

## Blues/Verses<sup>1</sup>

They sipped on milk,  
a child's lunch.

They wrapped it all in parchment  
and travelling on, embraced  
under the cosmic night, umbrella-like.

Such was His kindness, so partial,  
and so sweet.

Oh, terrible branch that burns  
your own tree, the field  
you flourish in!

Little flowers come hew to him;  
these are too small to sacrifice.

My people are bent on backsliding from Me.  
Though they call to the Most High,  
None at all exalt Him.

"How can I give you up, Ephraim?  
How can I hand you over, Israel?  
How can I make you like Admah?  
How can I set you like Zeboiim?

My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred.<sup>2</sup>

I will not execute the fierceness of My anger;  
I will not again destroy Ephraim.  
For I am God, and not man,  
The Holy One in your midst;

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<sup>1</sup> The first stanza and last two are original. The other material is all drawn from two sources. Either the Bible, or a particular footnoted conversation between Albert King and Stevie Ray Vaughan. The Bible excerpts are taken from the New King James.

<sup>2</sup> Hosea 11:7,8. Footnotes apply to entire stanzas unless they are placed mid-stanza.

And I will not come with terror.<sup>3</sup>

But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.  
And whoever exalts himself will be humbled.<sup>4</sup>

Y'know I often think about the time  
you would come in dragging your little guitah.  
You would say "I want to sit in."  
They would say - Stevie's here - let him sit in!  
I would say - who is Stevie?

*yeah I used to do that*

Yeah - bring him on up, let him sit in.  
He'd get on up and hit two or three good licks,  
then he'd back off,  
then I'd be waiting and listening for him  
to wake up and mash on the guitah;  
y'know go on and pick it.  
I used to holler at him on the other side of the stage:  
stop standing there looking at me all work,  
and play on your guitah.  
And then you'd go ahead and go to playing.<sup>5</sup>

I didn't ever think you'd be as bad as you are now though  
you know what I mean?

*aw, I'm not quite there (inaudible)*

You really done throwed up.

*I be tryin!*

Yeah that's right. Keep comin on.

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3 Hosea 11:9

4 Matthew 23:11-12

5 These dialogues are drawn from "In Session", a blues concert featuring Stevie Ray Vaughan and Albert King filmed for television in 1983, and released as an album in 1999. Albert King is the voice here doing the bulk of the talking, a natural elder statesman of the blues. Seen online at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPcGJahjsHY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPcGJahjsHY).

*try to keep what you...(inaudible)*

Right!

There's one thing you can't do.

You can't let your head get big.

You gotta stay on down there so I can brag on you.

Don't...I'll catch up with you - so I'll whup you  
with my board back there.<sup>6</sup>

When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast,  
do not sit down in the best place,  
lest one more honorable than you be invited by him;  
and he who invited you and him come and say to you,  
'Give place to this man,'  
and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.

But when you are invited,  
go and sit down in the lowest place,  
so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you,  
'Friend, go up higher.'  
Then you will have glory in the presence  
of those who sit at the table with you.<sup>7</sup>

There's lots of guitar players out here.  
They play fast. They don't concentrate on no soul.  
They don't know the blues.  
If I can't make it there, you be there.  
Show 'em what it's all about.<sup>8</sup>

Then He also said to him who invited Him,  
'When you give a dinner or a supper,  
do not ask your friends,

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6 "In Session"

7 Luke 14:8-10

8 "In Session"

your brothers,  
your relatives,  
nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back,  
and you be repaid.  
But when you give a feast,  
invite the poor,  
the maimed,  
the lame,  
the blind.  
And you will be blessed,  
because they cannot repay you;  
you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.<sup>9</sup>

Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him  
heard these things, he said to Him,  
'Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!'<sup>10</sup>

hahaa

hahahaha yeah! that's right!

I remember the first time I met you  
yeah

the Coliseum in Austin Texas, 1973,  
yeah yeah

I was listenin'

- you thought I wasn't. I was listenin'.

