

When Song Becomes Victory: *zāmar*, Power-of-God-Singing, and the Cochin Hebrew New Testament

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Abstract

This article examines “Power-of-God-singing” as a proposed theological category arising from the Hebrew root *zāmar* (זמר), its Piel verbal forms, and its wider semantic field of singing, music-making, plucking, pruning, and cutting. Using a variety of methods—including philological, canonical, and comparative approaches—this study explores key passages in the Tanakh in which song symbolizes deliverance, victory, spiritual relief, and covenant-rooted worship. Special attention is given to Exodus 15:2, David playing his lyre before Saul, Jehoshaphat’s battle assembly, and the depiction of eschatological song in Revelation. The article explores how everyday singing, lamenting, and praising use common words, but also examines the unique *zāmar/mizmor* (זמר/מזמור) language found in the Cochin Hebrew New Testament manuscripts, especially Cambridge MS Oo.1.32, MS Oo.1.16.1, and MS Oo.1.16.2. It suggests that in some contexts, this *zāmar* language reflects a deeper, more sacred way of singing that centers on God—evoking themes of salvation, growth, renewal, and victory—without suggesting that music has any inherent, independent power.

Keywords: Power-of-God-singing; Biblical Hebrew; Piel stem: *zamar*; Cochin Hebrew New Testament; Hebrew New Testament manuscripts; Psalms; Revelation.

1. Introduction

Singing holds a special place in biblical narrative. Israel sings with joy after crossing the sea; David sings as king, warrior, and poet; Levitical musicians are organized for temple service; Jehoshaphat sends singers ahead of his army; Paul and Silas sing while imprisoned; and Revelation portrays heavenly communities singing new songs before God’s throne. These examples show that biblical song is more than a literary detail. It becomes a way to proclaim, remember, embody, and respond to divine action. They also raise the central question of this study: in certain moments, does singing in Scripture serve to proclaim, remember, embody, or release divine power?

This paper explores that question through the Hebrew root *zāmar* (זמר; zayin–mem–resh). Standard lexical resources such as Gesenius-Tregelles, Brown-Driver-Briggs, HALOT, and TDOT identify *zāmar* in its worship sense as “to sing,” “to make music,” or “to celebrate in song,” especially in poetic and Piel contexts. They also preserve or distinguish related senses involving striking or plucking strings and pruning or trimming. These observations do not prove a technical doctrine of miraculous song, but they do provide the philological basis for asking whether certain biblical uses of *zāmar* should be heard as intensified, purposeful, and theologically charged singing rather than generic music.

The main idea of this paper is that “Power-of-God-singing” can best be understood as a cautious theological category built from several converging lines of evidence: the broad meaning of the Hebrew root *zāmar* (זמר), the expressive possibilities of the Piel stem, biblical links between singing, deliverance, and victory, the traditions of David and the Levites involving Spirit-connected music, and the distinctive Hebrew renderings preserved in the Cochin Hebrew New Testament manuscripts. This category is not meant to replace established dictionary definitions or turn every act of singing into a miracle claim. Instead, it names a repeated biblical and manuscript pattern that should be tested carefully in each passage.

This framing states the article’s central claim: Power-of-God-singing is a cautious theological category grounded in converging lexical, grammatical, canonical, and manuscript evidence. The category remains deliberately bounded. It does not attribute independent efficacy to music, nor does it treat every biblical reference to song as a miracle claim. Rather, it identifies a recurring pattern in which God-directed song functions as praise, proclamation, remembrance, resistance, and participation in divine victory.

2. Methodology and Sources

The approach is rooted in philology, tradition, and comparison. First, the paper explores the vocabulary around *zāmar* (זמר) and its related nouns, such as *mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר) and *zimrah* (זִמְרָה), along with similar forms. It then examines the grammatical importance of the Piel stem, not just as a simple “intensive” marker in every case, but as a verbal pattern capable of conveying different meanings—from emphasizing action to indicating repeated activity, causative force, or specialized lexical use. Third, it examines selected biblical texts in which singing is linked to deliverance,

warfare, spiritual relief, worship, or eschatological victory. Fourth, it compares the New Testament's language of singing, as represented in the Cochin Hebrew New Testament manuscripts, with other Hebrew New Testament witnesses where available.

From a linguistic-anthropological perspective, the question is not only what a dictionary permits the word to mean, but what range of associations an ancient writer, translator, or receiving community may have heard in the word when it was used. A term such as *zāmar* could carry more than one resonance at once: singing, instrumental action, plucking, and, within the broader root field, pruning or cutting. This does not prove that every author consciously intended all possible meanings in every occurrence. It does, however, leave open the possibility that a writer or translator working within a Semitic linguistic world may have selected the word because its range of meanings made it especially fitting for contexts involving worship, victory, deliverance, or divine action.

The principal sources are the Hebrew Bible/Tanakh; the Greek New Testament textual tradition, used as a comparative context for the New Testament passages discussed; and the Cochin Hebrew New Testament manuscripts held by Cambridge University Library, especially MS Oo.1.32, MS Oo.1.16.1, and MS Oo.1.16.2. The study also relies on standard lexical and grammatical authorities, including Gesenius-Tregelles, Brown-Driver-Briggs, HALOT, TDOT, and Joüon-Muraoka, along with manuscript descriptions from Cambridge and related scholarship on the Cochin Hebrew New Testament tradition.

This article also builds on my earlier study, "The Cochin Hebrew New Testament Manuscripts at Cambridge (MS Oo.1.32, Oo.1.16.1, Oo.1.16.2): Late Copies with Signs of an Early Semitic Tradition," published in the *European Hebrew Journal*. That article argued that the Cambridge Cochin witnesses should be evaluated as a stratified textual complex rather than dismissed as uniformly late and derivative. The present study applies that methodological framework to the narrower question of God-singing and *zāmar* (זמר)-related terminology while preserving the historical and manuscript context of the Cochin Hebrew tradition.

Transliteration note: Hebrew and Aramaic terms are transliterated in a simplified scholarly form for readability. Where exact manuscript spelling or philological detail is significant, the Hebrew form is supplied. Technical transliterations are provided selectively, especially for terms central to the argument, including *zāmar*, *zimrāt*, *dēvar 'asrā*, *lehitpallēl*, and *rinnāh*.

