

A Shepherd Band Their Flocks

Anonymous.

Michael Praetorius, 1609.

A shepherd band their flocks are keeping,  
And gentle lambs are sweetly sleeping;  
When suddenly they all behold  
An angel in bright robes, with harp of gold.

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

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

"On earth be peace with mercy blending,  
Goodwill to men, and love unending";  
Thus sweetly sing the angel throng,  
And all the heav'nly host rehearse the song.

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.

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

In haste they seek the heav'nly stranger;  
They find the babe laid in a manger;  
With wonder and with awe they fall,  
And joyfully adore Him, Lord of all.

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