The Unpardonable Sin

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 There have been a number of inadequate explanations of the unpardonable sin. Some describe it simply as unbelief. Others describe it as unbelief persisted in till death. These and similar explanations do not explain why Scripture makes a point of saying that a certain kind of sin is unpardonable. Such explanations merely confuse the point by ignoring the special factors that set this sin apart from other sins. We can discover these factors by a careful look at the relevant Scriptures.

 Unbelief can be forgiven as shown by countless examples such as the woman at the well **(John 4)**, and a life of unbelief can be forgiven as shown by the thief on the cross **(Luke 23:39-43)**. The unpardonable sin, however, can not be forgiven in this world or the next.

 As Jesus said, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy [against] the [Holy] Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the [world] to come." **(Matthew 12:31-32)**.

 The parallel passage in Mark is similar: "28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: 29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: 30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." **(Mark 3:28-30)**.

 Luke also records a similar statement: "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven." **(Luke 12:10)**.

 Two questions arise from these passages: What is the unpardonable sin and how can it be recognized? The answer, in brief, is that the unpardonable sin is repudiation of God by someone to whom God clearly reveals himself. It can be recognized by the hostile attitude toward God that comes with it.

 These points need further exposition to ensure a full understanding. The first point is to notice that this one sin is described in several different ways in Scripture. Moses describes it as blaspheming the name of the LORD [Jehovah] -- or more literally, "the name": "And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, [and] all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name [of the LORD], shall be put to death." **(Leviticus 24:16)**

 The writer of Hebrews describes it as a falling away: "4 For [it is] impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put [him] to an open shame." **(Hebrews 6:4-6)**. This is a repudiation of God by an act, rather than by words as in the previous passages. It is further described by Hebrews as a willful return to sin by someone who knows the truth: "26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." **(Hebrews 10:26-27)**

 Verses **28-29** of that same chapter also make it clear that such a person despises holy things: "28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" **(Hebrews 10:28-29)**

 John says this, "16 If any man see his brother sin a sin [which is] not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. 17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. 18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. " **(1 John 5:16-18)**.

 Here John identifies the person who commits the unpardonable sin as one who does not keep himself from returning to a life of sin. Paul has something quite similar to say to Titus: "10 A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." **(Titus 3:10-11)**. Paul points out that this sin shows up as heresy -- specifically, persistent heresy.

 "Damnable heresies" is what Peter calls such things. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." **(2 Peter 2:1)**.

 The whole second chapter discusses such people and uncovers their motives in detail. Verse **2** says that these people bring "damnable heresies," or literally, "destructive sects," which cause some to speak evil of (literally, "blaspheme") the truth. Verse **3** speaks of their "covetousness." Verse **10** speaks of their "lust of uncleanness," their despising of government (i.e., of authorities in general), their "presumption" (daring), their "self-will," and again of their blasphemies. Verse **12** says that they are motivated by corruption rather than by understanding. They take pleasure in riot (indulgence) -- v. **13**. They are full of adultery (any kind of sexual sin); they cannot cease from sin (unceasing in sin); they allure others; and they are covetous -- v. **14**. They have forsaken the right (straight) way -- v. **15**. They are servants of corruption -- v. **19**. They get re-entangled in the world after escaping it -- v. **20**. They return like a dog or a sow to the uncleanness they left behind -- v. **22**.

 These descriptions remind us of the words of **Jude**. After describing some in much the same words as in 2 Peter 2, Jude mentions that some can be saved (verses **22-23**), implying that others cannot.

 A key point in all of these descriptions seems to be the degree of enlightenment. Even such a one as Paul who had great knowledge of the Scriptures but perverted it with great hatred and blasphemy apparently did not have the kind of enlightenment that these passages discuss -- at least not until his Damascus road experience. He says, "12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief. **(1 Timothy 1:12-13)**

 Paul's blasphemy, disobedience, and unbelief arose from ignorance. The blasphemy, disobedience, and unbelief of those who commit the unpardonable sin arises from their dedication to the lusts of the flesh and their own self-will which they value more than they value the truth.