3. The Lexical Field of *zāmar*

The verbal root *zāmar* (זמר) is widely attested in contexts of singing praise or making music for God. Brown-Driver-Briggs identifies the worship verb as Piel, “make music in praise of God,” and notes that it is used chiefly in poetry. Gesenius-Tregelles, HALOT, and TDOT likewise place the worship use of *zāmar* within the field of singing, praising, and making music, while also distinguishing the related agricultural sense of trimming or pruning in contexts such as Leviticus 25 and Isaiah 5.¹ These standard lexical observations show that *zāmar* belongs to a semantic environment of music, praise, instrumental action, and pruning/cutting imagery, though the relationship between these senses remains debated.

Broader Semitic comparison also supports the antiquity of the musical sense of *zāmar*. Hebrew *zāmar* should not be described as deriving from Akkadian; rather, Hebrew *zāmar* and Akkadian *zamārum*, “to sing” or “to play an instrument,” are cognates reflecting a shared older Semitic inheritance. This comparative evidence suggests that the association among music-making, vocal praise, and instrumental performance belongs to a deep ancient Near Eastern cultural and linguistic horizon, predating the biblical texts themselves.

For this paper, the most cautious philological claim is not that every occurrence of *zāmar* (זמר) means “cutting down enemies,” nor that the pruning root must control every musical use. Rather, the claim is that the Hebrew root family permits a rich interpretive field in which musical praise, instrumental plucking, and cutting/pruning imagery may mutually illuminate certain theological contexts. When a passage already associates song with victory, judgment, deliverance, or divine intervention, the broader lexical field can strengthen the case for reading the song as active, forceful, and spiritually consequential.

¹ See Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2015), s.v. זמר; Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979), s.v. זמר; Ludwig Köhler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), s.v. זמר; and G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974–2021), s.v. זמר.

3.1 Singing, Praise, Lament, and *zāmar*: Lexical Differentiation in the Cochin Hebrew New Testament

The Cochin Hebrew New Testament evidence requires attention to a wider lexical field than *shir* (שיר) and *zāmar* (זמר) alone. The relevant passages distinguish several forms of vocal and liturgical expression: ordinary singing with *shir* or *shirot* (שירות), mourning with *qonenim* (קוננים), praise with *meshabbəhim* (משבחים) or *teshubahot* (תשובחות), and marked forms derived from *zāmar*, including *mizmor* (מזמור) and related verbal forms. This lexical distribution suggests that the manuscript tradition does not treat the Hebrew vocabulary of song and praise as interchangeable, but differentiates among distinct modes of vocal, liturgical, and theological expression.

Within this pattern, words like *shir* and related song vocabulary serve as broader terms for general singing, vocal expression, or lamenting performances. Praise words such as *meshabbəhim* and *teshubahot* explicitly denote acts of praise. In contrast, *zāmar* evokes a range of associations: singing with instruments, plucking or striking strings, and—through a homonymic connection—trimming or cutting. The Cochin shift between these vocabulary groups does not, on its own, prove an early source text, but it challenges the idea that these translations are careless or merely back-translated from Greek. Instead, it may preserve a subtle linguistic fingerprint, reflecting Semitic lexical reasoning that warrants further investigation through manuscript study.

4. The Piel Stem and Intensified Verbal Action

Wherever *zāmar* (זמר) is used in the Tanakh to denote singing or musical praise, it typically appears in the Piel form. This pattern matters because the Piel stem can express various nuanced verbal forces, such as repetition, intentionality, intensity, frequentative actions, causative nuances, or lexical specialization, depending on context. Importantly, the presence of the Piel does not automatically imply all these meanings in every case. Instead, it indicates that *zāmar* is presented as a purposeful and intensified action, rather than just an incidental or passive act of singing.

Table 1 illustrates representative Piel uses of *zāmar* in Tanakh worship and victory contexts.

Table 1. Representative Piel Uses of <i>zāmar</i> in the Tanakh			
Reference	Hebrew Form	Basic Sense	Piel Function in Context
Psalm 98:5	זָמְרוּ (<i>zammeru</i>)	“Sing / make music.”	The command for worship in the imperative form uses the Piel form to show intentional, directed praise to YHWH with a lyre and voice.
Psalm 147:1	זָמְרָה (<i>zamrah</i>)	“Sing praise / make music.”	Liturgical exhortation; the form presents praise as fitting, deliberate, and repeated communal action.
Psalm 149:3	יִזְמְרוּ (<i>yezammeru</i>)	“Let them sing praise.”	Jussive/imperfect form in a worship setting with dance, tambourine, and lyre; Piel supports embodied, instrumental praise.
Judges 5:3	אֶזְמֹר (<i>azammer</i>)	“I will sing praise.”	First-person vow within victory poetry; Piel presents song as intentional proclamation after divine deliverance.
2 Samuel 22:50 / Psalm 18:49	אֶזְמֹר (<i>azammer</i>)	“I will sing praise.”	Royal thanksgiving among the nations; Piel marks deliberate public praise after rescue from enemies.

Source and method: Examples are representative rather than exhaustive. The table illustrates how Piel forms of *zāmar* (זמר) function in worship, victory, and public praise contexts across the Tanakh; fuller morphological tabulation is beyond the scope of this article.

These examples indicate that the argument does not rest on isolated wordplay or a single metaphor. In the Tanakh, verbal forms of *zāmar* (זמר) frequently occur in Piel worship contexts associated with praise, victory, divine intervention, judgment, deliverance, and public testimony. The evidence therefore supports a limited but meaningful claim: in certain contexts, *zāmar*-language can carry theological force beyond generic singing. Read alongside the Cochin Hebrew New

Testament, the term may mark a form of God-directed song associated with Spirit-led worship, divine strength, and victory over hostile powers, while leaving the agency of that power with God rather than with music itself.

The Piel stem is among the most discussed and semantically flexible stems in Biblical Hebrew. It is often associated with intensive, factitive, causative, declarative, denominative, or frequentative meanings, depending on the root and context. Modern pedagogical summaries rightly warn that Piel cannot be translated mechanically; the lexeme and passage must decide the force. Nevertheless, the stem commonly signals an active and marked verbal formation. The familiar contrast between Qal שָׁבַר (“he broke”) and Piel שִׁבַּר (“he shattered” or “smashed”) illustrates how Piel may intensify or specify the action.

When *zāmar* (זָמַר) appears in Piel worship contexts, the action is represented as intentional, marked, and liturgically situated. The stem alone does not require the translation “intense singing,” but it does support the observation that biblical *zāmar* is commonly more than casual vocal activity. It denotes music and praise performed before God, often within communal, covenantal, or victorious settings.

