

117 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

1 While shep - herds watched their flocks by night, all
 2 "Fear not," said he, for might - y dread had
 3 "To you, in Da - vid's town this day, is
 4 "The heaven - ly babe you there shall find to

seat - ed on the ground, the an - gel of the
 seized their trou - bled mind: "Glad ti - dings of great
 born of Da - vid's line the Sav - ior, who is
 hu - man view dis - played, all hum - bly wrapped in

Lord came down, and glo - ry shone a - round.
 joy I bring to you and hu - man - kind.
 Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign:
 swath - ing bands, and in a man - ger laid."

- 5 Thus spoke the seraph, and forthwith
 appeared a shining throng
 of angels praising God, who thus
 addressed their joyful song:
- 6 "All glory be to God on high,
 and to the earth be peace;
 good will to all from highest heaven
 begin and never cease!"

This was one of the first metrical texts to deal with a New Testament narrative rather than paraphrase one of the Psalms. It is set here to a psalm tune that is more than a century older than the words, though the two were not firmly joined until the mid-19th century.