and dispositions. The indefiniteness makes  
the declaration more awful) **fearful** (objective,—tremendous,   
not timid: fearful  
to think of, frightful) **reception** (i.e. *meed*,  
*doom*: not, as I believe universally interpreted   
without remark, *expectation*.  
The word used (*ecdocké*) appears never to  
have this sense, and this is the only place  
where it occurs in the New Test. All  
which *remains* is, the reception of the  
doom of judgment, and the *fiery indignation*, &c.)   
**of judgment** (i.e. by the *context*,  
unfavourable judgment), **and fervour of  
fire** (so literally. In an English version  
we cannot give it well, except by paraphrasing,   
as in the text: the stress is on  
**fire**, and *fire* is personified. It is the  
fire of God’s presence, identified with  
Himself exactly as in ch. xii, 29: and  
it is the zeal, the fervour, the excandescence   
of this consuming fire, which  
awaits the apostate from Christ), **which**  
**shall** (in using this future, the Writer  
transfers himself again to the present  
time: as if he had said, ‘the fire which is  
destined to...’) **devour** (and therefore  
finally and entirely) **the adversaries.**

**28, 29**] *Argument from the less to the  
greater, to shew how grievous will be the  
punishment of the apostate from Christ.*There is a very similar inference in ch. ii.  
2, 3; xii, 25. {28} **Any one having set at  
nought the law of Moses** (we must not  
take this as a general assertion, as true of  
whoever in any way broke the Mosaic  
law: but as an alleging of a well-known  
fact, that in certain cases a breaker of  
that law was subject to the penalty following.   
The form of the sentence might  
be changed thus, “If Moses’ law could  
attach to violations of it the inexorable  
doom of death,” &c. The reference is  
especially to Deut. xvii. 2–7, where the  
punishment of death is attached to the  
same sin as is here in question, viz.  
apostasy: see ver. 3) **dies** (the normal  
present) **without benefit of** (apart from:  
not implying that no one felt compassion  
for him, but that such compassion, be it  
what it might, could not affect his doom)  
**mercies** (so literally: the merciful feelings   
of any who might be interested for  
him) **before two or three witnesses** (the  
allusion is to Deut. as above, where it is  
thus prescribed): {29} **of how much worse  
punishment, think ye** (an appeal to the  
judgment of the readers themselves),  
**shall he be found worthy** (i.e. by God),  
**who trampled under foot** (the verb is in  
the past tense, as spoken at that day, and  
looking back upon this life. By “trampling  
under foot” is meant that flagrant contempt   
which those shew who deliberately  
abandon the Lord and His precepts. Stier  
remarks: Some of us remember the cry,  
“Ecrasez l’infame!”) **the Son of God** (the  
higher title of the Mediator of the new  
covenant is used, to heighten the enormity  
of the crime), **and accounted common  
the blood of the covenant** (being the  
“*precious blood*” of Christ Himself, far  
above all blood of sprinkling under’ the  
old covenant. Even that [Lev. xvi. 19]  
had hallowing power: how much more  
this. But the apostate “*accounted common*”   
this blood—deemed it mere ordinary  
blood of a common man, and if so, consented   
to its shedding, for then Christ  
deserved to die as a blasphemer. And  
this, of that holy Blood, by which we have  
access to God! So that we have quite  
enough for the solemn sense, by rendering  
the word literally *common*, without going  
to the further meaning, *unclean*. Compare  
Acts x. 28, where the two are distinguished.  
The old Syriac version has “hath counted  
the blood of the covenant of him by whom  
he hath been sanctified as that of every  
man.” The reader will recall our Lord’s  
own expression, “*the blood of the new*