5. Singing, Power, and Victory in the Hebrew Bible

The central question in this section is whether the Janus-like force of *zimrāt* (זִמְרָת) in Exodus 15:2 illuminates the broader pattern of *zāmar*-related language examined in this article. If the root can evoke both song and cutting within the victory setting of the Song of the Sea, then comparable contexts—war songs, victory hymns, liturgical psalms, and eschatological songs—deserve renewed attention. Exodus 15 and Judges 5 function here as paradigmatic victory songs; the *mizmorim* (מִזְמוֹרִים) of the Psalter represent liturgical works entrusted to those who lead sacred song; and the songs of the elders, the 144,000, and those who overcome the beast present song at the culmination of divine victory. The repeated presence of *zāmar*-language in such contexts warrants the theological proposal advanced here: Power-of-God-singing names praise that remembers, proclaims, and anticipates YHWH’s defeat of hostile powers.

5.1 The Song of the Sea and the Archetype of Victory Song

Exodus 15 describes the Song of the Sea as Israel's first major national victory song. Yet it is more than a celebration; it is a declaration of who YHWH is—warrior, redeemer, and king. In verse 2, the word *zimrāt*, usually translated as “song” or “strength/song,” appears in the phrase often rendered “Yah is my strength and song.” This phrase invites reflection on the relationship between strength and song. Here, song becomes a means of remembering, interpreting, and transmitting the experience of deliverance.

My initial attention to this interpretation was shaped by instruction from my first Biblical Hebrew instructor in Jerusalem, who is from a Cohen family and who suggested that the use of *zāmar* (זמר)-language in Exodus 15 and Judges 5 may point to a form of “Power-of-God-singing” rather than ordinary song. While this observation is treated here as an interpretive prompt rather than as independent proof, it converges with the lexical, grammatical, and contextual evidence examined in this study.

5.2 Janus Parallelism and the Double Force of *zimrāt* in Exodus 15:2

Another literary technique highlights the significance of Exodus 15:2 in this study: the idea that the Hebrew word *zimrāt* (זמרת) may function like a Janus-like term in early Hebrew poetry. Janus parallelism, a concept associated with Cyrus H. Gordon and further explored in studies of Hebrew and ancient Near Eastern poetry, describes a word with multiple meanings that 'looks' in two directions at once: one meaning connects to what came before, while another points forward to what follows. This device is especially useful in poetry because it allows a single word to convey two layers of meaning at the same time.

‘ozzi we-*zimrāt* Yāh (עֲזִי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה) in Exodus 15:2 is usually rendered “Yah is my strength and my song.” On that reading, *zimrāt* (זמרת) points backward to the liturgical and musical sense of *zāmar* (זמר): Israel stands on the far shore and sings praise after deliverance. Yet the same consonantal root also belongs to a pruning or cutting field, as in the agricultural use of *zāmar* (זמר) for pruning a vineyard. This phrase can mainly be understood as “my song,” but it also hints at the idea of cutting, pruning, or severing within the broader root field. The poetic intention isn't to replace praise with violence or to suggest that every use of *zāmar* carries both meanings, but to blend

praise and victory in this moment: Israel's worship arises from YHWH's definitive act of cutting down Pharaoh's military strength.

Read in this way, the Song of the Sea is not merely a communal celebration after escape, but a dense act of victory poetry. The musical sense of *zimrāt* portrays the redeemed community praising YHWH on the shore; the cutting or pruning resonance evokes the divine warrior who has broken Egypt's military force. The theological force of the word lies precisely in this poetic convergence. Song and victory are not separate motifs but mutually interpreting dimensions of Israel's confession that YHWH has delivered His people.

The Song of the Sea also acts as a meaningful link between the Torah and Revelation. Revelation 15:3 describes the victorious believers as singing both "the song of Moses" and "the song of the Lamb." While the exact connection between Exodus 15 and Revelation 15 may be complex, the overall pattern is clear: the song of liberation at Israel's early redemption sets the stage for the song of ultimate victory.

Within this canonical frame, the song of the 144,000 in Revelation 14 may be read, cautiously, as an eschatological renewal of the Song of the Sea. YHWH is confessed as the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End; accordingly, this article entertains the theological proposal that the first great song of deliverance may also become the final song of victory. Later Jewish and Christian reception traditions that expect the Song of the Sea to be sung again strengthen the plausibility of this canonical association, though the identification remains a theological thesis rather than a demonstrable textual equation.²

5.3 David as God-Singer, Warrior, and Psalmist

David provides one of the most important biblical settings for considering music as spiritually consequential action. In 1 Samuel 16, his lyre-playing brings relief to Saul when a harmful spirit troubles him. The narrative does not present the music as entertainment alone; it places David's

² On the canonical reuse of the Song of the Sea, see Revelation 15:2–3, where the victorious ones stand beside the sea of glass and sing "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Isaiah 12:1–2 also reuses the central language of Exodus 15:2, "Yah/YHWH is my strength and song, and he has become my salvation," within a future restoration context following the gathering imagery of Isaiah 11. Psalm 118:14 likewise repeats the same Exodus lyric within a victory and temple-entry setting later read messianically in Christian interpretation. The opening phrase of Exodus 15:1, *'āz yāšîr* ("then Moses will sing"), has also been read in Jewish interpretation as carrying future force, though in this article it is used only as part of the broader reception history rather than as independent proof of the thesis.

playing within a scene of anointing, royal instability, and spiritual oppression. Later, 2 Samuel 23:1 identifies David as *zemirot Yisrael*, “the sweet singer of Israel,” a title that brings together his roles as anointed ruler, warrior, poet, and singer.

The narrative is theologically complex because the troubling spirit is described as coming from God within the context of Saul’s disobedience and judgment. Even so, David’s Spirit-associated musicianship becomes the occasion for relief: Saul is refreshed, and the harmful spirit departs. The passage therefore does not merely describe music soothing a distressed king. It portrays God using the anointed musician’s playing within a scene of spiritual affliction and divine discipline.

The point should be made carefully. 1 Samuel 16:23 doesn’t explicitly say that David “cut” the spirit through music. However, in the broader context of *zāmar* (זָמַר), David’s act of string-plucking can be seen as symbolic spiritual pruning. The anointed musician isn’t just entertaining Saul; his music, guided by God, creates a scene where Saul is refreshed, and the evil spirit leaves. This shows that David is an important biblical example of how singing for God can act as spiritual resistance: musical praise, in a way, acts like a blade that clears away and cuts back hostile spiritual forces.

