



# **The Book of Mystical Chapters: Meditations on the Soul's Ascent, from the Desert Fathers and Other Early Christian Contemplatives**

*John Anthony McGuckin*

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The early Christian monks of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine were the spiritual heroes of their age-fleeing the security of civilization for the desert, where they sought God in lives of prayer, contemplation, and radical simplicity. This book is a portable collection of their teachings, and those of their contemplative contemporaries, ranging from the fourth through the eleventh centuries. It is arranged to the traditional model of three ascending "books": Praktikos (practice), Theoretikos (theory), and Gnosis (knowledge). Each book consists of 100 "sentences"-aphorisms or thoughts. Each sentence is intended to be read and meditated upon for an entire day-just as the monks themselves might have done as they went about their work.

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