

2. *"For if the Father is spirit, the Son is spirit too, and the Holy Spirit is spirit, the Son is not conceived (νοεῖται) as Father and the Holy Spirit subsists (ὑφέστηκε) and is not conceived as Son, nor is he such (the Spirit is not conceived as Son, but subsists as the Holy Spirit). No longer the Holy Spirit, nor the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Spirit from the Father through the Son, given to the faithful".²⁸* Despite the fact that the Epiphanius abandons in this passage the usual form regarding the procession and reception of the Holy Spirit, he makes clearer his teaching. The Holy Spirit, while maintaining his peculiar hypostasis in comparison to the other persons of the Trinity, proceeds from the Father timelessly (ἐκ τοῦ Πατρός) and is given to the faithful in time through the Son. (δι' Υἱοῦ πιστοῖς διδόμενον). Thus, there is one essence of God which does not present any difference between the persons and on the other side the persons differ from each other with regard to their peculiar hypostatic qualities.

3. *"We do not speak of gods, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, who are not gods; for there is no polytheism in God. By these names we mean*

²⁶ PG 41, 1001AB. K. Holl, II, 349,7-23

²⁷ PG 41, 876A. K. Holl, II, 236,27-237,2

²⁸ PG 42, 433A. K. Holl, III, 288,22-27

the one Godhead of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; and there are not two sons, for the Son is unique (only Begotten); the Holy Spirit is the Holy, the Spirit of God, who is eternally with the Father and the Son, not foreign to God, but is from God, proceeding from the Father and receiving from the Son".²⁹

4. *"And the Spirit is Holy Spirit; the Son is Son; the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and receives from the Son, searching the depths of God, announcing what relate to the Son, sanctifying the saints of the world through the Trinity and being third in name; Father and Son and Holy Spirit".³⁰*

We observe in these passages the persistence of the Saint in the teaching of the Lord regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and his sending to a mission (ἀποστολή) in the world in time through the Son for the sanctification of the world. It is clear that this teaching of Saint Epiphanius has absolutely no relationship to the Roman Catholic dogma of the *Filioque* which affirms the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son.

Despite this, certain points in Epiphanius' teaching have a certain vagueness at first sight and may lead to an erroneous comprehension and interpretation of his teaching if they are isolated from the whole doctrine of Epiphanius.

To be more specific, Epiphanius uses on certain occasions some expressions which, if isolated from the whole manner of his thinking and the sequence of the text, can be taken to suggest acceptance of the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. These expressions are: 1. *"And as source from source, from the Father and the only Begotten is the Holy Spirit".³¹* Indeed, this passage presents certain serious difficulties. But if it is examined very carefully and in the light of the entire teaching of the Saint, then its meaning is straight forward. At first we must see to whom Epiphanius refers when he writes this passage. In this chapter he confronts the Arians who taught that the sending of the Son in the world by the Father indicates a difference between the sender and the one who is sent (ἀποστέλλοντος καὶ ἀποστελλομένου). Consequently, the effort of Epiphanius is centred on proving that the source of Godhead is one, the Father and that there is no splitting and difference in

²⁹ PG 43, 25C. K. Holl, I, 13,1-8

³⁰ PG 43, 28AB. K. Holl, I, 13,14-18

³¹ PG 42, 285CD. K. Holl, III, 200,31-201,17

the Godhead.³² The Son is characterised as and is a source from a source, i.e. from the Father. Similarly the Holy Spirit is a source from a source i.e. from the Father, and the Son as common source. Here Epiphanius is not concerned with the peculiar hypostasis of the Holy Spirit but with the fact that he shares a common essence and nature with the other two persons of the one Godhead. Therefore, the "*from the Father and from the Son*" means, in this case, that the Holy Spirit is homoousius with the Father and the Son. In this way, the Saint rejects the difference in essence of the persons of the Trinity which the Arians maintained. If we consider this point in the light of the whole teaching of Epiphanius, which, as we have seen is centred on the teaching of the Lord (Κυριακή διδασκαλία) regarding the procession and reception of the Holy Spirit, then, '*the source of the source*' and '*from the Father and the Son*' he does not refer to the everlasting procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and his sending in the world in time through the Son but to the fact that the Holy Spirit is in essence true God of true God.. This is also obvious from a hagiographical reference of the Saint, according to which one who receives the Holy Spirit may also become '*source from source*' and rivers of springing water may flow in within him unto eternal life.³³ Consequently, the Holy Spirit is '*source from source*' with regard to his essence, but proceeds from the Father eternally with regard to his hypostasis and is sent through the Son to his Church in time to sanctify the faithful with regard to the salvation of mankind.

2. "*And the Holy Spirit from (παρά) both, Spirit from Spirit*".³⁴ 3. "*The Holy Spirit is Spirit of truth, the third light from (παρά) the Father and the Son*".³⁵ 4. "*The entire God is life, so then the Son is life from life; "for I am truth and life". The Holy Spirit is from (παρά) both, Spirit from the Father for God is Spirit*".³⁶

These passages have been considered as proposing a double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. Yet, in the light of the Saint's complete^{world} the

³² PG 42, 285C. K. Holl, III, 201, 7-9. "For there is the sender and the sent, to show that there is only one source of all goods, that is the Father".