This study suggests that singing inspired by God’s Spirit may work analogously to David’s lyre-playing for Saul: not merely as musical expression, but as a Spirit-led act of worship that invites God’s presence to reorder the atmosphere and cause oppressive spiritual forces to retreat. The story of David and Saul therefore offers a model for understanding God-directed music as a setting for deliverance. If David’s anointed playing brought relief to Saul and the harmful spirit departed, then similar Spirit-led worship may be understood within the same biblical pattern: it reorders the human heart and environment under God’s authority, so that hostile spiritual influences are portrayed as losing their hold.

The Psalter brings this picture to life even more with its frequent use of *mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר), usually translated as “psalm.” But a *mizmor* is more than just a poem; it’s a song-prayer designed for singing and worship. Many psalm headings address the *menatzeach* (מְנַצֵּחַ), traditionally “the choirmaster” or “chief musician.” Because the root *netzach* (נָצַח) can carry senses of enduring, excelling, overcoming, or prevailing, the title may be read theologically as more than a musical

office: the leader of sacred song stands at the head of worship that participates in Israel's perseverance and victory.³

The Psalter clarifies the distinction between noun and verbal usage. *Mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר) appears in the superscriptions of fifty-seven psalms as a musical or liturgical designation for a composition intended for performance. By contrast, verbal forms of *zāmar* occur throughout the Psalms as actions of singing praise, making music, or playing instruments before YHWH. The distinction is significant: *mizmor* names the composed liturgical work, while *zāmar* describes the act of performing praise. Explicit calls or vows to *zāmar* appear in passages such as Psalm 7:17; Psalm 27:6; Psalm 33:2; Psalm 47:6–7; Psalm 92:1–3; Psalm 98:5; Psalm 144:9; Psalm 147:1; and Psalm 149:3, where praise is frequently joined to instruments, public testimony, victory, thanksgiving, or embodied worship.

Because many psalms are associated with Davidic authorship and David is identified as *zemirot Yisrael* (זְמִירוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל) in 2 Samuel 23:1, the Psalter presents music as a central dimension of covenantal praise and spiritual resistance. This pattern is already visible in 1 Samuel 16:23, where David's lyre-playing is linked with relief from hostile spiritual presence. It appears again on a communal scale in 2 Chronicles 20:21–22, where singers precede the army and YHWH acts against Judah's enemies. David and Jehoshaphat therefore provide complementary models of God-directed song as worship that accompanies deliverance and victory.

5.4 Jehoshaphat and Song as Battle Formation

2 Chronicles 20 presents a vivid example of song in a warfare setting. When faced with enemy armies, Jehoshaphat appoints singers to go ahead of the troops, praising YHWH for His steadfast love and faithfulness. The story links the beginning of their singing and praise with YHWH setting ambushes against Judah's foes. The singers do not replace God's action; their praise accompanies it. This passage therefore supports a foundational biblical pattern: worship can function as spiritual resistance, not because music controls events, but because covenantal praise aligns the people with the God who saves.

³ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2015), s.v. זָמַח.

5.5 Divine Vocalization: *rinnāh*, *teruah*, and the Voice of the Divine Warrior

The argument for Power-of-God-singing should not be limited to human praise. The Hebrew Bible also portrays divine vocalization as powerful, royal, and martial. In Zephaniah 3:17, YHWH is described as a mighty warrior who saves and rejoices over His people with *rinnāh* (רִנָּה). Although *rinnāh* is often translated as “singing,” lexical evidence also connects it with ringing cry, shout, proclamation, joy, sorrow, victory, and worship. The verse therefore need not be reduced to a gentle image of divine affection. In context, the God who rejoices over Zion is also the warrior who saves; His *rinnāh* may be read as covenantal joy, protective proclamation, and victorious shout.

Teruah (תְּרוּעָה) provides a related category of sacred sound. The term can denote shout, trumpet blast, alarm, celebration, or battle cry, and it regularly appears in contexts of divine kingship and military action. Psalm 47:5 declares that God has ascended with a *teruah* and YHWH with the sound of the shofar. The word’s semantic range shows that biblical sound may be simultaneously liturgical and martial: it announces the arrival of the King, gathers the community, and participates in the public recognition of divine rule.

Isaiah 30:30–32 powerfully combines themes of God’s voice, music, and judgment. The prophet describes how YHWH will sound His majestic voice, and every strike of the rod against the enemy will be accompanied by the melodies of tambourines and lyres. In this scene, music isn’t just background — it marches alongside God’s judgment, turning divine battle into a rhythmic display. This passage echoes the idea behind the *zāmar* (זָמַר) argument: while David’s lyre-playing in 1 Samuel 16 can be seen as spiritual resistance, Isaiah’s words show the opposite — YHWH’s own voice and victorious music accompanying the defeat of oppressors. Heaven’s sound isn’t just ornamental; it’s powerful, rhythmic, and triumphant.

Comparison with ancient Near Eastern material further clarifies the distinctiveness of the Hebrew portrayal of divine voice. In Ugaritic texts such as the Baal Cycle, the storm god’s voice is associated with thunder, power, and cosmic kingship. The Hebrew Bible likewise depicts the divine voice as powerful, but it places that power within covenantal, judicial, and salvific frames: YHWH’s voice creates, judges, protects, delivers, and renews. This wider background strengthens the article’s claim that human song addressed to God participates, by analogy, in a biblical world where sacred sound is bound to divine rule and victory.

In this framework, divine vocalization should not be reduced to emotional metaphor. The Hebrew Bible often treats divine speech, shout, and song as effective covenantal action: God’s voice creates, judges, delivers, and restores. Read alongside the semantic field of *zāmar* (זמר), which blends musical plucking with imagery of pruning or cutting, divine song can be understood as an active metaphor for divine intervention. It’s called “kinetic” not because it suggests modern physics, but because biblical sound is depicted as doing something: announcing judgments, striking enemies, reordering communities, and restoring peace.

6. The Cochin Hebrew New Testament and the Language of Singing

The Cochin Hebrew New Testament manuscripts at Cambridge are significant for this study because they contain Hebrew translations of passages related to singing, psalms, praise, and Spirit-filled worship. Cambridge notes that MS Oo.1.32 is a Hebrew translation of the New Testament from Kochi or Cochin, written on European paper. Claudius Buchanan acquired it from a Cochin synagogue community and presented it to Cambridge in 1809. In my earlier article in the *European Hebrew Journal*, I argued that MS Oo.1.32, MS Oo.1.16.1, and MS Oo.1.16.2 should be seen as interconnected parts of a larger, layered textual tradition rather than simply being dismissed as outdated and derivative. In this study, I use that perspective specifically to explore issues related to singing and the term *zāmar* (זמר).

