

No. 197.

HEBREWS 10:19-22.

An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
At Aldgate, 19th June, 1923.

OUTLINE:

1. The privilege of drawing near.
2. The joy of considering one another.
3. Sinning ~~and~~ wilfully and its peril.
 - a. What is the meaning of verse 26?
 - b. Can a child of God lose salvation?
4. The need for a tender conscience open unto the Lord.

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It is very remarkable, beloved friends, that when ever Hebrews 10 is mentioned, a goodly number at once think of verses 26 and 27. Now the Holy Spirit does not FILL Hebrews 10 with these verses. It is so important we should take EVERY passage in its context. If Hebrews 6 tells us of those who have fallen away, it equally contains a mention of two immutable things for the strong encouragement of God's people; and if Hebrews 10 declares it is quite possible to sin wilfully after receiving the ^{FULL} KNOWLEDGE of the truth, it also emphasizes that there are ones to be found of whom God Himself says that He has perfected for ever those who are being sanctified, of whom God Himself says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more". In other words, the Lord foreknew how men would misunderstand, and every possible misunderstanding seems to be answered in advance by the Holy Spirit. It is this fact which encourages us to know that the wrong interpretation ~~is~~ is a misunderstanding. When we find Divine guarding against a misunderstanding, we see that the Holy Spirit foreknew and disapproved of that very interpretation. In like manner, when we find Satan's particular attack on Deuteronomy, and the history of Jonah, and meet the imagination of two Isaiahs, and see how all those points are answered definitely in advance, we praise God. The Holy Spirit quotes from both parts of Isaiah together. A special stress on Deuteronomy is found in the attack of Satan in the wilderness. A reference to Jonah the prophet, and the historical facts are Divinely emphasized, and we see not only that God foreknew men's errors, but that He hated these errors, and warned His people in advance against them. Thus inspiration is intensely empha-

sized by this foreknowledge, and God's opposition to that which attacked the inspiration is at the same time made abundantly clear. So is it with regard to the contexts of passages as the one before us. If we find that the thought of a believer losing salvation is specially guarded against by the Holy Spirit, it is fairly clear that the Holy Spirit not only foreknew how some would read the passage, but in wondrous love there has been arranged a correct explanation in the very context itself. We feel, therefore, beloved friends, the joy of never dislocating a verse from its context. It is a great mistake to read the Scripture in a haphazard careless manner. So many dear children of God take out a promise away from its context and lose its force. They say "My God shall supply all your need". That was a promise to those who were devoted and giving liberally unto the Lord. They say "LO, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age", but the promise of the realized presence of the Lord Jesus is introduced by the word "And", associated with love's obedience. Likewise many other promises must be read more carefully in their context. So HEBREWS 10:26-29 HAS A CONTEXT. We go back and we find that the opening of the passage concerns the shadow of the law, the remembrance again of sins every year, the unavailability of the blood of bulls and goats of Israel's Day of Atonement, and the contrast of the One Who did not bring burnt offerings and sacrifices, did not bring sacrifice and offering, but contrarily OFFERING first and sacrifice, showing that He was perfectly able to present offering in life before He brought sacrifice in death. This precious, glorious Lord, even our Lord Jesus, has ESTABLISHED the "second" and new covenant, to quote from verse 9, and redeemed ones have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. The standing priests without an oath who died, are contrasted with the One Who after a unique sacrifice sat down, and the added statement is given "From henceforth expecting" (mark the word) "till His enemies be made His footstool, FOR - FOR by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are being sanctified". In other words, there is no further offering, therefore He

EXPECTS the enemies to be a footstool, FOR the sum total of redemption is done. With the types it was otherwise. David had no sacrifice for HIS sin under law. "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it". The law provided nothing for adultery and murder, but there was a sacrifice beyond this, and therefore he prayed "Make a sin offering for me, and I shall be clean". "Purge me with hyssop" contains the word for "sin offering". The contrite king pleaded with God to make what the type did not allow. Ah, the Antitype excelled, but there is nothing to excel the Antitype. Hence Christ EXPECTS His enemies to be made His footstool, FOR there is no further sacrifice, FOR by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are set apart, whereof the Holy Ghost also is a Witness to us. May I note in passing we do not read "The Holy Ghost WAS a witness", but IS A WITNESS, and is a witness TO US. The Old Testament is a living, present book in which the Holy Spirit keeps on witnessing. The Holy Spirit speaks through that Old Testament to US in the present dispensation.

