



Life in the Psalms: Contemporary Meaning in Ancient Texts: The Mowbray Lent Book 2016

Patrick Woodhouse

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The Psalms lie at the heart of Jewish and Christian worship. For thousands of years people in despair and praise have cried to God through the words of these ancient poems. Fragments of them are still widely known and loved, but such is the gulf between their ancient culture and our contemporary world that much of the depth of their meaning is lost to us.

Life in the Psalms aims to bridge that gulf, enabling the modern reader to find hope in these ancient texts by re-imagining their meanings for our times. The Psalms include texts that illuminate issues including climate change and environmental degradation; the illusions of consumerism and 'celebrity culture'; our response to migrants and asylum seekers; conditions of depression, anxiety, and grief, and the question of 'attention' in a digital age. Many texts take us deeply into the experience of meditation and contemplation; and teach us how to wonder, and find happiness.

Three introductory chapters are followed by reflections on thirty Psalms (one for each weekday of Lent), which aim to illuminate the text and help those in search of a more contemplative spirituality to discover, in the midst of the hard realities of a secular twenty-first century world, a deep consciousness of the healing mystery of God.

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