

New Psalms
from the Old Psalms

Real Conversations with God



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Foreword

Welcome to the “new psalms”! If you are a regular to devotional reading, you already have a steady diet of inspirational material to keep your spirits challenged. If you are an honest and broad Scripture reader, you know of readings that are less than pleasant or just plain hard to read (and therefore mostly avoided). That goes for personal devotions and congregational reading. Some of them just do not sound nice!

The “old psalms” have these pockets of pedantry, even spewing out occasional curses, “go get ’ems,” whines of self-pity, and burn-the-house-down epithets. These we almost never read. Yet we insist on a full reading of all the scriptures to have “real” conversations with God. Here you have them all in today’s language, set in today’s current flow of life—if you dare read them!

I have been surprised in reading the psalms afresh to find writers so much like me. They pray, plead, cry, whine, and reach glorious heights of poetic utterance. Then they sling mud, demand favors, claim their own righteousness, and even get a bit too big for their britches occasionally.

Mostly I have been surprised by the combative tone and nature of many of the psalms, though the warrior-like posture of such a responsible ruler as David should not surprise me. But right there I have found the most honest picture of my own soul! Real conversations with God, when seen through a mirrored image, can be disarmingly raw, real, and rigorous. It is into that matrix of real conversations that the old psalms have always meant to take us.

Thus, this writer’s invitation is to enter into the eternal conversation from old psalms to new with more honesty, fresh language, and eyes wide open. These thoughts are from the scriptures. They just might help you get through!

Bill Henderson

