



Narrative and Poetry at the Sea: Literary Genre and Theological Function in Exodus 14–15

Jean Paul Gotopo

Seminario Teológico de Lima (STT Lima) – Peru
jpgotopo@gmail.com

Abstract

This article examines the literary and theological relationship between Exodus 14 and Exodus 15, arguing that the two chapters form a deliberate canonical pairing in which narrative prose and poetic hymnody function complementarily to communicate Israel's salvation at the Sea. While Exodus 14 presents the event through linear narrative focused on historical causality and divine intervention, Exodus 15 rearticulates the same deliverance through poetic intensification, parallelism, and liturgical confession. The study demonstrates that genre decisively shapes message, tone, and function: prose secures salvation as remembered history, whereas poetry interprets that history as theological proclamation and communal worship. Through close literary analysis, including selected evidence from the Hebrew text, this article shows how Exodus 14 emphasizes deliverance as an accomplished act of YHWH in time, while Exodus 15 foregrounds the revelation of YHWH's identity as warrior, incomparable deity, and eternal king. The juxtaposition of these chapters illustrates a biblical pedagogy in which faith is grounded in historical memory and sustained through poetic confession. The study underscores the importance of genre-sensitive interpretation and highlights the formative role of biblical poetry in shaping Israel's theological imagination and worship.

Keywords: Exodus, Hebrew poetry, narrative and genre, Song of the Sea, divine kingship, biblical theology, literary analysis.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji hubungan sastra dan teologis antara Keluaran 14 dan Keluaran 15, dengan menegaskan bahwa kedua pasal tersebut membentuk suatu pasangan kanonik yang disengaja, di mana prosa naratif dan himne puitis berfungsi secara saling melengkapi dalam mengomunikasikan peristiwa keselamatan Israel di Laut Teberau. Keluaran 14 menyajikan peristiwa tersebut melalui narasi linear yang menekankan kausalitas historis dan intervensi ilahi, sedangkan Keluaran 15 menafsirkan kembali pembebasan yang sama melalui intensifikasi puitis, penggunaan paralelisme, dan pengakuan liturgis. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa genre berperan secara menentukan dalam membentuk pesan, nada, dan fungsi: prosa meneguhkan keselamatan sebagai peristiwa sejarah yang diingat secara kolektif, sementara puisi menafsirkan sejarah tersebut sebagai proklamasi teologis dan ungkapan ibadah komunal. Melalui analisis sastra yang cermat, termasuk penggunaan bukti-bukti terpilih dari teks Ibrani, artikel ini memperlihatkan bahwa Keluaran 14 menekankan pembebasan sebagai tindakan YHWH yang telah terjadi dalam sejarah, sedangkan Keluaran 15 menyoroti pernyataan jati diri YHWH sebagai pejuang ilahi,



Allah yang tak tertandingi, dan Raja yang berdaulat untuk selama-lamanya. Penempatan berdampingan kedua pasal ini mengungkapkan suatu pedagogi biblika, di mana iman berakar pada ingatan historis dan dipelihara melalui pengakuan puitis. Studi ini menegaskan pentingnya penafsiran yang peka terhadap genre serta menyoroti peran formatif puisi Alkitab dalam membentuk imajinasi teologis dan praktik ibadah Israel.

Kata kunci: Keluaran, puisi Ibrani, narasi dan genre, Nyanyian di Laut, keallahan dan kerajaan ilahi, teologi biblika, analisis sastra.

INTRODUCTION

Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 present two accounts of the same foundational event in Israel's memory: the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and the defeat of the Egyptian army. Yet these chapters narrate and interpret the event through radically different literary forms. Modern scholarship on biblical poetics—especially studies by Cross¹, Barmash², Wendland, and Schökel—has shown that literary genre is not a superficial feature of biblical texts but a theological lens that shapes the reader's experience, memory, and understanding of divine action. Prose and poetry function differently in Israel's literary tradition: prose frames events historically, while poetry reframes them theologically and liturgically, allowing the community to interpret, celebrate, and ritualize what God has done³.

Within biblical studies, the relationship between narrative prose and poetic hymnody has been explored as a key interpretive dynamic. Research on Hebrew poetics has shown that poetry does not merely embellish historical material, but performs theological interpretation through parallelism, metaphor, and symbolic compression⁴. Likewise, studies on biblical narrative emphasize that prose structures events to highlight causal development and divine agency with pedagogical clarity⁵. However, despite extensive work on Hebrew poetry and prose individually, comparative studies that analyze how a single event is simultaneously narrated and sung remain limited⁶.

This paper argues that the poetic reshaping of the Red Sea narrative in Exodus 15 does not merely celebrate the historical event described in Exodus 14, but theologically reframes it in a way that elevates poetry—not prose—as the primary vehicle through which Israel constructs communal memory, worship, and identity.

¹ Frank M. Cross, and David Noel Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 14, no. 4 (October 1955): 241, <https://doi.org/10.1086/371290>.

² Pamela Barmash, "Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15: Poetics and Historiography in Service to Religious Exuberance," *Hebrew Studies* 58, no. 1 (2017): 147, <https://doi.org/10.1353/hbr.2017.0007>.

³ Ernst Wendland, *Moses' Psalm by the Sea: A Study of Israel's Thanksgiving Song (Exodus 15:1-21)* (2017), 108.

⁴ Barmash, "Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15," 150.

⁵ Walter J. Houston, "Misunderstanding or Midrash? The Prose Appropriation of Poetic Material in the Hebrew Bible (Part I)," *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 109, no. 3 (1997), <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.1997.109.3.342>.

⁶ Cross, and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 250.



In this sense, Exodus 15 is not simply a liturgical appendix to the narrative of chapter 14; it is a theological reinterpretation that reveals dimensions of divine kingship, cosmic power, and eschatological hope that the prose narrative alone cannot fully communicate.