 Paul was **not disobedient** to the extra measure of enlightenment he received **(Acts 26:19)**. Those who commit the unpardonable sin **are disobedient** to such enlightenment.

 The unpardonable sin, then, arises from a particularly pernicious form of unbelief. Its fruits are evident in strong opposition to God in doctrine and practice.

 With this basic overview we can now look in more detail at the various Scriptures that describe this sin.

 The first instance of blaspheming the Lord's name occurs in **Leviticus 24:10-23**. In this passage two men are fighting one another in the camp at Mt. Sinai about a year after crossing the Red Sea. One is a full blooded Israelite; the other has an Israeli mother and an Egyptian father.

 Verse **11** tells us that during this struggle the half-Egyptian "blasphemed and cursed," (5344 and 7043 -- \_\_\_ & \_\_\_).

 Strong's Notes:

 The first word, \_\_\_ (naqab, **naw-kab**), is defined by Strong as: "a prim. root; to **puncture**, lit. (to **perforate**, with more or less violence) or fig. (to **specify**, **designate**, **libel**): -- appoint, blaspheme, bore, curse, express, with holes, name, pierce, strike through."

 The second word, \_\_\_ (qalal, **kaw-lal**), is defined by Strong as: "a prim. root; to **be** (caus. **make**) **light**, lit. (**swift**, **small**, **sharp**, etc.) or fig. (**easy**, **trifling**, **vile**, etc.): -- abate, make bright, bring into contempt, (ac-) curse, despise, (be) ease (-y, -ier), (be a, make, make somewhat, move, seem a, set) light (-en, -er, -ly, -ly afflict, -ly esteem, thing), x slight [-ly]. be swift 9-er), (be, be more, make, re-) vile, whet."

 The two words convey the idea of piercing words and demeaning words respectively. Sharp anger and deep disrespect are behind them.

 The third commandment, given about a year before this event, says, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." (**Exodus 20:7**). At that time the LORD did not give a specific penalty for this offence. Here in Leviticus he specified that the penalty would be death.

 To take the LORD'S name in vain means to empty it of its significance or to treat it as something evil, as Strong shows in his lexicon. The LORD said he would not hold anyone who did this guiltless; or another possible translation is "unpunished."

 Notes from Strong's:

 7723 ℵ\_\_ shav **shawv**; or \_\_ shav, **shav**; from the same as 7722 in the sense of **desolating**; **evil** (as **destructive**), lit. (**ruin**) or mor. (espec. **guile**); fig. **idolatry** (as false, subj.), **uselessness** (as deceptive, obj.; also adv. in **vain**): --false (-ly), lie, lying, vain, vanity.

 7722 ℵ\_\_ show, **sho**; or (fem.) \_ℵ\_\_ showah, **sho-aw**; or \_ℵ\_ shoah, **sho-aw**; from an unused root mean. to **rush** over; a **tempest**; by impl. **devastation**: -- desolate (-ion), destroy, destruction, storm, wasteness.

 5352 \_\_\_ naqah **naw-kaw**'; a prim. root; to **be** (or **make**) **clean** (lit. or fig.); by impl. (in an adverse sense) to **be bare**, i.e. **extirpated**: -- acquit x at all, x altogether, be blameless, cleanse, (be) clear (-ing), cut off, be desolate, be free, be (hold) guiltless, be (hold) innocent, x by no means, be quit, be (leave) unpunished, x utterly, x wholly.

 The death penalty which the LORD prescribed for this sin was the same as the penalty for cursing one's parents -- **Ex 21:17; Lev 20:9**. The word "curse" is a translation of the same Hebrew word (7043 - \_\_\_ - qalal) in all three passages (Ex 21:17; Lev 20:9; Lev 24:11).