³³ PG 42, 285D. K. Holl, III, 201, 15-17

³⁴ PG 42, 488CD. K. Holl, III, 323, 17-324, 2

³⁵ PG 42, 489B. K. Holl, 324, 9-17

³⁶ PG 43, 148A. K. Holl, I, 88, 3-6

phrases "*from both*" (παρά ἀμφοτέρων) and the "*third light from the Father and the Son*" (φῶς τρίτον παρά τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ) mean nothing more than the fact that the Holy Spirit is true God in essence or true God of true God, sent in time through the coeternal Son, as this is revealed in the economy. This is also made clear in the following text: "*Indeed Christ is believed to be from the Father, God from God, and the Spirit is from Christ, or from (παρά) both of them, as Christ says; 'who proceeds from the Father' and 'who will receive from me', and Christ is from the Holy Spirit, according to the announcement of the angel...*"³⁷

Consequently, these "vague" phrases are not due to the Saint's inability to understand thoroughly these terms from the theological point of view, as Professor S. Papadopoulos maintains.³⁸ We find that the Theology of Saint Epiphanius is always exact and relies on the Holy Scriptures and on the Apostolic and Patristic tradition of the Church. When Saint Epiphanius speaks about the nature of the Holy Spirit, he does not have as his direct aim the clarification of the doctrine of procession because during his lifetime this doctrine was not of immediate concern to the Church. Epiphanius was called to defend the divine nature of the Holy Spirit and his special consubstantiality with the other persons of the Holy Trinity, which was dealt a blow from those who fought against the Spirit (πνευματομάχοι),³⁹ and from the heresies which denied the Trinity.⁴⁰ Thus, by providing a discourse on orthodox theology and on the doctrine regarding the divine nature of the Holy Spirit, Epiphanius has the opportunity to write about the procession and sending of the Holy Spirit, based always upon the teaching of the Lord and the tradition of the Church as it had been expressed up to that time.

Closely related to the Theology of the Trinity is the topic of the knowledge that man can have about God. The everlasting relations of God inside the Trinity are incomprehensible and inaccessible to man: "*Creation does not work out (ἐργάζεται) creation, and the Godhead cannot become created, nor is God known in terms of measure or space. For God is without description and limits, incomprehensible and encompassing all creatures*".⁴¹ Only the persons of the Holy Trinity themselves have a

³⁷ PG 43, 137B. K. Holl, I, 81,14-16

³⁸ Styl. Papadopoulos, *Patrologia B'*, Athens 1990, p. 722

³⁹ PG 42, 473CD. K. Holl, III, 313, 10 - 314,3

⁴⁰ PG 43, 228D-229A. K. Holl, I, 144,21-32

perfect knowledge about their inner relations.⁴² Yet, although God is incomprehensible with regard to his essence, he does not remain unknowable and unapproachable. Through the work of Divine Dispensation, which is a total expression of his love towards his creation, he enables man to know that which may be known by him within the limits of his creaturehood. So this approach is made through the dispensational revelation (οικονομική ἀποκάλυψη) of the Trinitarian God in history: "*We know only in part, and we prophecy in part, and we draw God's knowledge as a drop from an ocean, and we understand pattern of this dispensation, the grace of our hope, the good pleasure of the Father, the will of the Son and the will of the Holy Spirit, the dispensation of God himself*".⁴³ Naturally this revelation is not an individualistic and anthropocentric matter. It has to do with man's acceptance of this revelation, which occurs in history and is perfected in the Church. Only through purification and enlightenment of mind, i.e. through renewal of the whole of man's existence that the Triune God can be known as redeemer and saviour. Hence Saint Epiphanius advises: "*So, make a plea to the Father to reveal the Son to you; make a plea to the Son to reveal the Father to you. Make a plea again to the Father to give you the Son, to reveal the Holy Spirit to you and to give him to you to have inside you, so that once the Holy Spirit is given to you he may reveal to you the entire knowledge of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and you may come to know that there is nothing unknown to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit either*".⁴⁴

Epiphanius connects directly his teaching about Cosmology and about Anthropology with the Theology of the Holy Trinity.

In his opposition to the false opinions of Arius regarding the creaturely status of the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Logos of God, Epiphanius makes a clear distinction between uncreated and created reality. What is created differs radically from what is divinely begotten and uncreated. What is begotten comes from a substance and not from nothing and such, indeed, is only the Son; whereas what is created comes

⁴¹ PG 43, 145C. K. Holl, I, 87,12-14

⁴² PG 42, 229C. K. Holl, III, 168,4-6. "But the Son is Only Begotten, without beginning, or time, and the Holy Spirit is known by the Father and the Only Begotten".

