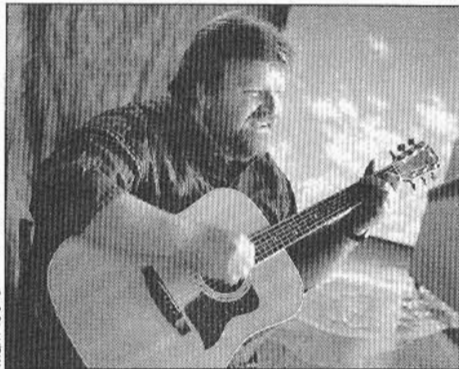


# GETTING THE MESSAGE

## Man of the Tombs

Words and music by  
Bob Bennett



Mark Tucker

While I was still in the process of writing "Man of the Tombs," I told a friend of mine over dinner that I was working on this song about the Gadarene demoniac. He said, "Bob, you're the only guy I know that would dare to write a song that identifies with a demon-possessed man."

I would have never thought about doing such a thing before I felt driven to do it. And "Man of the Tombs" is different than any other song I have written in that I knew where I wanted to take the song before I began. In a sense, writing it was like solving a riddle where I had already peeked at the answer.

As unlikely as it may seem at first, I could identify with this man. How so? I know well his isolation, his self-imposed exile, his fear, his internal torture and his brutish need to lash out at everyone, especially himself. His pain has often been the only emotional currency I could spend. That horrible knowledge is present enough within, that I am not going to quibble over the theology and dynamics of the "demon-possessed" part. I leave that to the theologians. I have met with evil, and too often for my own comfort. It has stared back at me with a face very much like my own.

Before I wrote the song, I always had *Exorcist*-like pictures come to my mind's eye. But, as I identified with this story during a particularly painful time in my own life, I began to see this poor man as fully human. Indeed, he was not a monster, at least not completely. That piece of information is one that started with me first, and then was applied to him. It's a tricky business to write someone

else's musical biography and be able to tell a portion of your own story as well, but the fit was hand-in-glove in so many respects.

On the technical side, I needed to pare down the story to the essentials I wanted to concentrate on and de-emphasize other details. In particular, I had what I later termed the "pig problem" . . . how to include that but not spend a whole verse working it in. The line "The evil departs like a thundering herd" really bailed me out of that difficulty. Those who are familiar with the story can nod knowingly at the reference while those who aren't are not distracted from the main thrust of the lyric.

Of course at 5:53, the song's a little lengthy, it doesn't have a traditional lyrical or musical hook (although there is a definite recurrence of phrases) and the song demands a high level of attention to be understood. But, when I perform it in concert I have been gratified to see these limitations overcome by other factors.

I often tell the audience: If you can identify with this "man of the tombs," then you surely also desire his end—to be dressed, seated and in your right mind at the feet of Jesus. In writing "Man of the Tombs," it started with the age-old truth that it does, indeed, take one to know one. □

—Bob Bennett

### VERSE 1:

Fmaj7 add 2 C/G G add 4  
Man of the tombs / He lives in a place / Where no one goes /  
C/G Fmaj7 add 2 C/G  
And he tears at himself / And lives with a pain / That no one  
G add 4 C/G F C G Gsus G Dm  
knows / He counts himself dead among the living / He knows  
Am Fmaj7 add 2 G  
no mercy and no forgiving / Deep in the night / He's driven to  
Am7 Am7/G Fmaj7 add 2  
cry out loud / Can you hear him cry out loud?

### VERSE 2:

Man of the tombs / Possessed by an unseen enemy / He breaks every chain / And mistakes his freedom for being free / Shame and shamelessness equally there / Like a random loss of a coin in the air / Man of the tombs / He's driven to cry out loud

### CHORUS:

C G/B C F Am  
"Underneath this thing that I've become / A fading memory of  
Gsus G C G C F  
flesh and blood / I curse the womb, I bless the grave / I've lost  
Am Am/G Fmaj7 add 2 G  
my heart / I cannot be saved / Like those who fear me, I'm  
Am G/B C/G Fmaj7 add 2 G  
afraid / Like those I've hurt, I can feel pain / Naked now before  
Am G/B C/G Fmaj7 add 2 Dm  
my sin / And these stones that cut against my skin / Some try to  
Am Fmaj7 add 2  
touch me, but no one can / For man of the tombs I am"

### VERSE 3:

Down at the shoreline / Two sets of footprints meet / One voice is screaming / Other voice begins to speak / In only a moment and only a word / The evil departs like a thundering herd / Man of the tombs / He hears this cry out loud

### CHORUS:

"Underneath this thing that you've become / I see a man of flesh and blood / I give you life beyond the grave / I heal your heart . . . I've come to save / No need to fear, be not afraid / This man of sorrows knows your pain / I come to take away your sin / And bear its marks upon my skin / When no one can touch you, still I can / For Son of God I am"

### VERSE 4:

Dressed now and seated / Clean in spirit and healthy of mind / Man of the tombs / He begs to follow / But must stay behind / He'll return to his family / With stories to tell / Of mercy and madness / Of heaven and hell / Man of the tombs / Soon he will cry out loud

### CHORUS:

"Underneath this thing that I once was / Now I'm a man of flesh and blood / I have a life beyond the grave / I found my heart . . . I can now be saved / No need to fear, I am not afraid / This man of sorrows took my pain / He comes to take away our sin / And bear its marks upon His skin / I'm telling you this story because / Man of the tombs I was"

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