 In **Leviticus 24:17-21** a list of violations requiring the death penalty is given. It is a shortened version of the laws given in **Exodus 21:12-36** which were given in conjunction with the penalty for cursing one's parents. The clear implication is that cursing the LORD belongs in the same category of capitol crimes as cursing one's parents. It belongs in the same category as manslaughter (Ex 21:12-14) and other violent crimes.

 This connection is further strengthened by the use of the **lex talionis**, a Latin phrase meaning "the law of retaliation." This is the legal principle that the punishment should fit the crime. The punishment should not be less than the crime deserves, nor should it be more than the crime deserves. There should be parity (equality) between the crime and the punishment. The authorities cannot put a person to death, for example, for injuring another person. This principle is expressed in the Exodus 21 and Leviticus 24 passages as "eye for eye, tooth for tooth." This law not only establishes a just penalty for a given crime, it also limits the amount of revenge that can be exacted for a crime. The penalty that the judges are to give is always to be equal to, but never greater than the nature of the crime itself.

 Since the death penalty is prescribed for cursing God, the implication is that there is something in the very nature of cursing God that is worthy of the death penalty; there is a moral equivalent in it to murder or one of the other capitol crimes; therefore, the punishment fits the crime.

 The man's words revealed a deep contempt and hatred for God. They were cutting and belittling words -- words of rejection -- and that in spite of the continuing miraculous provision and love manifested to him and all the rest of the people there in the wilderness. He rejected God; God therefore rejected him.

 In the New Testament the term for such verbal rejection and repudiation of God is "blasphemy." It means to speak harmfully against the name or reputation of another.

 Strong's Notes:

 988 βλασφημια blasphemia, **blas-fay-me'-ah**; from 989; **vilification** (espec. against God): -- blasphemy, evil speaking, railing.

 987 βλασφημεω blasphemeo, **blas-fay-meh'-o**; from 989; to **vilify**; spec. to **vilify**; spec. to **speak impiously**: --(speak) blaspheme (-er, -mously, -my), defame, rail on, revile, speak evil.

 989 βλασφημoς blasphemos, **blas'-fay-mos**; from a der. of 984 and 5345; **scurrilous**, i.e. **calumnious** (against man), or (spec.) **impious** (against God): -- blasphemer (-mous), railing.

 984 βλαπτω blapto, **blap-to**; a prim. verb; prop. to **hinder**, i.e. (by impl.) to **injure**: -- hurt.

 5345 φημη pheme, **fay'-may**; from 5346; a **saying**, i.e. **rumor** ("fame"): -- fame.

 5346 φvμι phemi **fay-mee**'; prop. the same as the base of 5457 and 5316; to **show** or **make known** one's thoughts, i.e. **speak** or **say**: -- affirm, say. Comp 3004.

 5457 φως phos, **face**; from an obsol. φαω phao (to **shine** or make **manifest**, espec. by **rays**; comp. 5316, 5346); **luminousness** (in the widest application, nat. or artificial, abstr. or concr., lit. or fig.): -- fire, light.

 5316 φαιvω phaino, **fah'ee-no**; prol. for the base of 5457; to **lighten** (**shine**), i.e. **show** (trans. or intrans., lit. or fig.): -- appear, seem, be seen, shine, x think.

 3004 λεγω lego, **leg'-o**; a prim. verb; prop. to "lay" forth, i.e. (fig.) **relate** (in words [usually of systematic or set **discourse**; whereas 2036 and 5346 generally refer to an **individual** expression or speech respectively; while 4483 is prop. to **break silence** merely, and 2980 means an **extended** or random harangue]); by impl. to **mean**: -- ask, bid, boast, call, describe, give out, name, put forth, say (-ing, on), shew, speak, tell, utter.

 2036 επω epo, **ep'-o**; a prim. verb (used only in the def. past tense, the others being borrowed from 2046, 4483, and 5346); to **speak** or **say** (by word or writing): -- answer, bid, bring word, call, command, grant, say (on), speak, tell. Comp. 3004.

