

they see, and your ears for they
hear: for verily I say unto you
y. many Prophets and righteous
men, have desired to see y. Things
w. ye see, and have not seen them
and to hear the Things w. ye
hear and have not heard them.
These Prophets desiring to see the
Things w. y. Gospel reveals simply
that they had only some general
imperfect Knowledge of them;
and yet not sufficient to satisfy their
pious Curiosity; tho sufficient for
the Salvation of their souls; as we
are told by St. Paul, that these all
died in the Faith; not having
received the Promises, i.e. the Accom-
plishment of them, but having seen
them at a distant Period they were
persuaded of them; and embraced y.
and confessed y. they were Pilgrims
and Strangers upon Earth —

It is obvious from what St. Peter says
that if Prophets did not always
understand their own Prophecies
fully and clearly: but enquired & searched
diligently & diligently concerning
Salvation & Grace, now brought
unto us; searching what, or what
manner of Time of Spirit of X.^t
w^h was in y^e did signify, when it
testified beforehand of the sufferings
of X.^t and of Glory that sh^d follow:
Unto whom it was revealed, if not
unto themselves, but unto us they
did minister the Things w^h are
now reported unto you, it is
holy Ghost sent down from Heaven
w^h Things of Angels desire to look
into -

But when the Fulness of Time
was come, y^e removed the veil
w^h had obscured the Prophecies,
and sent his Son into the world

made of a woman, made under
the Law, that he might redeem
us from the Curse & Condemnation
of the Law - No sooner did the
Angels behold the S^r of Life & Glory,
the Root and Offspring of David
cloath himself in our Clays, become
an infant of Days for us men
for our salvation than they hastened
down to this rather veiled, to
publish the Tidings of his birth
to the Sons of men -

The long looked for, the long
expected Messiah at length makes
his Appearance below - His Advent
had been ardently wished for by
People of all Languages -
on Account of that general
Expectation which had been un-
iversally excited, he was stilled
the Desire of all nations -

Yet this favour did by no means
answer that expectation which
Mankind in general had previous^{ly}
conceived of him —

They looked for, and expected a
temporal King & Deliverer, who
sh^d. redeem them fr^m human
Calamities and Oppressions —

But Christ's Kingdom was
not of this world, and the Deliver-
ance wh^{ch} he was to work out
was ~~to~~ not to be a temporal
but a spiritual Deliverance —

This the Angel of G^d. informed
Joseph of his reputed Father;
~~that shall~~ Mary thy wife
said he, shall bear a son and thou
shalt call his Name Jesus, for
he shall save his People fr^m
their Sins —

The Angels, who are ministering ~~spirits~~
sent forth to minister unto such
the Heirs of Salvation, had been
employed in all Ages, as God's
M^{essengers}, to reveal and make
known his will and Purposes of
Grace to his Servants; are now sent
upon the most Delightful the
most important Errand to acquaint
us who were Enemies to G^d. If unto us
a Child is born, unto you a Son is given
according to ancient Prophecies —

One of these heavenly Messengers
makes his Appearance to some
~~Counting~~ ~~Shepherds~~

poor Shepherds as they were
keeping watch over their Flocks
by Night; and saluted them with
the words of our Text Fear,
not for behold I bring you good
Tidings &c &c

In treating of this subject -
I shall first endeavour
to show that the News of a Saviour's
Birth may with the greatest
propriety be called good Tidings
of great joy -

2^d Point out to whom these
Tidings will be Tidings of great
joy -

1. Then we are to show that
the ~~Tidings~~ News of a Saviour's Birth
may with greatest propriety
be called Tidings of great Joy -
God had permitted all nations to
walk in their own ways for
the space of nearly 4000 years
the Jews excepted - No other people
were favoured with the light of
Divine Revelation - but from no
other Idea of the Supreme Being
than what might be learnt from

the works of Creation - but now
since the Saviour is come the partition
wall is to be entirely taken away ~~between~~
between Jew & Gentile and the Gentiles,
who till this period had been buried
in Ignorance Superstition & Idolatry
are now to be made Fellow Heirs
to the Jews of all the Privileges of the
Gospel - ~~before~~ At the time when
X^p was born the Jews themselves
appear to have had little true
Religion amongst them notwithstanding
their ~~superior~~ superior Advantages -
They seem to have had little Faith
little Piety, little Holiness - but
on the contrary there remained
little amongst them but false
Traditions, horrible Depravations
and immoralities of every Species -
There reigned Pharisaic Hypocrisy,
the Ambition of Priests, the