Next we find the quotation from Jeremiah 31, regarding the new covenant, and the giving of the law into the hearts, and in the mind the writing of them. Then comes the striking statement, "Their sins and their iniquities will I in no wise remember any more". I have put the stronger term because it is the double negative, signifying "I will not remember, it is impossible that I should remember". It denies the supposition as well as the fact. It has been pointed out years ago that wherever this double negative is used by a man, he afterwards breaks his word. Peter says, "I will not", but breaks his word. But wherever the Lord uses this double negative, denying possibility as well as fact, He always keeps His word. Hence we have the Divine statement "Their sins and their iniquities will I in no wise remember any more", but where there is forgiveness of these, the SENDING AWAY of these (I prefer the literal rendering, it gives the force), - where there is the sending AWAY of these, there is no longer an "offering". The word "offering" means "a bringing TOWARD" concerning the sins. How could there be if they have been

sent AWAY? how could there be "a bringing toward", and another sacrifice to deal with them if they have been sent away? Legally our sins have no position before God's throne. I am not now dealing with the sins of believers, the sins of a child before the Father and His fatherly forgiveness, but the legal position that deserves wrath has been dealt with, and they are sent away. Sending away there cannot be again the bringing toward of a sacrifice, for that would deny the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ! I need hardly say that Romanism stands convicted in this connection. It is a most serious attack on the Divine teaching of the finished work of Christ.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the way in that belongs to the saints" - the very word used for "the holiest" is the word for "the saints". The way that belongs to the saints is always the way of the holiest. "In the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh". Through the veil - here is a wondrous thought, - not outside the veil, but through the veil into the very holiest. Without His death this could not take place. The veil of the temple was THEN rent in twain, and we have boldness to enter into the holiest through the veil:- that is the precious aspect here. The word "boldness" denotes literally "All speaking" and involves the opposite of "That every mouth might be stopped"; the opposite, moreover, of "He was speechless". It is the word used in 1 John 4 "That we may have BOLDNESS in the day of judgment", and again, "This is the confidence that we have in Him". Moreover, we find in Hebrews 3 the ~~the~~ boldness of God's people when they hold fast the confidence unto the end, their mouth is opened, and as David said it would be "O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise". Thus, when God makes a sin-offering He graciously enables the open mouth to praise His name for a finished work. Every man who trusts in himself is silenced, but if the Lord opens the lips we have boldness to enter into the holiest. Here then is access and the privilege of drawing near.

Having this, says the writer, let us draw near. You will observe that Scripture again and again reminds us to be what we are, and to possess what we do possess, "That ye may BE a new lump, even as ye ARE unleavened", "To those who, by reason of 'HAVING' (lit.), HAVE their senses exercised to discern good and evil". So in the future the children of Israel will possess their possessions (Obadiah 17). Having, therefore, the way in, let us take advantage of our privilege. Having the fact, let us seek, by grace, the experience in the Holy Spirit. We have a newly slain and living way. We have the way through the finished work of the Lord Jesus. The veil pictures His flesh. Col. 2 is equally true that it pictures the law, but this is no contrast, for as the new covenant contains laws written on our heart, He had the law in the midst of Him. The tables of stone were to be inside the ark, and that which pictured the Law pictured Christ, even as there are four books of the law given, - Exodus to Deuteronomy, and four books of the perfectly obedient One - Matthew to John. He completely obeyed God's will. And the same symbol is used for the law of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, just as the same word is used for the sacrifice for sin and the punishment for sin. In His life He was complete obedience. He was not only One Who wrought much, but He WAS obedience throughout, and in His death He was not only One Who bore certain punishment, but Who as Substitute became identified, and the very word \times for the punishment of sin is used for the sacrifice that took the punishment. So complete is HIS life-work, so complete is His death-work. Therefore the way is now living, for if in His life He obeyed, in His death He obeyed, In His resurrection believers are joined with Him; but till the Corn of Wheat fell into the ground and died it abode alone, and there is no way into the Holiest, the unrent veil shuts us out, but the rent veil brings us in on resurrection ground \times in Christ Jesus. By virtue of His death we have boldness, that we may enter through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. But it is important we should come near with a TRUE heart, in FULL ASSURANCE of faith. We have the right position in Christ if redeemed, but we need the

