

The Structure of the Book of Revelation:

A Discourse Analysis Perspective

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Part 2

APPENDICES

and

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

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Part 1, Chapters 1-7
of this dissertation
may be found in a separate file.

APPENDIX 1

A Description of the Process of Analysis

1 Overview

This process assumes the study of a whole, predefined discourse, such as a whole book of the Bible. The first phase of the method consisted of reading the text in its entirety several times in order to gain a general overview of its organization and content. Where the genre of the book is known, and previous genre studies have established some general principles of possible structure, these may be considered as possible guidelines. This was not possible with the present analysis.

2 Division into Units

2.1 Method

The method consists of observation of features in the text which are the same or different. Similar features were interpreted as being evidence that the blocks of text concerned should be grouped together on the basis of internal cohesion, and different features were interpreted as evidence that the blocks may be considered to be different units. Where there is good evidence for maintaining cohesion and also good evidence for proposing a division into separate units, clearly the evidence has to be weighed and a decision made. Such analytical difficulties were used as signposts. This is because such ambiguities may indicate that some other linguistic feature is co-occurring at the same point in the text. This phenomenon of co-occurrence may be the reason for the linguistic signals being more difficult than usual to interpret, and discovery of the less apparent features of the text can often lead to a deeper understanding and to a more refined analysis. In situations such as this, where the best analysis was not immediately obvious, structural patterns which were clearly present elsewhere in the text were allowed to influence the decisions in the more ambiguous cases. As Callow 1998,150 says 'the significance of any given part can only be understood in the light of the whole: a top-down approach is essential'. In all cases, the analytical decisions sought to take account of the most available data in the most coherent manner possible. Evidence to support some of the decisions presented in the analysis may be found in Appendix 2. This indicates how these decisions were reached.

2.2 Criteria

The criteria are the similarities or differences in any type of linguistic feature including for example, phonological, lexical, semantic, grammatical/syntactic, structural, participants, topic/theme, situation and discourse type. Clear indicators of unit boundaries provided by the author himself were also taken into account. These included orienters (or signposts) where appropriate, and the obvious beginning or end of a clear grouping such as a series of seven.

2.3 References

The publications which provide information concerning this part of the process include Callow 1974 and 1998, Dorsey 1999, Larson 1984, Levinsohn 1992, Dooley and Levinsohn 2001, and Parunak 1981.

3 Relationships Between Units

Three types of relationship were considered. Firstly, the linear relationships between contiguous units such as the setting, the body and the conclusion of a discourse. Secondly, there were the relationships between non-contiguous units of text when they combine together in parallel and concentric structures. Thirdly, there were prosodic-type relationships, when non-contiguous units develop the same topics, themes or motifs without forming clear, parallel structures.

3.1 Method

The method consists of observing and charting the various types of relationships which are possible and which are relevant to the text in view:

1) Grammatical relationships. This concerns the surface structure issues of conjunctions and other connectives which occur in the text.

2) Semantic (logical) relationships. This concerns the relationships between units when viewed as propositions. These relationships concern the content and meaning contained in the text such as the relationship between a proposition (or group of propositions) which express a reason (for an action or event), and another proposition (or group) which express the related result.

3) Functional relationships. This concerns the relationships which are primarily structural in nature rather than semantic, as for example, the relationship between an orienter and the text which it introduces.

4) Concentric relationships. This concerns the relationship between units which are not necessarily contiguous, but are considered to be in relationship to one another on the basis of the occurrence of parallelism.

Another aspect of relationships between units which needed to be accounted for is their multi-dimensional nature. Thus, for example, units of discourse relate in a horizontal way in the first instance with other units of a similar type functioning at the same level of the linguistic hierarchy. However, any given unit also relates vertically to those units which function just above it and just below it in the hierarchy. In *Revelation*, the seven cycles were considered to relate to each other horizontally as discourse units of the same type. However, each cycle was also considered to relate vertically upwards to the book viewed as a total unit, and downwards to its main constituent parts of Setting, Body and Interlude. When taking account of these relationships, it was also necessary to take account of the linguistic phenomena of embedding and skewing.¹

3.2 Criteria

The criteria for establishing linguistic relationships are any possibility of establishing a logical relationship between different units on the basis of the form, the content or the function of the units concerned. See the references for extensive illustrations of the possibilities. The criteria for establishing symmetric relations and prosodies are the same as those listed in 2.2 above.

3.3 References

The publications which provide information concerning this part of the process include Alter 1985, Beekman et al. 1981, Beekman and Callow 1974, Callow 1998, Dorsey 1999, Grimes 1975, Harvey 1998, Heckert 1996, Larson 1984, Longacre 1976, 1980 and 1983a, Lund 1970, Palmer 1970, Parunak 1981, 1983a) and b), E.Pike 1967, K.Pike 1959, Schooling 1992, Terry 1995, Wendland 1998.

¹Embedding occurs when a particular discourse type occurs on a smaller scale at a lower level of the hierarchy than usual. Skewing occurs when the author assigns a function to a linguistic unit which is not its usual one. See Longacre 1983a,10-13.

4 Prominence Features

4.1 Method

The method consists of observing and charting those linguistic features which indicate that some units are more important for the communication of the overall message than others. Callow 1998,156 distinguishes between natural prominence which is derived from the basic semantic relationship which exists between the units concerned, and special prominence which is observable when units are specially marked by the author for prominence. Longacre's method is to look at the discourse in terms of its plot development and uses the term peak for the most important part of the text (or part thereof) being analyzed. Usually this coincides with Callow's special prominence.

4.2 Criteria

The linguistic features which may be used to mark prominence as a general rule are those which stand out as being different from the context and the standard patterns previously established by the author. Any device which serves to draw particular attention to a part of the text may well be a prominence feature. These can include, for example, the following: unusual, intense, emotive lexical items or collocations, imperatives, direct speech, repetition, rhetorical questions, change in the word order, change in habitual verb form, change of pace, skewing, embedding, concentration of participants, special particles or words, change of text type, a unit being noticeably longer or shorter than others occurring at the same level and so on.

4.3 References

The publications which provide information concerning this part of the process include K.Callow 1974 and 1998, Dorsey 1999, Larson 1984, Longacre 1983a and 1985, and Terry 1995.

5 Multiple Processing

A book cannot be analyzed by simply applying a single process in isolation on a once-only basis. The process outlined above was applied to the different levels of the hierarchy and on several occasions to the same expanses of text. In practice a 'top-down, bottom-up' approach (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001,51-2) is what is the most effective. This means that the process began by looking at the discourse as a whole and seeing what that revealed about its parts. Then, in the light of the insights gained, it was possible to look back up at the whole from the perspective of

(some) of its constituent parts. This more detailed study in turn illuminated the understanding of the whole. Once again the process was reversed, using the understanding gained of the whole discourse to further analyze and understand the organization and the function of other lower level constituent parts. This process was repeated until the whole discourse had been elucidated. Since human communication is such a complex process there are sometimes residual parts of the text which seem to defy analysis. Experience has demonstrated that multiple processing is the best way of reducing the number of these residual items to a minimum. In theory, all parts of a text ought to be amenable to some level of analysis and description even if ambiguity is an inevitable part of life and may even have been placed intentionally in the text by the author.

On a practical note, it is advantageous to begin with those parts of the text (usually the introductions and/or settings) where the author himself lays out his plan and purpose. Having come to terms with the parts of the discourse which are more clearly laid out, it is much easier then to move on to those parts which are perhaps purposely, for reasons of prominence or suspense, less clearly laid out. The process of looking for analogies was very helpful at this stage. In any case, before proposals concerning prominence can be posited, the more obvious, standard structural patterns of the discourse had to be found first.

This process involved developing hypotheses of what the structural architecture may be, based on the first information to be discovered. These hypotheses were then gradually refined and tested as more and more data was dealt with, until all the data had been appropriately accounted for. At each pass through the data, more evidence was accumulated which led to the rejection of the weaker hypotheses and the development of the hypotheses which withstood the test of detailed scrutiny. This is important for, clearly, the more evidence which can be adduced to support any particular structural hypothesis, the more reliable that hypothesis is likely to be.

The publications which provide information concerning this part of the process include Brown and Yule 1983, Callow 1998, Callow and Callow 1992, Longacre and Hwang 1994, Pike and Pike 1982, Reed 1996, Sternberg 1985.

6 Charting

As mentioned above, producing charts of different kinds to elucidate and track the occurrence of particular linguistic features are tools which were used during the process of analysis. At each stage a chart of the results of the analysis was also produced. The aim was to produce a kind of

organigramme which reproduces in visual form the structure of the whole book. The extent to which this can be done without doing an injustice to the text, is an indicator that the hypotheses illustrated have some objective reality in the discourse and that the analysis is maturing.

The publications which provide information concerning this part of the process include Callow 1998, Dawson 1994, Dooley and Levinsohn 2001, Longacre 1990a, and Pike and Pike 1982.

7 Description

The ultimate goal was to produce a description of the analysis which others can study and as appropriate, learn from, refine and improve. Once again, to the extent that an analysis can be clearly described, it is to the same extent that it will become obvious (or otherwise) that the analyst has gained a clear insight into the issues at stake.

8 Alternative Methods

Language is such a rich and flexible medium that, by the same token, there is no fixed method by which one can or should study it. On the contrary, there are doubtless as many procedural variations as there are analysts. However, if there is to be serious progress in the study of discourse, then the methods used need to be testable and re-usable by others if needs be, and they must also take account of the various aspects of language mentioned above, which have been found by researchers throughout the world to be fundamental to the use and organization of any language. To date, only a few analytical methods have been made accessible in published form. Callow 1998 is, in effect, a description of an analytical method and all the Semantic Structural Analyses produced by the Summer Institute of Linguistics are illustrations of the same method. See, for example, Sherman and Tuggy 1994. Terry 1995, 14-15 and 37-38, gives a brief outline of his methodology, Wendland 1998, 195-224 provides a complete ten step method with an illustration, while Dorsey 1999, 21-44 explains in some detail his methodology and provides many examples. A methodology can be deduced from Wiesemann et al. 1984 and examples of several different analyses of the same text are presented in Mann and Thompson 1992.

APPENDIX 2

Evidence for the Division into Units

1 Introduction

Language is structured on the basis of two opposing, yet complementary tendencies. On the one hand, it is composed of discrete units which can be analyzed and distinguished from each other, but, on the other hand, distinct units which share certain similarities naturally group together in order to form larger, more complex units. At the level of discourse analysis, text can be divided into units at the points where the effects of these two tendencies most clearly coincide. That is, a significant juncture can be posited where the tendencies for units to cohere together is pulling in two opposite directions thereby creating a separation. Where this separation is confirmed by evidence for positing two distinct units, a division can be established. In addition, all units have a function in the overall structure, and where different functions can be discerned, this provides additional support for the proposed division into distinct units.

As a general principle, evidence derived from features drawn from the higher levels of the hierarchy carries more weight than that drawn from the lower levels, and marked features, where relevant to the division into units, carry more weight than unmarked features.

In this appendix evidence will be provided in summary form, to indicate on what basis the text was divided into units for this study. In order to keep the material manageable, the information will be provided in abbreviated form, and not all the sub-units will be presented. However, a sample of the more difficult cases will be provided in order to show what is possible. The main aim at this stage is to demonstrate that text can be divided into units on the basis of linguistic evidence, and that this evidence can be made available for perusal by other analysts. What this means is that the on-going debate concerning the analysis of a particular text can consciously work towards a definite consensus as the evidence itself is appraised, and the decisions approved, or modified, as the case may be, until most parties are satisfied with the outcome. In the case of continued ambiguity, a final value judgment can at least be made on the basis of consciously preferring some parts of the evidence over others, while still recognizing that alternative interpretations of the data are viable options for those who may prefer them.

The abbreviations used in the presentation of the data are as follows:

D = Differences permitting a division into distinct units. Normally reference is made to the division at the beginning of the unit and also to that at the end of the unit.

IC = Internal Coherence requiring that similar units be grouped together

F = Function of the unit.

For ease of reference, each major section number (2,3,4 etc) corresponds to the chapter in which the texts concerned are discussed.

2 Chapter 2: The Narrative Framework

D: Composed of all those units where the narrator(s), John (and Jesus), is (are) actively involved, or in some way overtly present in the surface of the text. The content of these units is also composed of text which is primarily volitional (hortatory) in nature. There are major units, minor units and short phrases (like ‘and I saw’) which contribute to the narrative framework.

IC: The internal coherence of this framework is dependent on the narrative characteristics of the text concerned, with a primary participant situated in particular places and a chronological development, and also the volitional import of the texts concerned. The major units, Prologue, Central Interlude and Epilogue create a three-part ABA' linguistic structure.

F: Provides a coherent framework anchored in the referential world known to the addressees, within which other-worldly visions can be recounted and potentially understood. It provides both a setting and introduction to the book as a whole (the Prologue) and a conclusion (the Epilogue). However, the Prologue is more than just a low level setting, since it also clearly establishes the objective of the book as being volitional in nature (i.e. intending to influence the behaviour of the readers). In addition, the Central Interlude provides an example of how they should respond to the content of the book. The predominance of volitional import type text is interpreted as marking the Narrative Framework for special prominence. This means that whereas a normal setting and framework of this nature would usually be interpreted as being less important than the body of the book which contains the informational content, in this case the narrative framework overall is interpreted as being more important than the body, or at least equally important.

It should be noted that as a general rule, conclusions are naturally prominent in many kinds of text, but especially those where the major units are in a coordinated relationship as is the case for *Revelation*.

2.1 The Prologue 1:1-11

D: Beginning of the book, no preceding text.
End of narrative framework text, overlap with following unit which begins vision content, and which starts using καί as the usual higher level connective.

IC: Composed of units which all contribute support material to the book as a whole and which have no overt connection (asyndeton). Most of these units contribute to establishing various aspects of the volitional import (hortatory text-type) of the book. Overt presence of John the narrator, and reference to Jesus as co-narrator.

F: Establishes the initial narrative anchor point and as such constitutes the introduction to the book as a whole.

Unit 1 1:1-2

D: No preceding text.

IC: Statement concerning the nature of the book: its topic, origins and transmission.

F: Establishes general situation. Introduction to the Prologue.

Unit 2 1:3

D: New text type (blessing)

IC: A blessing - first of seven such blessings.

F: Foregrounds a hortatory conceptual network. Initiates a book level prosody.

Unit 3 1:4-5a

D: Different text type. Different topic, participants, grammar and lexical items.

IC: Typical constituents of an epistolary introduction. Repetition of ἀπὸ...καὶ ἀπὸ

F: Epistolary introduction.

Unit 4 1:5b-6

D: New text type. New addressee. New topic. Ends with 'Amen'.

IC: Doxology (ascription of glory to the Son of God with reasons).

F: Could be viewed as an aside with no specific function relating to its context. However, its probable function is to foreground an awareness that the whole text is dominated and impregnated by the divine presence of the Godhead. It also specifically foregrounds previously known information concerning the results of Christ's death for His followers. It foregrounds volitional import by implicitly inviting the readers to participate in the ascription of praise. Note the presence of 'amen' which implies a participatory role for the hearers. It may introduce the sub-theme of worship.

Unit 5 1:7

D: Different text type. Different topic. Follows an 'amen' and ends with an 'amen'. ἰδοὺ at beginning of a sentence/paragraph.

IC: A statement concerning Jesus Christ (implicit) containing allusions to the OT.

F: Continues to foreground Jesus Christ as a principal personage (same as units 1,3 and 4), and specifically foregrounds the Old Testament as an appropriate interpretive network.

Special Note concerning ἰδοὺ :

ἰδοὺ is interpreted as being a marker of special prominence in this study. (See Reed 1995a,90. Van Otterloo 1988,40 (cf. Wendland 1992b,107) considers that the primary function of ἰδοὺ is to introduce important personages. This may be relevant to 1:7 but it is not clear since the personage in question has already been introduced by name in 1:1 and 1:5, and, in addition, it does not correlate with the important occurrence at 4:1. It is more likely that its generic usage is that of a prominence marker which can imply different meanings in different contexts.) There are four possibilities for 1:7: 1) It marks the verb 'he comes' simply at the clause level. 2) It marks the verse as a unit of the Prologue, hence indicating that it is the most prominent unit in the Prologue. This is of interest when it is considered that there is no clear natural prominence in the Prologue to indicate which part of it should be considered the most important. 3) It marks the phrase beginning 'he comes...' as the first occurrence of a book level prosody which is taken up again, particularly in the Epilogue ('Behold I am coming soon' 22:7). 4) A combination of the above three possibilities: At the lexical level it marks the verb 'he comes' as being particularly important. Within the context of the Prologue it draws attention to the fact that it is Jesus Christ who is coming and that this coming should be understood within the context of the OT prophecies. As a book level feature it seems to indicate that all this information should be kept in view as a key cluster of concepts which will reoccur and, in effect, permeate the whole book leading to the understanding that it may be intended as an important interpretive key for the content of the book, and/or as a major motivating factor within the context of the volitional import of the book.

Unit 6 1:8

D: Different text type. Different topic and grammatical form. Follows an ‘amen’.

IC: A single statement concerning a single personage.

F: Foregrounds the importance of the Godhead and in particular His eternal nature and His omnipotence. Initiates a book level prosody which is completed in the Epilogue.

Unit 7 1:9-11

D: Repetition of ἐγώ ‘I’ referring to a different personage. Different text type and topic. End of narrative framework followed by first segment of visionary content. Tail-head link (βλέπω).

IC: Presence of John and same topic throughout. Repetition of ‘I came to be in...’ in vv.9 and 10.

F: Overlap link. End (seventh unit) of the Prologue and also first unit of the following setting.

Special Note concerning 1:12

John’s overt presence continues on into the first part of 1:12 and so, one interpretation would be to consider it as part of the narrative framework and as attached to verse 11. If it were attached to verse 11 and the end of the overlap link made to fall in the middle of verse 12, it would make no difference to the overall analysis. However, it was decided to make the division at the end of verse 11 for the following reasons:

1) Overlap links by definition are transitional in nature and their borders cannot always be defined with neat precision. 2) Verse 12 has considerable internal cohesion and is not amenable to division. The natural pulling apart between two segments bound together by internal cohesion occurs at the end of verse 11. 3) In verse 12 there is the description of John’s first action within the context of his vision, which is in direct contrast to his previous actions which were in the context of his normal physical experience. In this first instance therefore, this action is considered to be integrated into the visionary content rather than into the preceding component of narrative framework, much as the minor narrative framework components are considered to be inextricably integrated into their immediate context. 4) In addition, this action (‘turning to see’) is a necessary orientation for the description of what he actually saw, which is unambiguously part of the visionary content. The second part of the description of his action occurs together in a single grammatical clause with the content of what he saw, so they cannot be separated. 5) The first occurrence of καὶ...εἶδον is in this verse. Although this phrase is part of the narrative framework, it is a special component which is directly integrated into the visionary content and cannot be separated from it. It is therefore different from the narrative framework which occurs in verse 11. The first occurrence of a special feature is likely to be specially marked (similar argument to that of numbers 3) and 4) above). The lengthy orientation involving the repetition of the verb ‘to turn’ clearly builds up to, and draws special attention to, the key verb ‘I saw’. Consequently this orientation of verse 12a is analyzed as belonging with καὶ εἶδον and therefore belonging with the immediately following visionary content. 6) There is a switch here between βλέπω ‘I see’ and *εἶδέω ‘I see’. The two occurrences of βλέπω in verses 11 and 12, along with the repetition of John’s participation in these same two verses is interpreted as a tail-head link which serves to confirm that the natural division occurs between these two verses. 7) The use of the connective καί as the primary means of linking sentences and higher level units begins in this verse. The καί at the beginning of verse 12 introduces a new paragraph. It is therefore interpreted as connecting two paragraphs as distinct units (1:9-11 and 1:12-16), which are the first two paragraph level units of the setting of Cycle 1 (1:9-20). If this understanding of the function of καί is accepted, it is not possible to interpret it as connecting the beginning of verse 12 with the end of verse 11 at the sentence level. See below for further discussion of this issue.

2.2 The Epilogue 22:6-21

D: Return to narrative framework type text with volitional import. End of book, no following text. Parallelism with Prologue.

IC: Overt Presence of John. Reoccurrence and repetition of the prosody indicating that Jesus is coming soon (verses 7,12,17 and 20). Reoccurrence of primary linkage of the discourse units by asyndeton (except for the special case of verse 8 - see discussion of connectives below). Presence of seven sub-units which contribute directly to the volitional import of the book.

F: End point of the narrative framework and as such constitutes the conclusion for the book as a whole.

Unit 1 22:6-7a

D: Return to narrative framework type text. The text changes from being visionary content to being commentary on the visionary content, from conveying informational import to conveying volitional import.

IC: Verse 6 is a single sentence addressing a single topic. Verse 7a is part of a book level prosody and, as such, has no close structural connection with its immediate context. It is nonetheless considered to be grammatically connected to verse 6 because of the presence of καί. Alternatively, the καί connects it back to the last preceding appearance of the prosody at 16:15.

F: Concluding commentary on previous visionary content. Part of overlap link which creates a transition to the Epilogue. Introductory unit of the Epilogue.

Unit 2 22:7b

D: Different text type (blessing) and different topic.

IC: A single sentence and a single topic.

F: Contributes to a book level prosody (the seven blessings).

Unit 3 22:8-11

D: Different text type and topic (first person narrative). Different principal personage. Presence of initial καί which does not link back to immediately preceding text but either to 22:6 or more likely right back to the Prologue. (See discussion of connectives below)

IC: Dialogue linked internally by καί. It is not obvious whether verse 11 belongs with verse 10 or should be considered a separate unit since it is introduced by asyndeton. The present analysis is preferred because the third person form seems to accord better with a continuation of the previous speech rather than as an introduction to the following first person speech. The mitigated imperatives and the consequent hortatory nature of the text also accord better with what precedes than with what follows. The presence of asyndeton can be accounted for on the basis that it is a continuation of a direct speech beginning in verse 10. If verse 11 were to stand alone it is difficult to adduce any evidence to support this and to attribute a significant separate function to such a unit.

F: Brings to a conclusion the description of John's personal situation and involvement in the transmission process. Concludes the worship motif. Contributes to and brings to conclusion the hortatory material characterized by second and third person type imperatives aiming at the personal behaviour of the reader.

Unit 4 22:12-13

D: Different text type, topic, speaker and grammatical form. Introduced by ἰδοὺ alone.

IC: First person speech throughout.

F: Part of the prominent material of the Epilogue. Concludes book level prosodies ('Alpha and Omega', 'I am coming quickly'). Contributes to the hortatory nature of the Epilogue. Completes the reward motif.

Special Note on ἰδοὺ

ἰδοὺ marks the phrase 'I am coming soon' here and at 22:7a and the same phrase is also marked for prominence in 22:20 by ναί 'yes'. This suggests that this concept cluster is intended to be prominent in the Epilogue. As mentioned previously a similar concept was similarly marked in the Prologue suggesting that this concept is intended to be retained as being important for the whole book, but particularly here in the conclusion. This could be defined as the true 'After Word' of the whole book.

Unit 5 22:14-15

D: Different text type, topic (blessing) and grammatical form.

IC: Same topic and form (blessing and cursing). Most of the seven blessings are simply a blessing. This one is different in that it adds a complementary cursing reminiscent of the paired blessings and cursings in Deuteronomy. Both parts allude to the Old Testament.

F: The last in the series of seven blessings. The addition of the cursing may make this the most prominent in the series. The final hortatory material aiming at the personal behaviour of the reader.

Unit 6 22:16-20

D: Different text type, topic and grammatical structure (first person declarations with responses). Repetition of ἐγώ 'I' referring to a different personage.

IC: A single dialogue with two statements and two sets of responses creating a balanced parallel structure (ABA' B') unified by the concept of 'witness'. Inclusio of 'Jesus' in verses 16 and 20. Verse 17 is attached to verse 16 because of the presence of καί.