This thesis highlights that genre is not incidental but essential for understanding how biblical texts generate meaning. The analysis undertaken here demonstrates that the complementary genres of narrative and poetry shape not only the form of the Exodus story but also Israel's theological imagination, transforming a historical deliverance into enduring liturgical confession and communal identity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study employs a comparative literary–exegetical methodology designed to evaluate how Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 use distinct genre conventions to construct different theological interpretations of the same salvific event. Because the revised thesis argues that Exodus 15 reframes the prose narrative of Exodus 14 by transforming historical memory into theological and liturgical identity, the methodology seeks to demonstrate that this transformation is observable through textual, structural, linguistic, and functional analysis.

First, a textual and structural comparison was conducted to examine how each chapter organizes the crossing of the sea. This included identifying narrative sequencing, poetic strophes, repetition patterns, and shifts in temporal or thematic focus. Attention was given to how structural differences correspond to the communicative aims of narrative prose versus Hebrew lyric poetry.

Second, a linguistic and stylistic analysis was undertaken. This step evaluated features such as metaphor density, parallelism, lexical clusters, and verbal aspect. These linguistic markers were analyzed not merely descriptively but functionally, assessing how stylistic choices contribute to theological meaning and communal reception. Representative verses from both chapters were examined to illustrate contrasts between descriptive prose and exalted poetic language.

Third, a theological-function analysis was developed. Because the thesis asserts that poetry reframes the event theologically, this component investigated how each genre portrays divine agency, human response, and Israel's emerging identity. Special attention was given to how Exodus 15 expands, intensifies, or reinterprets themes introduced in Exodus 14, including divine kingship, cosmic warfare, and future eschatological expectation.

Fourth, the study incorporates a historical-literary review of scholarship, engaging researchers such as Frank Moore Cross, Pamela Barmash, Luis Alonso Schökel, Richard D. Patterson, and others. This step ensures that the comparison is not conducted in isolation but situated within broader academic conversations on Hebrew poetry, narrative historiography, and liturgical formation.

Finally, all observations were synthesized in a comparative evaluation aimed at demonstrating how genre—prose versus poetry—functions not merely as a literary aesthetic but as a theological medium through which Israel understands and transmits the meaning of the Red



Sea event. This methodological combination provides a rigorous framework for showing that Exodus 15 does not simply “retell” Exodus 14, but theologically reconfigures it for communal worship and identity formation.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Structure and form

The structural distinction between Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 is fundamentally tied to their literary genres, which shape how each chapter communicates Israel’s deliverance. Exodus 14 presents a tightly ordered prose narrative⁷, while Exodus 15 transforms the same event into a poetic hymn characterized by parallelism, strophic arrangement, and liturgical intentionality. Scholars consistently note that genre is not merely aesthetic but profoundly theological in the shaping of communal memory⁸.

1. Prose Structure in Exodus 14

Exodus 14 unfolds in a linear, sequential structure typical of Hebrew historical prose. The narrative follows a clear progression: (1) Egypt’s pursuit, (2) Israel’s fear, (3) YHWH’s command to Moses, (4) the division of the sea, (5) Israel’s crossing, and (6) the destruction of the Egyptians. This logical arrangement reflects what Wendland identifies as an “intermediate narrative structuring” designed for clarity, continuity, and memorability in oral transmission⁹.

A representative example appears in Exod 14:21, which combines narrative detail with a theologically charged depiction of divine intervention:

וַיֹּלֶךְ יְהוָה אֶת־הַיָּם בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עָזָה

wayyōlek YHWH ’et-hayyām b’rûah qādîm ‘azzāh

“The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind” (ESV).

The prose prioritizes temporal progression (“*Then Moses...*”, “*And the Egyptians...*”, “*In the morning watch...*”) and emphasizes events as they happened, establishing the historicity of Israel’s deliverance. Scholars such as Houston (1997) observe that Hebrew narrative frequently prioritizes factual coherence over emotional expression, and Exodus 14 follows this pattern¹⁰.

2. Poetic Structure in Exodus 15

In contrast, Exodus 15 abandons chronological narration and presents a poetic, strophic composition that reorganizes the event according to theological and liturgical logic. The chapter opens with a formulaic proclamation that immediately signals its genre:

שִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאֹה גָאָה

šîrāh laYHWH kî gā’ōh gā’āh

“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously” (Exod 15:1, ESV).

⁷ Richard D Patterson, “Victory at Sea: Prose and Poetry in Exodus 14–15,” n.d., 49

⁸ Cross, and Freedman, “The Song of Miriam,” 240.

⁹ Wendland, *Moses’ Psalm by the Sea: A Study of Israel’s Thanksgiving Song (Exodus 15:1-21)*.

¹⁰ Houston, “Misunderstanding or Midrash?”



The doubled verb גָּאֹה גָּאֹה (*gā'ōh gā'āh*) exemplifies semantic intensification, a hallmark of Hebrew poetry noted by Alonso Schökel (1985)¹¹ and Barmash (2017)¹². Such poetic techniques reframe the same event narrated in Exodus 14, but now through exaltation rather than description.

Most scholars divide the song into two major movements (Cross 1955; Klein 2012)¹³:
Retrospective strophe (vv. 1–12) — celebrating YHWH's defeat of Egypt.

Prospective strophe (vv. 13–18) — anticipating Israel's arrival in the land and YHWH's enthronement.

The opening line of the poem's first strophe illustrates poetic compression and rhythmic parallelism:

סוּס וְרֹכֵב וְרָמָה בַּיָּם

sūs w'rōkēvô rāmāh bayyām

"The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea" (Exod 15:1b, ESV).

This refrain returns in v. 21, creating an *inclusio* that frames the entire song. As McCabe (n.d.) notes, the repetition serves not merely as poetic embellishment but as liturgical reinforcement for communal participation.

3. Theological Function of Structural Differences

The structural divergence between the two chapters signals their theological and communal functions:

Exodus 14 → Historical testimony.

Exodus 15 → Liturgical interpretation.

As Klein (2012) argues, the poetic form intentionally shifts the focus from "what happened" to "what the event reveals about YHWH."¹⁴ The poem's progression from deliverance to enthronement ("The LORD will reign forever and ever," 15:18) establishes a theological arc that narrative alone cannot express.

