

# “In Jerusalem” by Mahmoud Darwish

from [“Butterfly’s Burden” \(2007\)](#).

[source : <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/52551/in-jerusalem>

transated by [Fady Joudah](#).]

(\* free translation in Greek and English by Alkistis Voulgari)

In Jerusalem

within the ancient walls

I walk from one epoch to another

without memory guiding me

The prophets over there, share the stories of the holy...

those who ascend to heaven

and return to the earth

less discouraged

less melancholic

because love and peace are holy

I was walking down a slope and thinking to myself

“Why do the narrators disagree

about what the Light said to the Stone?”

“Is it from a dimly lit stone that wars flare up?”

I walk in my sleep

I look around

I see no one behind

I see no one ahead

All this light is for me

I walk

I become lighter

I fly

and then, I become another

transfigured

Words sprout like grass from Isaiah's messenger mouth :

"If you believe, you will be safe."

I walk as if I were another

And my wound, a white biblical rose

And my hands like two doves on the cross

hovering and carrying the earth

I don't walk, I fly, I become another, transfigured

out of time and space

So, who am I?

It's not me in ascension's presence

It's not me in resurrection

But I think to myself

"Alone, the prophet Muhammad spoke Arabic"

"And then, what?"

"Then, what?"

A woman soldier shouted :

"Is that you again? Didn't I kill you?"

I said :

"You killed me... and I forgot, like you, to die"

