



Rivers of Babylon

Music and Lyrics by Brent Dowe

Performed by The Melodians

[LISTEN](#)

THE MELODIANS are one of Jamaica's greatest Rocksteady groups, cutting a series of classic singles during the late '60s and early '70s that included the internationally famed "Rivers of Babylon" and "Sweet Sensation."

ABOUT THE SONG

The song is based on the Biblical psalm 137:1-4, a hymn expressing the lamentations of the Jewish People in exile following the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

In the Rastafarian faith, the term "Babylon" is used for any governmental system which is either oppressive or unjust. "By the rivers of Babylon" refers to living in a repressive society and the longing for freedom. Rastafarians also identify themselves as belonging to the Twelve Tribes Of Israel.

Brent Dowe, the lead singer of the Melodians, told Kenneth Bilby that he had adapted Psalm 137 to the new reggae style because he wanted to increase the public's consciousness of the growing Rastafarian movement and its calls for black liberation and social justice.

4/4 Time

RIVERS OF BABYLON

Original Key G

(B.Dowe and S.McNaughton / 1970) - The Melodians

INTRO {G,4m} {D,2m} {G}

By The Rivers Of Babylon
Where We Sat Down
And There We Wept
When We Remembered Zion... For The Wicked

Carry Us Away Captivity
Require From Us A Song
How Can We Sing King Alpha's Song
In A Strange Land... For The Wicked

Carry Us Away Captivity
Require From Us A Song
How Can We Sing King Alpha's Song
In A Strange Land...

So Let The Words Of Our Mouth
And The Meditations Of Our Hearts
Be Acceptable In Thy Sight
Over I...

So Let The Words Of Our Mouth
And The Meditations Of Our Hearts
Be Acceptable In Thy Sight
Over I...

REPEAT SONG

4/4 Time

RIVERS OF BABYLON

Original Key G

(B.Dowe and S.McNaughton / 1970) - The Melodians

INTRO {G,4m} {D,2m} {G}

{G,5m} By The Rivers Of Babylon

Where We Sat Down

And There We {D,2m} Wept

When We Remembered {G,2m} Zion... For The Wicked

{G,2m} Carry Us Away Captivity

Re - {C} quire From Us A {G,3m} Song

How Can We Sing King Alpha's Song

In A {D} Strange {G,2m} Land... For The Wicked

{G,2m} Carry Us Away Captivity

Re - {C} quire From Us A {G,3m} Song

How Can We Sing King Alpha's Song

In A {D} Strange {G} Land... So Let The

{G} Words Of Our {D} Mouth

And The Medi- {G} tations Of Our {D} Hearts

Be {G} Acceptable In Thy {D} Sight

Over {G,2m} I... So Let The

{G} Words Of Our {D} Mouth

And The Medi- {G} tations Of Our {D} Hearts

Be {G} Acceptable In Thy {D} Sight

Over {G} I...

REPEAT SONG