4. Genre and Communal Memory

Frank Moore Cross famously described Exodus 15 as one of the oldest and most sophisticated poems in the Hebrew Bible, whose structure reflects ancient Near Eastern victory hymn traditions¹⁵. Its strophic artistry and parallelism suggest an inherently performative function—designed for antiphonal singing, as supported by Amzallag & Avriel (2012)¹⁶.

Thus, the structural forms of Exodus 14 and 15 embody two complementary modes of memory:

Prose preserves the event for instruction.

¹¹ Luis Alonso Schökel, *Manual de Poética Hebrea* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1985).

¹² Barmash, "Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15," 170.

¹³ Cross, and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 240; Anja Klein, "Hymn and History in Ex 15: Observations on the Relationship between Temple Theology and Exodus Narrative in the Song of the Sea," *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 124, no. 4 (December 2012): 520, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zaw-2012-0036>.

¹⁴ Klein, "Hymn and History in Ex 15," 519.

¹⁵ Cross, and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 237.

¹⁶ Nissim Amzallag and Michal Avriel, *RESPONSIVE VOICES IN THE SONG OF THE SEA (EXODUS 15:1-21)*, 40, no. 4 (2012): 213.



Poetry transforms the event into worship.

Together, they create what Barmash (2017) calls a “kaleidoscopic theological memory,” combining historical detail with liturgical exaltation¹⁷.

Use of language and image

A defining contrast between Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 emerges in the linguistic density and imagistic power of the poetic hymn compared to the restrained clarity of the narrative prose. While Exodus 14 focuses on descriptive precision, Exodus 15 transforms the same event into a richly symbolic theological proclamation. This literary shift is evident in the Hebrew diction, syntactic constructions, and metaphorical range employed in each chapter.

1. The Prose of Exodus 14: Functional, Sequential, Report-Oriented

Exodus 14 employs straightforward narrative language whose purpose is factual transmission. The syntax is dominated by wayyiqtol forms, marking sequential action, and the vocabulary emphasizes concrete actions rather than theological imagery. For example:

וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם

vayyibq'û hammāyim

“and the waters were divided” (Exod 14:21, ESV)

The verb בָּקַע (“to split, cleave”) is used literally, not metaphorically. As Wendland notes, Hebrew narrative “prefers referential clarity over stylistic embellishment,” highlighting the event as historical rather than symbolic¹⁸. Another example illustrates this functional language:

וַיִּשַׁע יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא

vayyôša' YHWH bayyôm hahû'

“Thus, the LORD saved Israel that day” (Exod 14:30, ESV)

Here the verb יָשַׁע (“to save, deliver”) functions as a narrative summary, not a poetic elevation. It states what happened; it does not interpret or aestheticize it.

Scholars such as Brevard Childs and Adele Berlin argue that prose’s “referential transparency” serves pedagogical and historiographical aims—it fixes the memory of the event in the communal tradition without rhetorical intensification¹⁹.

2. The Poetry of Exodus 15: Metaphor, Symbol, and Theological Intensification

By contrast, Exodus 15 employs highly figurative language that reshapes the historical event into liturgical confession. The opening line already reveals a shift from reporting to celebrating:

שִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי גָאֹה גָאֹה

šîrāh laYHWH kî gā'ôh gā'āh

“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously” (Exod 15:1, ESV)

¹⁷ Barmash, “Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15,” 158.

¹⁸ Wendland, *Moses' Psalm by the Sea: A Study of Israel's Thanksgiving Song (Exodus 15:1-21)*, 142.

¹⁹ Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 35; Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 47.



The doubled infinitive absolute (גָּאָה גָּאָה) conveys intensification—“utterly, magnificently exalted”—a poetic device absent from the prose. Luis Alonso Schökel notes that such constructions mark Hebrew hymnody as “language stretched to the limits of expression,” intended to evoke awe rather than convey information²⁰. A second example displays the metaphorical transformation of divine power:

יְמִינְךָ יְהוָה נָאֲדָרִי בִפֶּחַ

yēmîn'kā YHWH ne'dārî bakōah

“Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power” (Exod 15:6, ESV)

יְמִינְךָ יְהוָה תִּרְעֵץ אוֹיֵב

yēmîn'kā YHWH tir'as 'ôyēb

“Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy” (Exod 15:6, ESV)

The “right hand” (יְמִין) is a metaphor for invincible divine agency. As Frank Moore Cross argues, such anthropomorphic metaphors align the Song of the Sea with West Semitic royal hymns, where the deity’s “arm” or “hand” symbolizes kingship and cosmic victory²¹.

Further imagery stretches beyond physical possibility, emphasizing symbolic meaning over narrative coherence:

תִּהְיוּמֹת יַבַּיִם

tēhōmōt yēkas'yûmû

“the deep waters covered them” (Exod 15:5)

יָרְדוּ בַמְצֹלֹת כֶּמֶן אֶבֶן

yārēdû bimtšōlōt kēmō 'āven

“they went down into the depths like a stone” (Exod 15:5, ESV)

צָלָלוּ כַּעֲפֹרֶת

šālālû ka'ōperet

“they sank like lead” (Exod 15:10, ESV)

Pamela Barmash (2017) describes this technique as “kaleidoscopic poetics”: piling incompatible images (“stone,” “lead,” “stubble,” “earth swallowing them”) to intensify the emotional and theological impact rather than to provide literal description²².

Similarly, the portrayal of Yahweh as warrior (Exod 15:3) marks a shift from historical narrator to liturgical theologian:

יְהוָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה

YHWH 'iš milhāmāh

“The LORD is a man of war” (Exod 15:3, ESV)

²⁰ Schökel, *Manual de Poética Hebrea*, 57.

²¹ Cross, and Freedman, “The Song of Miriam,” 249.

²² Barmash, “Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15,” 147.



This metaphor does not appear in the prose narrative, which simply describes the event. Ronald B. Allen emphasizes that in Exodus 15, theology is sung, not stated; metaphor becomes a vehicle for communal worship rather than historiography²³.

