

writes, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your foolish conduct received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. John tells us, "God is light," 1 Jno. i. 5; "God is love," 1 Jno. iv. 8; and says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 Jno. i. 7. At the opening of the last book of the Bible, we have an ascription of praise, "unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen," Rev. i. 5, 6.

That this doctrine of the blood, which pervades the entire Bible, is not natural, nor agreeable to men, is shown by the fact that it is utterly rejected by vast numbers of professing Christians. There is no desire now to defend the doctrine, but only to refer to the multitudes, claiming to believe the Bible, who scoff at one of its most plainly revealed truths as a proof that the Bible is not of or from men. The corruptions of Christianity have always been along the line of natural inclinations, demonstrating that the requirements of the Bible are opposed to these natural inclinations. Look at the savage persecutions of dissenting Christians by the Church itself, the bitterness and envy and rivalry of ecclesiastical factions, the refusal to recognize the rights of conscience, the demand for union between the Church and State, the persistent prying into unseemly things, all so natural, and all so contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and then let the impartial skeptic decide, if he can, that the Bible has not a supernatural origin.

THE ANGELS MESSAGE "FEAR NOT."

BY PASTOR A. J. GORDEN D. D.

WHEN God especially visits his people his first work is to allay their alarm. Is it not deplorable that it should be so, and that even good news from heaven should always frighten us?

The Lord sent his salutation to Mary, "Hail thou highly favored of the Lord; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." And Mary was troubled; and the angel had to say, "*Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favor with God.*"

When good old Zacharias, who had known the Lord for a score of years had a message from him, he was troubled and fear came upon him, and the angel said to him, "*Fear not Zacharias, thy prayer is heard,*" etc.

When the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem were visited, they were sore afraid, and the angel had to say to them first, "*Fear not,*" before he could add, "for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

When, after a few years the angel of the Lord stands at Christ's sepulchre to announce the resurrection, the disciples fled to their friends in alarm, and again the angel had to say, "*Fear not,* he is not here; He is risen."

After his ascension, when the glorified Lord appeared to John in Patmos, John says that he fell at his feet as one dead, and the Lord laid his hands on him and said, "Fear not."

I wish the children of men were half as afraid of the devil as they are of the Lord. He manifests himself in all his subtle arts of worldliness and pride, and fashion and unbelief. He sends his bad angels to us to tempt us with all "deceivableness of unrighteousness," and we do not get greatly alarmed.

But when an angel comes down at a certain season to trouble the waters of our stagnant spiritual life, that whosoever then first steps in may be healed, we are afraid that some dead propriety is going to be disturbed, or that some venerable tradition is going to be jostled, and great fear falls upon the church.

"We search the world for truth, we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower fields of the soul;
And weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said,
Is in the book our mothers read."