In this textual collection, the current study examines all Cochin Hebrew New Testament passages that I previously identified as relevant to singing. These include Matthew 11:17; Luke 15:25; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:15 and 14:26; James 5:13; 1 Peter 1:7; Revelation 5:9; Revelation 14:3; and Revelation 15:3. These passages are important not only because some employ forms related to *zāmar* (זמר) or *mizmor* (מזמור), but also because others provide contrastive controls. Matthew 11:17 uses ordinary singing language related to *shir* (שיר); Acts 16:25 uses praise terminology rather than *zāmar*; and the remaining passages preserve marked song language in contexts of Spirit-filled worship, congregational edification, restoration, eschatological praise, or final victory. The argument relies on both presence and contrast: the Cochin tradition seems to distinguish certain types of singing from regular singing or general praise.

The Cochin readings discussed in this section are therefore summarized from my published transcription, translation, and analysis in *Power of God Singing: In the Hebrew New Testament*,

with the present article focusing specifically on their lexical and theological significance for *zāmar/mizmor* language.

6.1 Contrastive Controls: Matthew 11:17 and Acts 16:25

Matthew 11:17 is significant because it doesn't seem to use *zāmar* (זמר) for ordinary musical performance. The Cochin Hebrew wording distinguishes “we sing” with language related to *shir* (שיר) and pairs it with lamentation. This serves as a control example: everyday social singing and mourning can be described without specialized song words. Similarly, Acts 16:25 shows the same pattern. Though Paul and Silas are praying and praising God in prison, the Cochin Hebrew tradition uses praise terminology rather than *zāmar* (זמר). This omission matters because Acts 16 is a passage where we might expect to see “powerful singing” emphasized. The manuscript's word choice suggests that the Cochin copyist or translator tradition didn't use *zāmar* (זמר) indiscriminately for every scene of song, praise, or worship.

6.2 Luke 15:25: Singing at Restoration

Luke 15:25, in the parable of the returning son, places the sound of celebration within the household. In the author's transcription, the Cochin Hebrew uses *zāmar* (זמר) language for the great sound of music heard by the elder son. The context is not battle in the military sense, but about restoration: a son who was lost has come home, the father is overjoyed, and everyone celebrates together. This moment expands what singing can express. It's not just about fighting or ultimate victory, but about coming back, making peace, and sharing joyful promises.

The Cochin Hebrew use of *zāmar* (זמר) in Luke 15:25 allows this study to theorize that the return of prodigal children is itself a setting in which song carries heightened theological force. Just as the father's house in the parable bursts into singing when the lost son comes home, so too should the return of children to their parents and covenant family be a moment when Spirit-led worship arises—celebrating restoration and sharing in divine joy, healing, and deliverance.

6.3 Romans 15:9: Singing among the Nations

Romans 15:9 cites the scriptural expectation that the nations will praise God and that God's name will be sung among them. In the Cochin Hebrew form cited in the book, *azammer* (אזמר) may be rendered “I will sing.” The first-person form feels more personal, turning the act into a declaration

shared among nations. Singing here becomes a testimony that reaches beyond Israel's borders, connecting worship with mission, mercy, and inviting the nations to join in praising YHWH.

6.4 Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16: Spirit-Filled and Wisdom-Filled Singing

Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 are central because they place psalms, praise, and singing within the life of the believing community. In the Cochin Hebrew Ephesians passage, the author notes the presence of *mizmor* (מזמור) and *mezamrim* (מזמרים), while Colossians 3:16 includes ordinary songs and praises together with *mezamrim*. The combination is important: Colossians appears to distinguish *shiroi* (שירות) and praise terminology from *mezamrim* (מזמרים). This suggests that singing is not merely another synonym for music but a distinct category within Spirit-formed instruction, wisdom, and worship in the heart.

6.5 1 Corinthians 14:15 and 14:26: Singing as Spiritual Gift and Edification

1 Corinthians 14 should be read in the context of Paul's encouragement to pursue love and to eagerly desire miraculous spiritual gifts. In that light, the Hebrew wording of 1 Corinthians 14:15 matters because singing "in the Spirit" is connected to understanding, not merely ordinary music or ecstatic expression. The forms *mezammer* (מזמר) and *azammer* (אזמר) occur in this context, linking singing with intelligible spiritual practice. 1 Corinthians 14:26 then extends the pattern to the gathered assembly, where one may have a *mizmor* (מזמור) alongside utterance, knowledge, or interpretation, and all must serve edification. Together, these verses support the interpretation that marked singing may function as a Spirit-enabled congregational gift when ordered by love and directed toward building up the community.

6.6 James 5:13 and 1 Peter 1:7: Singing in Trial, Joy, and Tested Faith

James 5:13 pairs suffering with prayer and cheerfulness with singing. In the Cochin Hebrew form cited in the book, the phrase includes *tzarikh* (צריך), indicating necessity or obligation, and *lezammer* (לזמר), "to sing." This gives the verse a practical pastoral function: the appropriate response to suffering is prayer, while the appropriate response to a good or joyful heart is singing. 1 Peter 1:7 adds another dimension by situating *zamar* (זמר) language within the context of faith refined by fire. Singing is therefore not limited to celebration; it also belongs to tested faith awaiting the revelation of Yeshua Messiah.

6.7 Revelation 5:9, 14:3, and 15:3: Eschatological Singing

The three Revelation passages form the eschatological climax of the study. Revelation 5:9 describes the heavenly elders as singing a renewed song before the throne. Revelation 14:3 presents the 144,000 as singing a renewed song that no one else is able to learn. Revelation 15:3 identifies the victorious group as singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. In the Cochin Hebrew forms cited in the author's work, these passages use *zimru* (זמרו) and *mezamrim* (מזמרים), placing song language at the center of heavenly redemption, the sealed community, and final victory over the beast. The pattern is cumulative: Singing appears in restoration, mission, Spirit-filled worship, congregational edification, tested faith, and eschatological overcoming.

6.8 The Tav, the Seal, and the New Song: A Typological Note

The sealing of the 144,000 in Revelation 7 and 14 may also invite typological reflection on the Hebrew term *tav* (תָּ), “mark” or “sign,” especially in light of Ezekiel 9:4, where the righteous are marked on the forehead. In ancient Israel, the word 'tav' referred to a physical mark, sign, or signature—something tangible—rather than a musical note. The modern Hebrew use of *tav* as a “musical” note didn't exist back then, so it shouldn't be viewed as part of the original meaning of Revelation's seal, nor should it be read into Ezekiel or the Psalms. In the time of the Psalms, music was mainly oral—performed, sung, played on instruments, and committed to memory—without a written system of musical notation like what we have today. Only much later did scribes and religious traditions add marks for cantillation to help with public reading and worship.