 4483 ρεω rheo, **hreh'-o**; for certain tenses of which a prol. form ερεω ereo, **er-eh'-o**, is used; and both as alt. for 2036; perh. akin (or ident.) with 4482 (through the idea of **pouring** forth); to **utter**, i.e. **speak** or **say**: -- command, make, say, speak (of). Comp 3004.

 4482 ρεω rheo, **hreh'o**; a prim. verb: for some tenses of which a prol. form ρευω rheuo, **hryoo'-o**, is used; to **flow** ("run", as water): -- flow.

 2980 λαλεω laleo, **lal-eh'-o**; a prol. form of an otherwise obsol. verb; to,**talk**, i.e. **utter** words: -- preach, say, speak (after), talk, tell, utter. Comp. 3004.

 John D. Davis, in his Bible dictionary, defines blasphemy as "Defamatory or other wicked language directed against God." Webster's 1806 dictionary defines it as "a horrid indignity offered to God." It can also refer to such language used against someone or something else which is worthy of respect or reverence, such as parents or government officials, etc.

 Several examples can help us understand how blasphemy manifests itself. Sennacherib committed this sin during one of his raids into Israel. He claimed to be in league with Jehovah (2 Ki 18:25). He also claimed to be more powerful than Jehovah (18:33-35). For this blasphemy, the Lord destroyed his army and allowed his sons to kill him when he returned home (19:7, 35-37). The man of sin will do the same sort of things (2 Thes 2:3-4).

 The Israelites in the wilderness did this over and over, attributing evil motives to God (Ex 14:3,27-39), proclaiming a complete lack of faith in his power (Ps 78:19, 41), and using flattery and lies toward him (Ps 78:36).

 Idolatry and apostasy is a form of blasphemy (Ezekiel 20:27-32). The mockery of the soldiers who beat Jesus was a form of blasphemy (Luke 22:63-65). It is blasphemous to claim a special relationship with God while having a special relationship with Satan (Rev 2:9).

 In his comments on **Matthew 12:31-32** and the parallels in Mark 3:28-30 and Luke 12:10, Matthew Pool makes the following observations:

 "1. It cannot be any sin that is committed ignorantly. Paul was a blasphemer, but forgiven, because he did it ignorantly. 2. It must be a sin knowingly committed against the operations of the Holy Ghost. So was this sin of the Pharisees. 3. Apostasy must be an ingredient in it **If they fall away**, saith the apostle, Heb. 6:6. It is a sinning willfully after the receiving the knowledge of the truth, Heb. 10:26. 4. It should seem by this text persecution is an ingredient in it: the Pharisees did not only say this, but they spake it out of malice, designing to destroy Christ. 5. Most certain it is, that though impenitency cannot be called that sin, yet it must be an ingredient in it, for what sins we truly repent of shall be forgiven, 1 John 1:9; and therefore the apostle saith of such sinners, It is impossible they should be renewed by repentance. Upon the whole then, if any person hath been instructed in the things of God, and hath made a profession of religion and godliness, and afterwards falleth off from this profession, and becomes a bitter enemy to it; saying that those things are the effects of the devil in men, which his heart telleth him are the operations of the Holy Spirit, and be so hardy as to persecute and seek to destroy such persons for such profession: the interpretation be to those that hate us, and to the enemies of our God: if they have not committed this unpardonable sin, they have done what is very like it; and I know no way they have, but by a timely and hearty repentance to satisfy the world, or their own consciences, that they are not under this dreadful guilt. And that which confirms me in this opinion is, that we rarely hear of such persons renewed by repentance (if any instances of that nature at all can be produced)."