⁴³ PG 43, 188C. K. Holl, I, 115,12-16

⁴⁴ PG 43, 45C. K. Holl, I, 25, 13-20

from nothing through the Son: " *What is created is not similar to what has been born, nor is what is born similar to what is created, especially with regard to the one unmixed (ἀκραιφνή) and perfect essence. For everything has been created by God, and only the Son of God has been born and only the Holy Spirit has come forth from the Father and received from the Son. All other things were created and did they come forward from the Father nor did they receive from the Son, but from his fullness (πληρώματος), as it is written; by the Logos of God everything was made firm, and by the spirit of his mouth their whole power [is sustained]*"⁴⁵

Consequently according to orthodox theology God creates the world out of nothing and this means that the world has absolutely no relation to the essence of God. Created things cannot have what the everlasting God has and what is attributed to him. Naturally what creatures lack, because of their nature, can be acquired by them, through grace and participation in the doxological life of the Trinity.⁴⁶ Thus, on this view, the world, man and every other being outside the Godhead is created. No physical relation or connection may exist between the creation and the simple essence of God, whilst the hypostatic relations of the persons of the Trinity are impassive and everlasting. The Holy Trinity is the primary cause of all created beings, which have been created and are maintained by God. The world, however, being created and finite, is called upon through its submission to in the plan of God's dispensation, to overcome its creatureliness and reach its union with the God of the Trinity and perfection by grace.⁴⁷

On the basis, then, of the aforementioned cosmology we can also consider the topic of man's creation in the image and likeness of God which Epiphanius mentions on many occasions in his teaching.

Like the entire creation man is created, out of nothing by God the Trinity.⁴⁸ God bestows his image on man and endows him with excellent divine gifts: "*Only God knows where the image is, or where the image is fulfilled, for it is he who endowed man with this grace*".⁴⁹ However man "*rendered vulgar*" (ἐχυδαίωσε) the image by

⁴⁵ PG 42, 256AB. K. Holl, III, 182, 28-183,3

⁴⁶ PG 43, 60D-61A. K. Holl, I, 32,27-32

⁴⁷ PG 43, 157AB. K. Holl, I, 94,9-30

⁴⁸ PG 43, 116A. K. Holl, I, 65,9-12

his rebellion against the law and will of God. In other words man darkened, or stained the image of God, but did not destroy it.⁵⁰ This means that the image of God is embedded in the created nature of man and is closely intertwined with it. Actually it is not limited to a certain element of human nature,⁵¹ but is expressed dynamically and in many ways through the entire psychosomatic human existence: "*Indeed we must believe that the image of God is in man generally in everything and not singly*".⁵²

We need to clarify at this point that of Epiphanius although the divine image is given to all men without exception, men are not divine by nature, because the divine image does not refer to the nature of God but to God's grace. So, everybody has the image but not by nature. Consequently, men have no equality with God on account of God's image in them. Besides, God is ineffable, incomprehensible, Spirit above every other spirit and light over every other light.⁵³ Man, having as a dowry the image and the various gifts of God, and being a member of the Church of God, moves progressively towards his final purpose, which is to become according the likeness of his Creator.⁵⁴

In conclusion we would say that through his works Epiphanius summarises in the most skilful way the orthodox theology and teaching of the Church with regard to the Holy Trinity. Throughout his fight against the various heresies he praises the real and everlasting nature of the three divine hypostases, who are consubstantial without being confused with each other. Although, the persons of the Son and the Spirit are not self-subsistent, since they come from the Father, their hypostatic properties are totally personal and unchangeable. Man and the world in general are created by God out of nothing. They have absolutely no relation to the essence of God, but they are

⁴⁹ PG 42, 344B. K. Holl, III, 235,22-24

⁵⁰ PG 42, 344B. K. Holl, III, 235, 24-26

⁵¹ PG 42, 341C. K. Holl, III,234,22-25

⁵² PG 42, 344B. K. Holl, III, 235,20-22

⁵³ PG 43, 117A. K. Holl, I, 66,18-23

⁵⁴ PG 43,236B. K. Holl, I, 149,1-4. "We believe ... in one catholic and apostolic Church, in the baptism of repentance, in the resurrection of the dead, in the just judgement of the souls and bodies, in the kingdom of heaven and in eternal life".

called to participate by grace in the glory of the Holy Trinity and to be led to perfection.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ PG 41, 1053BCD. K. Holl, II, 391,17-392,18. In this text Epiphanius, opposes to the heresy of Sabellius, in a most skilful way the entire Theology of the Church with regard to the Holy Trinity.

CHAPTER 3

C: CHRISTOLOGY

In his life time Saint Epiphanius had to confront the Christological problem of the relations of the divine and the human nature of the one person of Christ. This problem was created by Apollinaris¹ and many others who were influenced by him and followed this teaching. Apollinaris claimed that the Logos of God assumed flesh without rational mind and so he raised the subject of the perfection of the human nature of Christ: *"For it appeared to some, who have come from us [the orthodox] and who have great ability and are always praised by us and by all the orthodox, that they should expel the mind from the incarnate presence of Christ, saying that when Christ our Lord came, he assumed flesh and soul but not a mind, i.e. perfect man"*.²

Epiphanius remaining steadfast to the tradition and teaching of the great Fathers of the Church and to the decisions of the Councils, develops this subject in the orthodox way.³ So, he praises on the one hand the existence of two perfect natures, the divine and the human, in the one and only person of Christ and, on the other hand, their hypostatic union. Christ is true God and true man.⁴ The incarnation of the Logos of God is real and perfect in every sense and *"not in appearance"*(οὐ δοκῆσει). Christ