The connection is strengthened by the close verbal correspondence between Ezekiel 9:4 and the Cochin Hebrew Revelation. Ezekiel 9:4 marks the preserved remnant with a *tav* *'al ha-mitzhot* (“a mark upon the foreheads”), and the Cochin Hebrew wording of Revelation's sealing scene likewise uses *tav* *'al mitzhot* language for the marked community. This shared forehead-marking formula suggests more than a general thematic parallel: it points to an intentional Ezekielian resonance within the Cochin Hebrew Revelation tradition. Because Ezekiel's vision concerns judgment and preservation among the covenant people, and because the northern kingdom of Israel had already fallen more than a century earlier, the prophecy may be read as reaching beyond Ezekiel's immediate historical moment toward an eschatological marking still unfulfilled. On that basis, this article proposes, cautiously, that the marked remnant in Ezekiel 9 and the sealed singers of Revelation 7 and 14 may be typologically related. The texts alone cannot demonstrate this

identification, but the shared forehead-marking pattern strengthens the possibility that Revelation's 144,000 represent the eschatological completion of Ezekiel's prophetic marking tradition.

If the *tav* (תָּו) functions typologically as a divine sign or written marker, then its placement on the 144,000 can be read, cautiously, as part of their consecration before the song no one else can learn. The point is not that the text defines the seal as musical notation, nor that later Hebrew usage determines the ancient meaning. Rather, the seal-and-song sequence reinforces the larger claim that final deliverance is associated with a marked, Spirit-directed community whose worship is uniquely authorized. This typological reading supports the broader thesis that eschatological victory is enacted not only through passive identification but through the liturgical release of God-directed song.

The importance of these passages isn't just about counting how often they appear, but about understanding their distribution and the differences between them. If a manuscript tradition uses the word *shir* (שִׁיר) or praise terms in some places, but switches to *zāmar* (זָמַר) or *mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר) in sections that are Spirit-filled, uplifting, or victorious, then the translator or tradition might be highlighting a real distinction. The phrase "Power-of-God-singing" is a simple way to describe a pattern: passionate, Spirit-driven singing associated with worship, guidance, deliverance, victory, or final victory.

7. Comparative Hebrew New Testament Witnesses

A comparative manuscript approach adds human depth to the argument by exploring whether the Cochin pattern is unique, copied, or widely shared. Early comparisons with several key texts—like BnF héb. 131 (often referred to as Paris 131), the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana's Vat. Ebr. 100 (known as the Hebrew Gospels of Catalonia or the Sephardic Hebrew Gospels), Freiburg UB Hs. 314 (Freiburg HS-314), the Marseille MS 24 (Marseille MS 24), and the British Library's Royal MS 16 A II (the Shépreve New Testament)—suggest that the Cambridge Cochin Hebrew New Testament stands out due to its rich and widespread use of *zāmar* (זָמַר)-related language across various passages. Additionally, the John Rylands Library's Gaster MS 1616 (Manchester Gaster 1616) appears to be a derivative of the Cochin Hebrew tradition rather than an entirely independent witness. Because its copyist appears to have introduced secondary and unnecessary

changes, it is useful only in a limited way for tracing transmission and alteration and is not foregrounded in the argument.

The tables presented here are selective and exploratory. They highlight the passages most relevant to the argument rather than serving as a complete diplomatic edition of each manuscript witness. A more comprehensive study would include folio references, manuscript images, full transcriptions, and systematic comparisons with Greek, Syriac, and other Hebrew New Testament traditions.

The Greek New Testament offers the comparative textual background for these passages, but the point here isn't solely about Greek vocabulary. Many Greek passages use common words for singing, psalms, hymns, praise, or music; the key question is how the Cochin Hebrew tradition translates those concepts and whether its Hebrew choices set apart everyday song and praise from the more distinct *zāmar/mizmor* language. So, the following tables highlight the Cochin Hebrew evidence and include a straightforward Greek reference for the underlying New Testament vocabulary.

Table 2. Cochin Hebrew New Testament Singing Passages: Hebrew Text and English Gloss			
Passage	Cochin Hebrew Text / Excerpt	English Gloss	Function in the Argument
Matthew 11:17	שירים ... קוננים (<i>shirim ... qonenim</i>)	"We sing ... we lament."	Contrastive control for ordinary singing.
Acts 16:25	משבחים (<i>meshabbehim</i>)	"Praising God."	Contrastive control for praise without <i>zāmar</i> (זמר).
Luke 15:25	זמר (<i>zāmar</i>)	"A great sound of singing/music."	Restoration and covenantal joy.
Romans 15:9	אזמר (<i>azammer</i>)	"I will sing to Your name."	Witness among the nations.
Ephesians 5:19	מזמור ... מזמרים (<i>mizmor ... mezamrim</i>)	"A song ... singing in the Spirit."	Spirit-filled communal worship.

Table 2. Cochin Hebrew New Testament Singing Passages: Hebrew Text and English Gloss			
Passage	Cochin Hebrew Text / Excerpt	English Gloss	Function in the Argument
Colossians 3:16	שירות ... תושבחות ... מזמרים (<i>shirot ... teshubahot ... mezamrim</i>)	“Songs ... praises ... singing to the Lord in your hearts.”	Distinguishes songs, praises, and singing.
1 Corinthians 14:15	מזמר ... אזמר (<i>mezammer ... azammer</i>)	“I sing in the Spirit; I will sing with understanding.”	Spiritual gift with understanding.
1 Corinthians 14:26	מזמור (<i>mizmor</i>)	“One has a song.”	Congregational edification.
James 5:13	צריך ... לזמר (<i>tzarikh ... lezammer</i>)	“He must sing psalms.”	Pastoral response to a good or joyful heart.
1 Peter 1:7	זמר (<i>zāmar</i>)	“To sing and praise.”	Tested faith and eschatological praise.
Revelation 5:9	זמרו (<i>zimru</i>)	“They sang a renewed song.”	Heavenly worship and redemption.
Revelation 14:3	מזמרים (<i>mezamrim</i>)	“They were singing the renewed song.”	The sealed 144,000 and the hidden song tradition.
Revelation 15:3	מזמרים (<i>mezamrim</i>)	“They sang the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.”	Final victory and the song of Moses.

Source and method: Cochin Hebrew readings are summarized from the author’s published transcription and analysis of Cambridge MS Oo.1.32, MS Oo.1.16.1, and MS Oo.1.16.2. The table is selective rather than exhaustive and is intended to identify the passages most relevant to the article’s argument.

