

# A few questions for the Muslim brothers in Tahrir Square

Saturday 6 August 2011, by [ALI Tariq](#) (Date first published: 31 July 2011).

*I wrote this poem in response to the demonstration in Egypt's capital after prayers last Friday. I address this poem to the Muslim brothers who demonstrated in Cairo's Tahrir Square after Friday prayers on 29 July.*

Patience exhausted  
You emerged from the shadows  
To tell us what was forbidden and why.  
You spoke loudly and clearly,  
Each chant a whiplash:  
God is Great!

The laws of God transcend democracy!  
Liberals and secularists are the scum of the earth!  
Copts too!  
And uncovered women!  
And leftists, trapped on the wrong side of history,  
Their rage impotent, their numbers miniscule!  
We Brothers represent the will of God!

Who told you?  
Why did you believe him?  
Was it the will of God that your leaders collaborate with Mubarak?  
What of your rivals at home who claim the same?  
And your noisy neighbours, each with their preachers in tow?  
The Sultans in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh?  
The Ayatollahs in Qom and Karbala?  
The godly warlords in the White House?  
The Pope in the Vatican?  
The Rabbis in the Jerusalem Synagogue?

Their God is great too, is he not?  
The Book teaches us there is only one God,  
Omnipotent, indivisible, all-seeing.  
Why does He speak in so many different tongues and voices?  
Is He trying to please all at the same time?  
Both Israel and Palestine?  
Both oppressor and oppressed?

Leave Him alone for the moment,  
Tell us what else you believe in?  
How will you deal with our exploiters  
starting with those inside your ranks?

Does the sun belong to you alone?  
Is your God a neoliberal?  
Must the poor live off charity for ever?  
Why are our people despairing?  
How long will you chain their freedoms?  
Whose side are you really on?

**Tariq Ali**

31 July 2011

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**P.S.**

\* Source: Guardian UK.