¹ PG 42, 641D-644A. K. Holl, III, 416,31-417,2

² PG 42, 641B. K. Holl, III, 416,15-20

³ PG 42, 660CD. K. Holl, III, 428,7-11. PG 42, 676C. K. Holl, III, 437,21-26

⁴ PG 41, 965D-968A. K. Holl, II, 321,10-14

was born and he assumed real flesh from the Ever-Virgin Mary through the operation of the Holy Spirit, "*the Logos who became incarnated in truth*".⁵ It ^{is} the Logos of God who, without changing his Godhead, assumed real flesh, endowed with rational soul and mind. For this reason, he voluntarily passed through the blameless passions of hunger, thirst, labour, sleep and sadness, so that what happened to him may be proof of his true incarnated presence.⁶ The character of the perfect incarnation of the Logos of God does not have the meaning of a "*high*" (ὕψηλῆς) ος "*spiritual*" (πνευματικῆς) salvation as the heretics would claim. The character of the incarnation is soteriological therapeutic for the entire human nature.⁷ The Son becomes man for the salvation of man, "*in order to that, being God, he might perfectly work out the whole of man's salvation in a perfect man*".⁸ Consequently, the subject of the incarnation of Christ is not simply a matter of clarification of certain terms on the level of philosophical and theological discussions. It is a matter of actual living and experience through the life of the Church of that which is made perfect through the incarnation. The Logos becomes the hope of man through his perfect incarnation. He bestows salvation on him abolishing death through his own death. Salvation could not be and is not realised without the voluntarily offer of God.⁹

In order to stress this reality of the perfect incarnation of the Son and through this the perfect salvation of man Epiphanius, employs the term "*Dominical man*" (Κυριακός ἄνθρωπος) for the person of the Lord. It seems that he borrows this

⁵ PG 42, 665BC. K. Holl, III, 431,25-26

⁶ PG 42, 680B. K. Holl, III, 439,20-22

⁷ PG 42, 689BC. K. Holl, III, 445,7-14

⁸ PG 43, 157C. K. Holl, I, 95,9-10

⁹ PG 43, 185CD-188A. K. Holl, I, 114,3-25

term from the Great Athanasius. We encounter exactly the same term in the letter of the Great Athanasius to the Bishop of Corinth, Epictetus, which Epiphanius published in his work "Panarion".¹⁰ So, the "*Dominical man*" is the Logos of God a composite nature, (ἐκ συνθέτου) divine and human.¹¹ This term denotes the true man, who is hypostatically united with the Godhead of Christ without the two natures being confused between them: "*For in saying that the Lordly man came to be in anguish, you showed indeed that the Dominical (Kyriakos) man is a true man. Further more in order to show that he was a true man and that the anguish occurred not from the Godhead; 'he perspired and his sweat became like blood clots, i.e. a bodily form and not a spiritual one' "*".¹² All human passions which the Dominical man suffers occur voluntarily and by permission so that the plan of divine dispensation may be fulfilled. So because of the hypostatic union of the two natures, the one God-Man, performs the divine and the human. He is thirsty, he is hungry, he weeps, he dies on the cross, in order that the world may not lay its hope on man, but on the Dominical (Κυριακός) man, whilst the Godhead assumed the passion; so that the impassibility (ἀπάθεια) of the Godhead may become salvation for the world; or so that the suffering (passion) of the flesh may be taken on by the Godhead, although the Godhead had suffered nothing.¹³

The manner of union of the two natures of Christ is another matter that Epiphanius tackles in his teaching. He contrasts his teaching about the two natures of Christ to the heresies of the Gnostic Valentinians,¹⁴ as well as to that of the

¹⁰ PG 42, 644C. K. Holl, III, 417,25

¹¹ PG 43, 77CD. K. Holl, I, 43,8-12

¹² PG 43, 84B. K. Holl, I, 46,28-47,1

¹³ PG 43, 188B. K. Holl, I, 115,2-6

Cerdonians,¹⁵ Noetians,¹⁶ etc. The Logos of God descends from heaven, being perfect God, and is born from the Virgin Mary, being conceived from the Holy Spirit. He takes perfect human flesh without any change or alteration of his Godhead, neither is there any confusion between the two natures: "*We believe perfectly the incarnation of Christ, perfect God, the same perfect man, without sin, having taken this very body from Mary, and having taken a soul and mind and everything that is man, without sin, not two but one, co- united not of confusion, nor for non - existence, but for a great dispensation of grace*".¹⁷ There are not two persons and two natures in Christ. "*Not two, but one*" person with two perfect natures, divine and human, which are co-united without being confused between them, neither does one absorb the other so that one of them is led to non - existence. But the very Logos became flesh, not changing the Godhead into manhood, but by including the existence of man in the very body of his Godhead and the very hypostasis of the enhypostatic (subsisting) Logos of God, and being an hypostasis .¹⁸ Neither did the Logos of God dwell in the man Christ as

¹⁴ PG 41, 485D-488A. K. Holl, I, 396,7-15. "As I said, both he and his school call our Lord Jesus Christ Saviour, Christ, Logos, Cross, Conductor, Limit - Setter and Limit. But they say he has brought his body down from above and passed through the Virgin Mary like water through a pipe. He has taken nothing from the virgin womb, but has his body from above, as I said. He is not the original Logos; nor is he the Christ after the Logos, who is above among the aeons on high. But they claim that he has been emitted only to come and rescue the spiritual race from above".