I thought about it all the way back to Illinois.

I said now he got the makings of a good fiddler.<sup>11</sup>

I want you to pick up on these things

I know you can do it.

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<sup>9</sup> Luke 14:12-14

<sup>10</sup> Luke 14:15

<sup>11</sup> "In Session"

See, you qualified to do it.

I want you to go on up.

The most important thing:

the better you get, the harder you work.

You can't say well, *well, I got it made, I got enough.*

Don't do that.

*I won't.*

All right.

*That's a promise.*

You're gonna be better than what you are.

You're already pretty good,

you're pretty good.

But...you're gonna be better.

*That's the whole point.*<sup>12</sup>

I'm gonna be watchin you and praying for you,

and be right there with that board.

*haha!*

This is called "Don't lie to me."<sup>13</sup>

Hananiah the prophet took the yoke

off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and broke it.

And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people,

saying, "Thus says the LORD:

'Even so I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar

king of Babylon from the neck of all nations

within the space of two full years.'"<sup>14</sup>

Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah

spoke to him, saying,

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<sup>12</sup> "In Session"

<sup>13</sup> "In Session"

<sup>14</sup> Jeremiah 28:10,11

'Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Please, let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak encouragement.'

And Micaiah said, 'As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.'

Then he came to the king;  
and the king said to him,

'Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall we refrain?'

And he answered him, 'Go and prosper, for the LORD will deliver it into the hand of the king!'<sup>15</sup>

Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and in the presence of all the people who stood in the house of the LORD,

and the prophet Jeremiah said, 'Amen! The LORD do so; the LORD perform your words which you have prophesied, to bring back the vessels of the LORD'S house

and all who were carried away captive, from Babylon to this place.

Nevertheless hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people:

The prophets who have been before me and before you of old prophesied against many countries and great kingdoms - of war and disaster and pestilence.

As for the prophet who prophesies of peace, when the word of the prophet comes to pass, the prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent.'<sup>16</sup>

Then Balak again sent princes,

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<sup>15</sup> 1 Kings 22:13-15

<sup>16</sup> Jeremiah 28:5-9

more numerous and more honorable than they.  
And they came to Balaam and said to him,  
"Thus says Balak the son of Zippor:  
'Please let nothing hinder you from coming to me;  
for I will certainly honor you greatly,  
and I will do whatever you say to me.  
Therefore please come, curse this people for me.'"  
Then Balaam answered  
and said to the servants of Balak,  
'Though Balak were to give me his house  
full of silver and gold,  
I could not go beyond the word of the LORD my God,  
to do less or more.  
Now therefore, please, you also stay here tonight,  
that I may know what more the LORD will say to me.'<sup>17</sup>

And God came to Balaam at night and said to him,  
'If the men come to call you, rise and go with them;  
but only the word which I speak to you - that you shall do.'  
So Balaam rose in the morning,  
saddled his donkey,  
and went with the princes of Moab.<sup>18</sup>

Then they brought the donkey and the colt,  
laid their clothes on them,  
and set Him on them.  
And a very great multitude  
spread their clothes on the road;  
others cut down branches from the trees  
and spread them on the road.  
Then the multitudes who went before

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<sup>17</sup> Numbers 22:15-19

<sup>18</sup> Numbers 22:20

and those who followed cried out, saying:

*'Hosanna to the Son of David!'*

*'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'*

*'Hosanna in the highest!'<sup>19</sup>*

All this was done

that it might be fulfilled

which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

“Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you,  
lowly, and sitting on a donkey,  
a colt, the foal of a donkey.'”<sup>20</sup>

And when He had come into Jerusalem,

all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?'

So the multitudes said,

'This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.'<sup>21</sup>

Rise up, Balak, and hear!

Listen to me, son of Zippor!<sup>22</sup>

God is not a man, that He should lie,

nor a son of man, that He should repent.<sup>23</sup>

*Let me die the death of the righteous,*

*And let my end be like his!<sup>24</sup>*

And Balaam raised his eyes,

and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes;

and the Spirit of God came upon him.<sup>25</sup>

How lovely are your tents, O Jacob!