 Similar comments are put forth by the Universal Bible Dictionary: This judgment was probably pronounced against those who were "acute and well-informed, who were determined not to believe, and malignantly ascribed to Satanic power works which showed the presence of "the Spirit of God" (ver. 28)." Further, this was not so much a single act as it was "the result of a long course of wilful and malignant opposition to known truth." Also "That unpardonable sin is not confined to attributing Christ's miracles to Satanic agency (Comp. Heb 6:4-6); nor is it the only sin which ensures final destruction. ... its very nature is to destroy all fear of displeasing God, and anxiety respecting His favor, making men, like the Pharisees, either blind to their sin, or hardened in it."

 Calvin says, "For those who lack the light of the Spirit, much as they detract from His glory, are not held guilty of this crime. We do not hold that those who fight against His grace and power with determined malice are blaspheming the Spirit of God but we do hold that such sacrilege is committed only when we strive knowingly to extinguish the Spirit dwelling within us. And the reason why the Spirit, rather than the Son or the Father Himself, is said to be blasphemed is that, in deprecating God's grace and power, we are making a direct assault on the Spirit, from whom they proceed and in whom they are manifest to us. Does some unbeliever curse God? It is as if a blind man came into collision with a wall. But he is not cursing the Spirit unless he has been enlightened by Him and is aware of his ungodly rebellion."

 "The sin here spoken of by our Lord ranks high in the catalogue of **presumptuous sins**, for which there was no forgiveness under the Mosaic dispensation. See Num. 15:30,31; 35:31; Lev. 20:10; 1 Sam.2:25." (Clarke)

 "Grace, like bodily food, may be rejected until the power to receive it perishes." (Plummer, Luke, 321)

 [Both the Babylonian and the Jerusalem schools of the Jews believed that blasphemy against God could be wiped out at death, but not before. Christ contradicts this. - Clarke]

 "This audacity proceeds from a delirious blindness, in which, however, malice and poisonous frenzy predominate." (Calvin)

 "Whoever fall into it have been given a reprobate spirit. ... He hardens the hearts of the reprobate so that they never desire to repent." (Calvin)

 "To identify the Source of good with the impersonation of evil implies a moral disease for which the Incarnation itself provides no remedy" (Swete) - quoted by Plummer.

 "There is such a thing as opposition to Divine influence, so persistent and deliberate, because of constant preference of darkness to light, that repentance, and therefore forgiveness, becomes impossible. ... Against the dictates of reason and justice, they had deliberately treated as diabolical a work of the most surprising mercy and goodness." (Plummer)

 "The Jews spoke of the Messianic period as 'the world to come' (Heb. 2:5); it followed their own age, or 'this world.' " (W. F. Slater, CB)

 In his commentary on the parallel passage in Mark 3:28-30, S. D. F. Salmond says that this blasphemy "revealed a mind so set against light and so lost to conviction as to lack the first conditions of forgiveness."

 **Hath never forgiveness**. "An absolute negation" (S. D. F. Salmond)

 **Guilty of an eternal sin**. "An enduring sin carries an enduring punishment with it and in itself." (S. D. F. Salmond)

 **1 Timothy 1:12-13**. Pool says, " ... he [Paul] lived in Judea, where the gospel had been preached some years before he persecuted the professors; he might have heard the sermons preached, and seen the miracles wrought, by Christ and the apostles; but he was bred a Pharisee, and under the prejudices of that sect which were implacable enemies to Christ, this kept him in ignorance. Christ allows something for the prejudices of men's education. He did what he did also while he was in a state of **unbelief**. He believed one true and living God, (all the Jews did so,) and worshipped him according to the Jewish manner, yet styles himself an unbeliever. ... the gospel peremptorily excludes from pardon all that sin against the Holy Ghost, such who, being enlightened by the knowledge of the saving truth, yet for carnal reasons deliberately and maliciously oppose it ..."