3. Symbolic Density and Theological Reframing

Poetic language in Exodus 15 also reframes the event from a spatial phenomenon (the sea splitting) to a cosmic, mythic combat narrative typical of ancient Near Eastern victory hymns. For example:

בְּרוּחַ אֶפְיֹה נִעְרְמוּ מַיִם

bērûah 'appekā ne'ermû mayim

“At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up” (Exod 15:8, ESV)

The image of divine breath (רוּחַ), rendered hyperbolically as a “blast,” evokes mythic warfare motifs. Cross famously identified this as part of the ancient “YHWH as Divine Warrior” tradition²⁴.

Similarly:

תִּבְלַעְמוּ אֶרֶץ

tibla'ēmô 'āreṣ

“the earth swallowed them” (Exod 15:12, ESV)

Here creation itself participates in Yahweh’s victory, merging cosmology with salvation history—a feature typical of Hebrew poetry²⁵.

4. The Shift from Description to Celebration

Ultimately, the contrast between the prose and poetry is not merely stylistic, but theological. Exodus 14 tells what happened; Exodus 15 proclaims what the event means.

As Berlin notes, Hebrew poetry “transforms event into experience,” allowing Israel to internalize salvation emotionally and liturgically²⁶. Narrative conveys reality; poetry confesses faith.

Thus:

Exodus 14 → linear, informational, historically grounded

Exodus 15 → metaphorical, repetitive, liturgical, theologically interpretive.

The shift in language signals a shift in purpose: from commemoration to celebration, from recording to reframing, from historical memory to communal worship.

Tone and emotion

A striking dimension of the literary contrast between Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 lies in their tone and the emotional register with which each text communicates Israel’s salvation. Although both chapters narrate the same historical event, their literary forms generate markedly different affective experiences. Prose in Exodus 14 conveys restraint, sobriety, and controlled

²³ Ronald B Allen, *Worship In The Psalms Exodus 15 And The Praise Of God Part One*, n.d., 114.

²⁴ Cross, and Freedman, “The Song of Miriam,” 241.

²⁵ Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 241.

²⁶ Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 12.



narration, whereas the poetry of Exodus 15 expresses exuberance, awe, and communal elation. As Fokkelman observes, “tone is not ornamentation but the semantic atmosphere produced by form”²⁷. Thus, tone is inseparable from genre.

1. Reserved, Controlled Tone in Exodus 14

The prose narrator of Exodus 14 describes the event with an intentional emotional neutrality. The climactic reaction of Israel after witnessing God’s deliverance exemplifies this restrained tone:

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְלִינוּ בִּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עֲבָדָיו:
Wayyar’ Yisrā’el ’et-hayyād haggēdōlā ’āšer ’āsā YHWH bēmišrayim; wayyîr’û hā’ām ’et-YHWH, wayya’āmînû bYHWH ûbMōšeh ’abdô.

“Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses” (Exod 14:31 ESV).

Although the verse includes fear (*wayyîr’û*) and faith (*wayya’āmînû*), the narrator does not dwell on emotional intensity. Instead, emotional language is subordinated to the theological function of the prose: establishing divine legitimacy and the people’s appropriate response of trust²⁸.

The tone is thus *didactic*, not celebratory. As Brevard Childs notes, the narrative maintains a “measured and matter-of-fact tone appropriate to historiographical prose”²⁹. Even miraculous elements—waters dividing, the pillar of fire, the Egyptians drowning—are described with descriptive precision rather than heightened emotional language. This emotional restraint supports the prose’s purpose: to present a reliable, coherent account of divine intervention.

2. Exuberant, Celebratory Tone in Exodus 15

By contrast, Exodus 15 reshapes the same historical moment into a liturgical explosion of joy, where emotion is not merely implied but performed. The opening line sets an unmistakably exuberant tone:

אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאֹה גָאֹה הָיָה סוּס וְרֹכֶבּוֹ רָמָה בַּיָּם:
'Āšîrāh lYHWH kî gā’ōh gā’āh; sūs wērōkēbô rāmāh bayyām.

ESV: “I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea” (Exod 15:1).

The double intensification גָאֹה גָאֹה (*gā’ōh gā’āh*, “he has triumphed gloriously”) highlights elevated emotional fervor. As Barmash explains, the poetry “deliberately intensifies affect through hyperbolic diction and expanded imagery”³⁰.

The tone throughout Exodus 15 is marked by:

exultation (“I will sing... for He has triumphed gloriously”),

astonishment (“Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?” 15:11),

triumph (15:6–7),

communal joy (15:20–21).

²⁷ Jan P. Fokkelman, *Major Poems of the Hebrew Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 1:21.

²⁸ Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 235; John I. Durham, *Exodus*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 3:196.

²⁹ Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 228.

³⁰ Barmash, “Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15,” 148.



The climactic declaration of Yahweh's enthronement conveys solemn yet exuberant confidence:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד:

YHWH yimlōk lē 'ōlām wā 'ed.

"The LORD will reign forever and ever" (Exod 15:18).

Frank Moore Cross famously argued that this enthronement line reflects "the liturgical climax of an archaic victory hymn," where exalted tone and poetic form work together to proclaim divine kingship³¹.

Thus, while Exodus 14 presents a factual account, Exodus 15 transforms the same event into religious ecstasy.

3. Theological Function of Tone

Scholars consistently note that tone is not accidental but theologically functional:

Exodus 14's sober tone underscores Yahweh's *historical reliability*.

Exodus 15's exuberant tone embodies the *worshipful response* of the redeemed community.

Ronald B. Allen identifies Exodus 15 as "the first recorded instance of corporate Israelite worship," in which theological truth is expressed through heightened emotional language rather than mere propositional statement³².

Similarly, Luis Alonso Schökel notes that Hebrew poetry "elevates emotional content to theological proclamation," transforming memory into liturgy³³.

Tone, therefore, is not simply literary: it is hermeneutical. Exodus 14 teaches Israel *what God has done*; Exodus 15 shapes *how Israel should feel, respond, and confess* in light of that act.

