A shepherd band their flocks are keeping

Michael Praetorius ?

1. A shepherd band their flocks are keeping, And gentle lambs are sweetly sleeping;

2. Glad tidings of great joy he bringeth, The azure vault with anthems ringeth; "Emmanuel" awakes the song, And countless hosts the glorious theme prolong.

3. "To you this day is born a Saviour, Your Prophet, Priest, and King for ever;" "All glory be to God," they cry; "All glory be to God," let earth reply.

4. "On earth be peace with mercy blending, Good-will to men, and love unending;" Thus sweetly sing the angel throng, And all the heavenly host rehearse the song.

5. Through field and wood the song resoundeth, O'er hill and vale the chorus boundeth; Exultingly the echoes roll, And hymns of triumph spread from pole to pole.

6. The shepherds view the host returning, Their hearts with holy ardour burning; To Bethlehem they wend their way, Repeating with glad tongues th'angelic lay.

7. In haste they seek the heavenly Stranger; They find the Babe laid in a manger; With wonder and with awe they fall, And joyfully adore Him, Lord of all!

8. Now every voice with rapture swelleth, For Christ the Lord with mortals dwelleth; Let men and angels Him adore, And shout their glad Hosannas evermore.

(Source: Carols old and carols new, Boston, 1916)

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