F: Concluding statement or revelation specifically from Jesus. Final exhortation concerning the reader's attitude towards the words of the prophecy. Final references to the motifs of the plagues, the tree of life and the holy city. Conclusion of the 'come' prosody.

Unit 7 22:21

D: New text type and topic (prayer of blessing). Different principal speaker (John).

IC: Single sentence and topic. Typical epistolary closure.

F: Conclusion to Epilogue and the whole book viewed as a letter.

Special Note concerning Connectives in Revelation

καί 'and', καὶ εἶδον 'and I saw', μετὰ τοῦτο/ταῦτα 'after this/these things' and asyndeton (absence of overt connective) are the most frequently used connectives in the book.

Some modern research has been undertaken into the function of καί in NT Greek (see for example Levinsohn 1981a and b et al., Titrud 1991 and 1992, and Heckert 1996). However, it would seem that it has not yet achieved a thorough-going synthesis and global definition, particularly because it has not accounted for the uses at levels above the sentence.

Heckert *ibid.*,70 proposes that the primary function of adverbial καί 'is to mark the word, phrase or clause which immediately follows it for parallel processing'. In addition, he suggests (*ibid.*,58) that 'this (adverbial) function ...appears to have been its original use'. As regards conjunctive καί he proposes that its primary function is 'additive' and claims that it 'conjoins contiguous constituents' (*ibid.*,90). Quoting Levinsohn 1977,20 he says that καί 'unites elements of equal value, weight, or standing' (*ibid.*,74).

The observations made during this study lead to another significant conclusion that καί also creates links between paragraphs and even larger discourse units. As a result of this phenomenon another, more provisional conclusion is therefore emerging, that καί does not necessarily link directly contiguous units, even though it does appear to always create a link between units of 'equal value, weight, or standing'.

The first example from *Revelation* which can be cited is relevant to the Prologue, because the immediately following unit begins with καί (1:12). According to the analysis presented above, it is being proposed that this καί introduces a new paragraph (cf. also the καί which introduces 1:17), and so the question which needs to be investigated is which particular units are being conjoined. The proposed answer is that it is not the sentences which are directly contiguous to the conjunction which are being linked but the two entire paragraphs. The same would also be true for the occurrence at 1:17. If this is accepted it again has to be asked, 'What is being joined to what?'. Without denying the additive element of the function of καί, for whenever information is presented in sequence the natural logic is that some new information is being added to what is already known, it can nonetheless be proposed that each paragraph is not just adding new information to the previous paragraph, but to the original point of departure¹ which is the immediate context or setting of the paragraphs in question which is in 1:9 in this case.

¹See Levinsohn 1992,13-30 on points of departure.

Another striking example is the conjoining of the seven letters which follow immediately after the above example. The first letter (2:1) has no overt connection (see below for more on asyndeton) with its immediately preceding setting, but there is no difficulty in discerning that it is intentionally connected to, and a continuation of what precedes. However, all the other letters are introduced by *καί*, so what does this signify, and why is the use of asyndeton not continued? The proposed answer is that each letter, which is a paragraph cluster (and there is no debate that each is a distinct and separate unit of text), is not being related back by *καί* to the immediately preceding (and therefore contiguous) paragraph cluster, for there is no merit in arguing that the new information presented in the letter to Smyrna, for example, is adding something new to the letter to Ephesus. On the contrary, the repetition each time of the formula ‘To the messenger of... write:’ and the repetition of aspects of the description of Christ, in themselves suggest that each letter should be read in the light of the original setting and not in the light of the preceding letter. This is why it is being proposed that the function of *καί* is not to establish a link with the immediately preceding unit in sequence, but with the immediately preceding unit which is the relevant point of departure, which in this case is the whole setting as a unit (1:9-20), which provides the context for each of the letters in turn. A corollary of this observation is that, at least in the particular cases where more than one similar units are conjoined by *καί*, the *καί*, in effect, is indicating that just as each unit so marked should be read and understood in the light of the original point of departure, so each such unit should be read and understood in parallel with one another. This serves to confirm, but also to apply to conjunctive *καί*, Heckert’s remarks cited above that the original use of *καί* may have been to indicate the need for parallel processing.²

It now only takes a little imagination to realize that what is true for the seven letters is also true, at a minimum, for the seven seals, trumpets and bowls, and it may also be true for the seven signs and proclamations. Perusal of the text indicates that they are all introduced by *καί*. The first and sixth seal are, in fact, introduced by *καὶ εἶδον*, but remarks on the possible significance of this will be made below. So, in other words, if the understanding of *καί* which is emerging from this discussion is correct, then it can be understood that the intended point of interest of each of the seals, trumpets and bowls, is not that they arise sequentially out of, or after, the preceding one, but that each arises out of, and should be interpreted in the light of, their point of departure which is their respective setting. This also means that each one should be read and interpreted as being in parallel to its fellows.

The next point of interest is that the cycles in *Revelation*, which are higher level units yet than those discussed above, are also conjoined by *καί*. The first cycle which begins at 1:9 is preceded by asyndeton, which is the same as for the first letter.³ After this, all the cycles have *καί* at the beginning (4:1, 8:1, 11:15, 15:1, 16:17 and 20:1), with 4:1 being a special case which will be discussed further below. Until such time as further research may refute it, the working hypothesis which has been developed in the course of this study is to interpret this repetition of *καί* at this higher level of the hierarchy as further evidence for the cyclic nature of the thematic development of the book. In other words, it is being proposed that the presence of *καί* in this position is definitely not connecting the two sentences of the immediate context, and neither is it connecting in contingent sequence the following section (paragraph cluster) to the preceding one. Instead, it is indicating in the first instance that the following unit, which is a cycle in these cases, should be processed in parallel with the preceding units having ‘equal...standing’ (see above), which are the preceding cycles. In terms of connectivity, the *καί* is indicating that the unit so marked is not necessarily connected directly to the immediately preceding unit, but right back to the original point of departure or setting, which at one level would be the Prologue, and at a secondary level for Cycles 2-6, the throne-room setting of Chapters 4-5.

In support of this argumentation, the research undertaken on these issues by Levinsohn can be cited. He says for example (1981a,2) that ‘*καί* is the principal “nondevelopmental” conjunction associating the elements of the developmental units together’. This means that *καί* always precedes something whose principal topic has already been introduced in one form or another, thereby adding new information to an on-going topic of discussion. By the same token *καί* never introduces ‘a “new development” in the story’ (ibid.,3). The addition of something which is significantly different is the role of *δέ* (and other conjunctions), whereas ‘when nothing distinctive is presented, *καί* ... introduces the sentence concerned’ (ibid.,3). In another place (1981b,46-47), Levinsohn cites the example of Peter’s three denials (Lk.22:56-60). The last two of these are connected to the first by *καί* and according to Levinsohn (ibid.,47) ‘this implies that Luke does not consider them to develop from the previous interaction. In other words, Luke indicates that Peter denied his Lord on three *separate* and independent occasions’. Citing other examples Levinsohn proposes that the presence of *καί* indicates that there is no contingent dependence between

²Dooley and Levinsohn 2001,91-92 suggest that the English connective ‘and’ ‘is a pragmatic connective... that constrains the hearer to process together the material thus associated’. It would seem that *καί* has a similar function.

³The first cycle is, in fact, attached to the Prologue by means of an overlap link which is a different kind of non-grammatical connection which does not nullify in any way the above discussion of formal grammatical links.

the passages so connected. They are placed together because there is a thematic similarity but they are neither a chronological nor a logical development arising out of what precedes. With regards to Luke's description of Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem he says: 'he presents several series of incidents ..., each of which though set within the overall chronological framework of the journey, is largely independent of the rest' (ibid.,48). In this latter case Levinsohn indicates that the relationships indicated by *καί* are operating 'on a much larger scale' (ibid.,47) than the sentence. This is a situation very similar to that in *Revelation*, since the units concerned are also larger than the sentence, they are also set within an 'overall chronological framework', and they also are 'largely independent of' the units to which they are related by *καί*. Levinsohn says at one point (ibid.,47) that what occurs in one unit is 'unrelated' to what happens in the next. However, this cannot be entirely true otherwise the author would not have put them together and specifically linked them by *καί*. It is for this reason therefore, that it is being proposed in this discussion that the relationship being indicated by *καί* is that of parallelism. The units are in parallel because even though they could be considered to be independent of each other because there is no chronological nor other contingent connection between them, they are placed together because they are going in the same general direction and are thereby contributing in different ways to the same general topic. In the examples given above by Levinsohn the general topics are Peter's denial of Jesus, and Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem.

Buth 1981c,54 in commenting on Levinsohn's proposals, suggests that instead of using the term 'development' it may be more helpful to use the term 'thematic shift' as seen from '(the author's) *perspective*'. He sums up his appraisal as follows (ibid.,54):

The effect of marking 'thematic shifts' is to give a reader/listener an additional, partially redundant means of grouping and evaluating the narrative. Every time a 'thematic shift' is signalled the decoder... would understand that the micro-theme... of the previous clauses and/or sentences had been completed. These thematic spans would not be thought of as surface-structure units... but would be 'supra-units' in a similar way that prosodies can be formulated in phonology.

Even though the above interaction between Buth and Levinsohn is largely limited to the sentence level and below, and to texts which are primarily considered to be narratives, their conclusions can be readily applied to *Revelation* since the latter is also a kind of narrative due to the presence of the narrative framework. In any case, all this discussion is necessary because none of the narratives in question are strict chronological accounts of a story as story, but all of them have important thematic messages to communicate which go beyond the anecdote or tale. It is because of this superimposing of themes on the chronology of the narrative, in the form of discourse level prosodies, as Buth rightly remarks, and the consequent 'thematic shifts' which occur, that a good understanding of the role of so-called conjunctions like *καί* and *δέ* are necessary.

Returning now to *Revelation*, it can be observed that *δέ* is not used at all at levels above the sentence which means that there are no 'thematic shifts' at the higher levels of the book as a whole. In other words, the presence of *καί* throughout the book informs the reader that every major section of text, even though distinct as a unit of text and even though presenting new information, is nonetheless contributing to the same general 'theme', using Buth's proposed term. However, since in this case it is the whole book which is in view and not just a few short sections of text, it is really the same general *topic* which is being maintained by the presence of *καί*. Undoubtedly in a book as complex as *Revelation* there are many different themes (information being provided about the topic), but it is possible to understand those themes as contributing to the same general topic, which is what *καί* would seem to be indicating.

Nonetheless, since *Revelation* is indeed complex and it is being proposed that each of the cycles are in parallel to each other and each of the sub-units of each cycle are in parallel to each other, how is it possible for a reader/listener to differentiate between all the uses of *καί* and to know which one is signalling the connection of a sub-unit to a sub-unit and which one is connecting a cycle to a cycle? In some ways perhaps, it does not matter, since the overall message being communicated by the constant repetition of *καί* is that this book is talking about the same thing throughout, and it is less difficult to process a lot of information about one topic than it is to process several different topics within the confines of a single discourse. However, the author does not leave the reader unaided in his task of decoding the message, for John does not limit himself just to the use of *καί* alone to chart the course of the thematic development of the book. There is in fact variety and differentiation in his signals for he also uses asyndeton, *καὶ εἶδον* 'and I saw', *μετὰ τοῦτο/ταῦτα εἶδον* 'after this/these things I saw' and *καὶ ἰδοὺ* 'and behold'. It is not possible give a full treatment of these terms but a brief statement and some examples will be proposed.

In the case of asyndeton, the evidence suggests that it has the same function as elsewhere in the NT, which is to imply an unmarked link with the immediately preceding unit. Levinsohn 1992,62 resumes its function by suggesting that in non-narrative text 'it is commonly found between parallel statements... between paragraphs with

different (sub)topics, ...(and) in connection with most relations which are not marked as chronological or logical'. Asyndeton occurs the most noticeably in *Revelation* in the Prologue and Epilogue where the sub-units are juxtaposed without any marked chronological or logical connection or development, although they all have functions which contribute to the overall function of an opening and closing section of text. One of these occurrences creates the transition between 1:8 and 1:9 which is the point where the first cycle connects grammatically to the Prologue (the overlap link is considered to be a literary phenomenon rather than a grammatical one). Since *καί* implies a link back to something preceding, the relevant point of departure normally should not be marked by *καί*, and since this is the case for 1:9, it is taken as the point of departure for the seven cycles. In brief, asyndeton and *καί* indicate the same basic parallel, non-contingent relationship but of the two asyndeton is the unmarked form and *καί* is the marked form. As Heckert 1996,63 explains 'the presence of *καί* requires more processing time and so calls attention to what it introduces'.

As regards the other connectives cited above, perhaps the most helpful way of understanding them as a group is to propose that they also indicate the same basic relationship, but that *καί* is the unmarked (or the least marked) of the group and that the others are the more marked members of the set, with *καὶ ἰδοὺ* being the most marked since *ἰδοὺ* is a prominence marker in its own right.

There is no question in the minds of commentators that 4:1 is the beginning of a new major section of *Revelation*. This is obvious because the seven letters have come to an end, and because *μετὰ ταῦτα* 'after these things' clearly implies a new beginning after the completion of something else. However, in context with the following *εἶδον* 'I saw' there is a clear implication of continuity with what has gone before, since it is picking up from 1:19 where John is told that he would be seeing and recounting more things *after* the things which he was viewing at that point.⁴ So, 4:1 is the first fulfilment of the prediction that John would receive and write down more visions of a similar kind to those at the beginning. The presence of *εἶδον* also makes the phrase part of the narrative framework which reactivates the concept of the on-going recounting of a visionary experience. Next, it can be observed that the temporal clause is reinforced by *καὶ ἰδοὺ*, which is interpreted as *καί* marked for special prominence by *ἰδοὺ*, and which, in this case, is marking for parallel processing the beginning of a new major section which is Cycle 2.⁵ Not only that, but *καὶ ἰδοὺ* creates a doublet with a second occurrence at 4:2 ('and behold a door//and behold a throne') which creates a dramatic mini-setting to the long setting which is to be found in the rest of Chapters 4 and 5. The author therefore, has used a combination of four devices to bring to the readers' attention that something special is happening at this point in the text. The something special is not just an indicator that there is a new beginning, but that this new beginning is explicitly (see also note 4 below) picking up from, and creating a parallel with, the beginning of Cycle 1.

Following on from this, *μετὰ ταῦτα*, reinforced by *καὶ ἰδοὺ* next reoccurs at 7:9 in parallel with *μετὰ τοῦτο* at 7:1. By marking this passage in this way, John draws attention to the first interlude and he does the same for the interlude of Cycle 6 (19:1), which picks up after Cycle 5 which had no interlude, and he clarifies any possible ambiguity by also placing it at the beginning of the body of Cycle 6 (18:1) and in the setting of Cycle 5 (15:5). Since in this latter case it occurs in the middle of a unit it is not possible to argue that its primary function is either that of a high-level connective or as the marker of the beginning of a major unit⁶ (so also the case at 7:9 which is less obvious), which reinforces the contention that its primary function in *Revelation* is to act as a marked form of *καί*, thereby indicating the need to process the information so marked in parallel with equivalent preceding information. In resume then, it is being proposed that *μετὰ ταῦτα* is providing an extra level of prominence, which at strategic points in the discourse the author uses to slightly stir up the reader's level of consciousness, thereby

⁴This is made completely explicit by the reference in the rest of 4:1 to 'the voice which I heard *at first*' and the repetition of the clause 'the things which must happen after these things' (// to 1:19) and of the phrase 'I was/became in the spirit' (// to 1:10) which is marked for extra prominence by 'immediately'.

⁵If the *καί* is interpreted as functioning at the clause level then it is attaching *ἰδοὺ* to *μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον*, thereby creating a double-barreled connective at the beginning of a major section. In this case the *καί* would be functioning as part of a connective at the cycle level. If it is interpreted as only functioning at the sentence level as part of a doublet along with the *καὶ ἰδοὺ* of 4:2, then it can be argued that the second *καί* is attached to the first, but at the sentence level the first *καί* can still only be attached to *μετὰ ταῦτα εἶδον*. In effect then, the *καί* of 4:1 must link back to the first cycle, whichever way the evidence is viewed.

⁶This is contra Beale 1999,129 who considers that 'after this', 'after these things' and 'I saw' are 'transitional expressions' Cf.6:2,5,8 and 9 where 'I saw' occurs in the middle of a sub-unit.

reminding him to register the fact that what he is currently reading is repeating in another form something which he has previously encountered.

Similarly, *καὶ εἶδον* appears to lead the reader in the same direction. Firstly, it is a constant reminder of the ongoing movement of the narrative framework and as such recalls to the reader's consciousness that this is a series of visions which he is seeing over John's shoulder. Secondly, it would appear that the occurrence of this phrase is not completely haphazard but more research may bear out the proposal being made here that it also occurs at strategic points in order to maintain the prosody that there is no 'thematic shift' and that what is currently being presented must be understood in parallel with what has previously been presented. But at the same time, because *καὶ εἶδον* is different from, and therefore more marked than *καί* alone, it can also be proposed that the passages so marked are slightly different from and therefore a little more important than those not so marked. So for example, Chapter 5 has three occurrences of *καὶ εἶδον* and this is repeated at the beginning of the first seal at 6:1. This sets chapter 5 apart as slightly different from Chapter 4, but similar to Chapter 6 reinforcing the notion that although Chapters 4 and 5 clearly belong together, there is a progression and Chapter 4 is a more general setting and Chapter 5 is more of a specific setting for the Seals Cycle. Likewise with the seven seals, the first and the sixth are introduced by *καὶ εἶδον* (6:1 and 12), the first perhaps because it is setting a pattern, and the sixth perhaps because it is the most important of the series, which would confirm the traditional view of the sixth sub-units. Going on further, Signs 3-7⁷ (the first has its own inventory of special prominence markers and the second is marked by *καὶ ἰδοὺ* 12:1-3) are all marked by *καὶ εἶδον* which is an unusual pattern. This may be to clarify the parallel patterning because this is the first cycle without clear numbering, and/or it may be to contribute to the prominence of the cycle as a whole. It is noticeable that the sixth sign (14:14) is also marked for extra prominence by *καὶ ἰδοὺ* which confirms the remarks made above about the prominence of the sixth sub-units.

Finally, *καὶ ἰδοὺ* wherever it occurs is clearly providing extra prominence but in the context of the message being conveyed by *καί* alone. Apart from the examples mentioned above, it occurs along with *καὶ εἶδον* at the sub-unit level within the first, the third and the fourth seals (6:2,5 and 8).⁸ There seems to be no good reason at the level of the content why these seals should be marked for prominence and not the others, and so the best explanation once again is that the author, in the first cycle which is parallel to a preceding one, is at pains to make clear to the reader, that this second cycle also has an internal system of parallels just like the first one. So then, it would seem as if *ἰδοὺ* is reinforcing *καί* and what it stands for, rather than, or at least more than, the following 'horse'. In the Signs Cycle, the second sign (the dragon 12:3) is so marked as is also the Lamb in the interlude (14:1). Once again this not only contributes prominence to the immediate context, which are two important protagonists, but suggests that they are also supposed to be seen as in parallel to one another, this time a parallelism of opposition.

So then, from this brief survey it can be seen that John had at his disposal a number of different ways of marking different parts of his text at different levels, so that it would be possible for an informed reader⁹ to discern the larger units of text, the cycles, and also the internal patterning of the seven-fold parallels plus their respective interludes. At least it would have been much easier for the original readers than for those modern readers who have only experienced western, linear, writing-based forms of communication.

All of the examples cited above, except the one concerning the dragon and the Lamb, concern units of text which are contiguous to the preceding unit of text to which they are in parallel. So, the question still remains as to whether there is any clear evidence that *καί* can indicate a link between non-contiguous units.¹⁰ An example which is worthy of careful consideration is the occurrence of *καί* at 22:8 which begins *καὶ ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης* 'And I John'. This text is at the end of the book and is surrounded by units of text which have no direct connection (asyndeton) with their neighbours. This use of asyndeton begins with the immediately preceding blessing in 22:7b and includes another example of *ἐγὼ* 'I' at 22:16. So, the question has to be asked as to why this occurrence of *ἐγὼ* is preceded by *καί*,

⁷13:1,11; 14:6,14; and 15:1.

⁸In the Textus Receptus it also occurs in the sixth seal. Note that it is the sixth sub-unit which once again receives the extra attention.

⁹It is being assumed that the original readers would have been able to access the various levels of information which a good narrator/author has to provide in order to be adequately understood, even though it is almost impossible to provide supporting evidence for such an assumption.

¹⁰Dooley and Levinsohn 2001,92 report that in some languages a connective can establish a parallel relationship between non-contiguous propositions.

where elsewhere in the context asyndeton seems to be adequate for the author's purposes. This question is especially pressing since *Revelation* seems to be highly organized and pleonasm (redundancy) is not a useful solution.¹¹ As Heckert 1996,63 remarks 'since the author used a *καί*, though he could have used asyndeton, he must have had a purpose for it'.

The first option is that it creates a link with the immediately preceding text. However, this text is a blessing and it is difficult to accept that it is of equal status with what follows and for the same reason it is not self-evident that there is any reason why the *καί* should be present to signal a definite need to associate these two units as contributing to the same process of thematic or topical development. A better solution would be to associate 22:8 with 22:6 since they both contribute directly to the narrative framework and therefore it could be argued that they have equal status, with the presence of *καί* being necessary to associate them because of the intervening blessing. However, 22:16 is also a specific part of the narrative framework with much more intervening text and yet *καί* is not necessary there. Furthermore, 22:6 also begins with *καί* and so, even if 22:8 is supposed to be processed in parallel with 22:6, which is not unreasonable, the outstanding question is where the original point of departure is located, to which these two parallels, and others like them, are ultimately attached.

There is a better solution yet, which has the advantage of simultaneously resolving another linguistic enigma which is usually disposed of by invoking the category of pleonasm (redundancy), but this solution involves returning right to the beginning of the book where the point of departure of the narrative framework is located. This element of mental gymnastics is not unreasonable since it is well accepted that the Prologue and the Epilogue are similar and are related to one another, and in all cultures readers/listeners are well aware that conclusions are more often than not related to their respective introduction. The whole of the Prologue is, in effect, the point of departure for the narrative framework in general, but there is a detailed point of departure as well which is relevant to this issue and it is located in 1:8-9. This is the place where there is another double use of the so-called redundant first person subject pronoun *ἐγώ*. The first of these (1:8) refers to God himself and begins *ἐγώ εἶμι* 'I am'¹² and is in parallel to the second (1:9) which refers to John. The connection between them is asyndeton which is explicable by the fact that they are contiguous units in a particular context where asyndeton is the only type of connection being used between paragraphs. Therefore, there is no need to specifically mark the relationship in a more elaborate way.

However, when it comes to the next occurrence in 22:8, which is at the other end of the book, the processing demands being made on the reader are much greater, and so it becomes clear that the author is obliged to remind the reader to search in his memory for an antecedent to what he is now reading by marking the second occurrence of *ἐγώ Ἰωάννης ὁ...* with a preceding *καί*. Once this link is established and the occurrence of 22:16, whose parallel similarity with 22:8 is not difficult for the reader to process, is taken into account, a neat, even if complex parallel structure is discernible which has the form A(ab)BB'A'(a'b'). The (ab) part of the nomenclature represents the internal structure of the principal parallel A, and indicates how the structure provides cohesion for the Prologue and the Epilogue as whole units as well as for the internal components marked by *ἐγώ*. The evidence for this parallelism is as follows:

A a (1:1 and 11) The Prologue as a whole being the point of departure for the book and the narrative framework as a whole; parallel components being: 'Jesus...sending through his angel to John... witness/witnessing... to the churches'.

A b (1:8) 'I am (*ἐγώ εἶμι*) the one who is at the beginning, who is coming at the end and is ever present in the meantime', referring to the Lord God.

B (1:9) I, John... (*ἐγώ Ἰωάννης ὁ...*) who heard (1:10) and saw (*βλέπω* 1:11) things (& 1:19).

¹¹Modern scholars are increasingly rejecting pleonasm as a viable option for explaining linguistic data. See, for example, Heckert 1996,63 and 75.