right condition in the Spirit. A true heart a full-bearing along of faith. The word seems to suggest the power of the wind in the sails to carry the ship along, and the work of the Spirit of God is likened to a full bearing along.

Tis the breath of the Holy Spirit that causes and uses and supplies power to ^{faith.} and our bodies

"Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water". Here then we have brought before us an inner and true work. The heart is sprinkled from an evil CONSCIENCE, with respect to the fact that there is no more conscience of sins. The blood has dealt with these, and every fear that doubts the power of the blood to put away sin is a slur on the work of Christ; but the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience is not a sufficient preparation. The body outwardly washed. If our position is right, our condition needs to be right as well. A priest might be hindered awhile from drawing near, and a saint may be unable to pray. The body tells of the walk. The body washed with pure water. Without the altar I cannot reach the laver. Without the laver I cannot come to the tabernacle. The laver before the altar would be a mistake, but the altar does not make the laver unnecessary. The laver was placed because of the altar for those who have passed the altar and who know the preciousness of the altar. Our body is washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of the hope (not the profession of the faith, but this time, the confession of the hope, for here we have faith, love, and hope - all three). The confession of the hope, the hope of a complete salvation, since we look for a Saviour Who shall change this body of our humiliation. We were saved by hope. We have the EARNEST of the Spirit, not by hope but as a reality, but we WAIT FOR the redemption of the body, and in THAT sense are saved by HOPE; Let us hold fast the confession of the hope. We have been sprinkled as to the hearts from an evil conscience. There is a FINISHED work whereby we are quickened, but the body, the soul, needs washing. We confess there is the dirt externally. "Having been washed, and having the result of this washing with the pure water, let us be those who draw near, holding fast the hope when our body SHALL be like unto His body of glory.

I have no doubt that the striking reference here is primarily to the first appointment of the priest. I have referred to the laver in constant use, and you will see the force of that in a moment. Yet the primary application of the perfect tense is "having been bathed as to the body". You will say that the laver was not for bathing. Granted. Let us follow out the Divine teaching. "He that hath been bathed" in John 13, needeth not save to WASH HIS FEET. But he does need such washing, and the priest having once been bathed and brought into priesthood now continueth to wash the feet whenever the laver is passed. Whether the service was Godward in the tabernacle, or manward at the altar, whenever he came to the laver it was not only to look at it, but to wash, and when ever we come to the water of the word, it is not only to read, to examine, analyze and enjoy, but to wash. The one who hath been bathed NEEDS to wash his feet. Hence though this passage alludes to the primary washing, it includes by taking up the words of the Lord Jesus, the necessity for the continued washings - the laver, as we have seen, and that reminds us our body is not yet glorified. Hence we hold fast the confession of the hope, and the looking for the time when our body shall serve sinlessly.