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<sup>19</sup> Matthew 21:7-9

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 21:4,5

<sup>21</sup> Matthew 21:10,11

<sup>22</sup> Numbers 23:18

<sup>23</sup> Numbers 23:19

<sup>24</sup> Numbers 23:10

<sup>25</sup> Numbers 24:2

Your dwellings, O Israel!  
Like valleys that stretch out,  
like gardens by the riverside, like aloes planted by the LORD,  
like cedars beside the waters.  
He shall pour water from his buckets,  
And his seed shall be in many waters.  
His king shall be higher than Agag,  
And his kingdom shall be exalted.<sup>26</sup>

Behold, I have received a command to bless;  
He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it.<sup>27</sup>

Then Balak's anger was aroused against Balaam,  
and he struck his hands together;  
and Balak said to Balaam,  
'I called you to curse my enemies, and look,  
you have bountifully blessed them these three times!'<sup>28</sup>

Must I not take heed to speak  
what the LORD has put in my mouth?<sup>29</sup>  
Did I not tell you, saying,  
    'All that the LORD speaks, that I must do?'<sup>30</sup>  
    Did I not also speak to your messengers, saying,  
If Balak were to give me his house  
full of silver and gold,  
I could not go beyond the word of the LORD,  
to do good or bad of my own will.  
What the LORD says, that I must speak?  
And now, indeed, I am going to my people.

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26 Numbers 24:5-7

27 Numbers 23:20

28 Numbers 24:10

29 Numbers 23:12

30 Numbers 23:26

Come, I will advise you  
what this people will do to your people  
in the latter days.<sup>31</sup>

So he took up his oracle and said:<sup>32</sup>

I see Him, but not now;  
I behold Him, but not near;  
a Star shall come out of Jacob;  
a Scepter shall rise out of Israel.  
Out of Jacob One shall have dominion,  
and destroy the remains of the city.<sup>33</sup>

There was a certain landowner  
who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge  
around it, dug a winepress in it  
and built a tower.

Now when vintage-time drew near,  
he sent his servants to the vinedressers,  
that they might receive its fruit.

And the vinedressers took his servants,  
beat one, killed one, and stoned another.

Again he sent other servants,  
more than the first, and they did likewise to them.

Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying,  
'They will respect my son.'

But when the vinedressers saw the son,  
they said among themselves,

'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.'

So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes,

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31 Numbers 24:12-14

32 Numbers 24:15

33 Numbers 24:17,19

what will he do to those vinedressers?<sup>34</sup>

*But He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities;  
the chastisement for our peace was upon Him.*<sup>35</sup>

He who has the Son has life;  
he who does not have the Son of God  
does not have life.<sup>36</sup>

And when He has come,  
He will convict the world of sin,  
and of righteousness, and of judgment.

The ruler of this world is judged.<sup>37</sup>

For to the one  
we are the aroma of death  
leading to death,  
and to the other the aroma of life  
leading to life.<sup>38</sup>

His footfall finally lifted up a little  
so the donkey-foal could carry Him.  
And so Christ's soles appeared.  
Anomaly of prophets, Balaam spoke peace peace  
eternal, but persecuted, wavered, broke back, bucked  
for green ambition.  
Christ went on lowly to His death  
for us, charity take all.

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34 Matthew 21:33-40.

35 Isaiah 53:5.

36 1 John 5:12

37 John 16:11

38 2 Corinthians 2:16

They killed Him outside the city;  
let us go outside.

There a stairway  
mounts higher in euphoric peace and love.  
Death takes those  
who depart the balustrade.

The Cross will reach you,  
will ever reach you.

It is the ultimate prophetic sign – the very thing  
the Hebrews had been waiting on – very life  
come with very death. Our God,  
King, and lovely keeper of all hearts,  
how can I come up to you?