¹²This 'redundant' usage is reminiscent of the usage in John's Gospel and this is almost certainly not irrelevant from a theological and from a pragmatic point of view, even though it is not directly relevant to the internal structure of *Revelation*. However, *ἐγώ εἶμι* is also repeated in 22:16.

B' (22:8) I, John (καί + ἐγώ Ἰωάννης ὁ...) The one hearing and seeing (βλέπω) these things (ταῦτα).

A' a' (22:16a) I, Jesus (ἐγώ) sent my angel to you to witness these things among the churches.

A' b' (22:16b) I am (ἐγώ εἰμι) the root and offspring of David ... the morning star ('the root and offspring' implies someone who is at the beginning and also at the end of a process; 'the morning star' implies someone who is always present, because the morning star appears every day, or someone who is coming, because it heralds the new day which is soon to come - or perhaps both)

According to Levinsohn 1992,16-21 'a point of departure' is not just a convenient way of talking about language but is in fact a technical term in discourse analysis. The primary element of its definition is that it must be a 'fronted constituent', that is, such constituents 'begin sentences' (ibid.,18). If therefore, the above argument is correct that 1:8 and 9 are points of departure for a discourse-level¹³ structural feature then this explains the presence of the otherwise redundant¹⁴ first-person pronouns, because these are the fronted constituents which provide the point of departure for the rest of the structure, with καί having the all important role (22:8) of linking the two halves of the structure together.

This proposal which takes features discerned on the sentence level and below, and applies them to higher levels of discourse is undoubtedly breaking new ground, but at some point this has to be attempted if the relationships at all levels of the discourse hierarchy are to be described and understood. At times such as these, it is often helpful to discard old paradigms and try out new ones. In the case of καί, it has been described and understood for several centuries using the paradigm of the concept of a conjunction. This implies a connection which joins elements in a linear chain and in turn implies that the elements concerned must be contiguous units (cf. Heckert's definition of conjunctive καί cited above). However, it must be admitted that this is a paradigm which has been applied by scholars as they looked back in history at an ancient language and sought to understand it from the point of view of language as used in their era. The ideal, if it were possible, would be to try and view NT Greek from the point of view of its original users and understand it using paradigms which pre-dated and perhaps even inspired its use and development.

Although this ideal would be difficult to accomplish, it is perhaps more possible now than ever before. Linguists studying existing situations have found that within a given culture, when it passes from the oral to the written stage, written discourses rapidly take on different characteristics even while retaining important aspects of the oral style.¹⁵ Other scholars investigating orality as such and how it is represented in written form have found that parallelism in all its forms is a particular characteristic (see Harvey 1998,40-46). Two deductions can be made from these observations: firstly written discourses which are produced in the context of a predominantly oral culture will be similar in significant ways to their oral counterparts and this will include the fact that parallelism will often be found. Secondly, just as words change their meanings and grammar systems evolve over time, so it is to be expected that the occurrence and function of higher-level discourse features will also change. As writing dominates a culture more and more and oral discourse skills are lost, it is most likely that the features which were necessary for good oral communication will tend to be replaced by those which facilitate good written communication

Oral communication which relies heavily on repetition and therefore on parallel structures at all levels has a double problem of continuity and discontinuity. Because there is repetition of similar content, there is thematic continuity between different sections of the discourse which nonetheless follow each other sequentially, since only one word and one sentence, for example, can be processed at a time. However, at the same time, each section of the discourse will have an internal development with perhaps many different components in it before it reaches its conclusion.

¹³Levinsohn's discussion is limited to the sentence level but he explains that 'a point of departure...provide(s) the primary basis for relating what follows to the context' (1992,18). In the current discussion it is being assumed that principles of this nature can also be applied to all levels of the hierarchy since any discourse constituent needs to be related to its context and an author needs to have means of signaling such relationships. This, therefore, is a first attempt to demonstrate that this is the case. It may also be added that points of departure may be especially necessary for discourses which favour parallel organization and in support of this it can be noted that Levinsohn himself remarks that such a feature is not so obvious in 'languages such as English' (ibid.,19, note 4).

¹⁴Note that there is no 'redundant' pronoun before the name 'John' in 1:4.

¹⁵See, for example, Bartsch 1997.

Then when it reaches its conclusion, there is discontinuity, because this process of internal development is stopped and the whole process begins again with the repetitive, parallel section which follows. So, the complex decoding problem which arises for the reader/listener is knowing when a major section of the discourse has come to an end, and then to know whether the next section is in parallel and is looking at the same topic from a different point of view, or whether it is not in parallel but is broaching a new topic, or building developmentally on the preceding one. The problems are different within writing-based cultures, since in such a case constant repetition, and thence parallelism, are less necessary and usually less acceptable. In other words, an oral system has a need for topic markers to help track the continuities and discontinuities of one or more topics throughout a discourse, while written systems, where repetition is reduced to a minimum, need markers which indicate the kinds of connections which exist between units which follow each other linearly, like links in a chain. There is potential here for speculating that discourse markers whose original main purpose was to track topic development, may have evolved to the point where their main function became that of a conjunction.

In conclusion then, an attempt will be made to create a new paradigm and look at the function of *καί* from the point of view of an oral culture, with its predilection for parallelism, looking forward into time as written discourses begin to find their place in the communication pantheon. From this point of view then, it is being assumed that identifying and tracing the topic(s) of a discourse, and what is being said about them (the themes), are crucial issues for both the author and the readers. On this basis then, it is being proposed that *καί* (and other connectives such as those cited above which appear to have a similar function to that of *καί*) should be viewed according to the paradigm of the concept of a topic marker. Its function then, wherever it occurs, would be to inform the reader that the constituent which is so marked will continue providing information about the same topic as the preceding (not necessarily contiguous) constituent or constituents which have equal status, and therefore that it should be considered to have a parallel relationship¹⁶ with those constituents.

Since *καί* can occur at any level of the hierarchy from the discourse level, as in the case of the narrative framework and the cycles in *Revelation*, down to the word level, the topic will be different depending on the level which is in view. If *καί* is operating at the discourse level then it will be the overall discourse topic which is in view, whereas if it is operating at the clause level (for example), then it is likely to be the sentence topic which is in view. In contrast to *καί*, *δέ* would indicate that discussion of a previous topic has been terminated and that discussion of a new topic has begun. This would also imply that the thematic shift is developmental in nature (to use Levinsohn's term), with one package of information building in a contingent manner, or in sequential way, on what has preceded, rather than forming a parallel structure which goes over the same ground from a different point of view.

This is by no means the last word on this subject, but it is definitely an attempt to push back the limits of our understanding and in the first instance to make an attempt to account for the use of *καί* in this study of *Revelation*. In proposing a paradigm shift, it is intended also to propose a challenge so that others in turn may attempt to reappraise this very familiar part of the Greek language from another point of view, in the expectation that this process may lead to new insights into the function of this word even if, in the end, they are not identical with the proposals presented above.¹⁷ At the very least, it is to be hoped that in the future it will be possible to arrive at an integrated understanding of this discourse feature which takes account of its role at all the levels of the discourse hierarchy at which it occurs.

2.3 The Narrative Interlude 10:1-11:2

D: A new main participant 10:1. It is not the seventh trumpet as would be expected from the numerical sequencing. A different main speaker is overtly marked as from 11:3. Reappearance of John. 11:1-2 is interpreted as an overlap link with 11:1-13.

IC: Symmetrical ABA' structure involving new main participant (angel) ending at 10:11 with his involvement in 11:1 being ambiguous. Symmetrical ABA' structure based on John's involvement which runs from 10:1 to 11:2. (See also discussion of 11:1-13 in section 4.2 below.)

¹⁶Note that Heckert (1996,58 read together with 70) considered that this was the likely original function of *καί* as was previously mentioned.

¹⁷This challenge is necessary because Beale 1999,974-6, having provided a review of the traditional understanding of *καί* in the context of the crucial occurrence at 20:1, comes to the conclusion that 'a close examination of the use of the conjunction in 19:11-20:15 (alone) cannot solve the problem one way or another', and that therefore 'more trenchant exegetical work must be done'.

F: An interlude for the whole book. The major central component of the narrative framework. A signpost pointing towards the seventh trumpet. John's personal example contributes to the volitional import of the book.

Unit 1 10:1-4

D: A new main participant ('another angel') and his first utterance. The first command ('seal') to John in a new series.

IC: A single main participant and event. 10:4 is included because of coherence created by the repetition of the seven thunders.

F: Introductory unit of a coherent series. Sets the scene for the larger unit. First command to John which has significance at the higher level of the narrative framework (Prologue-Narrative Interlude-Epilogue).

Unit 2 10:5-11

(Alternative Analysis of Unit 2: 10:5-7)

D: Same participants as unit 1 but a different event.

IC: Primary coherence provided by the involvement of John in a single event. Coherence between 10:5-7 and 10:8-11 is provided by the fact that vv.5-7 are a setting for what follows and the repetition of the lexical items concerning the concept of prophecy in verses 7 and 11.

F: Central unit in a series of three and probably the most important because of the chiasmic structure of the whole and because of its greater length.

Unit 3 11:1-2

(Alternative Analysis of Unit 3: 10:8-11)

D: A new event involving John.

IC: John's continuing presence.

F: Concluding unit in a series of three, but also functioning as an overlap link and as the introduction to the next main unit 11:1-13.

3 Chapter 3: The Signs Cycle 11:15-16:1

D: A new major unit linked to what precedes and what follows by overlap links.

IC: An autonomous major unit with the same structure as preceding ones of similar size and function, namely a setting, and a body which presents a seven-fold motif and an interlude.

F: Functions together in a coordinated relationship with the other cycles to create the body of the book which presents the content of the visions received by the narrator. This cycle also contributes special prominence to the body of the book.

3.1 The Setting 11:15-19

D: Beginning of a new numbered sub-unit (7th Trumpet). Change of topic, principal participant and situation.

IC: Embedded narrative with chiasmic structure:

A. Introductory Event in Heaven 11:15a

B. Direct Speech: Generic statement concerning the Reign of Christ 11:15b

C. A response: Worship 11:16

B' Direct Speech: Specific Statements concerning the Reign of God Almighty 11:17-18

A' Concluding Event in Heaven 11:19

F: Overlap link: Conclusion to Trumpets Cycle and Setting for Signs Cycle.

3.2 The Body 12:1-16:1

D: Beginning of a series of seven signs.

IC: Composed of a series of sub-units containing seven signs and a contrasting interlude.

F: Head of the Signs Cycle contributing special prominence to the book as a whole.

3.2.1 Sub-Unit 1: Signs 1 and 2 12:1-17

D: Marked introduction of a new topic ('a great sign was seen'). New participants.

IC: Embedded narrative with symmetric structure:

A. Introduction of the first two personages (signs) and their first encounter. 12:1-6

B. War in Heaven and the Dragon is thrown down to the earth. 12:7-9

B' Explanation of the significance of the Dragon being thrown down. 12:10-12

A' Conclusion of the narrative: second encounter and denouement. 12:13-17b

Coda: Transition (tail-head link 'sea') to next sub-unit. 12:17c

3.2.2 Sub-Unit 2: Sign 3 13:1-10

D: Change of topic, primary participant and situation. Introduction of new personage.

IC: Embedded narrative with symmetric structure:

A. Description of the first beast emphasizing its great authority over people of the earth. It is 'as though it had been killed'. 13:1-3

B. Its Authority: it leads the inhabitants of the earth to false worship 13:4

B' Its Authority: it blasphemes God and the inhabitants of Heaven. 13:5-6

A' Resume concerning the use of its authority over people on the earth. These are the saints and those not written in the book of 'the Lamb who has been killed' 13:7-8

Coda: Exhortation directed at the reader. 13:9-10

3.2.3 Sub-Unit 3: Sign 4 13:11-18

D: Change of topic, primary participant and situation. Introduction of new personage.

IC: Embedded narrative with symmetric structure:

A. Description of the second beast emphasizing its authority. 13:11-12a

B. Its Authority: it leads the inhabitants of the earth to false worship using signs v12b-13

B' Its Authority: one of these signs is a talking statue to be worshiped. 13:14-15

A' Resume concerning the use of its authority on the earth. 13:16-17

Coda: Exhortation directed at the reader. 13:18

3.2.4 Sub-Unit 4: Interlude 14:1-5

D: Change of topic, primary participant and situation. Introduction of different personage.

IC: Embedded narrative with symmetric structure:

A. Description of the Lamb and His entourage of 144,000. 14:1

B. Worship: the sound of harps in Heaven 14:2

B' Worship: the sound of a new song before the Throne and the inhabitants of Heaven. 13:3a

A' Those who sing are the 144,000 only. 14:3b

Coda: Explanation concerning the identity of the 144,000. 14:4-5

3.2.5 Sub-Unit 5: Sign 5 14:6-13

D: Change of topic, primary participant and situation. Introduction of new personage(s).

IC: Embedded narrative with chiasitic structure:

A. The first angel and his speech to people on the earth: Fear God and Worship Him. 14:6-7

B. The second angel and his speech: Babylon is fallen. 14:8

A' The third angel and his speech: Condemnation on those who worship the beast. 14:9-11

Coda: Exhortation directed at the reader. 14:12-13

Including: A blessing which is part of the Narrative Framework and also a book level prominence feature.

3.2.6 Sub-Unit 6: Sign 6 14:14-20

D: Change of topic, primary participant and situation. Introduction of new personage(s).

IC: Embedded narrative with a double chiasmic structure but with the same topic:

A1. Description of one like a Son of Man who is ready to harvest. 14:14

B1. Another angel and his speech: Reap the (grain) harvest 14:15

A1' The harvesting action of the one like a Son of Man. 14:16

A2. Another angel goes out ready to harvest. 14:17

B2. Another angel and his speech: Reap the (wine) harvest 14:18

A2' The harvesting action of the angel (A2). 14:19

Coda: Explanation giving details of the aftermath of the harvest. 14:20

3.2.7 Sub-Unit 7: Sign 7 15:1-16:1. This is also the Setting of the Bowls Cycle

D: Change of topic ('another sign'), and situation. Introduction of new personage(s).

IC: Embedded narrative with chiasmic structure:

A. A Great and Wonderful Sign is seen in Heaven:

7 Angels with the 7 Last Plagues which will complete God's Anger 15:1-2

B. On the Glassy Sea: The Overcomers Stand and Sing Before God - Great and Wonderful are the Works of God Almighty, Who will not Fear and Glorify His Name? 15:3-4

A' The Sanctuary in Heaven Releases the 7 Angels who are given the Bowls of the Anger of God - The Sanctuary is so Filled with Smoke that no one can enter until the completion of the Seven Plagues. 15:5-8

Coda. Final Instructions to the 7 Angels. 16:1

Note: Some of the parallels between A and A' are conceptual and allusive rather than lexical. The 7 angels are generically designated as 'great and wonderful' in 15:1 (A) and their magnificence is specifically described in 15:6 (A'). The sea (A) and the sanctuary with the 4 living creatures (A') are elements of the throne-room scene.

4 Chapter 4: The Interludes

4.1 The Interlude of the Seals Cycle 7:1-17

D: Change of topic, participants and situation. A break in the sequence of seven seals.

IC: Parallelism between μετὰ τοῦτο 'after this' and μετὰ ταῦτα 'after these things' (7:1,9), the whole interlude is composed of salvation theme material as opposed to judgment theme material in the preceding and following passages. Although it is not obvious in the surface structure the consensus of opinion is that the topic of both parts of the interlude are the same, namely the people of God seen as a complete group. The structure of both parts is a combination of a parallel structure composed of description and direct speech followed by a coda. Even though description and direct speech occur in the preceding seals, these constituent parts are not in a parallel relationship. (The fifth seal possibly has a parallel structure but the evidence is weak).

Part 1. 7:1-8

D: Change of topic, participants and situation.

IC: Same participants and same basic event (sealing) throughout. The parallelism is established by the repetition of the reference to harming (synonyms) the earth, the sea and the trees (7:1,2 and 3). There is no good reason for this extensive repetition in such a short span except for the intention to create a parallel structure.

A. Description: John sees four angels holding the four winds back from harming the earth, sea and trees v.1

B. Description: Another angel with a seal of the living God who cries out with a loud voice to the four angels who have power to harm the earth and the sea v.2

C. Direct Speech: The Angel says: ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea or the trees until we have sealed God's people on their forehead.’ v.3

Coda: John is made aware of the result of this sealing activity. Namely, 144,000 people are sealed. v.4-8. The Coda is composed of a generic resume (v.4) and a specific list (vv.5-8).

Part 2. 7:9-17

D: Change of grammatical subject (even though the underlying topic of the whole section remains the same), participants and location.

IC: Same situation and same basic event (worship) throughout.

A. Description: John sees a great crowd standing before the throne in Heaven with palms in their hands v.9

B. Direct Speech: They cry out with a loud voice: ‘Salvation to our God, sitting on the throne and to the Lamb’. v.10

A' Description: The angels standing around the throne, the Elders and the four creatures fall before the throne and worship v.11

B' Direct Speech: Blessing, glory, wisdom, thanks, honour, power and strength (7 items) to God. v.12

Coda: John is made aware of the identity of the principal participants in this worship activity, namely the people dressed in white robes v.13-17. This Coda forms part of the narrative framework (see chapter 2).

4.2 The Interlude of the Trumpets Cycle 11:1-13

D: 11:1-2 is interpreted as an overlap link. In this passage John's involvement fades out, apparently uncompleted. The same passage sets the stage for the following description of the two witnesses which introduces a new topic, participants and situation.

IC: The narrative concerning the two witnesses along with parallel references to ‘the city’ at 11:2,8 and 13.

A. Setting 11:1-2

B. The miraculous ministry of the two witnesses 11:3-6

C. The earthly destiny of the two witnesses 11:7-10

B' The miraculous confirmation of their ministry 11:11-12

A' Conclusion 11:13

Notes: Being an overlap link 11:1-2 can be viewed in different ways. The imperatives (rise, measure, leave out, do not measure) would seem to be dominant, but they only concern John's story and as such are relevant to the conclusion of the passage 10:1-11:2. As far as the interlude 11:1-13 is concerned, the dominant concepts in vv.1-2 would seem to be God (in Heaven), those worshipping Him, the city, the nations and the time period.

The parallels between A and A' are God (in Heaven), the response to Him of worshipping or giving glory, the city. The parallels between B and B' are the concept of miraculous activity, standing//stood, enemies, a time frame stated in days. Each of the sub-units have a time reference which is unusual since time references are rare in the book. ‘The Lord’ or ‘God’ occur in each of the sub-units.

4.3 The Interlude of the Signs Cycle 14:1-5

D: Change of topic, participants and location. A change from the judgment theme to the salvation theme.

IC: A single embedded narrative with a single set of participants. A coherent parallel structure with significant cross-references throughout.

A. The Lamb standing on Mt. Sion with the 144,000 14:1

B. The sound in Heaven of a new song 14:2-3a

A' No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who are purchased from the earth 14:3b

Coda: John is made aware of the identity of the principal participants in this activity 14:4-5

- a. They are not defiled, celibates they are 14:4a
- b. They are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever he goes 14:4b
- b' They are the ones who were purchased as first-fruits 14:4c
- a' No lie was found in them, unblemished they are 14:5

Notes: Constituents A and A' of the interlude are in parallel because of the specific repetition of the 144,000 each time qualified by a passive perfect participle. 'The Lamb' also occurs in A and also in the coda as does 'his Father' and 'God'. Constituents a and a' of the coda are in parallel because of the similarity of the central concept (undefiled/unblemished) and also because of the similarity of their grammatical construction. Constituents b and b' are in parallel because they amplify information previously given in constituents A and A' of the body of the unit. Constituent b. of the coda says that the 144,000 follow the Lamb wherever he goes, while in Body A. they are with him on Mt. Sion. The reference to the Lamb's name being marked on their foreheads (v.1) could well be interpreted as signifying ownership in the case of slaves/servants, or as a commitment to follow in the case of soldiers who would wear their master's colours. Coda b' says that they are the first fruits of those purchased from humanity, whereas in Body A' they were previously described as those purchased from the earth.

4.4 The Interlude of the Proclamations Cycle 19:1-8

D: Change of topic, participants and location. Change from judgment theme to salvation theme. It is followed by a coda which is a section of narrative framework which also contains direct speeches but these are preceded by full forms of the verb 'to say' rather than participles.

IC: A series of direct speeches each with a similar internal structure. The structure of the whole is a concentric structure followed by a coda. The coda nonetheless is tightly integrated into its context and is intentionally attached to the interlude unit which precedes. This is because there is a clear tail-head link attaching the two units (the repetition of 'the marriage of the Lamb' in verses 7 and 9), because they both have similar structures organized around a series of direct speeches and because they both contribute to the sub-theme of worship.

A. 19:1-3 Personage: 'a great crowd'

present participle: 'saying'

direct speech 1: 'Hallelujah'

followed by TWO reason clauses introduced by ὅτι

direct speech 2: 'Hallelujah'

(Note that this is NOT introduced by a participle and is specifically stated to be a 'second' speech by the same participants)

B. 19:4 Personages: The 24 elders and the 4 living creatures (before) the throne

present participle: 'saying'

direct speech: 'Amen, Hallelujah'

B' 19:5 Personage: 'a voice from the throne'

present participle: 'saying'

direct speech: 'Praise God...'

A' 19:6-8 Personages: 'a great (synonym) crowd'

present participle: 'saying'

direct speech 1: 'Hallelujah'

followed by TWO reason clauses introduced by ὅτι

Coda: Being a Minor Component of the Narrative Framework 19:9-10

Personage: The Bowl Angel of 17:1 (implicit)

direct speech 1: indicative verb: 'he says to me'

'Write: Blessed' v.9a

direct speech 2: indicative verb: 'he says to me'

‘These words are true’ v.9b
followed by John’s response as an element of the narrative framework v.10a

direct speech 3: indicative verb: ‘he says to me’
‘Don’t worship me...Worship God’ v.10b
followed by a commentary/explanation introduced by γὰρ ‘for’.

F: Its primary function is that of the interlude of Cycle 6. The narrative framework unit contributes to the overall thrust of the cycle and the interlude in that it continues the motif of the proclamation, being a series of direct speeches. It is at the same time a book-level prominence feature contributing to the hortatory objective of the book. The interlude is the last and therefore concluding interlude, and the entire unit (19:1-10) contributes to the complex preliminary conclusion at the end of Cycles 2-6 (19:1-21).

4.5 The Relationships Between the Interludes

The Seals Interlude 7:1-17 and the Proclamations Interlude 19:1-8
There are 3 structural similarities (direct speech is a major component, presence of an element of the narrative framework and codas) and more than 10 semantic relationships including references to the general setting of Chapters 4 and 5, and references to God’s servants, glory and power, salvation, Amen.

The Narrative Framework Interlude 10:1-11:2 and the Trumpets Interlude 11:1-13
There is 1 structural relationship (overlap link) and 4 semantic relationships: prophesy, nations and tongues and peoples, finish (referring to an aspect of God’s work/plan), and the concepts of bitter/unpleasant experience and sweet/pleasant experience. The concept of witness is central in 11:1-13 and also implicit in 10:1-11:2 since John is designated as a witness elsewhere in the narrative framework (1:2).

The Seals Interlude has 3 relationships with the Trumpets Interlude, 4 with the Narrative Interlude including 1 structural, and 5 with the Signs Interlude including 1 structural.

The Proclamations Interlude has 2 relationships with the Trumpets, 3 with the Narrative Interlude including 1 structural, and 7 with the Signs Interlude including 1 structural.

The sub-unit 12:10-11 is connected to the interludes and the Prologue, Epilogue and cycle settings by the presence of a loud voice from Heaven, the Lamb, salvation, power, be glad, witness and tabernacle.

5 Chapter 5: The Seven Cycles Revisited

5.1 The General Setting of Cycles 2-6 4:1-5:14

D: Change of topic and situation. Introduction of new participants. Ends when setting material ends and the main topic introduced (the opening of the seven seals) is taken up in detail.