Having this condition of acceptance, by grace, let us draw near, says the apostle, and ~~not~~ holding fast the ~~the~~ confession of the hope, for He is faithful that promised; and we know He will not break His word, let us also consider one another. "Consider Him" says Hebrews 3. "Consider one another" Hebrews 10. The order is important. I have no doubt the present day use of the word "Consider" is helpful. You say to a child of God "Now be considerate". But I do not think, beloved friends, that is the primary aspect here. There are many Scriptures which urge us to courtesy, and the child of God must learn what sympathy means. The Lord sometimes allows us trials to learn sympathy. When the Lord Jesus Christ came into this earth, He particularly went through certain experiences that there might be not only the working out of a completeness, but the evidence of sympathy. How clear, therefore,

is the Divine thought, that if we are to be useful we must learn to sympathize, and that we must expect certain trials of which we may not know the reason, but God knows the reason. We have to meet others in similar trials, and unless we have gone through them, we cannot sympathize. But though that aspect is precious, "Let us consider one another" rather has the thought here of a fixed mind regarding one another. With a view to "provoking", let us keep our minds upon one another. We are looking forward for the coming of the Lord Jesus, but we keep our minds on one another. We are looking toward the blessednesses in Christ, but yet we are thinking of one another. Nor is this a difficulty. If we have boldness to enter into the holiest we understand something of the lesson of the cherubim. The cherubim's faces were toward one another, AND toward the mercy seat, as Ex. 25 shows. If we exalt Christ (the Mercy Seat), we shall think of one another. I know the aspect there is different. The aspect THERE is beholding one another's glory in Christ, and the saint who sees in his brother one accepted in the Beloved, a member of Christ, will find it very difficult to get angry with him. The primary aspect of a fellow believer is what he is in Christ, and if that is only kept to the front, we shall have a new view of what our brother is, we shall not be primarily concerned about his angles, but PRIMARILY about his relationship to his Lord, and when we wish to remove those ~~ang~~ angles we shall remove them for the sake of the Lord, and for his sake, and not because they scratch us. This is the important change of aspect which God has emphasized. The first view of saints is what they are in the Lord Jesus, but here we have the considering of one another with a view to provoking. The mind on others in order that there may be provoking. The water aspect suggests this. In the passage where the Lord said, "Love one another", He explained the "Love one another" as including many examples of "one another". "Ye ought to wash one another's feet". A gracious word of instruction. Here is the precious thought underlying Heb. 10. We learn more of the meaning of the provoking one another. Have you noticed how often the word "Love" is linked with, or

implied in connection with the "one another's" of the epistles? You do not often read "Love one another", but you read "Provoking to LOVE". The word "Love" is thus closely associated. Again you have such a passage as this "The law is fulfilled...Thou shalt love". "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the ~~law~~ law of Christ". Not a direct word about love in Gal 6:2, but very clearly implied. "Love one another" included. So you have "By love serve one another", not only a quotation "Love one another", but an explanation "By love serve". Love must work. Again "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" - "If ye bite and devour ONE ANOTHER". How solemn a contrast. All these passages imply that there is the REMEMBRANCE of the words of the Lord Jesus, and in the important thought that the epistles rarely say "Love one another", but they say, DO this to one another. Do that to one another in love; because "Love one another" could become a mere expression of the tongue, a mere catchword, a motto on the wall; and the Lord wants love to be "translated" and calls us to show what love really means. We are not simply to have love as a treasury note which we frame, but we are to change it into a number of shillings of different actions of service to the Lord, and spend them on our brethren. This is the important aspect of the Holy Spirit's analyzing of the "Love one another", dividing it into manifold forms of activity and fellowship. So it is here. "Consider one another" is part of "Love one another", to provoke to love and good works. To provoke to love seems to imply urging other brethren to love. None of us have a word to say against this. But it MAY be "With a view to a loving provocation", or "Consider one another with a view to your loving provocation of them", not only that you may make them love. If you are too much occupied with the thought that you want to make your brethren love, there is a little Pharisaism coming in. But "Consider one another with a view to your loving provocation of them". That seems part of the Divine aspect. If so, the good works intended will be your good works. With a view to the provocation which belongs to love and good works, namely your good works by grace. It is so easy to think