4. Summary

Table 1 Comparison of Exodus 14 and Exodus 15

Exodus 14 (Prose)	Exodus 15 (Poetry)
Controlled, factual tone	Exultant, emotionally heightened tone
Focus on event	Focus on God's character and glory
Didactic: evokes belief	Liturgical: evokes worship
Minimal emotional vocabulary	Saturated with affective, celebratory language

Together, the two tones create a theological synergy, illustrating that Israel's salvation is both a historical event to be remembered and a liturgical joy to be celebrated.

Repetition and parallelism

One of the most decisive literary distinctions between Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 lies in the role and function of repetition and parallelism. While Exodus 14 employs repetition only insofar as it supports narrative cohesion, Exodus 15 elevates repetition and parallelism to primary poetic devices that intensify meaning, reinforce communal memory, and serve liturgical

³¹ Cross, and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 125.

³² Allen, *Worship In The Psalms Exodus 15 And The Praise Of God Part One*, 32.

³³ Schökel, *Manual de Poética Hebrea*, 44–45.



purposes. As Adele Berlin observes, “parallelism is not redundancy, but the engine of meaning in Hebrew poetry”³⁴.

1. Limited Functional Repetition in Exodus 14

In Exodus 14, repetition appears primarily as narrative reinforcement, not poetic intensification. Lexical recurrence supports clarity and coherence rather than artistic or emotional effect. For example, the fear of Israel is restated at key moments:

וַיִּירָאוּ מְאֹד

wayyîr'û me'ôd

“they feared greatly” (Exod 14:10 ESV)

Later, fear gives way to belief:

וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה ... וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ בַיהוָה

wayyîr'û hā'ām 'et-YHWH ... wayya'āmînu bayHWH

“the people feared the LORD ... and they believed in the LORD” (Exod 14:31 ESV)

The repetition of וַיִּירָאוּ (wayyîr'û, “they feared”) marks theological development, not poetic artistry: fear progresses from terror before the Egyptians to reverent fear of YHWH. As Durham notes, this is narratively functional repetition, guiding interpretation rather than heightening affect³⁵.

Notably absent are classic poetic parallelisms (synonymous or antithetic bicola). The prose avoids patterned symmetry, reinforcing its chronological and informational priorities.

2. Parallelism as the Structural Core of Exodus 15

By contrast, parallelism in Exodus 15 is pervasive and constitutive. Almost every line is shaped by balanced or intensifying bicola, tricola, or staircase parallelism. The opening triumphant declaration illustrates synonymous–intensifying parallelism:

גָּאֹה גָּאֹה

gā'ôh gā'âh

“he has triumphed gloriously” (Exod 15:1 ESV)

Here, repetition of the same root (גָּאֹה) does not repeat information but amplifies meaning. As Watson explains, such doubling functions as semantic intensification rather than mere emphasis³⁶.

A more developed example appears in the praise of YHWH's power:

יְמִינָהּ יְהוָה נִצְדָרִי בָכֹחַ

יְמִינָהּ יְהוָה תִּרְעַץ אוֹיְבֵי

yēmînkā YHWH ne'dārî bakōah

yēmînkā YHWH tir'aš 'ōyēb

³⁴ Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 3.

³⁵ Durham, *Exodus*, 3:193.

³⁶ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 144.



“Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy” (Exod 15:6 ESV)

This bicola exhibits synthetic parallelism: the first line identifies divine power; the second specifies its effect. The repetition of יְמִינְךָ יְהוָה (“your right hand, O LORD”) anchors the praise and invites antiphonal recitation. Cross understands this repetition as a hallmark of ancient victory hymns intended for public worship (Cross 1973, 116–17).

3. Repetition for Liturgical and Communal Memory

Repetition in Exodus 15 also serves mnemonic and performative functions. The refrain:

סוּס וְרֹכֶבֶתוֹ יָרְמוּ בַיָּם

sûs wērōkēbô rāmāh bayyām

“The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea” (Exod 15:1, 21 ESV)

This line appears both at the song’s opening (v. 1) and in Miriam’s refrain (v. 21), forming an inclusio that frames the hymn. The repetition is not accidental; it draws the community—especially women, as v. 20 shows—into participatory praise. As Cross and Freedman famously argued, Miriam’s repetition reflects antiphonal performance within early Israelite worship³⁷.

Pamela Barmash further notes that such refrains anchor emotional memory by repeatedly associating Israel’s joy with Yahweh’s victory³⁸.

4. Parallelism and Theological Emphasis

Parallelism in Exodus 15 consistently directs attention to Yahweh’s uniqueness and supremacy. For example:

מִי־כַמּוֹכָה בְּאַלֹּהִים יְהוָה

מִי־כַמּוֹכָה נְאֻדָּר בְּקֹדֶשׁ

mî-kāmōkā bā’ēlīm YHWH

mî-kāmōkā ne’ dār baqqōdeš

“Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?

Who is like you, majestic in holiness?” (Exod 15:11 ESV)

This rhetorical parallelism functions doxologically: repetition becomes confession. As Berlin emphasizes, parallel questions in Hebrew poetry are designed not to elicit answers but to “shape belief through rhythmic affirmation”³⁹.

5. Summary: Function of Repetition and Parallelism

Table 2 Repetition and Parallelism

Exodus 14 (Prose)	Exodus 15 (Poetry)
Minimal repetition	Constant repetition
Functional, narrative	Theological, liturgical
Clarifies sequence	Intensifies meaning
No parallelism	Parallelism as structural core

³⁷ Cross, and Freedman, “The Song of Miriam,” 249.

³⁸ Barmash, “Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15,” 152.

³⁹ Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 132.



Repetition and parallelism thus mark the transition from narrative report to poetic proclamation. Exodus 14 recounts deliverance once; Exodus 15 repeats it so that it may be remembered, sung, and believed across generations.

As Watson aptly concludes, “where narrative tells, poetry tells again—and by telling again, it transforms history into faith”⁴⁰.

Message Focus

The divergence between Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 becomes especially clear when considering what each chapter foregrounds as its central message. Although both texts recount the same salvific event, their literary forms channel attention toward distinct theological emphases. Exodus 14 concentrates on deliverance as an act accomplished in history, while Exodus 15 rearticulates that deliverance as a revelation of YHWH’s identity and kingship. Genre thus directs message: prose secures the fact of salvation; poetry proclaims its meaning.