¹⁵ PG 41, 692CD. K. Holl, II, 91,10-12. "Christ is not born of Mary and has not appeared in flesh. As he exist in appearance he has also been manifest in appearance, and done all that he has done in appearance".

¹⁶ PG 41, 997C. K. Holl, II, 347,4-6

¹⁷ PG 42, 740A. K. Holl, III, 475, 10-16

¹⁸ PG 43, 157C. K. Holl, I, 95,3-7

an energy as in a relations of vehicle and driver, where the will of the one and the other are subdued so that there is one action and one single hypostasis of the incarnate Logos. Rather the Logos of God, *"having taken humanity with the Godhead, being perfect from the Father, who has fulfilled the perfect dispensation ... he was incarnated (or inhominated) in us, not in appearance but in truth, having re-created in him perfect man from Mary the Theotokos through the Holy Spirit; not dwelling in a man, as he used to speak in the prophets, but dwelling in power and acting"*.¹⁹ In this case, there is no form *another and another* (ἄλλος καί ἄλλος), *but one, and another thing and another thing* (εἷς καί ἄλλο καί ἄλλο). The union of the two natures, the divine and the human, is hypostatic, that is, real and substantial the perfect incarnation incurs the assumption of humanity by the Godhead in a real and perfect manner. This is very significant. Humanity is re-created through this union and thus as a consequence there is a dynamic healing and restoration of the human nature.²⁰ The Lord assumes exactly the same body with man and not a different one, in order to save it and to free it from the corruptive consequences of the fall.²¹ For this reason, Epiphanius too, as all the great orthodox Fathers of the Church, insists on the perfect incarnation of the Logos of God. He also assumed both rational mind and rational soul because in this way the entire man is saved and has a share, through grace, in the life of the Godhead. When man is proved worthy of his calling, then, the entire Godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit exists in him *"spiritually"* (πνευματικῶς). The word *"spiritually"* implies here the incommunicability and incomparability of

¹⁹ PG 43, 157BC. K. Holl, I, 94,27-95,3

²⁰ PG 42, 684D-685A. K. Holl, III, 442,11-27

²¹ PG 42, 661A. K. Holl, III, 428,20-23. PG 42, 665CD. K. Holl, III, 431,26-432,3

God's being in contrast to the human nature.²² The human nature so united with the divine in the one hypostasis of Christ, enables man to acquire the mind of Christ, that is, "*some energy given to us by God and existing in us*",²³ so that man may be led to perfection by the strength of his grace.²⁴

The incarnation of the second person of the Holy Trinity and the fulfilment of the work of Divine Dispensation incurs a total revelation of the truth to man. Man now knows about his salvation and about God as much as is possible to him within his limited human nature.²⁵ Exactly for this reason all the questions of the heretics are solved through the perfect and real incarnation of the Logos of God: "*For how could the dispensation be actually in truth, if it did not have the necessary usage (συνήθεια) of the incarnation? For in this, he proved to us all the solutions to the heretical questions*".²⁶ So all the false opinions of the heretics, of the Manichaeans, Ariomaniacs, Lucianists, etc., are weakened and censured before the mystery of the economic of incarnation of God.

Humanity finds in the body of Christ its fulfilment and return to the first created beauty. By condescending and by assuming the form of a servant Christ becomes the way through which we are led towards the kingdom and the Father. He is the gate through which we enter into the ark of salvation. He is the rock and the pillar upon which we establish and lay the foundation of the firm hope of our faith. He becomes the sun of justice to light our mind which is dark from sin.²⁷ Thus, through this historic

²² PG 42, 692BC. K. Holl, III, 446,13-24

²³ PG 42, 692D. K. Holl, III, 446,33-34

²⁴ PG 42, 693A. K. Holl, III, 447,5-7

²⁵ PG 43, 76BC. K. Holl, I, 42,1-5

²⁶ PG 43, 77AC. K. Holl, I, 42,10-43,3

reality man walks finally towards an eschatological becoming since he communicates with the Trinitarian God, and towards the abolition of destruction and death and full restoration of eternal communion with real life in God: "*The grace of our Lord and Saviour has appeared... He has [our Lord] once more shown the light of life, ... He has dwelt among us, and given to us the right of the Law of Spirit, so that we may know him [our Lord] and what are his; who is the beginning and the end of life. He became Law of righteousness for us, Law of Spirit, is freedom from the law of sin*".²⁸

²⁷ PG 43, 97D-100A. K. Holl, I, 55,29-56,5

²⁸ PG 43, 132CD-133A. K. Holl, I, 77,17-78,3

CHAPTER 4

D: ECCLESIOLOGY

One could say that in Saint Epiphanius' works Ecclesiology is not expressed in the same systematic and extensive way as the theology concerning the Trinity, Christology and Pneumatology. Despite all this there are several ecclesiological expressions and theses in his works and mainly in his work "Panarion" and more particularly in the chapter "*about Faith*" which are important.