IC: Parallel chiasmic structure. Coherence of general situation (throne-room), purpose (setting material including introduction of new participants) and content (continuation of references to the one sitting on the throne, and to the 24 elders and 4 living creatures). The relationship between the two major parts is that of generic-specific.

- Introduction:** Transition from Cycle 1 and General Introduction 4:1
A. The One Sitting on the Throne is Introduced and Described 4:2-3
B. The Next Participants, the 24 Elders and the 4 Living Creatures are Introduced and Described 4:4-7
A' The Worship Ascribed to The One Sitting on the Throne is Introduced and Described 4:8-11

A" The Issue of the Scroll held by the One Sitting on the Throne is Introduced and Described 5:1-3

B' The Next Participant, the Lamb is Introduced and Described, and the Elders and Living Creatures Respond 5:4-7

A''' The Worship of the Lamb is Introduced and Continues as does that of the One Sitting on the Throne 8-13

Conclusion: The closure of the 24 Elders and the 4 Living Creatures 5:14

F: It functions as both the general setting to Cycles 2-6 and the specific setting of the Seals Cycle. Alternatively, 5:1-14 can be viewed as an overlap link being both part of the general setting and also the specific setting of Cycle 2.

5.2 Part 1 (Generic) of the General Setting of Cycles 2-6 4:2-11

Structure:

A. Introduction/Description of the One Sitting on the Throne and the 24 Elders. 4:2-4

B. Special description of the Throne 4:5-6a

C. Introduction/Description of the 4 Living Creatures and their Activity. 4:6b-8

B'. # (missing)

A'. Description of the Activity of the Elders in Worship of the One Sitting on the Throne. 4:9-11

Note: Leaving aside the issue of B' which is missing and which is discussed in chapter 5, section 3.2 the structural organization suggests that the introduction of the four living creatures is the most prominent part of this section. This is confirmed when it is noted that they play an important role in the development of the body of this cycle. See 6:1,2,5 and 7.

5.3 Part 2 (Specific) of the General Setting of Cycles 2-6 5:1-13

Structure: narrative structure with plot

1. **Setting** for what is to follow. Specific development of one aspect of the description of the One Sitting on the Throne, namely the introduction of the scroll with 7 seals. 5:1

2. **Inciting Moment.** The problem is identified, namely that no one is worthy to open the scroll. 5:2-3

3. **Climax.** A climax of tension is reached, namely John is so disappointed that he weeps. 5:4

4. **Denouement.** A solution is identified, namely the Lion of Judah can open the scroll. 5:5

5. **Final Suspense.** The execution of the solution is delayed and an element of uncertainty introduced, namely when John looks he does not see a Lion but a Lamb who looks as if he is mortally wounded. 5:6

6. **Conclusion.** The immediate problem is resolved and the immediate effect of that resolution is described, namely the Lamb steps forward, takes the scroll and worship ensues. 5:7-13.

Notes: 1. Following the usual logic of problem/resolution type narratives, and because of its extra length, the conclusion would be considered to be the most prominent sub-unit.

2. Since the above text is only a setting the actual working out of the problem of the opening of the seals is contained in the body which follows. The above text is an embedded narrative, that is it is a complete narrative in its own right but it is functioning as part of a larger unit (Cycle 2) which in this case is also in narrative form.

3. The analyses presented in sections 5.2 and 5.3 above are different from the analyses of the same texts presented in the preceding paragraph (section 5.1). These are examples of complementary analyses which look at the text from slightly different points of view and bring to the fore different aspects or emphases of the same material. In section 5.1 the analysis looks at Chapters 4 and 5 as a total unit and proceeds from that point of view. As such, it presents the broad outlines of the structure and does not take account of all the detail. By contrast, the analyses in sections 5.2 and 5.3 look at the individual parts of the larger text and treat them in turn as individual units, rather than as a parts of a larger whole. By the same token it also enters into finer detail and takes account of smaller sub-units (e.g. 4:5-6a) which are beyond the scope of the higher level analysis.

5.4 The Conclusion to Cycles 2-6 19:11-21

D: Change of situation, topic and participants. No continuation of any significant theme or sub-theme from the preceding passage.

IC: Interweaving of several sub-themes and lexical chains which complete sub-themes or motifs initiated in sub-units prior to the immediately preceding context. The interweaving begins in verse 11 and continues through to verse 21.

F: Closure to the sixth cycle, since it contains the seventh Proclamation (vv.17-21), but at the same time it is also a conclusion to the whole Cycles 2-6, being in parallel with and forming an inclusio with Chapters 4 and 5.

Structure:

A. A Description of the Risen Christ Seen as a Victorious Warrior 19:11-13

parallels: 'one sitting on a white horse', 'having a name written... his name was the Word of God', 'garment dipped in blood', 'he makes war'.

B. A Description of the Armies of Heaven and their Leader 19:14-16

parallels: '(those) followed (sitting) on white horses', 'out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword' 'He treads the winepress...', 'He has on His garment...a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords'.

C. Proclamation 7: The Summons to the Final Conflict 19:17-18

parallels: 'assemble', 'the flesh of horses and those sitting on them', 'kings and those (following) sitting on horses', 'all the birds...', 'Come... eat'.

B' A Description of the Armies of the Earth and their Leader 19:19-20

parallels: 'the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war with the one sitting on the horse and his army'.

A' A Description of the Warfare and the Victory of the Risen Christ 19:21

parallels: 'the rest (the kings of the earth and their armies) were killed (war made and accomplished)', 'the one sitting on the horse', 'the sword...proceeding from his mouth', 'all the birds were filled by their flesh'.

Notes: The system of parallels is complex and complete: A. is in parallel with all other sub-units ('one/those sitting/following on (white) horse(s)'); A//B: 'name..written..., garment...blood/winepress...garment'; A//B//A': 'make war/killed'; B//C//B': 'armies'(stated or described); B//A': '(sharp) sword...out of his mouth'; C//B': armies of 'the kings' of the earth, (specific/generic); C//A': 'all the birds', 'the flesh of the rest/armies of the earth'. This means that even though sub-units can be recognised according to the changes in topic, as per the schema above, at the same time 19:11-21 is a complete unit and cannot be sub-divided into several units of the same semantic weight functioning at the same level of the discourse hierarchy.

Proclamation 7 (19:17-18) is at the middle of a chiasm and is therefore the most important sub-unit.

5.5 The Seventh Cycle 20:1-22:7 The Seven Characteristics of the New Creation or The Seven New Things

D: Change of topic, participants and situation. It follows the end of a set of seven which is marked by special features (e.g. inclusio 19:11) which confirms that it is the end of a major section. It is followed by the Epilogue which is the concluding unit of the book composed of narrative framework material, to which it is attached by an overlap-link.

IC: Composed of two major units with contrastive primary topics which function together as setting and body with a seven-fold motif, followed by a conclusion which overlaps with the Epilogue. The organization of the whole cycle is based on generic/specific relationships and antithetical contrasts.

F: Conclusion of the body of the book composed of seven major cycles which contains the visionary content of the book.

Structure:

1. Setting 20:1-15
2. Body 21:1-22:5
3. Conclusion 22:6-7

Note: This linear structure throws the natural prominence on the conclusion which emphasises the veracity and the reliability of the preceding vision. This kind of material is volitional import material which is always more prominent than informational import material.

5.6 The Setting of Cycle 7 20:1-15

D: Change of topic, participants and situation.

IC: Parallel structure interweaving references to the demise of Satan, 1000 years, first resurrection/second death, the lake of fire, and thrones and judgment/reigning.

Structure:

A. Satan's Imprisonment and Temporary Demise 20:1-3

(An angel *comes down* from Heaven: Satan is bound, and thrown into the pit so that he may not deceive the nations for 1000 years; afterwards he will be released for a short time - // with A'.)

B. The Martyred Witnesses Sit to Judge 20:4-6

(I saw thrones: the martyred witnesses have the right to judge; they live and reign with Christ; this is the first resurrection and the second death has no power over them; the remainder of the dead do not live again until after the 1000 years - // with B'.)

Note: v.6 being a blessing could be interpreted as a book level prominence marker. However, it is integrated into its context and is not a separate unit. Whichever view is preferred it clearly contributes prominence to the concept of the first resurrection. This section has the following internal structure: Introduction + ABCC'B'A'. Sections C and C' are marked for prominence by the blessing.

A' Satan's Release and Final Destiny 20:7-10

(Satan is released after the 1000 years and once more deceives the nations who *go up* against the saints, but fire *comes down* out of Heaven, and the devil who deceived them is thrown into the lake of fire.)

B' The (Other) Dead Stand to be Judged 20:11-15

(I saw... a throne and one sitting on it; the dead (now restored to life) stand before Him and are judged by the books and their works. Those not found in the book of life are thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death.)

Note: This section has the following internal structure: Introduction + AB, A'B',A''B''.

5.7 The Body of Cycle 7 21:1-22:5

D: Change of topic and situation. Continues until the end of visionary content when final section of narrative framework begins (overlap link).

IC: Parallel Structure. Coherence of general topic and theme, the new creation.

Structure:

A. Generic Description. 21:1-8

B. Specific Description 1. 21:9-21

C. Specific Description 2. 21:22-22:5

A. Generic Introduction to the Characteristics of the New Creation and the New Jerusalem 21:1-8

A. Generic Vision of the New Creation 21:1

B. Generic Vision of the New Jerusalem 21:2

C. Specific descriptions of the new creation including positive aspects and the absence of the negative (Direct Speech 1). 21:3-4b

(Containing: Statement about God v.3a-b, positive statements about what He will do for His people v.3c, statements about the negative which will be removed v.4a-b)

Coda: Repetition of summary explanation 21:4c (cf. 21:1)

A' Generic Statement referring to renewal 21:5 (cf. The promises in Cycle 1 and 7:15-17).

Plus prominence marker (narrative framework, imperative 'Write...'). (Direct Speeches 2-3)

B' Generic Statement referring to completion 21:6a (cf.10:6-7, 11:15-18, 12:12, 15:1,8, 16:17-19, 17:17, 19:1-2). Plus prominence marker (Alpha and Omega). (Direct Speech 4a)

C' Specific descriptions of the New Creation including positive aspects and the absence of the negative. (Direct Speech 4b) 21:6b-8a

(Containing: Statement about God v.6b, positive statements about what He will do for His people v.6c-7, statements about the negative which will be removed v.8a)

Coda: Repetition of summary explanation: second death v.8b (cf. Setting 20:6,14)

Note: The phrase concerning the Alpha and Omega is a special, book-level feature and as such it is interpreted as a prominence marker supporting the preceding speech. However, it does also contribute information which is relevant to the following context and so at the informational level it is interpreted as contributing to the content of vv.7-8a. The result is a single phrase with a double function which creates a low-level overlap link.

B. Specific Development 1: Detailed Description of the Characteristics of the New Jerusalem 21:9-21

A. Introduction by one of the Bowl Angels (cf.17:1) including

repetition of generic statement about the New Jerusalem 21:9-11a (Cf. 21:2)

B. Specific Description of the New Jerusalem in terms of a physical city 21:11b-21

a. Description of its glory v.11b (light, aura, valuable, jasper, crystal)

b. Description of the wall and gates v.12-13

c. Description of the foundations (generic) v.14

d. Measurement and Evaluation v15-18

(**Containing:** **a.** Measuring City, and Gates/Wall generic,

b. Measuring City and Wall specific,

a' Evaluating Wall and City generic

Note repetition of 'gold' a-a', also jasper, pure, pure glass)

c' Description of the foundations (specific) v.19-20

b' Description of the gates v.21a

a' Description of its (main) street v.21b (lightness, aura, gold, pure, transparent glass)

C. Specific Development 2: Detailed Description of Characteristics of the New Creation which are Associated with the New Jerusalem 21:22-22:5

A. Specific Explanation concerning the Sanctuary of God and the Lamb

and concerning the Glory of God which illuminates the city 21:22-23

(Negative and positive statements: 'No need, sun, moon, lamp, shine' - but this is primarily a statement about God. The light sources were/are part of the old/new creation and not part of the city as such.)

B. Specific Explanation concerning the role of the Nations 21:24-27

(Positive statement about things which will be brought into the city v.24-6 and 27b and statement about the negative things which will be excluded 'shall not be there' v.25 and 27a. Internal structure: a. Positive, b. Negative, a' Positive, b' Negative, Coda: Positive. The nations are part of the new creation and outside of the city, for they bring their glory IN to the city.)

B' Specific Explanation concerning the healing of the Nations 22:1-3a

(Positive statement about things which flow out of or are outside of the city v.1-2 and statement about the negative things which will be excluded 'shall not be any longer' v.3. Internal structure: a. Positive, b. Positive, c. Positive, Coda: Negative. The river and the tree are part of the creation and not part of a city as such. The river flows OUT of the throne and implicitly may be understood to continue on out of the city as well.)

A' Specific Explanation concerning the Throne of God and the Lamb

and concerning (the Glory of) God which illuminates His People 22:3b-5b

(Positive and negative statements: 'No need, sun, light, lamp, shine' - but including a statement about God)

Coda: Final Summary Statement/Explanation concerning the People of God 22:5c

5.8 The Conclusion of Cycle 7 22:6-7

D: Change of topic and import. Beginning of a new direct speech by the angel of 21:9. Followed by a new section where John is explicitly named and is the speaker.

IC: Complete unit of direct speech which is all volitional import material.

F: Conclusion of Cycle 7 and also first part of the Epilogue at the same time. (Overlap).

Note: the antecedent for 'these words' v.6 grammatically has to be the preceding words in the first instance, which is why v.6 is logically attached to 22:1-5. However the words are ambiguous and can also be interpreted by extension to refer to all the words in the whole book. In support it can be noted that the verse as a whole is in parallel to similar verses spanning the whole book (cf. 1:1,5, 3:14, 19:11 and 15:3,16:7, 19:2,9). Therefore it is only possible to adequately take account of all these features of the text by interpreting 22:6-7 as a transitional unit with a double function (i.e. an overlap link), a conclusion to Cycle 7 and also the beginning of the Epilogue which is attached by this means to the book as a whole (see section 2.2 above).

APPENDIX 3

Review of the Literature on Selected Issues

1 Introduction

It is beyond the scope of the present study to take full account of every detailed insight, whether explicit or implicit, which has ever been published concerning the structure of *Revelation* because as Aune 1987, xci aptly remarked, 'for whatever reason, the literary structure of *Revelation* is more intricate than that of nearly every other ancient apocalypse'. To attempt to do so, therefore, would perhaps double the size of this work. Consequently, as a reasonable compromise, a number of significant structural issues were selected and a review of the historical development of research on these issues is provided in this Appendix for those interested in taking into consideration a broader historical context for the issues under discussion. By this means it is possible, in the main body of the preceding work, to concentrate more fully on the principal objective which is the development and description of an analysis of the macro-structure of the book based on a linguistic methodology.

2 The Narrative Framework

Considerable research was undertaken in the 1970's to clarify the nature of the genre 'apocalypse' and this resulted in a definition of the genre published in Collins 1979. In this article Collins states 'there is always a narrative framework' (ibid.,9), but how this specifically applies to *Revelation* is beyond the scope of his article. The coining of the term 'narrative framework' by Collins and in this present work happened separately, which suggests that there is an underlying linguistic reality inherent in the text which has been independently perceived by different observers.

Barr 1984,46 in providing a brief summary of the content of the book observes that 'the unity of the work is achieved in several ways' one of which is 'a common setting'. Barr's setting is the same as what is traditionally described as the Prologue and the Epilogue and he goes on to say that 'this common setting constitutes a frame (from which) John directly addresses the reader/hearers'. He does not specifically relate this 'frame' to the narrative aspects of the work because he views the frame as creating 'the fiction of a letter'. However, he does go on to append the insightful observation that the frame 'bridges the gap between the normal world and the fictive world', which is the heavenly world into which John journeys in his vision. (See also Barr 1986,249.) Nonetheless, he does not develop these insights any more than that.

Boring 1989,29 seems to be following his predecessors for he expresses himself in this way: ‘the general compositional scheme followed by John is clear, for it is a narrative presentation of the broad apocalyptic pattern found in many other documents’. He then goes on (ibid.,37) to cite the definition quoted by Collins as referred to above. Although in the context of this discussion Boring presents an outline of the book (ibid.,30-1), the concept of ‘a narrative presentation’ does not contribute to his analysis in any way, apart from a brief reference to the opening and the closing of the book, since, like Barr, he also prefers to treat the text primarily as ‘a letter’ (ibid.,30) rather than as a narrative. Similarly, Aune 1987,xcii-iii recognized that John as the narrator ‘is present as a character in the story but only in a secondary role...’, but perhaps for the reason that he only views this phenomenon as ‘secondary’, he does not incorporate this insight into his analysis.

More recently, Longenecker 2001,105-6, who seems to have been influenced by modern linguistic discoveries as well as research into ancient rhetorical devices, attributes ‘part of (*Revelation*’s) artistic impressiveness’ to ‘the striking infrastructure that undergirds its narrative development’. Unfortunately, however, his interest is limited to one small section of text and his discussion, therefore, only concerns secondary structural issues. As a consequence, his dramatic statements concerning ‘the striking infrastructure’ do not actually lead to a deeper understanding of the complexities of the book as a whole.

As far as can be ascertained then, these general statements are as far as research has so far progressed with regard to an understanding of the scope and the function of the narrative framework in *Revelation* as a whole.

3 The Signs Cycle 11:15-16:1

A number of commentators, apparently independently, have recognized that the author of *Revelation* introduced the motif of ‘a sign’ at 12:1 and have sought therefore to discover a series of seven signs to match the other septenaries. These are Loenertz 1947 (cited in Ford 1975), Tenney 1953, Morris 1969, Johnson 1981, Ryken 1974, Wendland 1990, Morey 1991, Hayford 1995,¹ and Kuen 1997a.² Bowman 1962 followed by Spinks 1978 also divided this passage into seven parts but each part was called ‘a pageant’, with no particular reference to the signs motif.

¹Morey and Hayford present the same analysis.

²Kuen is following earlier German commentators including Loenertz.

There is general agreement on the division into units and the discrepancies which occur are regularly the same and can be explained and thence improved by reference to other linguistic features in the text which the writers did not discern as will be indicated below. Tenney went further and also recognized that the signs are actually represented by personages. However, he then went too far by making the child in 12:5 and Michael in 12:7 two of the signs without justifying why these personages, who are only minor participants in their immediate context, should be elevated to the same level as the other sign personages. In addition, this proposal means that there are four signs in the passage 12:1-7 and only three in the whole of 12:9-14:6, which creates an unbalanced analysis.

Bowman, Wendland, Hayford and Kuen propose that the body of the unit is preceded by a one verse setting (11:19). The difficulty with this is that most other commentators recognize 11:15-19 as a complete unit and so to divide it at verse 19 would seem to be rather arbitrary, and ultimately is unnecessary when the concept of overlap links is understood. This was foreseen by Loenertz who was beginning to perceive the overlap links and who apparently made the whole of 11:15-19 the setting to the Sign's Cycle.³

The other major difficulty is that none of these commentators take account of the system of interludes, even though some of them recognize the earlier interludes (ch.7 and 10:1-11:14). Since there is no recognition of a system and no definition of an interlude, the passage which fits into this system (14:1-5) is not recognized as such and is included as one of the seven signs. This creates a discrepancy in the numbering of the signs and also a mixing together of the major judgment and salvation themes under the rubric of the sign's motif. There is nothing to prevent an author mixing his themes together if he wishes, but it would appear that in the body of the central cycles (2-6) the author does not actually do this. So, this is an example of where the author is made to bow to the constraints of the analysis, instead of the analysis being adapted to what the author actually put in the text. See the chapter on themes for more discussion of this issue.

As a consequence of the above, some juggling is necessary to obtain seven signs which is the cause of the other discrepancies. Some commentators ignore Sign 2 which is actually indicated by the author (12:3) and which would, therefore, seem to be a rather major error, but such is the

³In Ford 1975,46-7 the setting is given as 11:6-19, but this would seem to be a misprint as is the spelling of Loenertz's name.

case for Wendland, Ryken, and Hayford. Bowman also puts the Woman and the Dragon together under one sub-title, although he does not call them signs, as indicated above. Morris (1969, 44) accepts that the Dragon is the basis of the second sign, but rather arbitrarily interprets the sign as being ‘Satan Cast Out’ and assigns it to 12:7-12. Others ignore the last sign which is also indicated by the author at 15:1, and such is the case for Tenney, Johnson, Ryken and Morris.

Johnson 1981,414 and 510, is a special case because he has two systems which do not harmonize. In his outline he presents a system of seven signs which is very similar to that of the other commentators cited. However, in his commentary he takes no account of the outline for the development of the sign motif, but presents another system based on the seven occurrences of the word ‘sign’ in the book. This latter insight is a valid one but it is not directly relevant to the structure of the Sign’s Cycle as such. See the chapter on prominence for discussion of this issue.

Another result of juggling the text in order to obtain seven signs is that Loenertz, Morris, and Johnson, combine the whole of 14:6-20 into a single unit, when the linguistic evidence and the consensus of opinion solidly support the view that 14:6-12/13 and 14:14-20 are two discrete units. Conversely, Ryken divides 14:14-20 into two separate units, when the evidence suggests that it is a single complex unit.

Wendland 1990,381 proposes that 14:12-13 is an ‘insertion’, but he does not explain why this should be so. Neither does he explain why he does not treat 13:18 in the same way, even though it is a similar kind of verse also beginning with ὧδε ‘here...’.

In summary then, these writers have discerned the importance of the seven units of seven for the structure of the book as a whole and have tried to take account of it in their analysis. The discrepancies noted above can be eliminated and a coherent analysis of this cycle can be obtained by taking account of the insights obtained from linguistic features like the interludes and the overlap links and codas, and by a better definition and application of all the various features involved, as is explained in the main text.

4 The Seventh Cycle

Discussion of the last part of *Revelation* is a complex matter since there is less consensus of opinion concerning the issues involved than for other parts of the book. Consequently, it is not possible to undertake a full survey, and so attention will be directed mainly to those

commentators who have either tried to divide the book consistently into seven main sections, or have proposed main sections composed of seven sub-units. The main issues arising are where the main division should fall which indicates the beginning of the last main section of text prior to the Epilogue, on what grounds to divide the text into sub-units, and whether there is a seven-fold motif in the last part of the book.

4.1 The Initial Boundary of the Last Main Section

Some have proposed 17:1 as the initial boundary of the last main section of *Revelation*, since this is the place where the seven bowls come to an end. This is the case for Lund 1942/1970, Ryken 1974 and Kuen 1997a, and for them the last section is 17:1-22:5. However in order to illustrate the uncertainty and the variety that there is even for the major divisions, it can be noted that Morris 1969 proposed 17:1-20:15 as the last major section, while Tenney 1953, Ladd 1972 and Beale 1999 proposed 17:1-21:8. What is left over is tacked on the end as a much smaller unit.

Others propose that the final boundary falls at 19:11, but here again there is no significant consensus. Loenertz 1947, Fiorenza 1977, and Johnson 1981 propose that the last section is 19:11-22:5, but Loenertz also includes 19:6-10 as a setting. Meanwhile, their colleagues Lohmeyer 1926, Wilcock 1975, Collins 1976, Bauckham 1977, Giblin 1991 and Aune 1998b propose that the section runs from 19:11 to 21:8, while minority viewpoints are held by Wendland (19:11-20:15) and Mounce (19:6-20:15). These latter have a further 'last' unit (usually 21:9-22:5), which in some cases may be divided into seven sub-units to make it stand on a par with previous larger sections. This is the case for Wendland and Wilcock, yet in order to accomplish this the latter makes his last section run on until 22:19. Collins, on the other hand, frankly calls this last section an appendix.

Moving on further, Hendriksen 1940 and Metzger 1993 analyze the last section as being 20:1-22:5, while Bowman 1962, Spinks 1978 and Hayford 1995, all of whom produce creditable seven-fold structures, work with 20:4-22:5.

