

by councils and decrees. Although his personal conduct in the creation of the schism has been questioned, his trinitarian work gave considerable guidance to the whole church as it worked over the Arian question following the council of Nicaea.

#### Origen (251)

Here is a hard man to place. He was a leading scholar in the church of our period of study but eventually was denounced as a heretic at the fifth ecumenical council...and was subsequently discredited as a father. We continue to treat him as such due to the magnitude of his work and the areas of influence he had on the church of his time. He is the possessor of perplexing qualities and combined them in the fashion of scholar and mystic. He has, indeed, a number of unfortunate statements in his writings and worse yet, a lot of his positions are expressed with sufficient ambiguity that almost anyone could embrace him and cite him for support. So in life much is contradictory including a good many of us.

The time of his life was 185-251 and he was born in a world of persecution (his father was martyred) and eventually died a martyr's death. He was educated in the school of Alexandria and soon after completing his work succeeded Clement as head of that catechetical institution, having served as a tutor after his 18th year. Moved by the appeal of the ascetic life and the need for self-denial, he emasculated himself to abate the cravings of the flesh. This brought him under the ban of the bishop of Alexandria, Demetrius, who declared that such acts would forbid Origen having an active role in the leadership of the church. The bishop forbade his ordination and Origen went to Antioch where more ascetically minded friends secured his ordination as a presbyter in 230. Demetrius denounced this act and the rest of Origen's life was spent in connexion with the school at Caesarea where he continued to expound and develop the Alexandrian method. Origen was accepted in Roman circles by Philip the Arabian and Alexander Severus but with the coming of Trajan he was one of the first martyrs.

Of his many works, the following seem most important:

DE PRINCIPIIS, in some ways the first systematic theology. His method is dialectical and this gives expression to various sides concerning the Person of Christ in particular. Much of the work may be read for profit...it is often graphic, interesting, but at