

A Passage Out of Time: A Selection of Poems

by Barry McDonald

In Time (after a line by Frithjof Schuon)

Lost in the ego's labyrinthine cave
Profane man is a fire, a stone, a night –
His life is a descent into the grave,
And all he leaves behind dissolves in time.

But wise men see with clear, objective eyes
The worldly dream is passing, false and strange –
Day after day they practice how to die,
And what they know nothing on earth can change.

Prayer

Though many roads into the world appear,
No matter where we turn the Lord is near.
In all the passing hours of the day
Reality is where we kneel and pray.

Men dream their lives away, but here and now
A star descends into an empty soul –
Somewhere a solitary man bows down
And with one word turns darkness into gold.

Remember

By contemplation or heroic deed
Men find within themselves a road to God;
The priest and warrior have little need,
And they renounce the pleasures of the world.

The body like a field in winter turns;
And like sunlight through mist, death through life burns —
Invoke in peace, or draw swords if you must,
Remember next to God all things are dust.

The Eagle

Because the human eye cannot see far
We pray to see things as they really are;
To rise up like an eagle soaring free,
To know and love the Truth we long to be.

And high above the valley of the soul
There is a world where time does not grow old –
No grief or laboring, no fearful night;
The dreamer wakes inside the eagle's flight.

The Treasure

Setting a ring-stone is a jeweler's work,
But sages place the Truth in every word.
Not rubies nested in the finest gold,
Their treasure is the consciousness of God.

A midnight bell rings at the end of time,
But through the darkness wisdom is revealed –
A few wise men pass round a cup of wine,
And praise the naked beauty of the Real.