Jeffrey Cohen employs his poetic skill and biblical scholarship to the challenging task of rendering the Book of Psalms into rhymed verse. While there are several fine renderings into English blank verse, notably that of Robert Alter, it is Cohen's belief that it is the rhymed verse genre that can best convey the vibrant and passionate spirit of the original Hebrew poetry, and its innate lyricism that lent it, so naturally and from ancient times, to musical and choral accompaniment. This highly original work conveys the inner meaning, lyricism, and message of the psalms in a manner that will engage and inspire adherents of all faiths and none. It also provides a useful exegetical tool for all who use the Bible for study, teaching or preaching, demystifying many words and phrases whose meaning translators and commentators acknowledge as uncertain in the original text.

This is as much a commentary as a work of poetry, as testified to by the endorsements of several Cambridge University biblical and Hebrew scholars. Before proceeding to create his poetry, the writer consulted the ancient Greek and Latin translations, as well as medieval and modern Jewish and non-Jewish interpretations, in order to attempt to clarify many of the acknowledged textual difficulties in the Psalms. In many cases this impelled him to offer his own original interpretations. Readers will find these most helpful in clarifying the thematic link between many succeeding lines and paragraphs that, on a cursory reading of the standard translations, may appear disconnected.

For scholars and students of the Bible this work will offer a novel perspective. For those who use the psalms for devotional purposes this new edition will serve as an inspirational source, and for those whose interest is purely in the poetry there is also much to appeal.

"Every new translation of a classic text affords us a fresh perspective on the power and beauty of the original. In this striking and wonderfully accessible translation of the Book of Psalms, Rabbi Dr Jeffrey Cohen gives us renewed insight into the greatest of all books of religious poetry, the unsurpassed music of the soul as it sings its songs to God."

—Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, former Chief Rabbi of Great Britain

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—Robert Gordon, St Catharine's College, Cambridge, UK

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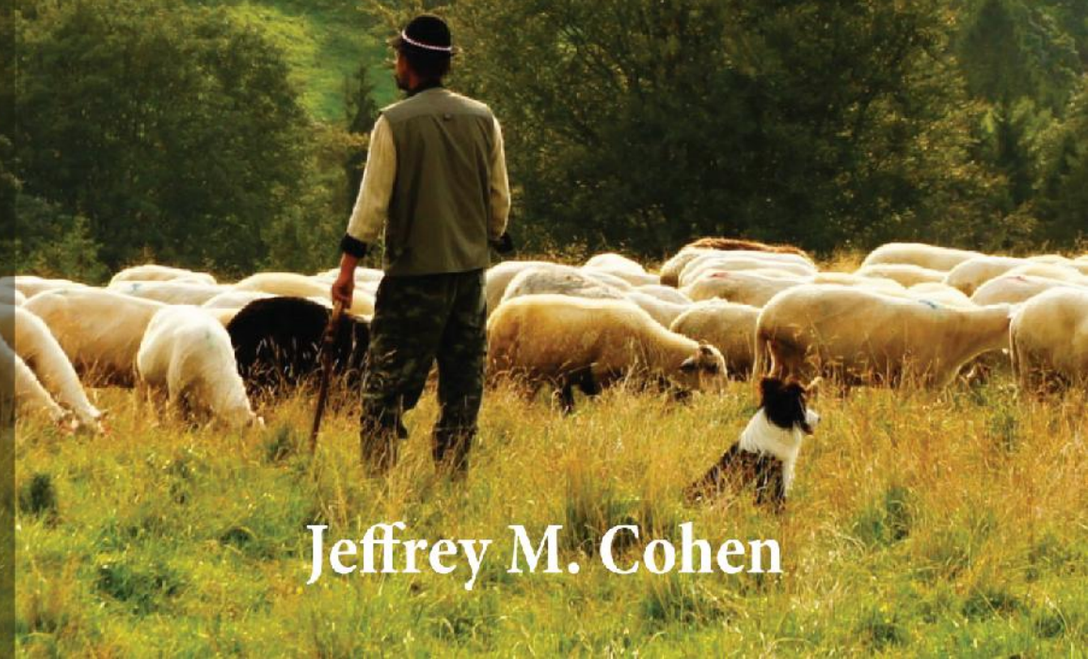
The Book of Psalms

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Poetry in Poetry



Jeffrey M. Cohen