**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.