the passage signifies that WE ARE TO MAKE OTHER BRETHREN HAVE SOME GOOD WORKS. Pharisaism comes in before we are aware of it. The argument would appear to be primarily "Consider one another with a view to a LOVING AND GOOD-WORKS' provocation." Your urging of a brother must not be proud, nor only verbal; spend yourself for him. The tendency is to consider a brother closely, and the word does mean "Look at him very closely". Ah, but our first thought should not be "He has got an angle here, he has got another angle there". If we act thus we shall be occupied with all his defects. To prevent this, the Holy Spirit says, Consider him, not in order to see defects, but with a view to your provoking with your love and your good works toward ~~him~~ him. Just see where there is room to show your love. Examine the situation to see how much love you can spend upon him - consider him with a view to the pouring in of the love and good works' provocation. Now provocation is a deeply interesting word, because it is important ~~we~~ we should realize that love is not a soft, backboneless thing. It is not a sentimental fancy, it is a very definite, sharp, strong, firm and thorough characteristic. "With a view to a love and good works' provoking". Now if we provoke without love, everything will go wrong. But there must be a loving PROVOKING. "Iron SHARPENETH iron" is the allusion, for here we have the very word "provoking" which means "sharpening". "With a view to sharpening". Let us consider one another with a view to sharpening. Our very word "oxygen" comes from the same root, likewise the word "paroxysm". We have the thought of a very active love, in order to stir up, - as another Scripture words it. The apostle stirred up the minds of saints. Now you cannot stir up the mind of a saint without using some activity. Iron sharpens iron. If you wash the feet you MUST wash them. You say that is a truism. The dirt must be removed. But do it with love, and gird with the towel first. Remember that if there is a provoking, there is a provoking WITH LOVE. I do not know how you feel. I sometimes look back to certain arrangements of my school days, and I think how

very glad I am that I was made to do certain work; and sometimes I feel when we get older and we have no one to make us do some parts of learning, we lose very much spiritually, and we have many disappointments. To be stirred on and stirred up is deeply important. Well, if we are Scripturally right we should expect to provoke one another, to sharpen one another. The assembly is to be a godly HOME. In Deut. 6 the statement was given that the parents were to take the Scriptures and sharpen them on their children. "Thou shalt teach them diligently" is in the margin "Sharpen". The words of the wise are as goads, and the One Shepherd Who gives them expects their use. If you love your brother you will use some goads. But remember "Let us consider one another". Do not expect that you are to use all the goads, and if a brother uses one in reply to you, do not think he must be unloving. It is his love to realize that you need goads as well. There is no saint beyond the need for goads. This is, today, a new idea, - no an old idea, of the Lord's arrangements, which has almost dropped out in the present time. People want to be very independent. They say, We are not under law. We want to be very independent. We want to be led INDIVIDUALLY IN these matters. The Holy Spirit knows nothing of this license, nothing of this lawlessness. The thought comes into many a mind when practical points are pondered - "Oh you must not interfere". It is the very command the Holy Spirit urges us to interfere with love, if you call it so. PROVOKE with some goads. Remember your life is part of your brother's life. If I have a splinter in my hand, and the other hand is afraid to interfere, everything goes wrong. We are members one of another, and we should expect this mutual love. Obviously, if the hand says, You are not to interfere, there must be a festering sore. No rightminded child of God walking with God would want anything else but the holy "interference" of other saints. Anything otherwise is simply a reflection of that licentiousness which is preparing for the lawless one. The Holy Spirit has shown the tending of saints in a way that provides a holy provocation, and the saint who interferes with you in love is provoking you to more