Table 3. Greek Comparative Terms for Selected New Testament Singing Passages		
Passage	Greek Term / Phrase	Basic Sense / Comparative Function
Matthew 11:17	<i>ēulēsamen; ethrēnēsamen</i>	Played the flute / lamented; supports the Cochin contrast between ordinary performance and lament.
Acts 16:25	<i>proseuchomenoi; hymnōn</i>	Praying and hymning/praising God; a powerful worship scene not rendered with Cochin <i>zāmar</i> .
Luke 15:25	<i>symphōnias kai chorōn</i>	Music and dancing; Cochin's <i>zāmar</i> rendering is a Hebrew interpretive choice within a restoration scene.
Romans 15:9	<i>psalō tō onomati sou</i>	I will sing praise / make melody to Your name; naturally invites Hebrew <i>zāmar</i> -language.
Ephesians 5:19	<i>psalmois kai hymnois kai ōdais pneumatikais; psallontes</i>	Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs; making melody; provides Greek context for Cochin <i>mizmor/zāmar</i> .
Colossians 3:16	<i>psalmois, hymnois, ōdais pneumatikais</i>	Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs; Cochin distinguishes songs, praises, and marked singing.
1 Corinthians 14:15	<i>psalō tō pneumati; psalō de kai tō noi</i>	I will sing praise/make melody with the spirit and with the mind; supports Spirit-and-understanding context.
1 Corinthians 14:26	<i>psalmon echei</i>	One has a psalm; Greek background for Cochin <i>mizmor</i> as congregational gift.
James 5:13	<i>psalletō</i>	Let him sing praise / make melody; Cochin renders with obligation and <i>zāmar</i> -language.
1 Peter 1:7	<i>epainon kai doxan kai timēn</i>	Praise, glory, and honor; Cochin's <i>zāmar</i> wording is not mechanically required by Greek.

Table 3. Greek Comparative Terms for Selected New Testament Singing Passages		
Passage	Greek Term / Phrase	Basic Sense / Comparative Function
Revelation 5:9	<i>adousin ōdēn kainēn</i>	They sing a new song; Cochin uses <i>zāmar</i> -language in a heavenly redemption context.
Revelation 14:3	<i>adousin hōs ōdēn kainēn</i>	They sing as a new song; Cochin marks the sealed community with <i>zāmar</i> -type language.
Revelation 15:3	<i>adousin tēn ōdēn Mōuseōs ... kai tēn ōdēn tou Arniou</i>	They sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb; supports final-victory comparison.

Source and method: Greek terms are included selectively as brief comparisons for the passages shown in Table 2. This table isn't a complete Greek text or critical edition; it highlights the Greek words most relevant to the Cochin Hebrew translations discussed here.

Taken together, the Cochin Hebrew and Greek comparison tables suggest a patterned distinction rather than a simple one-to-one translation habit. Matthew 11:17 and Acts 16:25 provide contrastive controls, since ordinary singing, lament, and praise are expressed without *zāmar* language. By contrast, Luke 15:25, Romans 15:9, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 14:15 and 14:26, James 5:13, 1 Peter 1:7, and Revelation 5:9, 14:3, and 15:3 preserve forms related to *zāmar* or *mizmor* in contexts of restoration, witness, Spirit-filled worship, congregational edification, tested faith, and eschatological victory. This distribution supports the article's claim that the Cochin tradition may preserve a meaningful distinction between ordinary song or praise and marked, God-directed singing.

Table 4. Preliminary Comparative Witnesses for <i>zāmar</i> -Related Language in Selected Hebrew New Testament Manuscripts			
Manuscript / Witness	Relevant Passages Noted	זמר-Related Evidence	Interpretive Significance
Cambridge University Library, MS Oo.1.32; MS Oo.1.16.1; MS Oo.1.16.2	Matthew 11:17; Luke 15:25; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1	Uses contrastive terminology for ordinary singing and praise in Matthew 11:17 and Acts 16:25, while preserving	Primary witness for the proposed "Power-of-God-singing" pattern.

Table 4. Preliminary Comparative Witnesses for <i>zāmar</i> -Related Language in Selected Hebrew New Testament Manuscripts			
Manuscript / Witness	Relevant Passages Noted	זמר-Related Evidence	Interpretive Significance
Cochin Hebrew New Testament	Corinthians 14:15, 26; James 5:13; 1 Peter 1:7; Revelation 5:9; Revelation 14:3; Revelation 15:3	forms related to <i>zāmar</i> (זמר) and <i>mizmor</i> (מזמור) in Spirit-oriented, edifying, restorative, and eschatological contexts.	
BnF héb. 131 Paris 131	Luke 15:25; Romans 15:9; 1 Corinthians 14:15, 26; Ephesians 5:19; James 5:13	Contains some <i>zāmar</i> (זמר)-related forms, though not always in the same stem, form, or distribution as Cochin.	Provides partial comparison but does not reproduce the full Cochin pattern.
Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Ebr. 100 Hebrew Gospels of Catalonia / Sephardic Hebrew Gospels	Luke 15:25	Does not preserve <i>zāmar</i> (זמר) in the noted Luke passage.	Shows that the Cochin rendering is not inevitable across Hebrew Gospel traditions.
Freiburg UB Hs. 314 Freiburg HS-314	Selected comparison passages	Does not preserve the same <i>zāmar</i> (זמר) pattern in the passages surveyed.	Supports the distinctiveness of the Cochin witness.
John Rylands Library, Gaster MS 1616 Manchester Gaster 1616	Selected comparison passages	Derivative copy of the Cochin Hebrew New Testament tradition; preserves <i>zāmar</i> (זמר)-related evidence largely because of dependence on Cochin, while also	Useful only in a limited way for transmission history; not treated as an independent supporting witness and not

Table 4. Preliminary Comparative Witnesses for <i>zāmar</i> -Related Language in Selected Hebrew New Testament Manuscripts			
Manuscript / Witness	Relevant Passages Noted	זמר-Related Evidence	Interpretive Significance
		reflecting copyist-level secondary changes.	foregrounded in the argument.
Bibliothèque municipale de Marseille, MS 24 Marseille MS 24	Luke and Acts only; Luke 15:24/25 comparison	Does not preserve <i>zāmar</i> (זמר) in the noted comparison.	Limited witness due to manuscript scope.
British Library, Royal MS 16 A II Shépreve New Testament	James 5:13	Contains <i>zāmar</i> (זמר)-related language, but in a different verbal structure from Cochin Hebrew James.	Important for comparison of James but not identical to Cochin.