 **Titus 3:10-11 Such a one is subverted**. "The metaphor is taken from a building which is not merely destroyed in some part, but completely demolished so that there is no chance of its being repaired." (Calvin)

 **Hebrews 6:4-6**. **Once**. "The addition of απαξ [hapax] (**once for all**) marks the completeness and sufficiency of the single act." (Westcott)

 1. "**The foundation and root of the unpardonable sin is, opposition to the Gospel of Jesus Christ**." (Joseph Augustus Seiss, 154)

 "Opposition to Christ was the essential feature of the sin there [Matthew] denounced." (Seiss, 154)

 "The apostle in the 10th of Hebrews characterizes the unpardonable sin, as a willful sin against the truth. This of course implies opposition to the Gospel. And in the text he designates it as apostasy from the Christian faith, which of course also implies opposition to the Gospel." (Seiss, 154)

 2. "That opposition to the Gospel which is unpardonable, and which constitutes the fatal deed spoken of in the text, is **opposition to the Gospel against the clear convictions of conscience**." (Seiss, 155)

 "To be enlightened , is to be acquainted with duty -- to know the truth." (Seiss, 156)

 3. "It is not only opposition against the clear convictions of conscience; but it is **resolved** opposition of this sort **at a particular crisis in the history of the individual** -- at a time when the motives and influences for acceptance of, or perseverance in the Christian faith have reached their highest possible extent, and when a decision in the opposition would place him in such a state and such circumstances as must forever preclude the return of such seasons, privileges and influences." (Seiss, 157)

 "Experience [referring to enlightenment, tasting, & partaking] is the most conclusive of all testimony. By the processes of logical induction we may be led to reliable conclusions; by mathematical demonstration our minds may be compelled to give assent to certain propositions. -- But the experience of a truth clothes it with a controlling power which it does not otherwise exert upon us. This advantage was theirs." (Seiss, 160)

 4. "The sin is **one** act; but it is an act for which no one is competent who has not had some previous drilling in the art of opposition. ... [Afterward] He cannot repent. He cannot even wish to repent. He is lost, and he does not know it." (Seiss, 162)

 5. [Can this sin be committed now? Yes!] "We have evidences equal if not superior to those against which the Pharisees sinned. They had the evidence of miracles, we have the accumulated evidence of centuries." (Seiss, 163)

 Pool believes that the **enlightened** referred to in this verse may mean those who were baptized in the sense that such were instructed in gospel truth. [Westcott adds that this phrase was commonly applied to baptism from the time of Justin (A.D. 100? - 165?) on.]  **"Tasting the heavenly gift**" he believes refers to "an apprehension and reception by it, and but merely such, and no more; a taste, and not a digestion, of Christ and his benefits as revealed to them in the gospel, John 4:39-40, followed with the superficial relishes of their joy and peace on their temporarily believing in them, as it was with the stony ground, Matt. 13:20. A sinner enlightened so as to see Christ and the glorious promises made to believers in him, it being agreeable to his natural principles, and being not much humbled, runs away with them with joy, having good desires and affections, but a stony heart still: such was Herod, Mark 6:20."

 **And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost**; not by an inhabitation of his person in them, but by his operations in them, whereby he is trying how far a natural man may be raised, and not have his nature changed: as is evident in Socrates, who died for owning the unity of the Deity; and as the scribe near the kingdom of heaven, Mark 12:34. ... These did partake of from the Holy Ghost, the light of nature, of the law, of the gospel, with some spiritual power accompanying all these ..." (Pool)

 **And have tasted the good word of God**; "So as to relish comfort and sweetness in the doctrine and promises of the gospel through self-flattery; for these hearing of pardon of sin, and crediting it, are filled with joy by it ..." (Pool)

 [Clarke believes this is a metaphor for having a substantial knowledge of such things, as in the Scripture that says that "Christ tasted death for every man" - Heb 2:9]

 **And the powers of the world to come**. Pool believes that this refers both to the conviction of sin (as in Felix - Acts 24:25) and to the comforts of supposing oneself to be redeemed (as in Balaam -Numbers 23:10).