devotedness and is a very loving saint. Do not say that your life is an individual matter between you and the Lord. If you are a member of other saints, to talk like that is to deny what your Lord said. The Lord has made a link, and many expressions of godliness as to being individually led by the Lord are a travesty of the Holy Spirit's precious teaching that where the Spirit of God works there is the unity of a body and the joining together of the members in that body. "Consider one another therefore with a view to the provoking linked with love and good works". Expect your brother will find out some faults in you. Do not be annoyed if he finds them out. Do not be annoyed if he mentions them. Rather be annoyed with yourself if you have them. Do not be annoyed with the brother trying to get the splinter out. But you say, He pains me so much and he does not always do it as well as he might. But that is not a reason why one should stop trying to get it out altogether. It may be the brother will do the work better next time, by God's grace, and God's blessing in practice, and you may have the privilege of a little trouble and difficulty that will help some other saint afterwards. Seek grace to remove the defects which hinder in our spiritual life, and welcome the help of others, even though painful. The provoking to love and good works is a seriously emphasized matter brought before us BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Then we have associated with this, as might be expected, the assembling of ourselves together, which must not be forsaken, as the manner of some is, but the ASSEMBLING is to be exhorted, and one another are to be exhorted. The italics may be ~~left~~ left out, or they may be implied from the context. It was the habit with some in the days of the epistle to the Hebrews to forsake the assembly, and so they lost this provoking; but they were encouraged thus to gather, that believers might be together, that iron might sharpen iron, and "SO MUCH THE MORE AS YE SEE THE DAY APPROACHING". When evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, do not say, We will only have more individual testimony, but say We will have more meeting together as ye see the day approaching. In the early church the saints met together every day, and the

idea that believers should only see one another once a ~~week~~ week, or once or twice a week, is a contrast with the Lord's own arrangements. We are meant to act together, and to be together so much the more as we see the day approaching. Then comes the striking, startling expression, "For if we sin wilfully". The "for" is linked on to the preceding verse. Provoke your brother. Why? Consider diligently lest any fail of the grace of God, - we read in another passage, - lest any root of bitterness spring up and thereby many be defiled. Take another passage. Exhort one another daily. Why? Lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Do you not see, beloved friends, how we need to revise all our ideas? Children of God when Scripturally gathered should take it for granted that if other saints see any defects in them, those other saints will point out these defects, and they should expect this instead of being irritated by it, because otherwise what is the danger? Surely one of the devil's great aims is to hinder believers from pointing out one another's defects, because in that way he can cause the DECEITFULNESS of sin. If children of God were perfectly frank, and pointed out defects there would not be backsliding in the same way. There would not be the deceitfulness of sin making such progress. Hence the "for" of this passage says, Let there be meeting together, let there be provoking one another, because if you meet together and provoke one another, there will be the Lord's preservation from the subtle dangers around. This is one of the Lord's safety valves for the keeping of His people. For if we sin wilfully, - more forcibly, if we are in a state of sinning wilfully - not an action, but a condition, is brought before us - after receiving the ^{FULL} KNOWLEDGE of the truth. ^{AS 1 TIM. 4.3} Contrast the words of 2 Thessalonians - "They received not the LOVE of the truth". There is no Scripture, of which I am aware, that we shall go on sinning wilfully after receiving the LOVE of the truth; but after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. Earlier in the passage we read "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more". Those words are in connection with "no more offering for sin". Verse 18 says, No

