

# The Shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?

Alistair Brown

For 3-part choir, with optional solos:  
Soprano, Alto and Baritone/All Men  
or  
Soprano, Tenor and Bass

Text from *Christmas* by George Herbert



The first verse and chorus may be sung by either  
3 soloists (1 per part), or by the full choir.

The remaining verses and choruses should be sung by the full choir.

Verse 1

*The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymne for thee?  
My soul's a shepherd too: a flock it feeds  
Of thoughts, and words, and deeds.  
The pasture is thy word; the streams, thy grace  
Enriching all this place.*

Chorus

*His beams shall cheer my breast, and both so twine,  
Till ev'n his beams sing, and my musick shine.*

Verse 2

*Shpeherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers  
Out-sing the day-light houres.  
Then we will chide the sunne for letting night  
Take up his place and right:  
We sing one common Lord; wherefore he should  
Himself the candle hold.*

Chorus

*(His beams...)*

Verse 3

*I will go searching, till I finde a sunne  
Shall stay, till we have done;  
A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly,  
As frost-nipt sunnes look sadly.  
Then we will sing, and shine all our own day,  
And one another pay:*

Chorus

*(His beams...)*

# The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?

(An excerpt from *Christmas*)

Text by George Herbert  
(1593-1633)

Music by Alistair Brown

**Molto Rubato; ♩=c.100**

Soprano

1. The shep-herds sing; and shall I si-lent be? \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Shep-herd and flock shall sing, and all my pow'rs \_\_\_\_\_  
3. I will go search - ing, till I finde a sunne \_\_\_\_\_

Alto

1. The shep-herds sing; shall I si-lent be? \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Shep-herd and flock sing, and all my pow'rs \_\_\_\_\_  
3. I will go search - ing, till I finde sunne \_\_\_\_\_

Baritone

1. The shep-herds sing and shall I si-lent be, sil-ent  
2. Shep-herd and flock shall sing, and all my pow'rs \_\_\_\_\_  
3. I will go search - ing, till I finde a sunne, finde a

Piano (optional)

4

S.

— My God, no hymne for thee? For \_\_\_\_\_ thee? \_\_\_\_\_ My soul's a  
— out-sing the day-light houres, the houres. \_\_\_\_\_ Then we will  
— shall stay till we have done, have done. \_\_\_\_\_ A will-ing

A.

— My God, no hymne for thee? For thee? \_\_\_\_\_ My soul's a  
— out-sing the day-light houres, the houres. \_\_\_\_\_ Then we will  
— shall stay till we have done, have done. \_\_\_\_\_ A will-ing

B.

be? (My) God, no hymne for thee? No hymne for thee? \_\_\_\_\_ My soul's a  
— out-sing the day-light houres, the day-light houres. \_\_\_\_\_ Then we will  
sunne (shall) stay till we have done, till we have done. \_\_\_\_\_ A will-ing

Pno.

8

S.

A.

B.

Pno.

12

S.

A.

B.

Pno.

S. pas - ture is thy word; the streams thy grace en - rich - ing all the  
sing one com - mon Lord; where - fore he should him - self the can - dle  
we will sing, and shine all our own day, and one a - no - ther

A. pas - ture is thy word; the streams thy grace en - rich - ing all the  
sing one com - mon Lord; where fore he should him - self the can - dle  
we will sing, and shine all our own day, and one a - no - ther

B. pas - - ture is thy word; thy grace en - rich - ing all the  
sing one com - mon Lord; where he should him - self the can - dle  
we will sing, and shine our own day, and one a - no - ther

Pno.

*poco rit.* . . . . **A tempo**

S. place. His beams shall cheer my  
hold.  
pay:

A. place, the place. His beams shall cheer my  
hold, can - dle hold.  
pay, we shall pay:

B. place, all the place. His beams shall cheer my  
hold, can - dle hold.  
pay, we shall pay:

Pno.

25

S. *breast, and both so twine, — till e - ven his beams*

A. *breast and both so twine, till e - ven his beams*

B. *breast, and both so twine, till e - ven his beams*

Pno.

28

S. *sing, and my mu - sick shine.*

A. *sing, and my mu - sick shine, my mu - sick shine.\**

B. *sing, and my mu - sick shine.\**

Pno.

\* On the final chorus, the Altos and Baritones may split to include the bracketed notes if desired.