



## The Message: The Book of Psalms

*Eugene H. Peterson (Translator)*

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In *The Message: The Book of Psalms*, Bible scholar Eugene H. Peterson brings this collection of ancient prayers to life by translating the rhythm and idiom of the original Hebrew into the American English we speak in our homes and workplaces. If this is your introduction to the Psalms, you will understand them instantly. And if you are a longtime student of God's Word, we invite you to read the Psalms again—as if for the very first time.

## **The Message: The Book of Psalms Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Message: The Book of Psalms for online ebook**

### **Tony Roberts says**

As I started reading Peterson's take on perhaps the greatest collection of poetry ever, I found the language to be unique and refreshing and satisfying. By the time I reached Psalm 72, I found it redundant and stale. I admire his thorough effort to dig into the Psalms and translate them into a modern vernacular. But, The Message does not express the invigorating Good News that other translations do so well.

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### **Gregory Johnston says**

My Bible reading plan had me go through the Psalms twice. From January to June, I used the HCB, and for July through December I used The Message. While this is a paraphrase, it is fascinating how Peterson takes a modern view and linguistic to ancient songs. In reading them, I heard a modern voice speaking about timeless issues, of hurt, abandonment, pain, joy, worship, and adoration. This year I will be reading through the New Testament multiple times, and the Message will be one of those times.

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### **Maggie says**

a strong and beautiful daily reading ... going to read proverbs next ... eugene peterson translates these biblical books into modern language and it does make a positive difference in how to understand them

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### **Andy Hickman says**

#### **“PSALMS – THE MESSAGE”**

The cries of lament are beautifully rephrased and the anger against injustice is expressed in vernacular that I can grasp and heartily agree with.

#### **Psalm 4:7-8**

Than they get in all their shopping sprees.  
At day's end I'm ready for sound sleep,  
For you, God, have put my life back together.

#### **Psalm 9:9-10**

God's a safe-house for the battered,  
a sanctuary during bad times.  
The moment you arrive, you relax;  
you're never sorry you knocked.

Psalm 10:14

But you know all about it—  
the contempt, the abuse.  
I dare to believe that the luckless  
will get lucky someday in you.  
You won't let them down:  
orphans won't be orphans forever.

Psalm 17:4-5

I'm not trying to get my way  
in the world's way.  
I'm trying to get your way,  
your Word's way.  
I'm staying on your trail;  
I'm putting one foot  
In front of the other.  
I'm not giving up.

Psalm 18:20-24

God made my life complete  
when I placed all the pieces before him.  
When I got my act together,  
he gave me a fresh start.  
Now I'm alert to God's ways;  
I don't take God for granted.  
Every day I review the ways he works;  
I try not to miss a trick.  
I feel put back together,  
and I'm watching my step.  
God rewrote the text of my life  
when I opened the book of my heart to his eyes.

Psalm 40:17

And me? I'm a mess. I'm nothing and have nothing;  
make something of me.  
You can do it; you've got what it takes—  
but God, don't put it off.

Psalm 51:4

You have all the facts before you;  
whatever you decide about me is fair.

Psalm 51:17

Heart-shattered lives ready for love  
don't for a moment escape God's notice.

Psalm 56:12-13

God, you did everything you promised,

and I'm thanking you with all my heart.  
You pulled me from the brink of death,  
    my feet from the cliff-edge of doom.  
Now I stroll at leisure with God  
    in the sunlit fields of life.

#### Psalm 104

You started the springs and rivers,  
    sent them flowing among the hills.  
All the wild animals now drink their fill,  
    wild donkeys quench their thirst.  
Along the riverbanks the birds build nests,  
    ravens make their voices heard.  
You water the mountains from your heavenly cisterns;  
    earth is supplied with plenty of water.  
You make grass grow for the livestock,  
    hay for the animals that plow the ground.

#### Psalm 111 -

God's works are so great, worth  
A lifetime of study—endless enjoyment!  
Splendor and beauty mark his craft;  
His generosity never gives out.  
....  
Never out-of-date, never obsolete, rust-proof.  
All that he makes and does is honest and true:  
....  
He's so personal and holy, worthy of our respect.  
The good life begins in the fear of God—  
Do that and you'll know the blessing of God.  
His Hallelujah lasts forever!

#### Psalm 113

God is higher than anything and anyone, outshining everything you can see in the skies.

....  
He picks up the poor from out of the dirt, rescues the wretched who've been thrown out with the trash,  
Seats them among the honored guests, a place of honor among the brightest and best.

Ps 116:1 - I love God because he listened to me.

Ps 118:1 - Thank God because he's good, because his love never quits. ... I was right on the cliff-edge, ready to fall, when God grabbed and held me. God's my strength, he's also my song, and now he's my salvation.

v21-25 Thank you for responding to me;  
    you've truly become my salvation!  
The stone the masons discarded as flawed  
    is now the capstone!

This is God's work.

We rub our eyes—we can hardly believe it!

This is the very day God acted—

let's celebrate and be festive!

Salvation now, God. Salvation now!

Oh yes, God—a free and full life!

Ps 119:

v11 I've banked your promises in the vault of my heart so I won't sin myself bankrupt.

V18-24 I'm a stranger in these parts; give me clear directions. ... Don't let them mock and humiliate me; I've been careful to do just what you said. While bad neighbors maliciously gossip about me, I'm absorbed in pondering your wise counsel. Yes, your sayings on life are what give me delight; I listen to them as to good neighbors!