 **Fall away**. " 'And having fallen away' ... I have translated παπαπεσovτας in the **past** time, **have fallen away**, according to the true import of the word, as standing in connexion with the other aorists in the preceding verses." (Clarke)

 "The man who falls is the one who forsakes the Word of God, who extinguishes its light, who denies himself the taste of the heavenly gift, and who gives up partaking of the Spirit. This is complete renunciation of God." (Calvin)

 "A long continued inactivity leads almost always to a lethargy which is followed by mental alienation." (Calvin)

 "perfidiously revolting from all those supernatural workings of the Holy Ghost, whereby their natural spirit was elevated, but not changed, unto their old swinish and canine temper of spirit and course of life that they led before they professed themselves Christians, as 2 Pet. 2:18-22." (Pool).  **To renew them again unto repentance**. "They freely forsake their professed Christian state, and make shipwreck of all, Jude 4, 10, 16, 18, 19. ... they cannot renew and bring themselves to the same state they enjoyed, and from which they fell; nor can the Christian ministry do it by their exhortations or counsels, thunders or comforts; the offended, wronged Spirit withdraws, and will not assist or elevate theirs to act above nature again, Gen. 6:33; Isa.63:10; but leaves them justly to themselves, so as he will neither by himself, nor by others, suffer it to be done, having limited his power by his will in it. They shall neither have a new principle infused into them, nor their minds or hearts changed by him to repentance, because they have undervalued his lower operations and motions on their souls, revealing Christ to them through the gospel, and have by their sinful negligence not improved them to seek from him the better and higher ones which he mentions, ver. 9,10, and were to be effected by the exceeding greatness of his power." (Pool)

 **Crucify ... afresh**. "by this their apostasy they look on him as an impostor and deceiver, as 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 4, and they deny him to be a Saviour to them, rejecting his sacrifice, and would, as much as in them lieth, dethrone him, and, if he were within their reach, would crucify him again, and tread him under their feet, as chap. 10:29, and actually do it to him in his members ..." (Pool)

 **Put him to an open shame**. "These apostates verbally and practically blaspheme and disgrace him; in their esteem vilifying him, and by their apostasy put him to an open and public ignominy, and make him a spectacle of the vilest reproach, as if they could find no good in him, and therefore renounce him; and this to the condemning and destroying of themselves, since they cannot repent ... " (Pool)

 **Hebrews 10:26-27**

 **26. Sin willfully**. "To reject Christ, and to refuse obedience to his religion is to declare sin preferable to holiness -- this world more desirable than heaven -- Satan a better master than Jehovah, to make Christ and all his apostles liars and impostors, and to fly daringly into the very face of Deity with the puny arm of insult and rebellion. All this the impenitent not only do, but do it as a measure of calm deliberation." (Seiss, 294)

 "Internal proofs, external evidences, and collateral facts; prophecies, miracles, and experience, all enter into the into the grand demonstration that religion is true. And a secret conviction in the heart of the veriest infidel concedes the same. Reason and conscience combine to make the obligations of Christianity clear and indisputable." (Seiss, 294)

 **26. No more sacrifice for sins**. "... the sacrifice of Christ, which only could do it, they renounce and desert " (Pool)

 "God has no more sons to die, and his mercy has no other outlet." (Seiss)

 "It [the soul] was created to rise in expansion, and power, and glory to all eternity -- to be the associate of angelic orders -- and towering in grandeur amid the spirits that burn before the throne of God, to be the immortal representative of his creative energy and redeeming love. ... [Yet the one who rejects Christ] "would drag it down from its sublime and lofty walks, ulcerate and deform it, and bury it up in the fiery tomb of an endless hell." (Seiss, 296)

 **27. Fearful looking**. "Fearful, because he is a God of infinite power. ... Again, he is infinite in justice. ... Again, he is a God of eternal immutability." (Seiss, 299)

 "He means by this the torture of a bad conscience which is felt by the ungodly who not only have no taste of grace but once they have tasted it know that they have lost it for ever by their own fault. ... This brings them to struggle rebelliously against God since they cannot bear a Judge so severe." (Calvin)