Source and method: This table is based on preliminary comparisons of the manuscript witnesses discussed in this article. It is intended as a general guide to observed patterns rather than a complete catalog of every manuscript reading. Full verification requires consultation of manuscript images, catalog records, folio references, and complete diplomatic transcriptions. No copyrighted manuscript images are reproduced here; permissions would be required for any reproduced images not covered by institutional or public-domain terms.

8. Theological Synthesis: Song, Spirit, and Victory

The biblical canon often connects singing with divine actions. For example, Exodus 15 celebrates already achieved deliverance; Judges 5 recounts a victory; David’s music offers relief from spiritual hardship; the Psalms serve as Israel’s prayers and praise; 2 Chronicles 20 shows singers leading the battle; Acts 16 depicts prayer and song in prison before a miraculous release—highlighting a pattern of worship that spans the Bible, even though the Cochin Hebrew tradition doesn’t use *zāmar* there; and Revelation places song at the heart of heavenly worship and ultimate victory. In these stories, song isn’t just decoration—it’s covenantal speech, heartfelt prayer, shared memory, and prophetic voice.

8.1 Worship, Alignment, and Whole-Body *zemer*

The connection between worship and spiritual freedom is best understood as a journey of alignment. When we worship, we shift our focus from oppressive circumstances to God's sovereignty, faithfulness, and judgment. This isn't just an emotional reaction; it's an active and shaping act. It reorganizes our mind, body, and spirit around divine truth. In this way, praise becomes a form of resistance, rejecting the enemy's attempt to control the atmosphere, our bodies, or our community. While the idea of legal "footholds" or restrictions can be seen as a metaphor, it reflects a key biblical pattern: worship realigns us with God, diminishing the power of fear, accusations, oppression, and spiritual darkness.

The term *zemer* (זֶמֶר) should be understood more dynamically than many modern Western categories of "hymn" or "song." In ancient Semitic expression, singing, instrumental playing, and bodily movement often go together. The physical action of *zāmar* (זָמַר) includes striking, touching, or plucking strings; the sound is therefore produced by kinetic force. In victory contexts, this musical force naturally invites bodily response, as seen in Miriam's timbrel and dance after the sea crossing and in David's embodied worship before the ark. Spirit-directed singing, then, is not passive melody alone. It is rhythmic, instrumental, vocal, and often bodily—a whole-person act of worship.

This whole-body experience echoes the pruning metaphor we've seen before in the *zāmar* (זָמַר) practice. The hands that play the strings perform a repeated, slicing motion reminiscent of how pruning and trimming are done in agriculture. Spiritually, this creates an image of clearing away obstacles: praise helps cut back fear, oppression, confusion, and hostile presence. It's not that music has its own power; rather, the *mizmorim* were meant to be songs of divine strength for those dedicated to worshiping God. Through these liturgical songs, God's people unite in Spirit-led praise, sharing in His victory.

This clarification helps explain how biblical worship can be imagined as embodied participation in God's victory. The worshiper sings, plays, and moves; God is the one who delivers, clears, and overcomes.

The repeated use of *zāmar* (זָמַר) and *mizmor* (מִזְמוֹר) in the Cochin Hebrew New Testament, especially in contexts that are Spirit-filled, uplifting, restorative, and eschatological, may point

beyond historical description toward an ongoing theological hope. If the Cochin tradition presents *zāmar* as more than ordinary singing and associates it with divinely directed worship, then these passages may suggest that Spirit-led worship remains a meaningful practice through which believers seek freedom, healing, clarity, and protection from hostile spiritual forces. Such a claim must remain grounded in the biblical pattern: the power belongs to God, while worship functions as faithful alignment with His presence and purposes.

8.2 Healing, Deliverance, and Worship: Biblical Limits and Theological Possibility

Although the biblical texts more often associate worship-music with deliverance, relief, victory, and release than with explicit medical healing, the categories are not unrelated. David's lyre-playing before Saul offers the clearest example of music producing immediate relief from hostile spiritual oppression. Acts 16:25–26 likewise presents prayer and song as the setting in which prison doors open and chains fall away, while 2 Chronicles 20:21–22 depicts singers going before the army as YHWH intervenes against Judah's enemies. James 5:13–15 places suffering, singing praise, prayer, and restoration within the same pastoral horizon: the suffering one should pray, the cheerful one should sing praise, and the sick one should be prayed over in faith. Taken together, these passages do not prove that music mechanically heals, but they do support the theological possibility that Spirit-directed worship may become a setting in which God brings deliverance, restoration, and healing.

9. Conclusion

“Power-of-God-singing” may therefore be defined as Spirit-oriented, God-directed song that participates in the biblical pattern of praise, deliverance, edification, and victory. This study has argued that *zāmar* (זמר)-language, in the passages examined from the Tanakh and the Cochin Hebrew New Testament, may point beyond ordinary music toward intensified worship, understood through the converging fields of song, instrumental action, pruning or cutting, and divine victory. This definition avoids two extremes. On the one hand, it does not reduce sacred song to aesthetics or emotional expression. On the other hand, it does not claim that every song automatically produces miraculous results. The power belongs to God; the singing is the human act of praise, obedience, proclamation, and faith through which God's people align with His purposes.

The evidence from the Bible and ancient manuscripts points to a meaningful category of music called “Power-of-God-singing.” The Hebrew root *zāmar* (זמר), especially in worship contexts, relates to intentional praise through song. Throughout the Hebrew Bible, singing is linked to divine deliverance, spiritual comfort, remembering covenants, and victory. The traditions of David and the Levites show music as an ordered act of service to God, while prophetic and apocalyptic writings see singing as part of the ultimate triumph. The Cochin Hebrew New Testament adds a significant manuscript witness by preserving a pattern across the New Testament passages surveyed in this article: contrastive ordinary singing and praise language in Matthew 11:17 and Acts 16:25, and marked *zāmar/mizmor* language in Luke 15:25; Romans 15:9; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:15 and 14:26; James 5:13; 1 Peter 1:7; Revelation 5:9; Revelation 14:3; and Revelation 15:3.

The conclusion is not that a single lexical gloss establishes the doctrine, but that a recurring pattern across biblical texts and manuscript evidence invites further study. Future research should compile a comprehensive database of *zāmar* (זמר) forms in the Tanakh, create a morphological table of all relevant Cochin Hebrew New Testament instances, include direct manuscript images with folio references, compare these readings with Greek and Syriac source traditions, and examine more deeply how early communities shaped by the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament understood song as praise, prophecy, prayer, deliverance, and spiritual warfare.

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