The remarks which can be made concerning these different analyses are as follows. Firstly, the lack of consensus speaks for itself, especially as the above summary is only partial in scope and by no means presents all the options. Whereas everyone is agreed about where the first letter begins and the seventh ends, in this case there is no consensus about where the last main section

of *Revelation* begins, nor even where it ends. This implies that there is still considerable uncertainty concerning the structure of this part of the book and commentators still seem to be at the stage of groping for solutions.

Secondly, more clarity could be obtained if the seven-fold structure of the Babylon section (16:17-19:21) were to be accepted. This involves understanding the system of settings and the discernment of the seven proclamations. Quite a number of commentators observe the parallel between Babylon and the new Jerusalem, but in reality this is only one of a large number of parallels which exist in the book and, as such, is not one which contributes directly to the macro-structure of the book. The point then, is that the seven bowls section is not the last seven-fold unit and does not, therefore, usher in the last section of the book.

A third key issue is the linguistic function of 19:11-21. One point of consensus is that 19:11 is perceived to be a new beginning. However, the reality is more complex than that. It is indeed a new beginning but according to the argument presented in the text it is only the beginning of a conclusion, which is a special kind of beginning under any circumstance. It is to be granted that it is the beginning of a unit which is operating at a high level in the linguistic hierarchy, and so, the impression expressed that it initiates a 'major' section of some kind, and the confusion which this impression has engendered, are understandable. The problem in the past is that the full range of linguistic evidence present in the text has not been fully explored and understood. Once this has been done, a coherent analysis of the role of 19:11-21 can be obtained, whose insights are validated by the fact that it explains why many have felt intuitively that 19:11 begins an important segment of text, even though it is, in fact, a conclusion and not the beginning of a new major section.

A fourth issue is the role of 20:1. In amongst all the debate it is interesting to note that there is no disagreement that 20:1 is also a new beginning. The point of disagreement is whether it is the beginning of a new major section, or just the beginning of a sub-unit. This is closely linked to the theological debate over whether 20:1 is sequential to what immediately precedes, or is recapitulative. This debate is too vast and complex to even resume here, but in any case it has been well documented elsewhere (see for example Clouse 1977, Lewis 1980, Grenz 1992, White 1994 and Beale 1999,972-83). Nonetheless, it is probably reasonable to conclude that over the centuries, biblical scholars have been fairly evenly divided over whether 20:1 is attached sequentially to 19:21 as a narrative continuation of what is described in the preceding passage,

or whether there is distinct break at this point and this verse begins a separate entity, which in the view of most proponents of such a division, is recapitulative in nature.

The main remarks which can be made of a general nature, which can perhaps guide the debate through to greater agreement is the insistence that the full range of linguistic evidence available should be taken into account and that the linguistic evidence should be allowed to constrain the theological conclusions rather than vice versa. It is not sufficient to merely debate in a vacuum whether 20:1 is sequential or recapitulative as do the documents cited above. In such a situation, it is hardly surprising that an approximately equal amount of data can be adduced to support each of the positions. The contribution of such verses at the micro-level can only be fully appreciated if they are assessed within the context of an adequate analysis of the macro-structure. This latter implies the prior existence of a complete and internally harmonious analysis of the whole book which is linguistically viable and takes account of all the significant data (cf. the remarks in Callow 1999,406). To the extent that the work is not done to accomplish this goal the debate runs the risk of going on ad infinitum.

4.2 The Division into Sub-Units

A general problem with all the analyses mentioned above, whether the authors are specifically seeking to divide their major units into seven sub-units or not, is that the division into sub-units tends to be arbitrary and artificial. There are many examples, but for the sake of illustration the two principal texts 19:11-21 and 20:1-15 will be taken as representative of the general problem.

Both these texts have a complex but coherent parallel internal structure. The former is an ABCB'A' chiasm and the latter is an ABA'B' parallel structure (see Appendix 2 for the details). This means that even though each passage can be divided into its constituent parts (sub-units), they cannot be divided into separate autonomous units which function together as constituents of another higher level unit. Similarly, even if such sub-units can be perceived, it is nonetheless not appropriate to suggest that they function on the same level in an analysis with much larger units which are not divided in such a way (e.g. 21:1-22:5).

So, for example, in all the outlines surveyed,⁴ all the commentators divided both the passages cited into at least three or four smaller parts, and yet, at the same time, many of them made these small units function at the same level of their analysis as a long passage like 21:1-22:5, which itself is composed of three major units and a total of fifteen sub-units which are on a par with the sub-units of the passages under discussion.

One problem lying behind these observations is that the divisions proposed are not supported by linguistic evidence and so it is not being unreasonable to label such analyses ‘arbitrary’ and ‘subjective’. As such, they do not take account of the complex interweaving of parallels which creates remarkably balanced and complete structures as demonstrated in Appendix 2. In the case of 19:11-21, careful observation of these parallels leads to an analysis with five sub-units, whereas the commentaries only present three (19:11-16, 17-18 and 19-21).

A second problem is that such analyses do not take account of the notion of a linguistic hierarchy (see chapter 1, section 3.2), or in more graphic terms the analysts do not appear able to distinguish the wood for the trees. The impression given is that almost the entire effort of analysis is devoted to dividing the text into units (i.e. it is as if ‘individual trees’ are isolated and studied), without taking into account the notion of coherence within a hierarchy. This coherence concerns how the various units fit together to create larger units which are themselves coherent within themselves. These units, in turn, fit together to create yet more coherent units so that the final, largest possible combination of units (the book in the linguistic sense, or the ‘wood’ in terms of the metaphor), is also a large unit which can be apprehended and appreciated as an entity with its own beauty, balance and unity.

The consequences of such inadequate analyses are particularly unfortunate, especially when it is realized that the structural organization of the text is based primarily on an interplay of parallelism and symmetry of various kinds as is the case for biblical literature in general and *Revelation* in particular. For example, Aune 1998b, 1114 suggests that 21:1-5a can be analyzed as a symmetric structure ABCDD'C'B'A'. This is almost certainly correct and confirms the analysis in the text (chapter 5 above) that the concepts of ‘a new creation’ (21:1a) and ‘all things

⁴Not all the outlines provide that amount of detail so this remark is not directly relevant to such analyses. Giblin is also an exception in that he did not divide 19:11-21, but he did make a major division at 20:11. In the main, the divisions proposed are 19:11-16, 17-18, 19-21 and 20:1-3, 4-10, 11-15.

being made new' (21:5a) are prominent.⁵ Such an analysis, therefore, is useful as a secondary, confirmatory piece of evidence, which can help to isolate prominent points in the text. However, it is not useful for the primary analysis because it destroys the coherence of the overall passage which for Aune is 21:1-8 (ibid.,1113). His symmetric structure straddles the three sub-units of his principal analysis and leaves a final part unaccounted for. The parallel structure proposed in chapter 4 and Appendix 2, is based on generic/specific semantic relationships and takes account of all the data in this passage in a single coherent system. Symmetric and other kinds of parallel structures are indeed helpful for confirming the validity of an analysis, but this is only true when they all fit together neatly, leaving no 'bits left over'; in other words, when the total 'wood' is as tidy and symmetric as the constituent 'trees'. As Wendland 1998,110 puts it (with italics added):

The well-formed literary discourse is built up into a hierarchy of larger and smaller units from a diverse assortment of components and interrelationships on a number of different levels of textual organization. The analyst must look to see how they *all operate in concert* to communicate the original author's message.

Returning then, to the two illustrative passages cited above, it has to be concluded that the division into sub-units proposed in the works listed, at best rides roughshod over the symmetry and parallelism which can be observed in the text, and at worst demonstrates a basic ignorance of some of the essentials of the linguistic architecture of a text. Cotterell and Turner 1989,244, having struggled with the same kind of issues made the following remark and proposed their own solution:

The ... pericope has its own structure, its own transitions, its own peak, all within the larger structure of the (total) narrative. To deal with these complex structures a new kind of commentary is needed which can place lexical studies in their appropriate place but can give to the larger structures more careful consideration.

4.3 The Seven-Fold Motif

The notion of not seeing the wood for the trees also applies to how the possibility of there being a seven-fold motif in the last part of *Revelation* has been handled. For example, Johnson 1981,411 and 573, like many others, seems to be totally absorbed by the need to divide into units. Each of his seven 'Last Things' (19:11-22:5) is therefore restricted to a separate unit of text. This overlooks the fact that an author is able to communicate his motifs and themes in many different ways, not just by a one-to-one relationship between referents and text units, and that already in

⁵This is contra Aune himself since he himself claims that 21:3a-4 are the most important verses. However, this overlooks that fact that with symmetric structures of this balanced kind, the outer wings are usually considered to be thematically the most important part. The centre is the most important part when it is a true chiasm with an unequal number of sub-units (e.g. ABCB'A'). See Breck 1987 and Wendland 1998,119-20.

Revelation 12 the author himself placed two signs together in a single textual unit. The consequence of this preoccupation with division into units is that the text is forced into a pre-conceived system, rather than the system being adapted to take account of the text. On the one hand, Johnson allots a great deal of space and importance to the events of judgment including separate slots for both the binding and the final defeat of Satan, (20:1-3 and 7-10) and yet only assigns one slot to all the detailed description of the new creation in 21:1-22:5. The question remains as to why he divided one section of text into as many small units as possible and not also all the rest. On the other hand, Ryken^{1974,337} proposes a very similar organization and yet he includes the judgment of Babylon (Ch.17-18) which is logical, since in this way all the final judgment events are included in the schema and not just some of them.⁶

Hayford, and Bowman and Spinks propose better overall titles for their final section ('The Church in the Millenium', and 'The Church Triumphant') which is, moreover, limited to 20:4-22:5, a passage which is rather more homogenous, but even so, it is hard to avoid the impression of arbitrariness. This is because Bowman and Spinks' preceding major section has judgment as its main theme and included various judgment events,⁷ and yet judgment events continue on into their last section before giving way to more positive, re-creative events. Hayford^{1995,475-6} does something similar but gets around the problem by calling the preceding section 'The Seven Spectacles' and the last section 'The Seven Sights...'; and yet superficial analysis of these titles suggests that they are synonymous. In both cases, the question still remains as to why all the judgment events should not be grouped together, and all the events of 'The Consummation' (their term) be grouped together separately.

Wilcock^{1975,17} and Wendland^{1990 384-5} limit their scope even more to 21:9-22:19 and 21:1-22:5 respectively, but still cannot avoid this same basic problem even though the details are different. Both entitle their last section 'Seven Revelations' and the preceding one 'Seven Visions' or 'Sights'.⁸ The double problem is that the whole of the book is a revelation (1:1) so why assign this title to just the last part and not all the other parts, especially as they do not even agree as to which sub-unit corresponds to a particular revelation. This issue is further

⁶However, neither of them include the judgment event in 21:8 as a separate part of their seven-fold plan.

⁷See Spinks 1978 for a comparison of both analyses.

⁸Bartina 1962 (cited in León 1985,126) proposes 'Seven Final Visions' as a sub-title for a comparable passage (19:7-22:5), but the details of his sub-divisions are not available.

complicated by the fact that some of their revelations are also sights or visions (for example 21:1 and 2), so why call some things which are seen ‘sights’ and some of them ‘revelations’? Tenney 1957,38 does better by trying less hard in that he proposes a list of ‘Seven New Things’ which at least form a homogenous group which is consonant with its proposed title. Nonetheless, arbitrariness still lingers since there are other ‘new things’ in the text which he did not include in his list.

Clearly, the last section of the book will not give up its treasures easily, since despite all these attempts, there is no consensus to speak of and considerable arbitrariness still to eliminate. These superficial issues are probably due to a failure to come to terms with a number of underlying issues. The first one, as mentioned at the outset is the concentration on the small units (the trees) to the detriment of being aware of, and even being guided by the overall thrust of the author’s purpose (the wood). When the larger picture is considered,⁹ there are certain important issues in the book which come to an end. In particular, it is the judgment issues which come to an end, and this observation goes together with the contention that 19:11-21 is a closure and not a new beginning (see discussion in chapter 5). Overall then, the book provides a revelation that God’s plan for judgment and for eliminating evil has an end in view and, therefore, there are some things which will be literally ‘last things’. To this extent the commentators who use this phrase are correct. However, the particular role of the last part of the book in this context is to demonstrate that just as (and this may be simultaneous as well as complementary) some things come to an end, so, by the same token, some new things will be created which will then exist for all eternity (and so, as such, can hardly be called ‘last things’). At the macro-level of the book these two issues represent the two major themes of the book, and, therefore, for obvious reasons should be considered as two distinct features of the book. This means then, that it is not appropriate to mix them together on the micro-level, and treat them as if they belonged to the same logical strand of development. That is, they should not be mixed unless the author himself does so, for, in fact, one of the complications is that these two strands are intertwined in the last part of the book by the author himself. However, if he does so, then what he actually does should be analyzed and described, rather than imposing an organization on the text which neither recognizes nor reveals what the author was doing. The solution is to keep the ending of the ‘last things’ distinct, as something which is primarily communicated by the ending of Cycles 2-6, and to recognize that Cycle 7’s main purpose is to inform the reader about a new beginning following on from and complementary to what has gone before. Having kept those larger issues distinct,

⁹This is an example of Longacre’s ‘top-down’ approach. See Longacre 1999a.

it is then necessary to recognize that within the scope of Cycle 7 the author uses a system of antitheses to make his point, but overall his point is entirely positive and has the ‘new things’ in focus, because the antitheses are essentially double negatives whose purpose is to highlight even more the magnificence of the new world to come.

The second underlying issue is the failure to carefully define how divisions are made in the text and then remain consistent to the definition, and similarly the failure to define a seven-fold motif, if such is proposed, and likewise to remain consistent to the definition in elucidating it. What needs to be done in order to forge a greater consensus concerning the structure and, thence, the intended communicative purpose of the final part of *Revelation*, is to pay greater attention to these foundational issues of definition and consistency. These, in turn, ought to be rooted in objective linguistic data (whether lexical, grammatical, or semantic) which can be found in the text. It is only by justifying a structural proposal with data which can be reviewed by others that arbitrariness can eventually be eliminated and a growing consensus be created.

There are some other views of seven-fold structures which are not dependent on dividing the text scrupulously into units and which, by the same token, have a measure of textual objectivity. It can also be said that their proponents do not force the rest of the text to fit into the seven-fold structure and therefore resist the temptation to use them as a template for the organization of the whole of the larger unit when this is not warranted by the data. The first of these is presented by Aune 1998b,1113-5 who points out that the speech by God in 21:5-8 can be divided into seven parts. This is an interesting observation, because it is one of only two speeches by God the Father in the book, and because (as was previously demonstrated in chapter 5) this passage is in large part generic and therefore includes most of the essential material of the body of Cycle 7. As Aune himself says ‘the number is probably intentional’ (ibid.1114)¹⁰ confirming once more that the whole of the structure of the book is permeated with seven-fold structures of different kinds, and yet, at the same time, it is not possible to say that this structure is like the other seven-fold, cycle-level motifs since it does not dominate and constrain the structure of the whole of the body of the cycle.

¹⁰Ironically on the following page (1115) Aune observes that ‘the term “Lamb” occurs no less than *seven* times (his italics) in 21:1-22:5’, and yet he concludes that ‘the phrase was added to the text... since (it) always appears to be tangential and secondary’. As a result of this subjective impression he uses this seven-fold repetition as evidence to support his ad hoc source-critical approach, which is another example of an arbitrary and unverifiable approach to text analysis.

Another example is that proposed by Welch 1981,245,¹¹ and this one is noteworthy because it takes into account the broad sweep of the book and is not blinded by the details. He correctly observes that ‘the rewards for faithfulness and endurance’ given to the overcomers in Cycle 1 (his section B in a chiasmic structure) are specifically fulfilled in Cycle 7 (his section B’), thereby providing clear evidence for parallelism between the beginning and the end of the book. Welch actually lists seven promises but he does not go so far as to make this an essential component of his structure. The parallelism is undoubtedly an objective feature of the text. As Welch points out at least some of the promises given in Cycle 1 are specifically fulfilled in Cycle 7. Furthermore, 21:7 states that ‘the overcomer will inherit these things’, the antecedent of which is the ‘all things’ of 21:4, and in the specific development of this generic statement in the following text will be found some of the promises which Welch enumerates. So there is plenty of data to support his view that ‘the evidence continues that this (parallel) relationship is in no way coincidental’ (ibid.,245). Intriguing as this may be, it is still not possible to use this data as support for a seven-fold motif in Cycle 7 as well. In reality, Cycle 1 lists more than seven distinct promises to the overcomers, and Cycle 7, in turn, does not clearly reproduce just seven of them, nor even one drawn from each of the seven letters. Convenient as this would have been if the data had supported the idea, it has to be concluded that this parallelism was not intentionally developed to be a seven-fold motif as well. To find that, it was necessary to take account of more obvious linguistic features as was described in chapter 5 of the text above.

5 The Significance of the Trumpets and Other Seven-Fold Motifs

A brief review of the literature suggests that most commentators interpret the trumpets in *Revelation* 8-11 as having primarily a warning function. Beale 1999,468 rightly suggests that the Old Testament is the appropriate context within which to search for the point of significance for this metaphor. He goes on to say that ‘the OT trumpets predominantly indicate: a warning to repent, judgment, victory or salvation, enthronement of Israel’s king, eschatological judgment or salvation, or the gathering of God’s people’. On the surface then, there appear to be a number of options to choose from when seeking to ascertain the point of similarity for the trumpets as a motif in *Revelation*.

Beale himself argues against the majority viewpoint (ibid.,469 note 9) and states: ‘we have concluded above that the trumpets represent punitive judgments against hardened unbelievers

¹¹Giblin 1991,29 note 29 makes a similar remark as he also argues for the parallelism between Chapters 2-3 and 21:1-22:5, but it is consigned to a footnote and does not contribute directly to his analysis.

instead of mere warnings to induce repentance' (ibid.,471). However, detailed perusal of his argument would suggest that in some places it is based on non-sequiturs and, overall, it seems to be unnecessarily fastidious. For example, he cites the example of the fall of Jericho in *Joshua* (ibid.468-9) and agrees that 'the first six trumpets in *Joshua* 6 announce the judgment to come on the seventh day' but tries to argue from this absence of judgment events during the first six days to support the claim that in *Revelation* 6-8 'the first six trumpets...are punishments preliminary to a climactic judgment' with the emphasis on 'punishment' rather than on 'preliminary'. Within the context of *Joshua* itself this argument overlooks two important facts. Firstly, the first six trumpets did not actually provoke any punitive act against the people of Jericho, and secondly, Rahab and her family understood the message of her visitors and of the subsequent trumpets, reacted positively, stayed obedient to God's word to her right to the end and so were saved in the midst of judgment all around them. The fact that the majority did not heed the warning did not make the trumpets any less a warning. The point about a warning is that it says something about the graciousness of the person giving it in good time; it does not in and of itself imply anything about the eventual reactions of those who hear it. Furthermore, a warning is of no value if there is no execution of the announced calamity. A warning implies that real danger will be encountered in due course, and so the accomplishment of this negative event, far from contradicting the basic intent of the warning, is what actually validates it.

Wilcock 1971 takes a more open-handed approach to symbolism in *Revelation* and suggests that, far from being forced to take one rather limited point of view with regards to symbolism and metaphor, John is saying that 'here are two things which correspond to each other, being *equally real from different points of view*' (ibid.,154 his italics). Further on he concludes that many of the symbols used in the book are 'different descriptions of the same thing' (ibid.,156). Since symbols and metaphors are by nature very fluid uses of language which, in Beale's own terms, are 'a deliberate transgression of a word's boundaries of meaning' (1999,55), it would seem more appropriate, with Wilcock, to be open to all the possible nuances which may be inherent in the comparison rather than somewhat pedantically arguing that its message should be limited to a narrow semantic field.

More practically speaking, it has been observed both in the structure and also in the content of *Revelation* that a single feature can be accomplishing more than one thing at a time (e.g. the overlap links), and this may be the case with the cycle motifs. In the case of the trumpets, it may well be that they should be understood as both punishments and warnings at the same time, and

to exclude one part of the meaning would be to diminish the richness and communicative impact of the metaphor. Pursuing this line of thought, one may ask what there is to prevent the trumpet from being a warning of judgment and an acclamation of victory at the same time, since this possibility can be found equally well in the Old Testament context.¹² Giblin 1991,158 in fact takes this position and suggests that the trumpets ‘herald deliverance’. Just as in one event, Christ’s death on the cross was at the same time a defeat for some and a victory for others (just as in any battle or modern day sports event), so it is that in actual fact, the events presaged by the trumpets are both a judgment event for some, but at the same time a deliverance event for others, since the judgment of God’s enemies is, at the same time, a victory for God’s people. There is nothing from a linguistic point of view to prevent an interpreter from suggesting that on one level the seven trumpets are warnings of judgment with the negative connotations that implies, and at the same time to permit at another level the evocation of the trumpet of the Jubilee, with all its positive connotations, to be discerned in the same motif.

It would seem, however, that there is a deeper reason yet why Beale’s argumentation is short-sighted, namely, that there is a confusion of referential levels which leads to an incorrect matching of the metaphorical aspect of the motif with its meaning in its relevant referential world. The first point of information (topic) is that John saw trumpet-wielding angels, and heard the trumpets sound. All these things, however, took place in the referential world which is called ‘Heaven’ and were ‘real’ in the context of that world. However, the result of the trumpet blasts, or their manifestation as it was felt and experienced in the referential world known as the ‘earth’, was perceived as a series of calamities, which we are calling judgment events. People on earth witnessed a calamity, but John is saying that in Heaven, that same event was caused by, or simply was, a trumpet blast. So there are two levels here which need to be kept distinct. In Wilcock’s terms we have a single ‘event’ which is equally real for all concerned but just seen from different viewpoints, namely the heavenly and the earthly. But then there is a third level, in that John reports in his visionary narrative what he saw, heard and understood, and makes a connection between a trumpet and a calamity, and this is the level which is of concern to those who wish to understand the text as text. So what then does this mean... what did John intend to communicate in bringing these different concepts together into one metaphor?

¹²Despite his desire to remove the element of warning from the trumpet metaphor, Beale 1999,469 does allow that the trumpet can indicate both judgment and victory at the same time.

The answer can be best understood by bringing into the discussion the concepts of the seals and the bowls, since, in effect, the same principles are operative in each case. Whenever a seal was opened, or trumpet sounded, or a bowl emptied in Heaven, the result on earth was much the same - it was a catastrophic judgment event - and this is what was perceived by the human witnesses. However, having read or heard John's text a human witness of such an event can now interpret it on the basis of information received or revealed from Heaven. If it is the first time the witness had ever thought about such things and reached more than just a superficial conclusion, what may happen as a result is that he suddenly realizes, like receiving a revelation, that God has a plan to judge evil and that includes human beings. At a deeper level, as the witness contemplates the fact that certain people have come to the end of their life in the judgment event and have been suddenly projected unprepared into eternity, he might take it as a warning and start thinking about avoiding such a fate himself, or if he was a follower of the Lamb he might think that his final vindication was getting closer (cf. *Luke 21:28* in context). If, on the other hand, he was a direct victim of the judgment event and lost his life, then, in his case, he would have gone through his own particular final judgment here on earth - for him it would be the consummation of judgment, after which the only thing which would follow would be the judgment of the 'dead' in Heaven. The same event could be understood from different points of view depending on the experience and the stand-point of the person concerned.

Whichever way *Revelation* is interpreted, the judgments described in Cycles 2-6 are clearly cyclic (i.e. similar judgments occur more than once) even as there is a sense of progression towards a final end (i.e. they will eventually come to an end - there will be a 'last' one - for everyone and for all time). If this is the case, then perhaps this is what John intended to communicate through the various motifs. A judgment event as seen from an earthly stand-point is very similar every time it happens: it is calamitous and brings earthly life to an end for some. But each such event, with heavenly insight, can communicate a slightly different message to different people: some may interpret it from the standpoint of an opened seal, others may perceive it as a sounding trumpet, while for others it is too late, for the bowl has already been emptied.