65-72 ...

You are good, and the source of good;

train me in your goodness.

The godless spread lies about me,

but I focus my attention on what you are saying;

They're bland as a bucket of lard,

while I dance to the tune of your revelation.

My troubles turned out all for the best—

they forced me to learn from your textbook.

Truth from your mouth means more to me

than striking it rich in a gold mine.

73-80

I can see now, God, that your decisions are right;

your testing has taught me what's true and right.

Oh, love me—and right now!—hold me tight!

just the way you promised.

83 I keep a steady gaze on the instructions you post.

92 If your revelation hadn't delighted me so,

I would have given up when the hard times came.

96 I see the limits to everything human,

but the horizons can't contain your commands!

114 You're my place of quiet retreat;

I wait for your Word to renew me.

116 Take my side as you promised; I'll live then for sure.

Don't disappoint all my grand hopes.

117 Stick with me and I'll be all right;

I'll give total allegiance to your definitions of life.

121 I stood up for justice and the right;

don't leave me to the mercy of my oppressors.

145 I call out at the top of my lungs,

“God! Answer! I’ll do whatever you say.”

146 I called to you, “Save me  
so I can carry out all your instructions.”

147 I was up before sunrise,  
crying for help, hoping for a word from you.

148 I stayed awake all night,  
prayerfully pondering your promise.

149 In your love, listen to me;  
in your justice, God, keep me alive.

152 Take my side and get me out of this;  
give me back my life, just as you promised.

161 I’ve been slandered unmercifully by the politicians,  
but my awe at your words keeps me stable.

165 For those who love what you reveal, everything fits—  
no stumbling around in the dark for them.

168 I follow your directions, abide by your counsel;  
my life’s an open book before you.

175 Invigorate my soul so I can praise you well,  
use your decrees to put iron in my soul.

176 And should I wander off like a lost sheep—seek me!  
I’ll recognize the sound of your voice.

Psalm 121:1- I look up to the mountains;  
does my strength come from mountains?

v2 - No, my strength comes from God,  
who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.

130: 3-4 If you, God, kept records on wrongdoings,  
who would stand a chance?

As it turns out, forgiveness is your habit,  
and that’s why you’re worshiped.

132  
I’ll shower blessings on the pilgrims who come here,  
and give supper to those who arrive hungry;

133 How wonderful, how beautiful,  
when brothers and sisters get along!

135  
13-18 God, your name is eternal,  
God, you’ll never be out-of-date.  
God stands up for his people,  
God holds the hands of his people.  
The gods of the godless nations are mere trinkets,  
made for quick sale in the markets:  
Chiseled mouths that can’t talk,  
painted eyes that can’t see,  
Carved ears that can’t hear—

dead wood! cold metal!  
Those who make and trust them  
become like them.

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{At times I feel somewhat uncomfortable with Scripture}:

Psalm 136:18-22  
Struck down the famous kings,  
    His love never quits.  
Struck Sihon the Amorite king,  
    His love never quits.  
Struck Og the Bashanite king,  
    His love never quits.  
Then distributed their land as booty,  
    His love never quits.  
Handed the land over to Israel.  
    His love never quits.

Ps 137:9 – Yes, a reward to the one who grabs your babies and smashes their heads on the rocks!

Ps 138:1 - Thank you! Everything in me says “Thank you!”. V8 - Finish what you started in me, God. Your love is eternal—don’t quit on me now.

Ps 139  
v1-2 God, investigate my life;  
    get all the facts firsthand.  
I’m an open book to you;  
    even from a distance, you know what I’m thinking.

V5 I look behind me and you’re there,  
    then up ahead and you’re there, too—  
    your reassuring presence, coming and going.

13-16 Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out;  
    you formed me in my mother’s womb.  
I thank you, High God—you’re breathtaking!  
    Body and soul, I am marvelously made!  
    I worship in adoration—what a creation!  
You know me inside and out,  
    you know every bone in my body;  
You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit,  
    how I was sculpted from nothing into something.  
Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth;  
    all the stages of my life were spread out before you,  
The days of my life all prepared

before I'd even lived one day.

Psalm 141

May the Just One set me straight,  
may the Kind One correct me.

Psalm 143

Point out the road I must travel;  
I'm all ears, all eyes before you.

Your kingdom is a kingdom eternal;  
you never get voted out of office.

- Psalm 145:13

Ps 146:3-4 Don't put your life in the hands of experts  
who know nothing of life, of salvation life.

Mere humans don't have what it takes;  
when they die, their projects die with them.

Ps 149:5-7 Let true lovers break out in praise,  
sing out from wherever they're sitting,  
Shout the high praises of God,  
brandish their swords in the wild sword-dance—  
A portent of vengeance on the God-defying nations,  
a signal that punishment's coming,

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## **P. Upshaw says**

### **Beautiful GOD inspired Psalms**

This Message translation of the Psalms showed them in a new way. They have always been some of my favorite verses, with the comfort of the 23rd, especially. The David psalms are even more understandable and beautiful in this translation. It has joined my daily devotionals and I hope to read and enjoy them again and again.

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## **Douglas Wilson says**

Peterson has done good work elsewhere, but this kind of thing is really problematic. The Psalms are one of the poetic glories of human civilization, but this rendering is just casual, breezy, and cliche-ridden. Like going to a reception at Buckingham Palace in gym shorts and flip flops.

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