Impiety of the Sadducees - The
meaning of the moral Law was
darkened and perverted. They had
arrived at such a pitch of wickedness
that they studied and endeavoured to
make the Commandments of G.^d
of none Effect by their ^{various} Inventions.
Religion had lost all its power
and Efficacy amongst them.
The holy Temple where the
Glory of G.^d was formerly wont
to reside, was profaned with
suggers and sellers -
yet in such a profligate Age, in
an Age so worthy of the Abhor-
rence of G.^d he remembered his
Promises ^{which} he had made to
our forefathers, Abraham Isaac
and Jacob, and sent his beloved
Son into the world precisely
at the time appointed by Prophecy

Surely the Tidings of his birth
contained matter of great joy
since he came to rectify these
horrid Abuses to point out to
mankind the way of Salvation
and to living life and immortality
to light up the Gospel -
When John the Baptist the fore-
runner of X.^t was born, the Morn-
ing Star arose; or as his Father
Zacharias expresses it, the Day ^{Spring} ~~Star~~
for an high visited us -
Jesus is the Sun of Righteous-
ness, the light of the world.
A light to lighten the Gentiles &
the Glory of his People Israel -
when he made his Appearance
in the world, then we are told
by St. Matt. the people that sat
in darkness saw great light

and to them who sat in the
Region and Shadow of Death,
Light-Spring up —

Thousands and tens of Thousands
who had been and were at that
very time worshipping Idols
of wood and stone, were to have
in consequence of the birth
of X.^t to have their minds
divinely illuminated, and were
to be turned from the worship
of dumb Idols, to serve the true
and living G.^d — He came also
to deliver many, who thro
fear of Death, had been all
their life time subject to
bondage —

The wisest Philosophers and
of Greece and Rome co. not
at all their unworldly wisdom
and Sophistry satisfy their

own Doubts, respecting Futurity,
or obtain any solid comfort or
Assurance of a blessed immortality.
The Son of G.^d came to give mankind
the fullest and clearest Conviction
of the Reality of things invisible
to satisfy all their Doubts, and to
remove at least from a good man's
mind all awful Apprehensions
respecting the world to come.
Surely then his birth contained
matter of great joy —

This Infant of Jesus X.^t Entrance
into the world was not to be
partial, confined to any one
single nation or people, but
universal. ~~The~~ He was for
Salvation to the Ends of the
Earth. — The Psalmist speaking
of X.^t says — All Kings shall
fall down before him, all
Nation shall serve him

For he shall deliver the needy
when he crieth the poor also
and him that hath no Helper.
His Name shall endure for
ever: his name shall be continued
as long as the sun: and men
shall be blessed in him: all
nations shall call him blessed:
and blessed be his glorious name
for ever: and let the whole
Earth be filled with his glory,
Amen, and Amen —

Thus we see that all Nations
were to be made Partakers
of the benefit of ^{his} birth: and
that radical Promise made
unto Abraham, was to be fulfilled
that in ~~him~~ his Seed all the
Nations of the Earth were to
be blessed —

well might the Heavenly Host
sing, when the babe, the Virgin's
Son, the promised Saviour, the
S. of Angels and men ^{was laid in the manger} glory to
gl. in the highest. Peace on Earth
good will, towards men —
Hear O Heavens and be astonished
O Earth at such love as this —
when he who speak the O
from nothing into Existence,
took upon him to deliver Man
he did not abhor the Virgin's
womb — God and Sinners are
now reconciled: the Kingdom
of Heaven, it were forever
bared against us on Account of
him, is now opened to all
believers. Peace is proclaimed
on Earth by an Host of Angels
sent from Heaven on this joyful
Errand —

in consequence of the birth of
X^t. such ~~guilty~~ sinful guilty
self-condemned criminals as
we are naturally may now
be reinstated in the Favor and
Love of our Sovereign; have
all our sins cancelled, and our
names written in the book of
Life - The Tidings then of
so glorious a birth cannot
but be Tidings of great joy -
Nay joy is the first Fruit
of X^t.s Birth into the world.
witness John the baptist
who being yet in his mothers
womb, leaped for joy at
the Approach of this divine
Infant - This joy is not to
one or two, to John baptist
or Elizabeth only, it is a public
general joy.

it shall be to all people, says if
Angel - w^h. brings us to the
second thing proposed, w^h. was
to point out to whom, these
Tidings of a Saviour's birth
will in reality be Tidings
of great joy -

This News is not an ordinary
or indifferent Report: but the
best that ever was published
either in Earth or Heaven -
~~And~~ Did the birth of X^t.
give joy to Angels, who are
not particularly interested in it,
and excited them to sing glory
to G. in the highest; certainly we
who are so nearly concerned
in so great an Event, ought to
be animated to the most holy
joy the moment these

So blinding, and so stupefying is
Sin & unbelief, w^{ch} prevail more
or less over the Heart and Conscience
of every man - We can hear our
own Wretchedness and misery
described: and what the Almighty
hath done to redeem us from a
State of misery, without
any Emotions of Fear or Joy -
So long as we continue in this
Situation the Tidings of a Saviour's
Birth will never be Good Tidings
of great joy to us.