 **27. Fiery indignation**. "wrath of fire proceeding from an injured and wronged God, Ezek. 36:5; 38:19;Zeph. 1:18; 3:8." (Pool)

 **28. Died without mercy**. [Numb 15:30 - Clarke]

 "1st. Because he sins against greater light. ... 2nd. He tramples under foot far richer blood. ... 3rd. ... He sins against a greater personage. ...4th. He sins also against the Holy Spirit." (Seiss, 298-299)

 **29. Trodden under foot ... counted unholy ... done despite**. "There is a triple indictment. The manifestation of the apostasy of the offender is described under three distinct aspects, as an act ... as an opinion ... as a personal and willful assault ... His conduct shows that he has already abandoned his faith, and that too after he had made trial of its blessings. His decision, expressed in deed, is regarded as complete and final." (Westcott)

 "The language used suggests the open repudiation of the baptismal confession and covenant: 1 Cor. 13:3." (Westcott)

 **2 Peter 2:1-3, 10, 12-15, 19-20, 22**.

 **1. Privily bring in**. "the Greek word signifies either to bring in slyly and craftily, under specious pretenses, and without being observed, Gal 2:4; Jude 4.; or, to bring in over and above, or beside the doctrine of the gospel, which they did not renounce; or both may be implied." (Pool)

 **1. Damnable heresies**. "It would be better to translate **destructive heresies** than **damnable**." (Clarke)

 **1. That bought them**. "the words seem to be taken out of Deut. 32:6, **Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee?** as likewise from ver. 5 of that chapter." (Pool) [Clarke agrees & adds Ex 15:16]

 **19. Overcome**. "he alludes to the law of war, according to which, he that is overcome, and taken captive by his enemy, becomes his servant. These false teachers, that talked so much of Christian liberty, yet being overcome by their own lusts, and kept under by them, were the worst of slaves." (Pool)

 **20. Escaped**. "outward reformation of life, though it does not purify the heart." (Pool)

 **20. Pollutions of the world**. " These are called μιασματα, **miasmata**, things that **infect, pollute,** and **defile**. The word was anciently used, and is in use at the present day, to express those noxious particles or effluvia proceeding from persons infected with contagious and dangerous diseases;; or from dead and corrupt bodies, stagnant and putrid waters, marshes, &c., by which the sound and healthy may be infected and destroyed." (Clarke)

 "The world is here represented as one large putrid marsh, or corrupt body, sending off its destructive **miasmata** every where and in every direction, so that none can escape its contagion, and none can be healed of the great epidemic disease of sin, but by the mighty power and skill of God." (Clarke)

 **22. Dogs and Swine.** "beasts unclean by the law." (Pool)

 **1 John 5:16-18**.

 **16. Unto death**. "such as have apostatized from a former specious profession into heresy and debauchery, and continue obstinate therein, against all methods of recovery." (Pool)

 **18. Keepeth himself**. They "are furnished with a self-preserving principle." (Pool)

 **Jude 22-23**.

 **23**. **Pulling them out of the fire**. They "must be more harshly and severely dealt with, by setting the Lord's terrors before them, 2 Cor. 5:11, and inflicting church censures on them." (Pool)

 **23. Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh**. "There may be an allusion to a case of **leprosy**, for that infected the garments of the afflicted person, and these garments were capable of conveying the contagion to others." (Clarke)

 "It is an allusion to that ceremonial law, Lev. 15:4,17, where he that touched a defiled garment was himself defiled. The sense is either, 1. That where there is danger of infection from heretics and obstinate sinners, all converse with them, and any thing whereby the contagion of their doctrine or manners may reach us, is to be avoided: or, 2. That when we reprehend others, we should do it with suitable affections, and though we would save themselves, we should hate their vices, and any thing that promotes them or savors of them." (Pool)