APPENDIX 4

Discussion of Some Smaller Units and Secondary Issues

1 Introduction

The purpose of the discussion in the text of chapters 1-7 is to present an analysis of the macro-structure of the book of *Revelation*. This means that, for the most part, only the structure of the higher levels of the hierarchy are discussed in detail. However, the proof of the macro-analysis is in the micro-analysis of the units in the mid and lower levels of the hierarchy, for it is as the micro-analysis harmonizes with, and thereby confirms, the macro-analysis, that the latter is established as being reliable and useful. In this appendix, then, a number of smaller and medium-sized units of text will be discussed in order to provide information concerning levels of the hierarchy which were not dealt with elsewhere.

The evidence accumulated so far indicates that the micro-analysis does harmonize with the macro-analysis, but, at the same time more, research is needed before this process will be complete.

2 Cycle 1: The Seven Letters 1:9-3:22

2.1 The Setting

This cycle is composed of a setting (1:9-20) and a body composed of seven letters (2:1-3:22).

The setting is a simple ABA' structure as follows:

A. Setting for the Introductory Vision 1:9-11

B. The Introductory Vision of the Risen Christ 1:12-16

A' Conclusion for the Introductory Vision 1:17-20

A and A' are in parallel because they are both part of the narrative framework and include the active participation of John. Both include speeches by the risen Christ of which the principal component is an instruction to write (1:10 and 19). By contrast section B is limited to a description of what John saw and includes no action or speech apart from the introductory action καὶ ἐπεστρεψα 'and I turned' (1:12). This verb is interpreted as being in parallel with Εγώ... ἐγενόμην... ἐγενόμην 'I was' (twice) (1:9-10) and καὶ... ἔπεσα 'and... I fell' (1:17), thereby indicating the beginning of each sub-unit (ABA'). This interpretation provides one possible explanation why the unusual, and therefore prominent, independent first person singular pronoun

Εγώ ‘I’ occurs at 1:9. Its presence draws attention to the use of the first person pronoun used with reference to John and initiates a structural pattern repeated in verses 12 and 17, which delineates the structural framework of the whole section. This interpretation does not annul the fact that Εγώ in verse 9 is also in parallel with the same word in verse 8, thereby creating a connection backwards with what precedes as well as creating a link forwards with what follows. Nor does it annul the explanation proposed in Appendix 2 in the Special Note Concerning Connectives, since a single feature may concurrently have functions at different levels of the organizational hierarchy.

2.2 The Body of the Cycle 2:1-3:22

The body of the cycle is composed of seven autonomous units which are the letters to the seven churches referred to in the setting at 1:11. The overall organization is that of a list, since there is no overt linguistic or logical connection between the seven letters which would suggest that there is a linear development throughout the seven sub-units. Since this is the case, it is not possible to argue that the seventh letter is acting in some way as a conclusion to the whole set and is, therefore, more naturally prominent than the others. Some commentators have suggested that the seven letters relate to each other in a chiasmic arrangement and, since the central letter to Thyatira 2:18-29 is the longest and has the greatest concentration of key elements, this, for the moment, seems to be the best analysis.¹ On this basis then, it can be proposed that this central sub-unit of the chiasm is the most prominent part of the body of this cycle.

2.3 The Structure of the Letters

Each of the seven letters is composed of some or all of the following constituent parts:

1. A formal epistolary introduction. (This includes an order to write and the addressees)
2. Identification of the sender² (beginning τὰδε λέγει ὁ ‘the one who says these things.’).
3. A statement of the sender’s knowledge of the situation (beginning οἶδα ‘I know’).
4. An amplification of 3. in the form of a commendation.
5. An amplification of 3. in the form of a reproach.
6. A central exhortation (marked by imperatives).

¹See below for further discussion of this issue and references.

²The sender is, of course, described in the setting to the cycle and an element of this description reoccurs in most of the letters as many commentators have recognized (e.g. Beale 1999,223-5). However in the case of Laodicea the allusion refers back to 1:5 and anticipates 19:11, and in the case of Philadelphia, one reference (holy and true) anticipates 6:10, while the other reference (the key of David) has no direct corollary in the whole book. The nearest possible parallel is nonetheless at 1:18 (the keys of death and hell).

7. A warning or an invitation.³
8. A generic exhortation. ('he who has an ear...')
9. A promise for the overcomers (beginning τῷ νικῶντι 'to the one overcoming'
or ὁ νικῶν 'the one overcoming').

The structure of the seven letters has been discussed by a number of commentators. Some, like Ladd 1972,36 and Hayford 1995,478, considerably oversimplify the issues. Morris 1987,58 and Beale 1999,225, however, recognize the nine points listed above although they are collapsed into seven more complex points.⁴ Those who discuss the structure usually recognize that there are variations but they do not usually try and explain the significance of those variations.

The nine constituents form internal groupings thereby creating a three-part overall structure as follows:

- A. Constituents 1 and 2 create a setting or introduction
- B. Constituents 3-7 form the body of the letter
- C. Constituents 8 and 9 provide a conclusion⁵

The setting has a fixed order of constituents while the order of the two constituent parts of the conclusion is reversed for the last four letters. The body, which contains the main part of the message to each of the churches, has the most structural variations. The body begins with the verb 'I know'. As Beale 1999,225, quoting Aune 1983,275-78, has correctly remarked, the sections immediately following οἶδα are usually closely connected to it. However, in this analysis it was considered preferable to distinguish all the semantic categories, thereby

³Semantically a warning and an invitation (especially of the kind found in the letters) are almost identical. Both invite a choice. In the case of a warning the negative consequences of the choice are clearly in view, although implicit is the fact that if the warning is heeded, positive consequences will ensue. The invitation views the same situation from the opposite point of view: the positive benefits of the choice are in view but implicit is the fact that negative consequences will ensue if the invitation is not accepted. The letter to Philadelphia is slightly different in that a warning is issued (3:10) but, with the same, the church is assured that it will be kept during the test. However, implicit in the immediate context is the need to hold fast (v.11). Elements of both warning and invitation can be discerned then, even if they are somewhat attenuated by the placing of the warning before the central exhortation instead of after it.

⁴Ladd overlooks the all important exhortation, and Hayford only presents an analysis of the body of the letters. Beale 1999,223-8 provides a wide range of references to other authors.

⁵Two primary reasons for treating constituents 8 and 9 together as the conclusion is firstly because they always function together, even if the order can be reversed, and they are never separated by any other constituent, and secondly because they have a similar and therefore parallel structure in that they both begin with a verbal noun composed of an article and a present participle.

distinguishing the commendations from the reproaches since these so clearly occur.⁶ Nonetheless, the close connection with what precedes is indicated by tagging constituents 4. and 5. with the label ‘amplification’.

2.4 The Variations in the Structure of the Letters

The order of the constituents as presented above, was established on the basis of the first letter to Ephesus, and the order of the third letter to Pergamum which is the most complete and least disturbed by special features. The order of the constituents in each of the letters is as follows:

| | Setting | Body | Conclusion |
|---------------|---------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Ephesus: | 1. 2. | 3. 4a. 5. 6. 7. | 4b. 8. 9. ⁷ |
| Smyrna: | 1. 2. | 3a.4.3b # | 6. (7a.7b.) 8. 9. |
| Pergamum: | 1. 2. | 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. | 8. 9. |
| Thyatira: | 1. 2. | 3. 4. 5. 7. 6. | 9. 8. |
| Sardis: | | 1. 2. 3. 5. 6. 7. 4. | 9. 8. |
| Philadelphia: | 1. 2. | 3. 4. # 6. # | 9. 8. |
| Laodicea: | 1. 2. | 3. # 5. 6. 7. | 9. 8. |

Perusal of the above list indicates that the changes in the ordering of the constituents are not random but fall into two main categories. Firstly, the order of the two concluding units 8 and 9 are reversed from the fourth letter to Thyatira onwards. The effect of this change is to bring the generic exhortation (‘He who has ears...’), which draws attention to all the instructions contained in the letters, to the attention of the reader more quickly and unexpectedly in the fourth letter.

⁶Three of the reproaches (2:4,14 and 20) and three of the commendations (2:6,9b and 3:4) begin with *ἀλλά* ‘but’. At 2:3 and 13 what can be interpreted as the commendation occurs in a new sentence with an independent verb (at 2:19 it is the same except that the verb is an elided verb ‘to be’). Another reason for treating them as separate constituents is that they can occur in different places in the structure and are not always directly attached to the ‘I know’ constituent. Thus, for example, in the letter to Ephesus there are two separate commendations occurring at 2:3 and 6, and in the letter to Sardis the commendation occurs in the seventh position at 3:4 after the warning.

⁷When a particular constituent either occurs twice (as in the case of Ephesus) or is split in two by an intervening constituent (as in the case of Smyrna), the two occurrences of the constituent are indicated by the letters ‘a’ and ‘b’. In the letter to Smyrna 3:10b and c could be interpreted as a warning followed by an invitation. This possible interpretation is included in parentheses as 7a and 7b. The references for the divisions are as follows: Ephesus: 2:1a,1b,2,3,4,5a,5b,6,7a,7b; Smyrna: 2:8a,8b,9a,9b,9c,10a,(10b,10c),11a,11b; Pergamum: 2:12a,12b,13a,13b,14-5,16a,16b,17a,17b; Thyatira: 2:18a,18b,19a,19b,20-1,22-3,24-5,26-8,29; Sardis: 3:1a,1b,1c,1d,2-3a,3b,4,5,6; Philadelphia: 3:7a,7b,8a,8b-10, (3:11a is interpreted as a book level prosody and not as one of the letter constituents), 11b,12,13; Laodicea: 3:14a,14b,15,16-8,19,20,21,22,23.

This contributes an element of special prominence to the letter to Thyatira. Secondly, all the other variations are limited to the body of the letters. The variations revealed by the list are the fact that particular constituents may be missing entirely (indicated by #), or may occur in a different position. This latter variation, with one exception, is limited to the commendation (constituent 4). The exception is in the letter to Thyatira where the warning (constituent 7, 2:22-3) occurs before the main exhortation (constituent 6) because it is a continuation of the reproach (constituent 5, 2:20-1). A further variation, which the list does not show, but which helps to explain some of the changes in order, is that certain constituents in some of the letters are particularly long and contain more information than their counterparts. This variation seems to particularly affect constituent 6 which is the central exhortation. Possible reasons for these variations will become clearer in the following discussion.

2.5 Volitional Import and Natural and Special Prominence

One of the most important generalizations which can be made about the letters is that, with the exception of the first constituent which is a formal introduction, all of the constituents combine to create a volitional import text.⁸ Constituent 2 of each letter, which links back to the setting of the cycle as a whole, provides a validation of the person who is issuing the evaluations and the exhortations. Constituent 3 provides support for this validation process since it reveals the fact that the sender of the letters is speaking, not only from a position of inherent authority, but also on the basis of incisive awareness of the situation in each place. This also serves as a motivator, because right from the beginning the recipients know that Christ is aware of even their hidden faults, so that there is no point in arguing or justifying themselves in any way. Constituent 6, which contains the primary exhortation, is the only obligatory component of a volitional import message⁹ and is therefore the most naturally prominent. Constituent 8 is also an exhortation, but a more general one which supports and underlines the importance of all the more detailed exhortations. The other constituents provide a range of both positive and negative reinforcement. The commendation and the reproach (constituents 4 and 5) provide positive and negative motivation on the basis of what has already been accomplished. This serves as a springboard for a future response to the following exhortations since these indicate how the addressees can continue on in an appropriate way and so obtain further commendations, and they also indicate how to avoid what is inappropriate, and thus any further reproaches. Constituent

⁸See chapter 6 section 4.2 above for a full explanation concerning volitional import text and supporting references.

⁹See Callow 1998,190-1.

7 being either a warning or an invitation (only the letter to Smyrna contains what may be interpreted as both a warning and an invitation 2:10b), provides negative or positive reinforcement, as the case may be, by indicating the negative or positive consequences contingent on the response of the addressees to the instructions received.

The fact that Cycle 1 is totally composed of volitional import text sets the tone for the whole book, since it is the first, and therefore introductory, part of the body of the book as a whole. Although it is not overtly stated, it is clearly implicit from this starting point that the author's overall purpose in all that he says, is to influence the behaviour of his addressees. Since the volitional text is the furthest one can go down the purposive chain, this kind of text is the most important for the author's purpose and it is this primary purpose which provides the context for the cycles which follow.¹⁰

As noted above, most of the letters have some variations in the order of the constituents and also differences in the extent to which certain constituents are developed. Since all the letters are otherwise so similar in structure, these variations are interpreted as indicators of special prominence at the level of the individual letters. It can be noted therefore, that for the letter to Ephesus, the commendation would seem to be particularly prominent. This is because it is longer than most and contains considerable detail, several reasons for being approved and a repetition of the key word 'endurance' (2:2-3). In addition, another commendation occurs later in 2:6. For the letter to Smyrna, it is constituent 7 which is the most developed (2:10b-c). It is marked by ἰδοὺ 'behold' and contains both a warning concerning their next test and also an invitation to remain faithful which, in turn, contains an inherent extra promise. Pergamum's letter conforms the most to the standard format and has no noticeable variations and no occurrence of ἰδοὺ. The only special feature which it has is the presence of δέ 'but' at 2:16. In this context this is interpreted as a contrastive feature which, along with the phrase 'I am coming quickly', does contribute a heightened prominence to the following warning¹¹. This would seem to be the only part which is specially prominent. The letter to Thyatira has several prominence

¹⁰See the previous note.

¹¹The functor δέ 'but' occurs so rarely in *Revelation* that it can be considered to be a prominence marker wherever it occurs. It is interpreted as such for the letters to Ephesus (2:5), Pergamum (2:16) and Thyatira (2:24). The warning to the church at Sardis (3:3) is marked by οὖν 'therefore' rather than δέ. This usage is also interpreted as a prominence marker, firstly, by analogy with the usage in the Ephesian and Pergamum letters, secondly, because of its rarity in *Revelation*, and thirdly, because it occurs twice in two consecutive sentences, thereby forming a doublet.

markers as will be discussed in more detail in the following section. In the letter to Sardis, the commendation is displaced and the reproach is very short. The net effect is that the central exhortation (3:2-3) comes more rapidly than usual to the reader's attention. In addition, this exhortation is particularly developed and contains five imperatives intertwined with an extra element of reproach (3:2b). It is the promises in the letter to Philadelphia which are specially prominent. The commendation (3:8c) is bracketed by three extra promises, two of which are marked by ἰδοῦ 'behold' (3:8b, 9a-b and 10) and the usual promise constituent (no.9) is particularly long (3:12). This is reinforced by the fact that there is no reproach and no warning or invitation. It is as if the promises in their case are unconditional. By contrast, Laodicea's special prominence highlights the element of invitation/warning in association with the reproach. The reproach 3:15b-18 is particularly developed, but most of this development consists of an extra warning ('I am about to vomit you...' 3:16) and invitation ('I counsel you...' 3:18a) which build on the reproach but lead the readers towards a positive solution. The normal invitation constituent (no.7 at 3:20) is not particularly long but is marked by ἰδοῦ. This is reinforced by the fact that there is no commendation. In addition, the extra information contained in the central exhortation (3:19) speaks to this same issue in that the Christ makes it clear that rebuke and chastening are for those whom He loves.

Review of the above features indicates that apart from the introductory statement beginning 'I know' (constituent 3) and the general exhortation (constituent 8), all the constituents in the body and the conclusion of the letters are made specially prominent in one or other of them. This indicates that the organization reflects a certain systematization. The net result is that in the course of the seven letters all the constituents which contain significant hortatory implications are emphasized at one point or another in the cycle, such that the readers are left with the overall impression that each of the hortatory aspects of Christ's messages to them should be taken seriously.

2.6 The Natural and Special Prominence of the Letters Cycle Viewed as a Whole

Since the letters are organized in the form of a simple list with no obvious linear connection between them it is impossible to say that one of them is more naturally prominent than any other. At this level each of them is important, and for any particular church concerned, the one addressed to them personally would be the most important for them. The fact that each of the primary hortatory constituents is marked in turn as specially prominent, as described above, reinforces this view that the author, at one level at least, intended that each of the parts

of his exhortation should be taken seriously. This is true internally for each of the letters, but would also seem to be true for each of the letters as a unit in a series.

Since the most naturally prominent part of each letter is the central exhortation (constituent 6.), the only other way of determining the prominent part of the cycle as a whole is to take account of all of these exhortations in some kind of aggregate or summarized form. The two primary exhortations which summarize all the others are 'repent' (also implicit in the commands 'remember from where you have fallen' and '(Go back and) do the same works as before' 2:5) and 'persevere'. This latter concept is communicated by many different verbal forms such as 'hold fast' 2:25, 'watch (out)' 3:2, 'enduring', '(keep on) remembering' 3:3a, 'keeping' 3:3b, and 'be faithful' 2:10. It is also implicit in the exhortation to 'not fear' in the face of suffering in 2:10. These same words and concepts also occur in constituents other than the central exhortation constituent. Overall the word 'repent' occurs twice in Letter 1, once in Letter 3, three times in Letter 4, and once each in Letters 5 and 6. The concept of endurance or remaining faithful occurs four times in Letter 1, once in Letter 2, three times in Letters 3, 4 and 5, and four times in Letter 6. In addition, the concept is also implicit in all the letters in the reference to the overcomer in unit 9.

Upon reflection it can be seen that these two concepts have similar hortatory implications. 'Repent' implies that a person has already fallen into sin and now needs to turn back to their previous state and avoid the negative consequences which will otherwise come upon them. The concept inherent in 'perseverance' implies that a person is confronted with the possibility of falling but needs to remain firm in the face of that danger, once again with the aim of avoiding the inherent negative consequences. The word/concept 'repent' in its positive form only occurs in Cycle 1 and is therefore considered to be a particular characteristic of this cycle and, consequently, one of the unique contributions which it makes to the book as a whole. By contrast, the word/concept 'perseverance/endurance' occurs in many other places throughout the book (e.g. 13:10) and is therefore considered to be a book-level theme in the sense that it is not limited to one particular cycle.

It is considered therefore, that these two concepts together form the most naturally prominent part of the seven letters taken together as a series. Further study of these concepts as they occur in the central exhortation of each letter also leads to a clearer understanding of the special prominence of the cycle. When they are aligned in a chart the following pattern emerges:

Chart 1. The Chiastic Organization of the Letters Cycle

Ephesus: Remember, **Repent**, and Do (again) your first works. (2:5)

Smyrna: Do not fear, (Be faithful unto death). (2:10)

Pergamum: **Repent !** (2:16)

Thyatira: Hold onto what you have until I come. (2:25)

Sardis: Remember what you received and keep it, and **Repent !** (3:3)

Philadelphia: Hold on to what you have. (3:11)

Laodicea: Be hot (again) and **Repent !** (3:19)

The letters are so similar in form and content that there is no dispute that they are in parallel to one another.¹² In addition, commentators like Beale 1999,226 and Morris 1987,58 for example, have proposed an ABCCCB'A' (sic) chiasm on the grounds of the differing spiritual states of the churches. The above chart confirms that there is a definite alternating pattern of the two main concepts under discussion, and the regular occurrence of 'repent' means that there is a clear-cut parallelism, and therefore the possibility of positing a chiasm, for the Ephesus, Pergamum, Sardis and Laodicea letters. Furthermore, the accompanying commands for Ephesus and Laodicea (Do (again) your first works, and Be (again) hot) are saying the same thing in direct and metaphorical language respectively which means that they are particularly in parallel to each other.¹³ In addition, the Smyrna and Philadelphia letters are in specific parallelism with each other because they are the only ones which refer to a crown (2:10 and 3:11) and both refer to imminent suffering, which, in one case the Christians have to pass through patiently, and in the other they will be protected (2:10 and 3:10).

Beale's and Morris' chiasm ABCCCB'A' is not overly convincing with its CCC pattern in the middle, but when this thematic evidence is combined with the linguistic evidence, then an

¹²It has been noted several times in this study that in a complex work like *Revelation* it is normal that an author would establish the patterns which he is planning to use with some clarity near the beginning of his work. There is no doubt that the patterning of the seven letters is the most standardized and clear of all the patterning in the book and may have been intended to alert the reader as to the author's intentions. Beale 1999,224 makes a similar point although drawing on other criteria.

¹³For Ephesus and Laodicea, the verb 'repent' and its accompanying verb is also in an abb'a' pattern: repent, do first works : become hot again, repent. Ephesus contains a warning about removal of the lampstand which means that they would no longer be able to see. Laodicea contains an invitation to buy eye medicine so that they can see again. Pergamum and Sardis both contain a warning about Christ 'coming' to them in judgment, with a sword (2:16) and as a thief (3:3) respectively. (This element also puts them in parallel with Ephesus 2:5). They both make reference to a white object in the promise to the overcomers: a white stone (2:17) and white garments (3:5) respectively. This supports the notion that these two pairs of letters are specifically in parallel as well as participating in an alternating pattern based on the word 'repent'.

ABCDC'B'A' chiasm becomes definitely plausible. This means that the letter to Thyatira (2:18-29), being at the centre of the chiasm, is the most specially prominent of all the letters.

Closer examination of this letter confirms this proposal on the basis of the following observations. This letter is the longest,¹⁴ constituent 7 is fronted one position, thereby coming to the readers' attention more rapidly than usual and, by the same token, slightly downplaying the naturally prominent exhortation which now follows. It has a triple repetition of the verb 'to repent', a double repetition of the verb 'to throw' in its most dynamic and unusual usage and, in conjunction with ἰδοῦ, the most graphic idiom.¹⁵ It also has the longest promise to the overcomers, which is also made more prominent by being fronted, since this is the first place where constituents 8 and 9 change positions. In other words, this letter has the largest concentration of special prominence features of all the letters.

Two of the occurrences of 'repent' appear in constituent 5 (the reproach 2:20-21) which is particularly long and detailed. This is semantically connected to the following unit which is the fronted warning unit (constituent 7 2:22-23). This unit contains a further occurrence of 'repent' plus an occurrence of 'throw' marked by ἰδοῦ, and the graphic idiom. It is then followed by unit 6 (the central exhortation 2:24-25) which is the naturally prominent unit, but, in addition, is marked by the presence of δέ 'but',¹⁶ the second occurrence of 'throw', and an unusual amount of extra explanatory material.

Even though there are many prominence markers which make the letter as a whole different from the other letters, internally to the letter itself the greatest amount of development and the greatest concentration of prominence features draw particular attention to constituents 5 and 7 (the reproach and warning 2:20-23) which are brought together in one paragraph. The message of this combination of reproach and warning is the importance of repentance. After a brief pause

¹⁴Length in and of itself is not a mark of prominence. Whatever stands out as different in its context is prominent and so the length feature falls into this category for the seven letters. This is confirmed by the observation that the second longest letter (to Philadelphia) which occurs in Longacre's post-Peak position (Longacre 1983a,22), is likely to be the second highest point of prominence in the cycle. This proposal is supported by the fact that this letter has a very long promise (constituent 9) and has three occurrences of ἰδοῦ. The repetition of the verb 'to give' may also be a mark of prominence.

¹⁵The hyperbolic phrase 'I will kill with death' (2:23) is prominent because it is the most unusually graphic idiom in the whole cycle. Beale 1999,227 also notes the unusual occurrence of the reference to 'all the churches' (2:23) which doubtless contributes to the prominence of the passage.

¹⁶See note 11 above concerning the functor δέ 'but'.

provided by the extra introductory material and a switch of focus (indicated by δέ 2:24), the call to repent is followed by the naturally prominent central exhortation which emphasizes the need to persevere. There is also a striking parallelism between the two sections, marked by ἰδοῦ, which highlights the fact that they are designed to work together. In 2:22, speaking of Jezebel, Christ says: ‘Behold, I am throwing her onto a bed, and the ones committing adultery with her (I am throwing) into great affliction, unless they repent of what she has done (literally: ‘her works’).¹⁷ Then in 2:24 he continues his speech by saying ‘But I say to the rest of you at Thyatira who (implicitly) have not followed her... I am not throwing on you an extra burden, unless (it is) that you hold fast to what you have until I come’. This then continues on with the promise to the overcomers (2:26) which is addressed to those who ‘keep my (Christ’s) works until the end’.