1. Exodus 14: Deliverance Accomplished in History

The narrative focus of Exodus 14 rests squarely on the act of salvation itself—what YHWH did and how Israel experienced it in real time. The chapter’s climactic message is summarized in a single, programmatic statement:

וַיִּשַׁע יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם

wayyōša‘ YHWH bayyôm hahû’ ’et-yîsrā’ēl miyad miṣrayim

“Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians” (Exod 14:30a **ESV**).

The emphasis is concrete and temporal (“that day”), anchoring Israel’s salvation within history. The narrative’s final response underscores the same focus:

וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה ... וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ בִּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ

wayyîr’û hā’ām ’et-YHWH ... wayya’āmînû bayYHWH ûbMōšeh ‘abdô

“The people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses” (Exod 14:31 **ESV**).

Here the narrative message culminates in recognition and trust. As Childs notes, Exodus 14 aims to establish the event as an authoritative historical witness, grounding Israel’s faith in a concrete act of divine intervention⁴¹. The chapter’s concern is not to theologize expansively but to secure belief through history. Its message is essentially declarative: YHWH has delivered Israel.

2. Exodus 15: Deliverance Interpreted as Revelation of YHWH

In contrast, Exodus 15 re-centers the same event around who YHWH is, not merely what he has done. The poem’s message moves beyond historical report to theological confession. This shift is evident already in the hymn’s opening affirmation:

יְהוָה יְהוָה עֲזִי וְעֶזְרָתִי

yāh YHWH ‘ozî wēzimrat yāh

⁴⁰ Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 29.

⁴¹ Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 228–36.



“The LORD is my strength and my song” (Exod 15:2a **ESV**).

The focus here is relational and confessional. Salvation is internalized (“my strength”) and voiced in worship (“my song”). The poem repeatedly reorients attention from the event to the divine agent:

מִי־כַמֹּכָה בָּאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה

mî-kāmōkā bā’ēlīm YHWH

“Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?” (Exod 15:11a **ESV**).

This rhetorical question frames the Red Sea deliverance as a theological polemic, asserting YHWH’s incomparability. As Cross famously argued, Exodus 15 belongs to the tradition of ancient Near Eastern victory hymns, where historical triumph is reframed as cosmic supremacy⁴².

The poem’s climactic message confirms this shift:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד

YHWH yimlōk lē’ōlām wā’ed

“The LORD will reign forever and ever” (Exod 15:18 **ESV**).

Deliverance now culminates in enthronement theology. The event at the sea becomes evidence for YHWH’s eternal kingship. As Durham observes, the song’s message is no longer confined to the moment of escape but projects forward into Israel’s identity under divine rule⁴³.

3. From Event to Meaning: Complementary Message Focus

The difference in message focus between the chapters may be summarized as follows:

Exodus 14 asks: What happened, and why should Israel believe?

Exodus 15 asks: What does this event reveal about YHWH, and how should Israel respond?

As Berlin emphasizes, Hebrew poetry often “redirects attention from action to significance,” converting narrative memory into theological understanding⁴⁴. Poetry does not replace narrative; it interprets it.

Pamela Barmash similarly notes that Exodus 15 reframes the crossing event into a paradigmatic confession, transforming a single historical moment into a perpetual proclamation of divine power⁴⁵.

4. Summary

Table 3 Message Focus

Exodus 14	Exodus 15
Focus on the event	Focus on YHWH
Salvation as historical act	Salvation as theological revelation
“The LORD saved Israel” (14:30)	“Who is like you, O LORD?” (15:11)
Culminates in belief	Culminates in worship and kingship

⁴² Cross, and Freedman, “The Song of Miriam,” 118.

⁴³ Durham, *Exodus*, 3:215.

⁴⁴ Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 12.

⁴⁵ Barmash, “Through the Kaleidoscope of Literary Imagery in Exodus 15,” 150–53.



Together, the chapters present a deliberate literary-theological progression: history grounds faith, and poetry gives faith its voice. Exodus 14 secures the reality of salvation; Exodus 15 proclaims its meaning.

Purpose and function

While Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 recount the same salvific event, their divergent literary forms reveal distinct purposes and communal functions. Narrative prose functions primarily to preserve and authenticate history, whereas poetry functions to activate memory through worship. Together, these chapters demonstrate how Israel's Scripture employs genre to shape not only understanding but also practice—moving the community from remembrance to participation.

1. Narrative as Testimony and Instruction (Exodus 14)

The primary function of Exodus 14 is testimonial and pedagogical. The prose narrative fixes the crossing of the sea as a remembered historical event that forms the foundation of Israel's faith. Its purpose is not emotional engagement but didactic clarity: Israel must know what YHWH has done and why he is trustworthy.

This function is especially evident in the concluding statement of the chapter:

וַיַּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם

wayyar' Yisrā'el 'et-hayyād haggēdōlā 'āšer- 'āsā YHWH bēmiṣrayim

Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians" (Exod 14:31a ESV).

The verb וַיַּרְא ("and Israel saw") highlights perception and comprehension, signaling that the narrative aims to produce recognition. As Fretheim notes, the story "educates Israel into faith by narrating divine action in history"⁴⁶.

This educational purpose corresponds to ancient Israel's use of narrative as covenantal memory. The prose text was suitable for public reading, instruction, and catechesis, ensuring that successive generations could recount the foundational act of deliverance. As Childs argues, Exodus 14 functions as normative testimony, shaping Israel's identity through remembered history⁴⁷.

2. Poetry as Worship and Identity Formation (Exodus 15)

In contrast, Exodus 15 serves a primarily liturgical and formative function. Its purpose is not to inform but to engage, not to instruct sequentially but to evoke communal response. The song transforms the remembered event into corporate worship, embedding theology within praise.

This functional shift is introduced by the performative verb:

אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה

'āšîrāh laYHWH

"I will sing to the LORD" (Exod 15:1 ESV).

⁴⁶ Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991), 154.

⁴⁷ Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 236.



Unlike the narrative's third-person reporting, the poetry speaks in the first person, immediately inviting participation. As Brueggemann notes, Israel's hymnody exists to "move the community from knowledge to articulation, from belief to praise"⁴⁸.

