

## The Canon of the Old Testament.

The word Canon comes from the Greek. Its original meaning is a measure. It was applied to the Bible in the first place, not as something which is fixed, but as something which fixes. By the Canon of Scripture the Church Fathers did not mean the establishment of a rule determining which books should be included in the Scriptures, but rather a use of the Scripture as a test of doctrine and of life.

In later years the word has come to be regarded commonly as referring to the content of the Scripture, rather than to the use of it as a norm. The central meaning of the word is that of authority. We might have the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, grouped together in their present form, but unless we add the idea of authority, that they are the very Word of God, our infallible guide to faith and practice, we have no Canon.

I shall discuss the subject of the Canon of the Old Testament briefly, under two heads;

1. The idea of the Canon of the Old Testament.
2. The extent of the Canon.

### I. The idea of the Canon of the Old Testament.

Where did the idea of authority as resident in the books of the Old Testament originate. Some critics assert that the origin of the idea of authority in the books of the New Testament must be sought as late as 200 A.D., and that it was a creation of the