We believe that this is not accidental or an omission on the part of the Saint. The Ecclesiology of Epiphanius is closely and organically connected with his Triadology, Christology and the remaining units of his orthodox teaching: "*For there is one unity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, one essence, one dominion, one will, one Church, one baptism, one faith*".¹

The Church does not have a worldly and juridical character so as to be considered as such, but a spiritual and mystical one.² This means that the notion of the Church can only be understood in a way which is proper to its spiritual and mystical character.

The highest and unique authority in the Church is the one God who creates and maintains the Church. This is because the Church, according to Saint Epiphanius, starts with creation. Through its diachronic development moving through history towards the

¹ PG 43, 232A. K. Holl, I, 146,3-5

² PG 41,945D-948A. K. Holl, II, 306,5-10

final fulfilment of man and nature, the Church^{is} always closely associated with its Master.³ This means that the Church has a wider spectrum of historical and spiritual dimension. In other words, any effort of delimiting or defining the Church is proved conventional.⁴ The world is the Church itself, or better, the Church comprises the entire world and even goes beyond it, keeping it in an organic and free dependence upon the life-giver, God the Holy Trinity. "*And of one remaining, that is, the holy catholic Church, and Christianity which is really called so from the beginning, with Adam, and before Adam and before all ages with Christ, by the will of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and with all who in every generation were pleased to believe in God, and which was revealed to the world through his presence*".⁵ Consequently the members of the Church are those who are very close by relation to the source of the Church. With his incarnation, the Logos of God becomes the Saviour of the entire Church. He becomes the way through which the Church is led by grace to communion with the entire Godhead. Those who live in the true faith and do not deny the truth of the kerygma, taste the healing and saving character of the Church. This means that the heretics are excluded from the body of the Church because they do not have communion with what the Church essentially is: *The incarnate Logos of God*.⁶

With the assumption of perfect human nature by the Logos of God there is a calling of all men to join in concord with the one body of the holy Church. Everybody

³ PG 41, 181BC. K. Holl, I, 174, 17-175, 12. PG 42, 584A. K. Holl, III, 361, 15-19

⁴ In the chapter which deals with the refutation of the heresy of the Valentinians, Epiphanius quotes the treatise of Saint Irenaeus where he refers to the ecumenicity of the Church. PG 41, 533ABC. K. Holl, I, 431, 12-432, 12

⁵ PG 42, 784CD. K. Holl, III, 502, 21-26

⁶ PG 42, 809CD. K. Holl, III, 515, 10-23

is entitled to this union because the assumption of humanity by the Lord was complete (catholic). Yet, not all men are saved. The Lord came from above "... *and approached humanity, through which he assumed flesh of similar passibility, so that the humanity which approached him, after he had gathered together those who approached him with obedience, might be called Holy and spotless*".⁷ The appropriation of the events of salvation in the Church cannot be achieved with autonomous and worldly procedures. The saving and therapeutic power and character of the Church, is not merely due to the fact that it is divine and possesses the revealed truth, and consequently those who are in it are saved, but to the fact that the Body of Christ is extended through the ages, through the presence and life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit. Those who live outside this reality, or exist in a latent state in relation to this, have no relation with the Church, the Body of Christ.⁸

Through, the assumption of the entire humanity and the salvation of human nature by means of the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection and the ascension, Jesus Christ has become the only head of the Church, and humanity, the body of this Head.⁹ In this way we can understand the exact nature of the Church and the real force of the expression "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*". The Church is the only true faith, life, hope and confirmation of eternal incorruption.¹⁰ This does not mean that we can exclude God's ruling of the entire creation and confine it within certain boundaries. The entire creation and the entire humanity are called to avoid sin and corruption and

⁷ PG 42, 313AB. K. Holl, III, 217,8-18

⁸ PG 42, 781D-784A. K. Holl, III, 501,21-26

⁹ PG 42,813BC-816AB-817ABC. K. Holl, III, 517,18-519,12

¹⁰ PG 42,820B. K. Holl, III, 520,10-12

to join the one holy and catholic Church. Even the *concupines* (*παλλακίδες*), i.e. the heresies, have a right to the gift of God if they want.¹¹

The Church as the Body of Christ possesses all the means by which one can be saved. These are the sanctifying sacraments of the Church by which the faithful are healed and incorporated into the community^{of} the friends of God. Participation in the sacraments of the Church, which consists in the organic and substantial inclusion and incorporation into the Body of Christ, presupposes two basic elements: faith and confession. These are followed by the first and basic sacrament of holy Baptism, which constitutes the fulfilment of the command of the Lord: *"To us this is the faith, and this is the honour and this is our mother, the Church, which saves through faith and hope, being strengthened by the love of Christ, perfected through confession, the mysteries and the cleansing power of baptism. Because he said [to the disciples], Go and baptise in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, i.e. in the name of the Holy Trinity"*.¹² Thus, through Baptism the faithful are regenerated and incorporated into the one Body of the Church, in order to be led in this way into perfect communion with the Triune God. Perfection, however, is not achieved merely through Baptism as if by some magical way. There are those who do not comprehend the truth correctly, because of their ill faith, and are led to deny it.¹³ If the faithful are to reach perfection, having received the sacraments and laws of the Church, they must fight to win. There are mystical laws within the life of the Church which are organically related to the mystery of the Godhead and the incarnate presence of the Logos of God.¹⁴ Thus, Epiphanius proves wrong the opinion that many theologians have about

