

He was introduced into the world by a convoy of angels who, returning, sung a song "then unsung. The heavenly cadences that reached the earth were "glory to God in the highest heaven, peace on earth, and good will to men." The infant Jesus was no doubt the Messiah. There was no mistake; there could be none. Prophets filled with God's own inspiration, had named his birth-place and carefully noted the circumstances and the time of his appearance centuries before. They had sketched, too, his very form and features, and recorded with historic accuracy the events of his eventful life. He answered to the prophecies. Besides, his life, discourses, and miracles are every way worthy the plenipotentiary of Heaven, and of themselves carry conviction to thoughtful minds that he was sent from God. The evidences of his Messiahship drawn from these sources, acquire a brighter lustre and a mightier strength as He approaches the goal on which salvation seems tremblingly suspended. But his death and the events connected with this most momentous event, at last, demonstrate the proposition on which the scale of redemption turns, and the mighty intelligences of the universe are relieved from their long suspense by the successful issue of an hour around which eternity revolves. The past points to it. The future unrolls from it. The events of no other hour are so intimately connected with the past and the future, with time and eternity, with God and men, with our deepest woes and our highest joys in this world and the world to come, as the mysterious events of that hour in which Jesus of Nazareth cried, "It is finished" and then yielded up his spirit. This was the hour and the power of darkness. Different and contrary purposes were accomplished by wicked men and the ever blessed God. Men thought to disprove his claims to the Messiahship by putting him to death. They succeeded in nailing him to the cross, and no doubt congratulated themselves on the success of their scheme. But ah! the blindness of men. For paradoxical as it may seem, their success was their failure, and their triumph their overthrow, for the accomplishment of their purposes was their frustration. He claimed to be God's Son. They thought by this slow murder to disprove his claims and prove him to be an imposter. But his death was the strongest proof of the truth of these claims. It accomplished the prophecies and fulfilled the types. They expected too, to maintain the honour and perpetuity of their law against him who they thought was about to destroy it; but by the very means of his death that law was abrogated. Till that moment its representative institutions had an efficacy but now it had accomplished its purpose and served to bring in a better hope, and then the shadowy dispensation fled away forever—Then the first will was taken away that the second might be established upon better promises. Mysterious and important hour! the central point in the dial plate of time. Four thousand years were not too long to prepare the universe for its development. Great was the responsibility resting upon the meek sufferer on the Roman cross, and He fully realized it. A thousand prophecies and a thousand types were to be fulfilled in order to the successful accomplishment of the mighty plan,—a single failure now and all is lost. All