

The Day is Nearly Over

(A meditation on the Quran Sura 103, Al 'Asr, "Time Through the Ages")

bismillahir rahmanir rahim wal 'asr

We begin with the light of Unity,
the womb that bears compassion and mercy.

Unity also includes the root of everything solid,
the origin of everything compressed;
the feeling of being pushed from outside in—
the steepness of a mountain,
the hardness of a rock,
the bits and pieces we sense as matter,
the bits and pieces we experience as time.
"Time and again...Day after day..."
The awareness we have
when late afternoon light
reminds us that the day is nearly over,
again.

'innal insana lafi khusr

Because of this, if you count material gain,
human existence always comes up a loss.
Energy contracts to form a being,
a vortex of "I-ness" envelopes the Self.
This creates a temporary shelter,
a hostel for the night.
But we miss the journey
if we hold on to the shelter:
its nature is to fall away behind us
as we travel farther,
just as do the moments of time.

'illallazina 'amanu

wa 'amilus sallihati

Time's loss doesn't affect those whose
lives arise from the mother-principle,
the giveaway:
who radiate beneficence
without counting the cost,
whose actions are fully formed, a work of art,
because they are always opening softly
to the divine One.

wa tawasaw bil haqqi

wa tawasaw bis sabr

Time's loss also doesn't affect those who
come together simply and with feeling,
to point out and celebrate
the presence of holy wisdom all around,
who recognize the sacred ground of being,
the home of truth within embodiment;
who share the glory of patience and of limits
as they function like channels
for the sacred fire to flow.