The communal dimension becomes explicit in Miriam's response:

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־גָאֹה גָאָה

šîrû laYHWH kî gā'ôh gā'āh

"Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously" (Exod 15:21a **ESV**).

Here, imperative language (šîrû, "sing!") reinforces the song's function as corporate exhortation. Cross and Freedman famously interpreted Miriam's role as evidence of antiphonal or responsive performance, highlighting the song's ritual setting⁴⁹.

The poetic function thus extends beyond the moment of the sea crossing. It shapes Israel's identity as a worshipping community under divine kingship, as proclaimed in the hymn's climax:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד

YHWH yimlōk lē'ōlām wā'ed

"The LORD will reign forever and ever" (Exod 15:18 **ESV**).

This declaration moves the community forward—beyond deliverance, toward allegiance and hope. As Durham observes, the song functions as a theological bridge, linking past rescue with future trust⁵⁰.

3. Complementary Functions: Memory and Participation

The functional contrast between Exodus 14 and 15 mirrors a broader biblical pattern:

Narrative stabilizes memory.

Poetry mobilizes response.

Exodus 14 ensures that Israel remembers the crossing as a factual intervention by YHWH. Exodus 15 ensures that Israel relives that intervention through worship. As Wendland explains, poetry serves as "a tool for embedding theology in emotion and rhythm, ensuring its endurance in communal consciousness"⁵¹.

Together, prose and poetry form a theological pedagogy: history grounds faith, and worship sustains it. Neither text alone is sufficient; their juxtaposition allows Israel to both know and confess its salvation.

4. Summary

Table 4 Purpose and Function

Exodus 14 (Prose)	Exodus 15 (Poetry)
Testimonial narrative	Liturgical proclamation
Educates belief	Shapes worship

⁴⁸ Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 19.

⁴⁹ Cross, and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 248.

⁵⁰ Durham, *Exodus*, 3:214.

⁵¹ Wendland, *Moses' Psalm by the Sea: A Study of Israel's Thanksgiving Song (Exodus 15:1-21)*, 163.



Exodus 14 (Prose)	Exodus 15 (Poetry)
Preserves event	Reactivates event
Focus on seeing and believing	Focus on singing and confessing

Theological and poetic perspective

The differing literary forms of Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 culminate in distinct theological perspectives articulated through their respective genres. While prose narrates divine action within history, poetry interprets that action by locating it within a broader theological horizon—one in which YHWH's power, holiness, and kingship are proclaimed. The Song of the Sea thus functions not merely as a response to deliverance but as a theological lens through which the community understands its God.

1. Narrative Theology in Exodus 14: YHWH as Saving Agent

The theology of Exodus 14 is primarily implicit and event-centered. YHWH's identity emerges through action rather than explicit theological reflection. This is evident in Moses' exhortation to the people:

יְהוָה יִלָּחֶם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ שָׁמְטִים

YHWH yillāḥēm lākem wə'attem taḥārîšûn

"The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent" (Exod 14:14).

The statement emphasizes divine initiative and human passivity, framing salvation as an act accomplished solely by YHWH. The theological perspective is practical and situational: Israel learns who YHWH is by witnessing what he does. As Fretheim observes, Exodus 14 presents theology "in narrative motion," allowing divine character to be inferred from historical intervention⁵².

This perspective culminates in Israel's fear and belief (14:31), reinforcing a theology grounded in empirical encounter. The narrative does not systematize doctrine; it narrates deliverance so that faith may arise from memory.

2. Poetic Theology in Exodus 15: YHWH as Warrior-King

Exodus 15, by contrast, articulates theology explicitly and confessionally. The poem gathers images, metaphors, and doxological statements to present a coherent theological vision centered on YHWH's kingship. The declaration is unambiguous:

יְהוָה אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה

YHWH 'îš milḥāmāh

"The LORD is a man of war" (Exod 15:3 ESV).

This metaphor crystallizes a central theological motif. YHWH is not merely one who happens to fight; he is a warrior, inherently characterized by victorious power. Frank Moore Cross situates this depiction within ancient Near Eastern divine-warrior traditions, where victory hymns proclaim the deity's rule over chaos and enemies alike⁵³.

The poem proceeds to intensify this theological vision by pairing power with holiness:

מִי־כֹמֶךָ בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה

מִי־כֹמֶךָ נְאֻדָּר בְּקֹדֶשׁ

⁵² Fretheim, *Exodus*, 148.

⁵³ Cross, and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 115.



mî-kāmōkā bā'ēlīm YHWH

mî-kāmōkā ne'dār baqqōdeš

“Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?

Who is like you, majestic in holiness?” (Exod 15:11 ESV).

Here theology moves beyond victory to uniqueness and holiness. The rhetorical parallelism insists that YHWH is incomparable not only in power but in moral and sacred authority. As Childs notes, this verse represents a decisive move toward monotheistic confession, framed through poetic exaltation rather than philosophical argument⁵⁴.

3. From Rescue to Reign: Eschatological Horizon

One of the most distinctive features of Exodus 15's theological perspective is its forward-looking orientation. The poem does not stop with Egypt's defeat; it projects YHWH's reign into the future:

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד

YHWH yimlōk lē'ōlām wā'ed

“The LORD will reign forever and ever” (Exod 15:18).

This statement reframes the Red Sea deliverance as more than a historical rescue—it becomes evidence of enduring kingship. As Durham argues, Exodus 15 presents not a temporary victory but “a theological claim about YHWH's permanent sovereignty”⁵⁵.

Poetry thus enables a theological leap that prose does not attempt: from past event to perpetual rule. The song's imagery of planting Israel on God's holy mountain (15:17) confirms this teleological thrust, linking deliverance, land, sanctuary, and kingship into a unified theological vision.

4. Complementary Perspectives: Action and Interpretation

When read together, Exodus 14 and 15 offer complementary theological perspectives:

Narrative theology (Exod 14) reveals YHWH through action in history.

Poetic theology (Exod 15) interprets that action, declaring its meaning for worship and belief.

