The Poem

How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot!
From the morn to the evening he strays;
He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,
And he hears the ewes' tender reply;
He is watchful while they are in peace,
For they know when their shepherd is nigh.

Definitions

- The use of the word *stray* here means to wander or roam
- An *ewe* is a female sheep
- *Nigh* is used to mean near
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The Shepherd

How sweet is the Shepherd's sweet lot
From the morn to the evening, he stays:
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,
And to hear the ewes tender reply
His joy is perfect while they are in peace,
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.
In Depth

Tone

• The tone of this poem is key
• It has two different tones in just 8 lines
• Starts with an upbeat joyful tone
• Second stanza begins with a more somber peacefulness

Messages

• Blake uses religious views to write this poem
• The shepherd can be taken as a metaphorical guardian angel or God
• The sheep are the people that God watches over
• “For he hears the lambs’ innocent call. And he hears the event’s tender reply. He is watchful while they are in peace, For they know when their shepherd is nigh.” Symbolizing our prayer to God and His response

Structure

• The poem contains 2 stanzas
• It is in standard ABAB format as seen in rhyme scheme
• There is a shift from the first stanza which summarizes the shepherd’s role during the day to the second stanza which talks about his role during the night
• Blake makes the shepherd’s job seem easy and peaceful, but also shows how he must be prepared
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