This means that the letter to Thyatira is the only one which devotes a whole section to each of these two exhortations thereby giving approximately equal weight to each. In this way the two principal exhortations are brought together in the same unit at the centre of the chiasm.

2.7 An Overview of the Message of the Letters Cycle

The analysis described above has made it possible to locate the most important parts of the total message which is contained in the first cycle composed of the letters to the seven churches. These parts are the central exhortations of each letter, which are the most naturally prominent part of each, and the parts which are marked for special prominence. The information contained in these passages combined together in summary form is presented in the following chart. The primary imperatives of the central exhortation are in bold face as in the previous chart, and equivalent concepts are in brackets.

The chart (below) presents the material in Cycle 1 which is prominent in one way or another. It is an illustration of the fact that a careful study of linguistic prominence is not only useful but is, in fact, essential for discovering what the main message of a text is according to the intention of the author. Accurate interpretation can only take place once the main message has been established on the basis of objective evidence which can be located in the text, and a consistent set of criteria which can be used and tested by others.

¹⁷The key words of the parallelism in Greek are: ‘ἰδοῦ βάλλω αὐτήν εἰς κλίνην ... // ὑμῖν δὲ λέγω ... οὐ βάλλω ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς ἄλλω βάρος’.

Chart 2. An Overview of the Message of the Letters Cycle

A. Ephesus: Your perseverance is commendable. But remember from where you have fallen; **Repent**, and return to your first works which were works of love. But if not I will remove your lampstand (your source of light and life).

B. Smyrna: **Persevere** in face of the coming test. If you persevere even in the face of death, I will give you the crown of life.

C. Pergamum: **Repent!** But if not I am coming soon and will fight (bring death) with my sword (like a warrior or judge).

D. Thyatira: Jezebel must **repent** of her works! But since she will not repent I am throwing her into a bed (test), and will kill her children with death. But as for you, I throw on you no other burden except that you should **persevere** (by continuing to do my works) until I come. All the churches should take notice of what I am saying.

C' Sardis: Watch out and restore the things (your works) which are dying. Remember what you received before and keep on (persevering) and **repent**. (But) if not I will come like a thief (to destroy/kill).

B' Philadelphia: I give you all you need for life* and protection from the coming great test. I am coming soon so **persevere** in what you have in order to keep your crown (of life).

*('life' is used as a conceptual resume of the promises of hope and of vindication given in vv.8-9 and 12)

A' Laodicea: I rebuke the people I love, so **repent** and be hot (ardent as you were at first). If you will repent I will come in and provide all that you need for life.

The chart as it stands particularly highlights the parallel organization which is a direct result of the repetition of a similar structural organization in each letter. It also demonstrates by its chiasmic form how that the cycle as a whole is not just a monotonous list but also has its own peak of special interest, just as most well-formed discourses do. It also provides a basis for comparing and contrasting the different elements which are in parallel to each other, which in turn can lead to an understanding of linear thematic developments which are not at first apparent.¹⁸

So, for example, in sections A, C and C' Christ says 'I am coming' or 'I will come', but in section A' He has come and is present at the door. In B the faithful are promised protection as they go through their test, but in B' they are assured that they will be spared the test entirely; meanwhile in D the unrepentant are tested to the point of death. In A the loss of the source of life (the

¹⁸See chapter 5 section 7 for discussion of the issues of linear development in chiasmic structures.

lampstand) is threatened and as a result the implied house would be full of darkness, while in B future life is promised, in B' hope of life is a present assurance, while in A' the offer of on-going life is a present reality as the risen Christ proposes to come through the door into their house.

In short, the structural interweaving at the micro-level is both subtle and systematic, but it nonetheless harmonizes both structurally and semantically with the macro-structure. It is possible to study it in as much detail as is desired, but it will withstand the scrutiny, whether at the cycle level, the sub-unit level, or the lower levels, because it is not random, but is consistent with the author's overall communicative purpose. All the details support this overall purpose in some way or another and all contribute to the total impact of his message. Each of the structural strands described in the above discussion can be pursued wherever they will lead, and each of them will reveal a part of the rich tapestry of the total message.

2.8 Conclusion

In addition to the harmony at the micro-level, the first cycle harmonizes with, and thereby provides support for, three major elements of the macro-structure. Firstly, the volitional nature of its message is unmistakable. This harmonizes with other volitional import material elsewhere in the book which occurs primarily in the Prologue and the Epilogue, and also in more scattered form in other parts of the book. Secondly, in terms of the number of types of units, the first cycle also confirms what has been observed for other parts of the book. It was proposed above that each letter is composed of a maximum possible number of nine constituents, most of which are obligatory and some are optional. This internal structure of the letters is in harmony with the structural organization of other parts of the book, for the dominant structural pattern for the cycles is also an organization with nine principal parts, most of which are obligatory and one of which is optional. Thus, most of the cycles are composed of a setting, a body with seven principal parts and an optional interlude. Thirdly, this cycle contains two levels of exhortation. There are the specific exhortations to repent and persevere for example, and there is also the more general exhortations ('He who has ears...') which urges the reader to live out the specific exhortations. This is also a feature of the book as a whole which has both these kinds of exhortation. The specific ones occur in the body of the book, and the general ones in the Prologue and Epilogue.

3 The Influence of the Narrative Framework on the Chronology of the Book

Chronology is a particular problem for *Revelation* more than for most books. The very terms (preterist, futurist etc.) which have been traditionally used to label the different interpretive viewpoints indicate that differing views of chronology lie behind the discussion. The main structural issue in the debate is whether the book is ordered according to a linear chronology or whether it is recapitulative¹⁹ in nature.

This issue can be clarified by appeal to two related linguistic concepts, that of the referential hierarchy and that of the narrative text-type.²⁰ Language does not exist in a vacuum but is a phenomenon of human behaviour to the extent that there is a need to communicate about something. The ‘something’ which is conceptualized and then talked about is usually something which exists outside of the speaker in a ‘real’ world of some kind. This external world is what is referred to when communication is undertaken and is called the referential world of the speaker or the referential hierarchy.²¹ In the majority of cases this referential world is the physical world of things and events which are experienced through the physical senses, and which is the usual context for human activity.

Because the physical world is so all-pervasive of human experience it can be taken for granted and, for this reason, it is possible to overlook the fact that it is not the only referential world which is relevant to human communication. Because it is possible to conceptualize anything which can happen in the real world, it is therefore possible to ‘envisage’²² things and events which have not actually existed or happened in the real world. It is also possible to ‘imagine’ a completely different referential world which has a different set of characteristics and rules of

¹⁹The term ‘recapitulative’ has raised unnecessary issues because some have argued that it implies that any element which recapitulates a previous element must be identical with it. All literature, music, art and even life itself is characterized by the repetition of certain elements. It is rare that such repetition is absolutely identical. On the contrary, a basic aim of art is to find creative ways of expressing the same things in different forms, by different media and with subtle and beautiful variations. To argue that the author of *Revelation* or of any other book must, if he wishes to repeat himself, do so in an exactly identical way is forcing the issue to an unhelpful extreme. See Beale 1999,116-151 for a recent treatment of these issues.

²⁰On the referential hierarchy see Pike and Pike 1982,3 and 7; Pike 1982,97-106; Longacre 1983a,337-8; Callow 1998,49-51, 64-7, 210-12 and 250. For references concerning different text-types see Longacre 1983a,2-10.

²¹It is called a hierarchy because the world of things and events is considered to be organized in a hierarchical form in a way analogous with the organization of the phonological hierarchy or the grammatical hierarchy. See Pike and Pike 1982,7.

²²See Callow 1998,65-7 for definition and discussion of the terms ‘envisaging’ and ‘imagining’.

behaviour, and although this phenomenon rarely occurs in daily life, it often occurs in literature both written and oral.²³

Revelation is an unusual book for the very reason that it requires the reader to take account of two different referential worlds within the scope of the same text. The first world to be introduced is the usual referential world of normal, human experience. John himself, the island of Patmos and the seven churches in Asia Minor all belonged to that world. It is one of the functions of the narrative framework to set the book in the context of this world, to describe relevant aspects of this world and to keep the reader in constant touch with this world. John needed to root his book specifically in the real world with which his readers were familiar, and this included establishing himself as a known and reliable witness (cf. 1:1,9 and 22:8), in order that they may be convinced enough to believe him when he goes on to describe another world, which was undoubtedly less familiar to them.

This other world is the heavenly referential world which John sees (1:12) and even visits (4:1), a world which is peopled by angels and dragons, and where great distances can apparently be traveled in no time at all (17:3 and 21:10). It is of little importance for questions of analysis whether the world John experienced in his visions is another real, existing world, or whether it is just a world of symbols which he only experienced in his imagination.²⁴ What is important is to recognize that the book refers to two different referential worlds and that both of these worlds have to be understood and interpreted in terms of their own particular characteristics. It is not therefore legitimate to transfer the characteristics of one world and apply them to the other world without consciously justifying this process.

Having established the earthly setting of the book at the outset, the author by means of subsequent parts of the narrative framework creates a bridge between the familiar world and the unfamiliar one. However, the fact that the two worlds are linked and that there is interaction between the two, should not cloud this basic fact that the author, and thence the reader, is dealing with two different worlds.

²³For example, fairy stories are based in an imaginary world as are literary classics like C.S.Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* or J.R.Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*.

²⁴So also Craven in Lange 1873,145.

The characteristic of referential worlds which is under discussion here is the issue of chronology, so having established the fact that two different worlds ‘exist’ in the same text, it also needs to be clearly stated that both these worlds, normally speaking, should have a system of chronology. But, and this is the crucial issue to bring out into open discussion, it cannot be assumed that the two systems of chronology are identical. In fact, nothing can be assumed about any similarities or differences except on the basis of relevant information provided, in the first instance, by the author himself.

The basic framework of *Revelation* has been called a narrative framework, because it has the usual characteristics of a narrative text type.²⁵ In particular, narratives are organized according to a chronological structure and, unless the author wants to create a special effect which he is obliged to indicate clearly in order to avoid being misunderstood, that chronology will be presented in a linear fashion. In the case of *Revelation*, a man called John witnessed a series of visions which he wrote down, presumably according to the chronological order in which he viewed them. The chronology then, which provides cohesion for the book, is a characteristic of the narrative framework. As such, it is the chronology of the physical world which is being expressed and not that of the heavenly world, whatever that system of chronology may be. Even though some parts of the visionary content of the book which are based in the heavenly referential world contain some narrative text, it is still being narrated by John from his standpoint of a human being who is observing the heavenly world as a temporary visitor, and according to his system of chronology.²⁶

A key verse for the chronology of the book is 1:19, for it is on the basis of this verse that some commentators divide the book into three parts, and claim that each part refers to succeeding periods of earthly history.²⁷ However, this interpretation assumes more than this verse alone can support, because it rides roughshod over a straightforward understanding of its surface grammar. In terms of basic linguistic analysis, phrases like ‘the things which you saw, (the things) which are and (the things) which are about to occur after these things’ in 1:19 can only refer in the first

²⁵See Longacre 1983a,4-7.

²⁶This is contra Aune 1997,xciii who believes that the order of the visions is such as it is ‘because (the author) intends the visions themselves to constitute *a single chronological narrative of the eschatological events that will soon begin to unfold*’ (his italics). However, he does not provide any data or argument to support this opinion. In contrast to Aune, Welch 1981,247 believes that ‘the book is predominantly schematic...in character. ... The order in which the events in the book occur is not dictated by chronology’.

²⁷See chapter 1, section 4.2.

instance to the things which John saw in his visions and which are being referred to from within the context of the narrative framework.²⁸ Likewise, any chronology implicit in such phrases can only refer to the chronology of the narrative framework which is the order in which he observed the visions in the 'real' time of the earthly world, which is the referential context of this framework. If the things which John saw do, in fact, have relevance to some future period of the history of the physical world then this has to be extrapolated on the basis of other evidence. It is not legitimate to pass from the immediate referents of the words in 1:19 to some future time and place in world history without justifying the intervening process.²⁹

This is particularly true because the actual content of the visions is portrayed from the viewpoint of a different referential world and no specific information is available concerning its chronological organization. It may have the same chronology as the physical world, a totally unrelated and skewed chronology (as in *The Chronicles of Narnia*), or no time (as we know it) at all. To argue that 1:19 serves as a model for imposing a particular chronologically-based structure on the content of the visions in the book would involve assuming that both worlds have the same chronological organization without justifying that assumption.

Another issue which needs to be clarified is that even though the presence of the narrative framework, and other embedded narratives, give the impression that the book is some kind of other-worldly story, this is nonetheless only an impression. In reality, the book as a complex whole is an extended exposition which has a hortatory aim. When they stand alone, expository and hortatory texts are not linked together on the basis of chronological development but rather on the basis of logical or thematic development. In fact, Longacre 1983a,9 remarks specifically that 'expository discourse tends to have linkage through... parallelism of content'.

The point is that *Revelation* is a complex book, and even though that creates special challenges for the analyst, it is not a reason for failing to take account of the complexities. The complexity

²⁸Johnson 1981,429 also holds this view and comments 'This leaves the question open concerning the structure of the book and its chronological progression, as John may have intended'. Beale 1992 and 1999,152-70 gives a detailed discussion of 1:19 and attempts to provide support for the transition from the immediate referents to a futurist interpretive position. See also Smith 1990b and Michaels 1991 for further discussion of this issue.

²⁹Ryrie 1996,17 provides an example of this tendency to move rapidly from the referential level to a highly developed interpretive level without establishing the intervening stages. By contrast, Beale 1999,129 argues that the need to be clearly aware that there is no inherent necessity for the ordering of the visions as John saw them to be the same as the ordering of events as they may be worked out in human history 'is a crucial hermeneutical principle of the book'. However, according to his subsequent argument (ibid.,152-70), he does not appear to apply this principle to his understanding of 1:19.

in view here is that it is composed of different types of text which have their own particular characteristics but which, nonetheless, support and complement each other. At one level it can be analyzed as a series of blocks of text which are narrative in nature and which comprise the narrative framework. This complete set of passages give the book its overall narrative shape and provide it with an element of chronological linearity. However, this chronology refers to John's personal experience and is rooted in the referential reality of his human experience in the physical world. On the other hand, this framework is intricately interwoven with blocks of text which are different in nature, as they provide the main, message-bearing content which is a combination of expository and hortatory types of discourse.³⁰ These units of text are not specifically linked together among themselves by a linear, time-based development, but by themes which are developed in a parallel, cyclic fashion.

The issue of the narrative framework as a distinct component in the structure of the book is also an example of another underlying linguistic issue, namely that the 'grammatical structure and the referential structure may be varied independently of each other' (Pike and Pike 1982,7). As the Pikes explain it, 'the **telling** order of a story has to do with the grammatical structure whereas the **happening** or chronological order has to do with the referential structure' (ibid.,7, their emphasis).

In *Revelation* the narrative framework provides the telling order of one particular story of a man called John who received and recounted a series of visions in a particular order. However, the content of the visions, what John actually saw, is composed of events which took place in a particular referential world. In fact, to complicate matters, as has been mentioned above, what he saw concerned two different referential worlds, the earthly and the heavenly. However, the issue at stake is that it cannot be assumed that the order of events as they happened (or will happen) in the context of the viewpoint of the heavenly world, is identical with the order in which John recounted the story of what he saw, since there is no universal principle requiring a one-to-one relationship between the grammatical (telling) structure and the referential (happening) structure. Narration of a story demands a definite sequential linearity, since only one event can be recounted at a time, but at the same time it is self-evident that different events can take place simultaneously (for example) within the reality of any particular referential world.

³⁰The situation is further complicated by the fact that narratives can also be found embedded within the visionary content material, as noted above. But this fact should not be allowed to cloud the simplicity of the basic distinction between narrative framework and content of that framework which is being presented.

Similarly, events in the referential world can be far removed in time from the time of the narration, or they can happen many times even though their occurrence was only narrated once, or they could feasibly take place in a chronological system which is not the same as the one operative in the earthly referential world.

In this brief discussion it has not been possible to resolve all the questions concerning chronology in *Revelation*, especially the interpretative ones. However, it has been possible to clear the ground more fully at the linguistic level. The key issues are firstly, that the book describes events in two different referential worlds and, as a consequence, it cannot be assumed that what is true for one of these worlds is automatically true for the other. In particular, it cannot be assumed that the system of chronology which operates in the physical, earthly world is the same as that in the spiritual, heavenly one.

Secondly, the linguistic shape of the book as a whole is created by the set of textual units which is being called the narrative framework. As its name suggests, these texts give the impression that the book is some kind of narrative with a particular chronological sequence, even though the main purpose of the book is not just to tell a story. It is helpful, therefore, not to assume that the book is a true narrative but to make a distinction between the narrative components and the components containing the visionary content.

Thirdly, even if the system of chronology is the same in all cases, a narrator is free to tell his story according to a chronology which is independent of the referential world in which his story is set. Therefore, it cannot be assumed without justification that the chronology of the story, as expressed in this case by the narrative framework, is the same as the chronology of the events described in the story.

Once underlying linguistic issues such as these have been clarified, it is possible to maintain a more conscious control of the assumptions which influence any subsequent analysis of a text and the interpretation of its message. This, in turn, makes it possible to more readily discern the linguistic signposts which the author will undoubtedly have placed in his text to guide the reader to the intended semantic destination, rather than drawing hasty conclusions which are not supported by the data in the text.

4 The Import of the Words ‘Living’ in 19:20 and ‘Live’ in 20:4-5

The following discussion concerns one particular word, which is grammatically redundant in one place and ambiguous in its immediate context in another place. Nonetheless, it has generated a major theological argument which appears to have no resolution. Examination of the underlying linguistic issues at the micro-level, suggest, nonetheless, that these words were intentionally used, and this linguistic insight, if accepted, provides additional support for one side of the theological debate.

In 19:20 it is stated that the beast and the false-prophet are thrown ‘living’ into the lake of fire. This is an unusual linguistic collocation which ought to provoke some reflection³¹ since there is no immediately apparent reason for this redundancy. It is possible that a contrast was intended with the following ‘the rest were killed’ but it has to be admitted that if the word ‘living’ is removed, the meaning of the section does not change and the contrast between the fate of the beasts and ‘the rest’ is not lost.

In 20:4 the verb ‘to live (again)’ is used to refer to the followers of Christ during the thousand year period. Proponents of the premillennial position insist that this must refer to a physical coming to life (or resurrection), since, they argue, it must be identical in meaning to the use of the same verb in 20:5, where the physical resurrection interpretation is universally accepted (see Beale 199,1003). Proponents of the amillennial position argue that the verb refers to a spiritual coming to life, and that the difference in meaning as compared to the usage in 20:5 is not a fatal flaw. At this point deadlock is reached because there appears to be no objective data which can override this difference in opinion. Beale 1999,1004 (quoting Mounce 1977,356) states that ‘we are faced with the problem of discovering within the context some persuasive reason to interpret the same verb differently within one concise unit. No such reason can be found’.

However, one such reason may be the fact that these words were chosen to participate in a complex overlapping transition between two major units of text. This proposal is warranted because, even though the root ‘live/life’ occurs sporadically throughout Cycles 1-5, the last previous usage was at 16:3, after which there is the occurrence in 19:20 followed soon after by

³¹There is no need to state that they are ‘living’. If they are spiritual beings then they presumably cannot be killed as is the case for ‘the rest’ in 19:21, so they are automatically ‘alive’. If they are human beings then they must be ‘dead’ physically since the overall context (cf. 20:10-15) indicates that the lake of fire is a post-death experience, but if they are going through a traumatic post-death situation they must be able to experience it (as is stated in 20:10) otherwise there would be no value in recounting the experience to warn others. So, why then is this detail included in the text?

two occurrences in 20:4 and 5, with these last three creating a tail-head link across the cycle boundary, which falls between 19:21 and 20:1. Furthermore, as was noticed previously³², such transitions may often signal concepts which will be important in the following unit, and in this case, even though the verb is no longer used after its use in the transition, the cognate noun 'life' occurs six times in Cycle 7 and three more times in the Epilogue.³³ If this interpretation of the linguistic data is correct, then it provides a linguistic reason why the verb 'to live' is used in 20:4-5, which is the text which provokes all the debate.³⁴ This reason is that the verb 'to live' was chosen, rather than any other which may have had a more precise meaning, because it was to participate in the first instance in a structural plan to link Cycles 6 and 7 together, and in so doing it was also to signal that a significant sub-theme of the following unit was to describe what true 'life' is all about. It is reasonable to suppose that the author's primary intention was to draw his readers' attention to the centrality of the theme of 'life' in a broad sense within the context of Cycle 7, rather than to provide a watertight theological definition of all that may have been implied by this term.

It is self-evident that the data observed is present in the text, and it should also be self-evident that this primary evidence should be factored into, and allowed to influence, any subsequent theological debate. Whether the interpretation of the data proposed above is accepted is another question, but some reasonable interpretation of the data must be provided if the theological debate is to avoid the fate of sinking unsupported into a bottomless pit of circular arguments.³⁵

However, if this proposal concerning the linguistic nature of the text is accepted, then it can be seen that the detail of the micro-level of analysis, in this case the unusual use of the word 'living' in 19:20 and the ambiguous use of 'to live' in 20:4-5, contributes to, and confirms the macro-level analysis.

³²See the end of section 6.3 of chapter 3 and note 112 in loc.

³³The root 'live/life' occurs 12 times in the short space of 19:20, the last Cycle and the Epilogue, as compared to 13 times in the Prologue plus the rest of Cycles 1-6 (up to 16:3) combined.

³⁴See for example Erickson 1977,76-83 and Beale 1999,991-1017 for discussion of the theological issues.

³⁵Another linguistic issue which needs to be addressed in the context of this debate is the author's objective in writing the book and therefore in placing the verb 'to live' twice in 20:4-5. Is his objective that of a theologian to explain in accurate detail the characteristics of the after-life in a way, for example, similar to that of Paul in *1 Corinthians* 15? Or is his objective rather more hortatory (as is proposed in this study) and as a master wordsmith he is using all his possible linguistic inventory of words and structural devices to make a strong impact on the readers so that they will be influenced to do, and 'to live', according to what he desires for them? See also Callow 1998,149-50 on 'purposiveness'.

In conclusion then, the presence of ‘living’ in 19:20 and the two occurrences of ‘to live’ in 20:4-5 are linguistically coherent in that they contribute to a complex tail-head link which confirms a break between major sections of text between 19:21 and 20:1. The break is major because this tail-head link draws attention to the major theme of the Cycle beginning at 20:1 which is (new) life. An understanding of this linguistic phenomenon in turn contributes to a clearer understanding of the theological import of the text. This is because the linguistic data provides a reason why the verb ‘to live’ was used in 20:4-5 on both occasions, rather than two different verbs, even though it made the interpretation slightly more complex. This provides support for the amillennial understanding of the text which requires that each occurrence of the verb be interpreted slightly differently, even though commentators generally prefer not to do this.

5 The Word ‘Testimony’ in 19:10

As has been mentioned before, the true beauty of something like a tapestry or a text like *Revelation* is discovered in its finest details; details which are perceptible to the human spirit but not necessarily provable in the true scientific sense. The last sentence of 19:10 (‘The witness/testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy’) contains such a detail. It is a sentence which could truly be taken to be extraneous in that it appears to have no connection at all to its context. Rich as it is in theological substance it could theoretically appear anywhere in the book, or in the New Testament, and still ‘fit’ just as well as it does here. Except, that is, for a very important detail. The key word is ‘testimony’ and it just so happens that Cycle 6, within which this verse occurs, is composed of a series of testimonies. There are two types: the first six proclamations are testimonies concerning Babylon, they are negative in content, and testify to the totality of Babylon’s demise. In the interlude of the cycle (19:1-8) the testimonies are addressed to God, concern His just plans, especially His plans for the Lamb, and are positive in nature. In 19:10, John receives some personal tuition and is informed that the prophet (i.e. he, himself) should concentrate on testimony which concerns itself with Jesus - either testimony that comes from Jesus or is about Jesus (cf 1:2). This is relevant here, precisely because John has just been witnessing and meditating on a series of proclamations which are testimonies. So, this small detail harmonizes with, and confirms the general thrust of the analysis presented, that Cycle 6 is composed of a series of proclamations which, for the most part, are testimonies.

