

# **Marcionism**

- Background: son of a bishop, a rather wealthy businessman
- Outline beliefs
  - o Cosmology – Gnostic
  - o Soteriology – not Gnostic
  - o (Most important of all) – His understanding of a ‘Christian’ *canon*

## **Getting to the root of the problem**

What was Marcon’s problem? –

- His doctrine of God
- The way he read the Bible

## **Situation of the Church before Marcion came along:**

- Canon (ie. lack of...)
- Fall of Jerusalem, the situation of Jewish Christianity and Judeo-Christian relations
- Philo of Alexandria and the rise of the use of allegory

## **Issues which arise from Marcionism**

1. CANON and the authority of scripture
2. Biblical exegesis and its challenges – ‘plain’ meaning of scripture and ‘spiritual’ meanings of scripture. For example, how do we interpret the command by God to slaughter the Amalekites, and the punishment of Saul for refusing? (1 Samuel 13).
3. Relationship between Christianity and Judaism – what it was like in Marcion’s time, and what it is like now (particularly after the Holocaust), Christian Zionism, Christian evangelism amongst Jewish people, Supercessionism
4. Christian Doctrine of God: continuity, progressive revelation
5. Church as the ‘New Israel’ – what this implies and does not imply.
6. Where is there some sense of continuity of vocation between Christian theology and Judaism, especially in regard to eschatology?