

NOW AND THEN

The monks of old were wise to say,
“Before you take your final breath,
Make it your habit every day
To meditate upon your death.”

Those ancient sages weren't morose—
They wanted to prepare the heart,
That whether far away or close,
They'd calmly face their time to part.

Between your NOW that's speeding by
And your forever THEN to come,
God offers gifts before you die,
And you must tally up the sum.

Abundant blessings fill the span
Of life ordained for you to spend,
And finding them is Heaven's plan,
Before you face your journey's end.

So much for you to do and see
Within the number of your days
That you must set priority
Upon pursuing holy ways.

You'll better savor earthly joys
And dearer hold sweet family ties
When undistracted by the toys
You purchase from the worldly wise.

Amid the blossoms in the spring,
And summer sunshine, winter snow,
Rejoice in hearing nature sing,
Until you meet your turn to go.

But know this well, that work and play
Must fall within the limits set
By just how long you get to stay,
If you would leave without regret.

— *David L. Hatton, 2/4/2014*