It may be asked are there none
in the world then that will receive
this News with Pleasure and Delight -
I answer, blessed be G^d there are -
Some in all Ages have feared G^d
and wrought Righteousness: and have
looked for & expected Salvation from
his Son -

All of Prophets expected of Messiah,
who was to redeem us. And for that
Expectation derived all their Comfort
and Happiness with regard to a future
State - St. Paul informs us
Moses had an Eye to this Saviour,
and on Account of his Faith in him
he esteemed the Reproaches of X^t
greater Riches than all of Treasures
of Egypt - It was thro' Faith that
the Israelites subdued Kingdoms, wrought
obtained Promises: that they were
enabled to endure Trials of cruel
mockings, & scourgings, moreover
of bonds & Imprisonment -
The very Idea of G^d w^{ch} send them
a Spiritual Deliverer, w^{ch} they
collected from obscure Figures & dark
Representations was Life and Salvation
to their Souls -
In that very degenerate Age, when
when the Son of G^d actually made

his Portraiture here below, we are told
by St. Luke there were some righteous
before G. walking in all his Command-
ments and Ordinances blameless -

Zacharias the Father of John the Baptist
seems to have been filled with holy
Raptures of Joy & Triumph at
the View he had of the near Approach
of the birth of X. and break
forth with divine Transport in
the following Language -

Blessed be the G. of Israel for
he hath visited and redeemed his
People - And hath raised up an
Horn of Salvation for us in the
House of his Servant David: as he
spoke by the mouth of his holy
Prophets, w. have been since the
world began: that he w. save
us from our Enemies, and from the hand
of all that hate us -

Simeon also who the Character of a
just and devout man in Holy writ
who had been waiting for the consolation
of Israel - He took up the Child
Jesus in his Arms when brought
into the Temple; and blessed G. and
said: Lord now lettest thou thy
Servant depart in Peace, according
to thy word, for mine Eyes have
seen thy Salvation, w. thou hast
prepared before the Face of all People
to a Light to lighten the Gentiles, & the
Glory of thy People Israel -
Simeon had waited and expected
the messiah: and having
enjoyed the exceeding great pleasure
in seeing the Lord's X. He was
now willing to die - His greatest
wishes were fully accomplished -
His Soul was happy in the
Knowledge of X. as a Saviour -

and he now wished to be translated
fr. this present scene of wretchedness
and misery, into the presence of
G. where there is fulness of joy
and Pleasures for ever more.

Thus we see the Tidings of a
Saviours birth have been good
Tidings of great joy to all the
righteous of former Ages —

There are some few also in
our Day, who do and will
rejoice at a ~~fact~~ the birth of
X^t. These persons have been
awakened to a sense of their
sin & danger. Have seen
into the Spirituality of Gods
holy Law; and have felt of
Sentence of Death in themselves.
The full meaning of the moral
Law has been opened and
explained unto them by

Spirit of G. and in consequence
of breaking that Law, they see themselves
sunk under guilt and condemnation
without any means of their own
to free themselves fr. G. wrath of
an offended Deity — nothing can
administer so much Consolation
to persons labouring under such
convictions, as the News of a
Saviours birth. A Saviour ~~to~~
~~will~~ bear the punishment due
to all their sins. a Saviour, to
free them fr. a guilty Conscience,
to ~~and~~ the sense of the Law, to
redeem them fr. sin Death & Hell,
to reconcile them to G. to exalt
them to ~~eternal~~ glory, and to
crown ⁱⁿ y. with everlasting life
and immortality —

Such Persons are thankful
to G^d for so great a gift as his
Son, and can join it of Psalmist
and say! I give thanks unto the
Lord for he is good: for his mercy
endureth for ever—

Jesus is also precious to them
whom having not seen ye
love, says St. Peter, and in whom
tho^{now} ye see him not yet believing
ye ~~joy~~ ye rejoice with joy unspeakable
and full of glory—

~~We should all rejoice at this day~~
at a

The Tidings of a Saviours birth
will be good Tidings of great joy
to us all this Day, provided
we saw our sin and danger
and upon what Foundation
we stand for Eternity—

We are all condemned by the law
of G^d ^{for it is written} ~~because~~ cursed is everyone that
continueth not in all things written
in the book of the law to do
them— This Truth we are not
easily convinced of because it
militates against all our ^{sinful} worldly

Pleasures & Gratifications—
We shall never esteem a Saviour,
but he will always be ~~regard~~ despised
and rejected by us, till we see and
feel our absolute need of him.
that we must perish eternally
without him: then like

Saul of Tarsus, we shall begin
earnestly to inquire & what will
thou have me to do to be saved?
W^h holy Conviction may G^d
in his infinite mercy grant
unto us all for his Names sake