

# Sheep may safely graze

from Cantata No. 208

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

Andante pastorale, Quietly

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*mp* *p*

4 *mp*

Sheep may safe - ly graze and pas - ture -

*mp* *p* *mp*

7

In the watch - ful shep - herd's sight. Sheep may safe - ly

10

graze and pas - ture, Sheep may safe - ly graze and pas - ture

This system contains three measures of music. The vocal line (treble clef) features a melody with eighth and quarter notes, including slurs and ties. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) consists of a right hand with chords and eighth-note patterns, and a left hand with a steady eighth-note bass line.

13

In the watch - ful shep - herd's sight, In the

This system contains three measures of music. The vocal line (treble clef) has a melody with quarter and eighth notes, including a full rest in the second measure. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a right hand with chords and eighth-note patterns, and a left hand with a steady eighth-note bass line.

16

watch - ful Shep - herd's sight.

This system contains three measures of music. The vocal line (treble clef) has a melody with quarter and eighth notes, ending with a full rest in the second measure. The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a right hand with chords and eighth-note patterns, and a left hand with a steady eighth-note bass line.

19 *mp*

Those who rule with

*p* *mp* *p* *mp*

(☺) FINE

22

wis - dom guid - ing\_ Bring to\_ hearts a peace a - bid - ing\_

25

Bless the land with joy made\_ bright.

28

Musical score for measures 28-30. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a whole rest in measure 28, followed by a half note G4 in measure 29, and a half note A4 in measure 30. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand. Dynamic markings include *mp* for the vocal line and *p* and *mp* for the piano accompaniment.

*mp*  
Those who

*p* *mp* *p* *mp*

31

Musical score for measures 31-33. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "rule with wis - dom\_\_ guid - ing, Bring to\_\_ hearts a peace\_\_ a -". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. Dynamic markings include *p* and *mp*.

rule with wis - dom\_\_ guid - ing, Bring to\_\_ hearts a peace\_\_ a -

34

Musical score for measures 34-36. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line contains the lyrics: "bid - ing, Peace\_\_ a - bid - - ing, Peace\_\_". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. Dynamic markings include *p* and *mp*.

bid - ing, Peace\_\_ a - bid - - ing, Peace\_\_

37

a - bid - - - ing, Bless, o

39

D.C. al Fine

bless this land with joy made bright.

D.C. al Fine

**NOTES:**

In addition to his nearly 200 surviving sacred cantatas, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) composed several secular cantatas for various ceremonial occasions. Cantata No. 208, the "Hunting Cantata" was written in 1713 for the 31<sup>st</sup> birthday of Herzog Christian (Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels) and was performed as banquet music in his hunting lodge after a hunt. The gentle ninth movement of the cantata is the soprano aria, *Sheep May Safely Graze*, (*Schafe können sicher weiden*) whose title evokes a pastoral scene, remains one of the composer's most beloved and most frequently performed works.

The reference to the good shepherd is most significant, and Bach would not have used this lightly. It would be obvious to anyone in Christendom in both Bach's time, and in ours, that a comparison was being made with Jesus, the Divine Shepherd.