more offering for sin because they are entirely removed. Verse 25 gives the exact opposite - no more sacrifice for sin, to remove this sin, because they were in a state of sinning wilfully, - a state, be it observed. Compare the words of Mark 3. Sin against the Holy Spirit is called an eternal sin, a condition of sin. There remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment. Expectation. This is a quotation from verse 13. It is not primarily that the person is expecting, but that Christ is expecting. There remaineth no more a SACRIFICE for sins, but there ~~THE~~ DOES remain an expectation of judgment. CHRIST IS EXPECTING that His enemies will be made His footstool. Christ is not coming to die again, but He is coming to fulfil His expectation of punishing them. Consequently we have the contrast - a certain expectation of judgment is from Christ's standpoint, not fearful in the sense of the man being frightened. Some dear children of God Have been confused by this passage. They have said "I am in fear" - and they have thought that those who are in terror are waiting for this judgment, and that they have committed the unpardonable sin. But when one is truly fearful and terrified, there is the encouraging evidence of a contrite heart. The word here is not fearful in the sense of terrified, but terrible, - the terrible expectation of Christ, the terrifying expectation. The truth is solemn; God will yet terrify the sinner; there is no encouragement to the sinner, he is in a state of sin, and there is a terrible expectation. Christ's expectation to make His enemies His footstool is firm, - a terrifying expectation remains, for Christ is expecting to take up the reins of government, and what else is waiting? A zeal of fire about to devour the adversaries, not a looking for fiery zeal. Our English version suggests that it is an expectation of judgment and of fiery indignation, and I suppose nearly every child of God reads it thus "An expectation of judgment and OF fiery indignation", but that is not the point. The grammar will not bear it out. It is that the fiery zeal is waiting. Well that must be Christ's fiery zeal, that is Christ's jealousy; for we are told when He comes He will be jealous. Are we not re-

mind of other Scriptures, e.g. Isa. 59 and 63. When the day of vengeance is in His heart, He puts on zeal as a garment. God is jealous for His holy Name. The fiery jealousy waiteth, about to devour the adversaries. Here then is the Divine argument. Do not let your brother get cold, because if he gets cold, he is becoming like the unsaved, and you will begin to wonder if he is really saved at all, as Paul was afraid of the Galatians. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God, but exhort one another ^{daily} ... lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin", for those who are away from the Lord have a zeal of fire against them about to eat the adversaries. One Who despised Moses' law died without mercies. This is explained in Num. 15:30, He that sinned with a high hand presumptuously, the one who sinned thus died without mercy. "Of how much sorer punishment do you think he will be counted worthy who trod down the Son of God?" Now the apostle shows that the stepping stone to this was forsaking the assembly. In Heb. 6 it is just the same. There we read of those who kept on laying again the foundation, and when persecution came up apparently left the gatherings, and the Scriptures throughout speak very plainly of this danger. Let us be borne along to completeness, not laying again the foundation, again and again the foundation. Let us go FORWARD in the power of the Spirit; let us view those who tread down the Son of God as committing a sin parallel with the crucifying the Son of God afresh. They put Him to an open shame, and count as a common thing the blood of the covenant in which ^hHe was sanctified (this ^{HE}MAY be, in which the man was sanctified, as the ^{WHY}(apparently) engrafted was said to be in the vine,- or in which Christ was sanctified, according to the grammar. I have often taken these words to allude to the glorious work of the Lord Jesus, for He is marked out as set apart in the blood of the covenant.) If any have counted the blood of the covenant in which He was set apart, as a common thing, and outrageously treated the Spirit of grace, how awful their doom. Here we have exactly the reverse of Israel's condition in Zech. 12:10. "I will pour upon them the

Spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall mourn." The unweeping heart and bold heart against God are full of evil. The one who sins with a high hand presumptuously is in peril. "For we know Him That saith, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, said the Lord; and again, The Lord will judge His people". Vengeance to His adversaries, says Deut. 32. So we have that which will devour the ADVERSARIES. This is not a reference to those who are concerned, those who are troubled. Those who are anxious as to whether they have committed the unpardonable sin prove that they have not committed this sin. HERE have the position of those who are the adversaries in a state of wilful sin. Just as in Heb. 6 the inspired writer adds, "But beloved, we have been persuaded THE better things concerning you, and the things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak", so is it here. The passage appropriately CONTINUES "We are NOT of them that draw back to destruction, but of them that believe with a view to the preservation of soul". God by a warning keeps His own people to the path of truth, but if we would avoid getting near the way of danger, let us exhort one another in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore assemble with one another, and let us welcome loving rebuke in the Spirit, that we may live to the praise of the glory of God's grace, enjoying the privilege of an ever tender conscience, and an earnest desire to please the Lord promptly at all times.
