



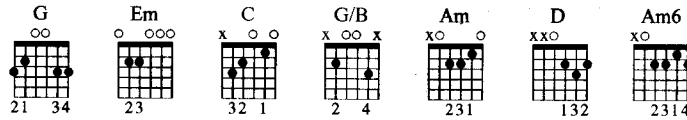
# REDEMPTION SONG

As Recorded by Bob Marley  
(From the Tuff Gong Recording LEGEND)

Note-for-note transcriptions with tab for this song and 34 more reggae faves from the legendary Bob Marley are available in *Songs of Freedom* (00694945, \$24.95). Contact Music Dispatch to order (1-800-637-2852, [www.musicdispatch.com](http://www.musicdispatch.com)).

Words and Music by Bob Marley

Arranged by Adam Perlmutter



## Intro

Moderately ♩ = 110

Riff A End Riff A

*mf*

Gtr. 1: w/ Riff A

Verse  
G

1. Old pi - rates, yes they - rob  
(2.,3.) pate your - selves from men - tal

Em C G/B Am

I. slav - er - y. None but Sold — I to the mer - chant ships, —  
our - selves can free our minds. Have no

G Em C G/B

fear min - utes af - ter they — took I from the bot - tom - less —  
for a - tom - ic — en - er - gy, 'cause none of them can stop the time —

Am  
\*(D) G Em

— pit. But my hand — they kill was made — strong  
How long shall they kill our pro - phets, while we

\*2nd and 3rd times

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# Redemption Song

C G/B Am G

stand by the hand of the Al-might - y. We for - ward in this gen - e - stand a - side and look? Some say it's just a part

Em C \*(G/B) D

ra - tion, — We've got to ful - fill tri - um - phant - ly. } of it. the book. — }

**Chorus** \*2nd and 3rd times  
G C D G

Won't you help to sing — these — songs of free - dom? 'Cause

C D Em C D G *To Coda* ⊕

all I ev - er have, re - demp - tion — songs,

C D G 1. C D 2. C D

re - demp - tion — songs. 2. E - man - ci - re - demp - tion —

**Interlude** 1., 2., 3. 4. *D.S. al Coda*  
G C D Em C D C D

— songs. 3. E - man - ci -

⊕ **Coda** C D Em C D Em

all I ev - er have, re - demp - tion — songs,

C D G C D G

these — songs of free - dom. Songs of free - dom.

C G/B Am Am6



# Bob Marley "Redemption Song"

By Douglas Baldwin

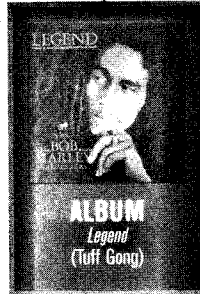
The music brought into this world by the Honorable Robert Nesta Marley is as vital and transforming as that of the Beatles, Bob Dylan, Stevie Wonder, Bruce Springsteen, Kurt Cobain, or any other major popular songwriter you care to name. In much of the world, he is adored with the same passion that Americans reserve for luminaries like Michael Jordan, John F. Kennedy, and Louis Armstrong combined. "Redemption Song," like all great folk anthems, is rich with the focused energy of endurance against awesome and terrible powers. The simple yet memorable melody and chords make it an ideal addition to your repertoire of strum-songs.

ADRIAN BOOTREINA

refers to the use of unfretted strings (E-A-D-G-B-E) whenever possible, with all other notes played in their lowest positions. Conveniently, the entire opening melody can be played with the index and middle fingers of the fret-hand.

Notice those little dots beneath some of the notes in the intro's standard notation? They are called *staccato marks*, indicating that those notes are to be played a little shorter than usual. Also watch for the hammer-on notes; B is slurred from the open A string and E is hammered on from the open D string. A diminutive eighth note with a slash through it indicates that the hammer-on is played quickly; notes like these are called *grace notes*. To play these hammered-on grace notes, first pick the open string (the small note), then immediately come down with your fretting finger on the primary note. Practitioners of the martial arts break boards and concrete blocks by visualizing points beyond the objects and moving as if the objects didn't exist; an effective hammer-on is executed by pressing your finger onto the fretboard as if the string weren't there.

for upstrokes, as in Fig. 1. This will create a full and firm bottom on the beats and a lighter, but still muted, coloration on the off-beats. Demonstrating a natural use of the strum-hand, Marley's approach is a pleasant break from the usual plectrum-fueled strumming texture we so often hear.



### STRUMMING THE INTERLUDE

As if to underscore the dark tribulations from which "Redemption Song" has risen, the interlude shifts to E minor. That key is referred to as the relative minor of G

major; this is arguably the most common relation between two keys in traditional harmony. The relentless Em-C-D chord cycle is underscored with a muted strum as shown in Fig. 2. Mute the strings (marked with Xs) by relaxing your fret-hand's fingers, without lifting them from the strings. A bit of palm muting—resting your strum-hand's palm against the strings—also helps here. Otherwise, continue to use the alternating thumb-and-index-finger strum as shown in Fig. 1.

The unspoken secret of chord switching is clearly employed on the final strum of this pattern: Take your fingers off the D chord and pick an open string (or strum all six) while switching to Em. Notice that the Em-C-D chord cycle is exactly the same as the chorus's G-C-D chord cycle—but with the substituted relative minor chord—and you'll be one step closer to memorizing the song. Then, *farward, I an' I, from dis bloodclot Babylon!* 🎸

### THE OPENING MELODY

Patriotic-sounding, the melody that opens "Redemption Song" is a great one to learn. It's in the key of G major (G-A-B-C-D-E-F#), as is the entire song, and is easily played in open position on the guitar. Open position

### THE VERSES AND CHORUSES

The muted tone of Bob Marley's acoustic guitar indicates that he probably played this performance of "Redemption Song" without a pick. Try using your strum-hand thumb (p) for downstrokes and your index finger (i)

**Fig. 1**

Strum-hand: p i p i p i p i etc.

p = thumb  
i = index finger

**Fig. 2**

Em C D (open 4th str.)