

The Nativity of Jesus

(for a shorter piece, simply omit Quatrains I, II and IV)

- I** The Prince, the Priest, and Prophet Haggai led,
From exile in the Babylonian dread,
The Jews to Judah, freedom now restored,
And they had built a Temple to the Lord.
- II** Five hundred years have passed since that return,
The Second Temple priests and Levites spurn
Historic law and practices, for gain,
Collaborating with the Roman bane.
- III** Judaea is the name the Romans call
Our lands which tyrant Herod rules, in thrall.
The priests and Levites, they no longer care,
The general public are in dark despair.
- IV** No prince, no priest, no prophet, none to guide,
The holy path to God is now denied.
Zerubbabel would weep for Judah now,
And Joshua, the Temple disavow.
- V** Despair does not grip all the nation though,
The noble clans of Bethlehem all know
That here, in David's Royal Town, there dwells
A noble wife, and Mary's belly swells.

VI Her husband Joseph has a task divine,
As scion of the royal Davidic line,
The night that Mary bears a healthy son
He's named as Jesus, 'God is Salvation'.

VII For now, they can rejoice this glorious night.
Why, even starlight's glow seems bright tonight!
But then, he's hid for thirty years, a trice!
Until at priestly age there comes the Christ!

Copyright © 2022 Alan John Branford

Permission is given for free use of either the full poem or its official shorter version, provided attribution is given