¹¹ PG 42, 788B. K. Holl, III, 504,11-15

¹² PG 42, 820A. K. Holl, III,519,24-520,3

¹³ indem.

the number of the sacraments. The sacraments are not confined to a given number, e.g. seven, but embrace every act in the Church which is ^{an} organically connected celebration of the entire mystery of the salvation of humanity. Monasticism, widowhood, matrimony, the divine Eucharist in the gatherings of the faithful, the institutions of the reader and the deaconess, the priesthood, fasting, psalmodies, the study of holy Scripture and any other obligatory or optional act which has as a direct aim advancement in virtue and perfection in the Lord of the faithful are sacraments.¹⁵

These sacraments, constituting the practical application of the tradition of the Church,¹⁶ do not have the sense of a divinely constituted rite which is divinely endowed with magical powers. The sacraments exist as rites and functions of the body of the Church, which derive their redemptive and healing power from the redeeming and saving events of the Divine Dispensation.¹⁷ For this reason, the achievement of the transformation of the faithful in the Church, there is the need for personal participation in the entire life of the community, along with absolute negation of sin and repentance. Participation in the sacraments ensures the possibility and the grace of God for correction and perfection of life. Personal participation renders this possibility a reality. Thus, through negation of sin and defection the faithful "*desists from the community of heresies, denounce prostitution, adultery, debauchery, idolatry and murder ...*" and is led to the position of the sound life of virtue and holiness. "*He says prayers continuously with fervent and great zeal and genuflexion, on the appointed days, making his offerings to God through night and day ...*".¹⁸ Consequently the Church is

¹⁴ PG 42, 821CD-824A. K. Holl, III, 521,28-33

¹⁵ PG 42, 824ABC-825AB-828ABCD-829ABC. K. Holl, III, 521,33-525,2

¹⁶ PG 42, 828D. K. Holl, III, 524,5-7

¹⁷ PG 42, 832BC. K. Holl, III, 525,23-526,3

life and act, truth and goodness; it constitutes the community of the faithful, those that are communicants of the Triune God.

The Church constitutes the infallible criterion and supreme authority of orthodoxy.¹⁹ Naturally this authority of the Church is not understood as a form of papal primacy and infallibility. The Church expresses and formulates the faith authentically because it is the Body of Christ and Christ is its head. The only source of salvation and true faith is the incarnate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁰

This authority, which belongs in an exclusive and unique way to the leader and perfecter of the orthodox faith, the Logos of God, is transferred to the Apostles, who, by divine grace in Jesus Christ and in Holy Spirit, undertake to teach all nations and to baptise them in the Lordly (Kyriake) name of the Trinity.²¹ In turn the succession is transferred from the apostles to the bishops and the presbyters who undertake the responsibility of shepherding the flock of the Church. This office in no case can be considered as an despotic and authoritarian power of the pastors. The office of priesthood and high priesthood belongs to the Church and is donated to it by the Lord.²² Therefore, the work of the bishop in the Church is not merely the administration of a local Church and the authoritative formulation of the faith, but the shepherding of the flock which was entrusted to him, and the guarding of the orthodox faith. Christ is the Great High Priest and "*chancellor of high priests*"²³ (ἀρχιερέων

¹⁸ PG 42, 829D-832AB. K. Holl, III, 525,3-22

¹⁹ PG 42, 817C. K. Holl, III, 519,13-14

²⁰ PG 41, 161B. K. Holl, I, 157,19-23

²¹ PG 41, 227BC. K. Holl, I, 231,8-17

²² PG 41, 392A. K. Holl, I, 323,5-9

²³ PG 41, 393B. K. Holl, I, 324,10

πρῦτανις), who sits eternally on his throne *"and dispenses gifts to his own servants including the high priesthood, namely, to the high priests of the catholic Church"*.

Again authority does not belong as an absolute right to any bishop separately. A bishop participates in his authority as long as he participates and lives and exemplifies in his life in the high priesthood of Christ. In this way he leads and administers his local Church in an orthodox way as a type and in place (εἰς τύπον καὶ τόπον) of Christ.²⁵

The subject-matter of faith as a whole is not limited, however, to the domain of a local Church, but is related with the totality of the faithful and the local Churches of the one and undivided Body of Christ. The Council of all the Bishops is responsible about this subject-matter which has to do with the formulation and interpretation of the faith.²⁶

The Ecumenical Council expresses in this way the unity of the Church and the apostolic continuation and tradition of one faith and the one salvation. For this reason each one who calls himself a faithful orthodox, or proceeds to join the Church, must *"keep this holy faith of the catholic Church as it was received by the holy and sole virgin of God from the holy apostles of the Lord; and thus each one of the instructed and those destined to come forward to the holy baptism, is not only obliged to proclaim the belief to their own sons in the Lord, but to teach it expressively as mother of all does..."*²⁷

We must stress at this point that an Ecumenical Council is infallible when it expresses infallibly the catholic faith of the Church. An Ecumenical Council does not

