

WHILE shepherds watched their flocks  
by night,  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down,  
and glory shone around.

2 'Fear not!' said he, for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind;  
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
to you and all mankind.

3 'To you, in David's town, this day  
is born, of David's line,  
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
and this shall be the sign:

4 'The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,  
and in a manger laid.'

5 Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, and thus  
addressed their joyful song:

6 'All glory be to God on high,  
and to the earth be peace:  
goodwill henceforth from heaven to men  
begin and never cease.'

*Nahum Tate, 1652-1715*