

Herb Alpert

"If I Were A Rich Man"

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Dear God, you made many, many poor people
I realize, of course, that it's no shame to be poor
But it's no great honor, either
So what would have been so terrible if I had a small
fortune?

If I were a rich man
All day long I'd biddy-biddy-bum
If I were a wealthy man
I wouldn't have to work hard
If I were a biddy-biddy rich
Yaidle deedle daidle daidle man

I'd build a big tall house with rooms by the dozen
Right in the middle of the town
A fine tin roof with real wooden floors below
There could be one long staircase just going up
And one even longer coming down
And one more leading nowhere, just for show

I'd fill my yard with chicks and turkeys and geese
And ducks for the town to see and hear
Squawking just as noisily as they can
And each loud pa-pa-gee! pa-pa-gaack! pa-pa-gee! pa-
pa-gaack!
Would land like a trumpet on the ear
As if to say, "Here lives a wealthy man", oy

If I were a rich man
All day long I'd biddy-biddy-bum
If I were a wealthy man
I wouldn't have to work hard
If I were a biddy-biddy rich
Yaidle deedle daidle daidle man

I see my wife, my goldey, looking like a rich man's wife
With a proper double chin
Supervising meals to her heart's delight
I see her putting on airs and strutting like a peacock
Oy, what a happy mood she's in!
Screaming at the servants day and night

The most important men in town will come to fawn on
me
They will ask me to advise them like a Solomon the
wise
"If you please, Reb Tevye? Pardon me, Reb Tevye?"
Posing problems that would cross a rabbi's eyes
And it won't make one bit of difference if I answer right
or wrong
When you're rich, they think you really know

If I were rich, I'd have the time that I lack
To sit in the synagogue and pray
And maybe have a seat by the eastern wall
And I'd discuss the learned books with the learned men
Seven hours every day
That would be the sweetest thing of all, oy

If I were a rich man
All day long I'd biddy-biddy-bum
If I were a wealthy man
I wouldn't have to work hard

Lord who made the lion and the lamb
You decreed I should be what I am
Would it spoil some vast, eternal plan
If I were a wealthy man?

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