²⁴ PG 41, 396C. K. Holl, I, 325,14-16

²⁵ PG 41, 393AB. K. Holl, I, 324,2-13

²⁶ PG 43, 233A. K. Holl, I, 147,21-23

²⁷ PG 43, 232B. K. Holl, I, 146,15-20

formulate new truths and doctrines, but expresses the one truth authentically and authoritatively as it received it from the tradition of the Church in order to safeguard it from heresies.²⁸ Consequently the bearer of the authority of faith is the body of ^{the} Church as a whole: the people of God in its unity with Jesus Christ "*on account of this, yourselves and ourselves, and all orthodox bishops and collectively the entire holy catholic Church following the previously proclaimed faith of those holy Fathers, thus speak to the heresies which have arisen and, indeed, to those who approach holy baptism*".²⁹

This is the nature and structure of the orthodox and catholic Church which Epiphanius the Great pillar and defender of orthodoxy presents to us in a very beautiful and vivid manner, at the ending of the chapter "*about Faith*" in his "Panarion": "*This is the character of this holy Church with the faith that was previously proclaimed, and these are the institutions which are related to it. This is the character of the Church, brought together by the law, the prophets, the apostles and the evangelists; just prepared as a powerful antidote from many myriad of cures for those in need of salvation by the will of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. These are the characteristics of this solemn bride of Christ. This is the dowry and testament of inheritance and will of her groom, our heavenly Lord Jesus, through whom and with whom glory is ascribed to the Father, and honour and power, with the Holy Spirit, unto ages of ages. Amen*".³⁰

²⁸ PG 43, 232A. K. Holl, I, 146,7-10

²⁹ PG 43, 233AB. K. Holl, I, 147,28-148,2

³⁰ PG 42, 832BC. K. Holl, III, 525,23-526,3

EPILOGUE

As we have seen in the development of our thesis, St. Epiphanius remains firm and unyielding on one particular principle. Orthodoxy is the truth which precedes the ecclesiastic life of the community and is expressed via all the manifestations of this life. Heresy is any deviation from this primordial truth and the ecclesiastic life. That is to say, Orthodoxy and Heresy are defined and expressed in relation to this truth. Obviously, Heresy is not simply a different doctrine and way of life from that at the Church. It too has its own history, which is linked to various pre-existing forms of life and doctrines which, in turn, are represented by pre-Christian or post-Christian groups.

At this point we would wish to express our opposition to the stance of Walter Bauer, as this is expressed in his well-known book "*Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*", according to which, Heresy comes first and Orthodoxy ensues as it battles for its existence within the pre-established heretical groups.¹ Bauer utilises historical rather than ecclesiastical facts in order to reach his conclusions as he himself attests.² He clearly does not use established ecclesiastical traditions and ecclesiastic life in order to make his point, but historical and 'scientific' methods which revolve around the definition of the birth of Christianity and of the first ecclesiastical communities.

According to our Saint, however, Orthodoxy has its beginning in the creation of the world and, as singular truth, precedes all other teachings and life. Thus the unity of orthodox teaching and life is emphasised as a living organism, which throughout the course of human

¹ Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, ed. R. Kraft and G. Krodel, FORTRESS PRESS Philadelphia, 1971, pp. 1-40.

² Walter Bauer, see above pp. xxi-xxv

history, calls the entire creation to harmonise itself with it for one specific aim: perfection and deification in Christ.

The arguments of St. Epiphanius are lucid and persuasive. First and foremost he is clearly a biblical Father. Nevertheless he just does not simply examine the "letter" of Scripture but overtakes it as he proceeds to something livelier, i.e. to the "spirit" of the letter and its interrelation with history. This is why he does not accept any rift between the Old and the New Testament. The presentation of biblical teaching and the experience of ecclesiastical life are his firm and unshakeable criteria.

Ecclesiastic life and history do not constitute a field of friction and confrontation between diverse ideologies. They constitute a living and unbreakable Theology, which is expressed in theory and practice, i.e. in the doctrines and traditions of the Church.

Finally, as we saw in analysing the works of St. Epiphanius, Orthodoxy is defined as the specific and historically transmitted truth of the facts of the Old and the New Testament which a wholeness marked by catholicity and eternity. Any human group, of any period of time which remains unrelated to this truth or attempts to forge, falls immediately from the bosom of the Church and is classed as a Heresy. Thus Heresy, according to St. Epiphanius, is nothing else but erosion of the truth and detachment from the truth, in life and teaching and, by implication departure and severance from the body of Christ:

" ...For Gods' holy faith having existed since the beginning and forever, being ancient but not dated, always is and is[†] foundation is firm, and it exists, having her Master timeless. Thus it is not bound by time is always operational among the angels and adorns the saints from generation to generations".³

"And what might be the need of addressing you, whilst you are estranged from all Christians, prophets, as well as apostles, evangelists, martyrs and all the saints? those who are ready to convict you on the day of judgement; who, in order that they may not deny the Son to be from God and to have been born of Him, have suffered torture, flogging, flailing, beasts fire and knife".⁴

³ PG 42, 548A. K. Holl, III, 361, 15-19

⁴ PG 42, 565AB. K. Holl, III, 372, 14-20

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