As Berlin observes, poetry “does not add new events but adds new understanding,” transforming experience into confession⁵⁶. Theological reflection, therefore, is not detached speculation but a liturgical response rooted in remembered history.

Pamela Barmash further emphasizes that the Song of the Sea functions as a canonical lens through which later Israelite theology interpreted divine power and holiness. The poem teaches Israel not only *that* YHWH saves, but *what kind of God* saves.

5. Summary

Table 5 Theological and poetic perspective

Exodus 14	Exodus 15
Theology implicit in action	Theology explicit in confession
YHWH revealed through deeds	YHWH proclaimed through poetry

⁵⁴ Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 237.

⁵⁵ Durham, *Exodus*, 3:215.

⁵⁶ Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 11.



Exodus 14	Exodus 15
Focus on rescue	Focus on kingship
Faith grounded in memory	Faith expressed in worship

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 reveals that while both chapters recount the same foundational event—the liberation of Israel through the Red Sea and the defeat of the Egyptian army—they do so from radically different literary and theological perspectives. Exodus 14, with its prose narrative style, is oriented towards the clear and orderly transmission of historical facts, with the aim of instructing, witnessing and cementing the people's faith in the saving power of Yahweh. Exodus 15, on the other hand, framed in a poetic and liturgical structure, transforms the event into a song of praise, in which the emphasis is no longer on "what happened," but on "who God is" and his eternal reign.

Throughout the article, differences in the structure, language, tone, emotional charge, use of parallelism, theological approach, and function of each chapter have been explored. The prose of Exodus 14 is sober, factual, and obedient faith-oriented; the poetry of Exodus 15 is exultant, symbolic, and worship-oriented. While one presents God's action as an object of trust, the other celebrates his person as an object of praise. This complementarity not only enriches the biblical narrative, but also shows how Israel understood, transmitted, and responded to divine intervention, in a dynamic of historical memory and liturgical response.

Both texts, therefore, form a theological unity in which history and poetry, witness and worship, faith and worship converge to affirm that the God who saves in history is the same one who reigns forever. This double expression—narrative and poetic—is key not only to understanding the theology of Exodus, but also to reflecting on how the Church today remembers, proclaims, and celebrates God's redemptive action in Christ.

A comparative analysis of Exodus 14 and Exodus 15 reveals that the Bible uses different literary genres to convey the same event from different perspectives. Exodus 14 presents a historical account in prose, focusing on the events and sequence of divine intervention. Instead, Exodus 15 is a response of worship, which uses poetry to express the greatness of God and the joy of the people of Israel.

This study highlights the importance of considering literary genre when interpreting biblical texts. Prose documents history and poetry gives meaning to the experience of salvation, offering a model of how narrative and worship work together in the biblical tradition.

Future research

The present study has offered a comparative analysis between chapters 14 and 15 of Exodus from a literary, theological and functional perspective. However, this approach opens up the possibility of exploring other areas that complement and expand the understanding of these texts and of biblical poetry in general.

One possible line of research would be a comparative study between the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15) and other early biblical hymns, such as the Song of Deborah (Judges 5), the Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2), or the Song of David (2 Samuel 22). Such comparisons would make it



possible to identify common patterns in the structure, theology of war, the use of parallelism, and the liturgical function of these poems in diverse historical contexts.

Likewise, a study could be conducted on the reception and reuse of motifs from Exodus 15 in the Psalms, especially those that celebrate Yahweh's exploits as a warrior and king (e.g., Psalms 18, 68, 74, 77, and 114). This research would help trace how the language of the song became integrated into Israel's liturgical and theological tradition over time.

Another pertinent area is the analysis of poetic parallelism and musicality in the context of the Ancient Near East, comparing Hebrew poetry with Ugaritic, Akkadic, or Egyptian texts that also exalt warrior deities. Studies such as those of Frank Moore Cross have pointed out formal and thematic similarities that could be deepened from a more philological and comparative approach.

Finally, it would be valuable to explore the pastoral and homiletical function of Exodus 14–15 in the Christian tradition, considering how these texts have been interpreted in contexts of crisis, liberation, or worship in historical and contemporary Christian communities. This would allow us to reflect on its current relevance as a paradigm of theological memory, liturgical celebration and proclamation of the reign of God.

These and other possible investigations show that the texts of the Exodus not only narrate a historical event, but also constitute a fertile field for dialogue between literature, theology, liturgy and the life of the People of God throughout the centuries.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of Exodus 14 and 15, the following recommendations are proposed for the teaching, preaching, and theological study of these texts:

1. Incorporate literary analysis into biblical study: The distinction between prose and poetry should not be seen as a mere stylistic datum, but as a fundamental exegetical tool. It is recommended that seminaries, Bible institutes, and pastoral studies include modules on the analysis of literary genres, as these profoundly influence theology and the reception of the text.
2. Encourage synchronous reading between narrative and hymn: Exodus 14 and 15 are encouraged to be read as a literary and theological unit. This practice allows us to observe how Israel responds to God's saving act with worship, and how the liturgy arises as a natural reaction to divine intervention. This approach can enrich homiletical teaching and community spirituality.
3. Use Exodus 15 in contemporary liturgical contexts: The Song of the Sea, by its celebratory tone, can be adapted in times of congregational worship as a confession of faith and praise. Its exalted language invites us to recover the value of biblical poetry in the devotional life of the church.
4. Study the theology of the warrior God with pastoral sensitivity: Although the language of war may be uncomfortable in modern contexts, its correct interpretation offers a powerful image of God as a defender of the oppressed. It is recommended to approach it pastorally as an expression of God's commitment to justice and liberation.
5. Promote liturgical and theological reflection from the structure of the song: Pastors and worship leaders can use Exodus 15 as a model for composing songs that integrate



elements of historical memory, proclamation of divine character, and future hope. The "action–response–confession" pattern is a solid framework for designing biblically informed moments of worship.

In sum, this study not only offers a deeper reading of the texts, but also provides tools to enrich the theological, liturgical, and pedagogical life of the church, helping God's people to celebrate with understanding what He has done, what He is, and what He promises to do.

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