Sister Rosetta Tharpe - Gospel Train (1956)

1 Jericho 2 When They Ring the Golden Bell 3 Two Little Fishes, Five Loaves of Bread 4 Beams Of Heaven 5 Cain't No Grave Hold My Body Down 6 All Alone 7 Up Above My Head There's Music in the Air 8 I Shall Know Him 9 Fly Away 10 How About You 11 Precious Memories 12 99 1/2 Won't Do Sister Rosetta Tharpe (vocals, guitar) Ernest Richardson (guitar) Ernie Hayes (piano) Harry "Doc" Bagby (organ) George Duvivier, Lloyd Trotman (bass) Panama Francis (drums) The Harmonizing Four (background vocals)

Sister Rosetta Tharpe is incredible - both her singing and her guitar playing are fantastic. She performs gospel songs infused with r&b and blues, and was transforming gospel and bringing it to the public long before the well-known pioneers Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, Ray Charles, The Staple Singers, and James Brown. They took gospel intensity and song forms and turned them into soul and r&b in the fifties and sixties; Tharpe is more gospel-based, and began her recording career in the thirties - though she recorded a bit of more straight-ahead blues - and got into a lot of hot water with the gospel community for her trouble! She continued to play well into the late sixties. The Proper label 4-cd box set is excellent without a doubt, but I actually prefer this because the fidelity is so outstanding. For anyone who loves music from that magical time before rock'n'roll, soul, and r&b became the 'thing,' Tharpe's music is a must, and really something of a revelation. Unfortunately she's one of American music's sorely overlooked foundations, so do yourself a favor and hear her music! ---echoes of empires, amazon.com

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