6 The 'Stand/Sit' Motif of the Signs Cycle

Another example of the tapestry metaphor with its intricacy and beauty is to be found in the strategic central cycle. At the micro-level, there is once again additional evidence which confirms the analysis presented, yet without contributing in a direct sense to the overt structure. It manifests itself in terms of a recurring motif and so it does not have the same weight of logic as the other evidence, but contributes, as it were, to the richness of the texture of the text and illustrates the beauty of the symmetry and patterning which is to be found even in the smaller details - just as in a tapestry.

Signs 1 and 2 are specifically stated to be signs which 'were seen in heaven' (12:1 and 3). In the course of the story there is war in heaven and the dragon is thrown down so that the earth becomes his domain of operation (12:7,9,12-17). In 12:17c he is specifically 'standing on the sand of the sea'.³⁶ This designates the two major earthly domains, namely the dry land and the sea and situates the dragon at the crossroads between the two. From this situation the dragon's two helpers emerge, one from the sea and one from the earth (13:1 and 11). This triad then, clearly belong to the domain of the earth.

In contrast to this, the Lamb is also seen standing with his followers in another situation. In this case he is 'standing' up on the solid rock of a mountain (in contrast to sand down by the sea), and the following context suggests that this Mount Zion is the heavenly one (14:1-3). Next, John sees an angel specifically flying in 'mid-heaven',³⁷ that is, half-way between earth and heaven, and from this vantage point he makes appeal to those who are 'sitting' on the earth (14:6). By any standards, this is an unusual use of the verb 'to sit'³⁸ and a possible explanations for such a usage would be that it contributes intentionally to a motif contrasting 'stand' and 'sit' which has been woven into the pattern of the Signs Cycle.

³⁶This verse has apparently caused debate for centuries as is perhaps indicated by the textual variant 'I stood' versus 'he stood'. Unless it is contributing to some larger motif as is being proposed here, this verse has no compelling structural, semantic, grammatical or logical usefulness. Why then, was it included in the text? The earthly sea which is in view in chapters 12 and 13 may also be intentionally in contrast to the heavenly sea first observed at 4:6 and which reoccurs in Sign 7 (15:2). This is a different motif which could be explored separately. The dragon is also seen 'standing' in heaven prior to his downfall (12:4).

³⁷This reference to an angel flying in mid-heaven only occurs once in *Revelation*. A curious person would be justified in asking questions like these: Why should such a specific and unusual reference be made at all? If at all, why only once and why precisely at this point in the text? A complete analysis of a text needs to be able to include reasonable answers to questions such as these.

³⁸This is especially true in the light of the context of 13:14 where human beings are designated by the much more natural phrase, 'those who dwell on the earth'.

The last two signs are also coloured by this motif. The last sign is once more in heaven where the overcomers are 'standing' before God (15:1-2) on the heavenly sea,³⁹ and the penultimate one (14:14) depicts one like a man (i.e. one who, from external appearances, would seem to be an inhabitant of the earth) 'sitting' on a cloud. Whether the cloud is interpreted symbolically as being part of the heavenly domain or literally as half-way between heaven and earth, as in the case of the angel cited above, the development of the motif continues and the contrast between his glorious seat and the previous earthly seat of his fellow 'men' (14:6) is clear. This contrast, is of course, directly parallel with the contrast between the Dragon and the Lamb.

It would appear then, that the thread of the motif, using the words 'standing' and 'sitting' as guides, takes the reader on an interesting journey, from heaven down to earth and back up to heaven. It starts out with the dragon standing in Heaven from where, soon after, he is banished and ends up at the lowest point possible on the earth (i.e. at sea-level 12:17). Meanwhile, the Lamb is standing in glory in Heaven with His followers (14:1) and the section ends with those same followers, who were originally among those who 'sit on the earth' (14:6), standing on the sea in Heaven 15:2. It transits, as it were, in mid-heaven from which vantage point, the inhabitants of the earth, who apparently can belong to either the earthly or the heavenly domain, are invited to cast their lot in with the denizens of heaven (14:6-7). Otherwise they will suffer the judgment which is bound to fall on them on the earth (14:9-11), which judgment is also apparently executed from mid-heaven (14:14-16).

A literary motif by its very nature is a rather ephemeral linguistic phenomenon, whose presence can only be perceived rather than proved. Just like a single thread in a tapestry, it can be viewed as an element of beauty in the texture of the material for those who can see it, or it can be viewed as an element with no particular value by those who cannot.

What is important for analytical purposes is that, by a remarkable coincidence, the motif of 'stand/sit' in association with the locations of Heaven/sea, earth/sea and mid-heaven is overtly present in each of the sign units and the interlude.⁴⁰ If the motif is appreciated and its value accepted, it can be adduced as further secondary evidence that the presentation of seven signs

³⁹See the previous comments concerning the word 'sea' in note 36.

⁴⁰Signs 1 and 2, 12:1-17; Sign 3 (earthly sea), 13:1; Sign 4 (the earth and its inhabitants), 13:11-17; Interlude, 14:1-5; Sign 5, 14:6-11; Sign 6, 14:14-16; and Sign 7, 15:1-16:1. The motif also occurs in the setting where the 24 elders are 'sitting' on their thrones in heaven (11:16).

plus an interlude is an intentional, organizational schema which is objectively present in the text. In addition, an awareness of this motif helps justify the intentional presence of 12:17c and the use of the verb ‘to sit’ in 14:6.

The verbs ‘stand’ and ‘sit’ do also occur elsewhere in the book, but more research is required before any statements can be made concerning any possible patterns at the book level.

7 The Development of the Topic of the Book

In chapter 4, sections 2, 2.1 and 6, it was proposed that the topic of the book is the ‘revelation’ given by God to John, which showed him what God’s plans are for this world and the next. Even though, as indicated in the discussion cited above, the topic of a text does not need to reoccur overtly on many occasions, nonetheless, evidence that the topic is maintained and carried through to the end of the discourse ought to be discernible. The principal features on the micro-level which demonstrate that the topic of a Revelation of God’s Plan for the World is maintained throughout the book will be presented in this section.

The principal lexical items which allude to the topic of the book are ‘revelation... (of God)’ in 1:1, ‘the mystery of God’ in 10:7, and ‘the words of God’ in 17:17. Verbs which co-occur with the above lexical items are γίνομαι in the sense of ‘to happen’ and τελέω ‘to finish’. Both these verbs have a meaning which is relevant to the concept of a plan. The texts where these lexical items co-occur with reference to what God is doing or saying are as follows:

- 1:1 A Revelation... which God gave... about things which are soon to happen (γίνομαι)
(γίνομαι with the same collocations and sense is repeated at 1:19 and 4:1)
- 10:7 The Mystery of God is/was finished (τελέω)
- 17:17 The Words of God will be finished (τελέω)
- 21:6 God said: ‘It has happened’ (γίνομαι)
(γίνομαι with the same collocations and sense as 1:19 is repeated at 22:6)

Further examination reveals that τελέω also occurs in 15:1 and 15:7-8 with reference to the anger/plagues of God. In the context of this verb it is clear that the plagues expressing God’s anger are part of His plan and so these texts also make reference to the main topic of the book. These texts can be treated as two separate occurrences of the same collocations, but since they form an inclusion around a complete unit of text (15:1-8),⁴¹ it is probably more revealing to treat this reference as a complete complex unit with two parallel references to the same concept cluster.

⁴¹16:1 is viewed as a coda to 15:1-8 which is in itself a complete unit.

When this text is included in the list a symmetrical arrangement can be perceived as follows:

- A.** A Revelation... which God gave... which (will) soon happen (γίνομαι) 1:1
(γίνομαι with the same collocations and sense is repeated at 1:19 and 4:1)
- B.** The Mystery of God is (will be) finished (τελέω) 10:7
- C.** The Plagues/Anger of God are finished (τελέω) (two occurrences) 15:1-8
- B'** The Words of God will be finished (τελέω) 17:17
- A'** God said: 'It has happened' (γίνομαι) 21:6
(γίνομαι with the same collocations and sense as 1:19 is repeated at 22:6)

A and A' are in parallel because of the verb γίνομαι, the first occurrence being in the aorist with a future sense implied by the context i.e. the events are not yet accomplished, while the second occurrence is in the perfect form with a clear past tense meaning, indicating that the events have been accomplished.⁴² Both A and A' are reinforced by repetitions of γίνομαι in the larger following context which reiterate the fact that the events referred to at the outset will happen. Thus, A is reinforced by two repetitions in 1:19 and 4:1 and A' is reinforced by 22:6. It is to be expected that there would be more overt references to the topic near the beginning of the book (and near the beginning of a new major section as at 4:1), since the author is still in the process of firmly establishing his topic in the readers' mind.

B and B' are in parallel because of the presence of the verb τελέω. The first occurrence is in the aorist with a future, imperfect sense implied by the context, (i.e. the events are not yet accomplished), while the second occurrence is in the future form which projects forward to a time when the events will have been accomplished. In addition, the lexical items 'the mystery of God' and 'the words of God' are in parallel since they both refer to the underlying concept of God's plan.

The central unit (C) also has τελέω in the aorist on both occasions (15:1 and 15:8). On the first occasion the completion of God's anger is potential, but is not yet actualized, since the plagues are being prepared and have not yet been poured out. On the second occasion, although the plagues have still not been poured out, the verb in its context projects forward again to a time when they will have been completed. Since it is larger and more complex than the other units, C is a natural candidate for being the central, and therefore the most important part of a chiasm.

⁴²There are other parallels in the context e.g. λόγος 'word' 1:2 and 21:5.

It can be seen then, that even though there are only five principal references (and a total of nine overt references) to the topic of the book, these references create a remarkably systematic thread which maintains the presence of the topic of the book in an overt way.⁴³ The most notable feature is the fact that these references are not only in parallel to one another (which is not totally surprising seeing that they refer of necessity to the same underlying concept) but that they also create a clear chiasm as demonstrated above. Further analysis and interpretation of this chiasm could lead to pertinent theological insights. Thus, for example, the fact that 15:1-8 is the most important part of the structure suggests, that within the context of the communicative aims of this particular discourse (i.e. the book of *Revelation*) at least, it would seem that the completion of the pouring out of God's anger on humanity is the hinge point of His plan and the part which needs to be taken the most seriously by the readers.

A second observation is that the most obvious references to the topic occur right at the beginning of the book, in the Prologue (1:1), at the beginning of the Epilogue (22:6) which is the conclusion for the whole book, and spanning the physical centre of the book at 10:7, and at 17:17. It is notable that these four passages are also components of the narrative framework. The Prologue, Epilogue and Central Interlude (10:7) are all major components of the narrative framework, while 17:17 is the conclusion, and probably the most important part, of the largest of the minor components of the framework. This phenomenon supports the view presented in chapters 2 and 6 above, that the narrative framework has an important supportive role for the book as a whole. The other place where the topic is overtly referred to is at the end of the Signs Cycle (15:1-8) which is the thematic centre of the book, and consequently another important part of the book.

A third observation is that there are more references to the topic in the first half of the book, viewed in literary/thematic terms than in the second (six references as opposed to three) which bears out the theoretical assumption that the author is more likely to refer more often to his topic near the beginning while he is still fixing important concepts in his readers' consciousness.

These observations lead to the conclusion that the linguistic organization of this feature of the book is systematic. There is a clear sense that, whether it was accomplished consciously or unconsciously, the author leads the reader along a clear path towards his final destination. In this

⁴³The topic is also maintained by many less overt references as well, e.g. the feature 'I saw/heard' belonging to the narrative framework.

case, references to the main topic of the book are placed in a systematic way, in strategic places, so that at each significant moment the reader knows what the author is talking about.

This study of these micro-issues confirm two of the major assumptions underlying this study, that discourses in general, and *Revelation* in particular, are organized in a systematic way, and that this organization can be analyzed and described by means of appropriate linguistic tools. This means that even though the analysis of a complex discourse such as this is a challenge, it is by no means impossible, and that careful study of each and any of the components of the discourse, whether large or small, will reveal their own nuggets of truth and insight.

APPENDIX 5

Suggestions for Further Study

The present study has been limited exclusively to a discourse analysis of the book of *Revelation* based on linguistic evidence to be found within the text itself. However, other areas of research could be fruitfully explored to both consolidate the findings based on the internal linguistic evidence, and also to apply the findings practically to ongoing exegetical and hermeneutical study of the book. Suggestions for such further study are presented below.

1 External Support for the Analysis

The present study is a cross-disciplinary study in that it has brought methods developed within the field of linguistics to bear on the study of a biblical book. Nonetheless, it was intentionally limited in scope in that it concentrated on marshaling the internal linguistic evidence to be found in the book itself in order to develop an understanding of the structure of the book. It was found that two of the crucial aspects of this structure were the importance of the number seven, such that key parts of the structure are composed of seven parts, and the parallel arrangement of the book as a whole as well as many of the lower level units.

To some western observers, used as they are, to texts which usually develop in a linear fashion, these two features seem unusual and even perhaps difficult to accept. However, much evidence is accumulating from different disciplines which support the findings presented in this study. Some of this evidence is listed below with the intention of both indicating the support which is available from external sources and also for indicating possibilities for further research into issues which in the future could fruitfully inform exegetical studies of biblical literature.

1.1 Psychology and Psycholinguistics

At the broadest possible level, structure of discourses is directly related to how the human brain processes information. This can be approached from two complementary sides. Firstly, there is the area of authorial competence, since it is clear that before producing a discourse an author needs to be able to collect and organize information into a coherent package before he can communicate it to someone else. Secondly, from a listener/reader's point of view, the question arises as to what is the optimum amount of information he can handle and in what form, to avoid either boredom or overload. Miller 1956 in his article *The Magical Number Seven...* presents evidence that human intelligence appears to package information into relatively small groups

ranging from two or three units to as many as twelve or thirteen, but that the average, i.e. the optimum size of the package in most cases, is a grouping of seven units of information. If such a grouping is not large enough to handle all the information in view, in order to avoid cognitive overload, the larger group will be broken down into two or more groups, related together in a nesting arrangement similar to the linguistic hierarchy which has been referred to in this study. Although no statistical studies have yet been found,¹ it is noticeable that chiasms and other similar parallel structures can be found with anything from three to thirteen subunits, the latter being rare, and anything bigger than this extremely rare. Nonetheless, chiasms with seven subunits are very common, and it is reasonable to suppose that this may be a reflection of Miller's cognitive average.

1.2 Ancient Middle-Eastern Literary Tradition

It is self-evident that *Revelation* was created in the context of the culture and traditions of the ancient Middle-East and therefore must reflect the influence of these traditions. By the same token, it needs to be borne in mind that it should never be assumed wittingly or unwittingly that it embodies modern, western culture or literary traditions. Some research has been conducted in this field and the results so far, indicate that symmetric parallel patterns and uneven chiasmic patterns of all kinds occur frequently in a wide range of ancient Middle-Eastern documents. Welch 1981 provides a broad survey of various Middle-Eastern languages, while Dorsey 1999 provides a comprehensive survey of Old Testament literature. See also Longenecker 2001 on the preferences of Greek rhetoricians.

1.3 Oral Literary Traditions

One of the particular features of ancient Middle-Eastern culture is that it was dominated by the oral transmission of information. Even though writing was known, it was not available to the majority of the population and the books written not only arose out of and would have been influenced by the predominant oral culture, but in most cases they were written to preserve information which was originally produced and preserved within the oral tradition. As Harvey 1998,³⁵ has remarked:

¹A brief review of Dorsey 1999 indicates that for the Pentateuch and the Prophets most of the discourses of different sizes which he analyzed were composed of seven units. For all types of parallel structures there were: 100+ examples with 7 sub-units compared to 5 with 3; 1 with 5; 1 with 6; 1 with 10; 9 with 13 and 5 with 14. For linear structures there were 21 examples with 7 sub-units, and 1 each with 2, 3 or 5 sub-units. Dorsey himself comments that 'the most common symmetric scheme in the Hebrew Bible is the seven-part symmetry' (ibid.,32).

There is both a growing recognition that first century culture was largely oral and a corresponding concern that scholars might be guilty of imposing on ancient texts presuppositions more appropriate to the widespread literacy of modern culture.

Harvey 1998,10 proposes seven characteristics of oral literature in general, all of which occur in *Revelation*. However, what is of particular interest is that oral literature is characterized by the same variety of parallel and symmetric structures as can be found in the above analysis of *Revelation*. Harvey *ibid.*,80-1 makes it clear that such parallelism may be based as much on underlying concepts as on the surface structure words themselves, and that such organization occurs on both the micro and the macro level. One aspect of this parallelism is the juxtaposition of opposing ideas which was considered to be good style at the time.² This confirms that the placing of the interludes in *Revelation* without linkage right next to material which is dealing with an antithetical theme, is likely to have been an intentional device, even if it is difficult for modern readers to discern the intended relationship.

Harvey's work concentrates on the New Testament era but this is complemented by Niditch 1996 which is a study of orality focusing on the Old Testament period.³

1.4 Modern Cultural and Literary Traditions

Language and culture are inextricably related for the former expresses the latter and the latter underlies and influences not only how people live but particularly how they express themselves. As Callow 1998,172 explains:

Sociocultural factors also affect the *form* of the text. Each culture has acceptable literary (or spoken) forms for different kinds of communications... sociocultural factors affect the *communicative strategies* employed in the text... These strategies will vary (even) within one community according to the type of message and the assumed audience.

Other primary research (e.g. Schooling 1987 and 1990) has shown that people from non-western cultures have different viewpoints concerning their preferences as to how messages are communicated. What may be considered normal and acceptable for one culture may well be foreign and unacceptable in another culture.

²Harvey 1998,74. He quotes Aristotle as follows: 'Contraries are easily understood and even more so when placed side by side, because antithesis resembles a syllogism'.

³For a more recent and briefer review see Davis 1999.

Two significant observations arise out of this general principle which are relevant to the present study. Firstly, modern Semitic culture still has a preference for discourses which are characterized by repetition and parallelism. At a general level, Bailey 1983 after years of research and personal experience considers that Middle-Eastern culture has changed very little since Bible times and that the people moulded by it still have a linguistic predilection for various kinds of parallelism which he describes in detail. On the other side of the world, Kaplan 1966 undertook some research with graduate students from different parts of the world and discovered that students from Semitic cultures still had this same preference for repetition and parallelism when expressing themselves in writing.⁴ By contrast, it was only the English-speaking students who had a preference for ‘a sequence that is dominantly linear in its development’ (ibid.,4). This was not a preference for all western students since even Romance languages, not to mention an eastern language like Russian, had different dominant forms.

Kaplan ibid.,14 also remarks that even though ‘the requirements of communication can often be best solved by relatively close adherence to established patterns’, it is nonetheless true that ‘paragraphs like those described... as being atypical in English do exist in English’. What this means is that even for modern English, a language and culture which seems to have developed a preference for straightforward, linear structures and the minimum possible amount of repetition (for some repetition is necessary in any discourse since its coherence depends on there being ‘an orderly flow of sentences marked by *repetition of key ideas*’)⁵ it is quite possible to find atypical structures such as chiasms and other such parallel structures. The international magazine *TIME* was chosen for a limited research project since it contains quality discourses in a modern style of English aimed at a cosmopolitan audience. cursory research indicated that inclusios (where the conclusion and the introduction contain parallel words or concepts) were very common, and chiasms, although more rare, were not difficult to find.⁶

Another example is the organization of the present study. At the outset, and in spite of the nature of the content, it was assumed without question that the final product would follow the linear,

⁴He also found that Semitic texts used a lot of apposition and lists and he claims (1966,9-10) that unlike English, Arabic (for example) has a series of connectives which are better adapted to this usage. This is relevant also to *Revelation* and highlights the need to undertake more research into the true function of the connectives in New Testament Greek.

⁵Connolly 1953,304, quoted in Kaplan 1966,19, emphasis added.

⁶See *TIME* of 13/10/97 page 74 and of 17/02/2003 pages 50-1. These chiasms had seven and nine sub-units respectively.

non-repetitive format typical of most English texts of this nature. However, it was found in practice that, in order to do justice to the subject matter, much detail and considerable repetition of key concepts was logically necessary. This reality, coupled with editorial constraints led quite naturally near the end of the process to a small reorganization of the text. This involved dividing one chapter into two and moving another chapter towards the beginning. The end result, which was not pre-planned but happened quite naturally, was a seven-part chiasm. An unexpected but beneficial side-effect was that after this reorganization was undertaken, it was noticed that the chapter which was moved to the centre of the chiasm turned out to be the most important since it is the one which deals most directly with the meaning of the book, which is clearly more important than the structure per se. This example seems to illustrate that parallel structures appear to accommodate natural psychological needs for certain kinds of communication at least as well as linear ones, even in a language and culture where it is accepted that the linear form is dominant.⁷

Clearly then, the myth that linearity and absence of repetition are universal norms for discourses must be laid to rest. It needs to be accepted that repetition of some kind will always be present in all coherent discourses. It also needs to be accepted that cultural norms are different in different parts of the world, that within a single cultural context, norms may be different in different situations, and ultimately that an author may intentionally decide to ignore the norms. All these factors should be allowed to inform linguistic analysis, and therefore the analyst should remain open to the fact that any kind of structure is theoretically possible in any discourse arising out of any particular culture. It is only study of the indicators which the author has placed in his text which will determine the kind of textual organization which he decided, consciously or unconsciously, to use to communicate his message.

Further research may indicate that the dominance of linearity in English is a modern phenomenon. Ford 1982,75-80 without broaching the subject directly, provides hints that Medieval English literature arose out of, and was produced in the context of, a dominant oral culture. This culture had a preference for events and hence literature, which were repetitive and cyclic in nature, in which strict linear chronology was subordinated to the cultural pressure to live life in the dynamism of 'the immediate present', and within the context of which, the most

⁷Harvey 1998,77, quoting other authors, makes it clear that the training provided in the classical period would have helped students to master the use of chiastic structures. It is logical within the context of the examples given above, that simply an awareness of the existence of chiastic structures makes it possible both to recognize and to create them. Experience and training would serve to make this even more feasible.

important event occurred at the centre of the year, and the most important literary piece occurred at the centre of its total context. If this is the case, then there is no good reason for scepticism concerning the organization of *Revelation* just because it is different from what is assumed to be normal from within the context of modern anglophone culture.

1.5 Genre Studies

Communication does not take place in a vacuum but is possible to the extent that the communicator and the addressee have certain things in common even before the communication process begins. As Callow 1998,35 puts it:

Communicating people share a present chunk of experience and know that they do... All are likely to have *very similar foregrounded frames*, which will include shared time and location, shared awareness of each other and numerous social factors.

This is a vast area of study but the study of genre narrows the field down to include just those shared assumptions which are likely to exist between the communicator and the addressees which arise from the type of communication which takes place between them.

The particular value of genre studies is the 'predictability factor'. As Reed 1999,39 explains:

Genre creates predictability, allowing the reader to recognize the type of discourse being spoken and, in turn, to use other similar discourses as a schema for interpreting the immediate one.

Revelation is an interesting case in that it is a mixture of three genres at the same time, biblical epistle, apocalypse and prophecy. However, what is more interesting is that what is so far known about these genres serves to confirm the major features which have been discovered by internal analysis alone. All of these genres are characterized by the following features just as *Revelation* is.⁸ Firstly, their main aim is persuasive (Callow's volitional import) with the exhortations being supported and motivated by expository material (Callow's informational import). Secondly, since these are non-narrative genres, they are not organized according to a linear time-line, but topically according to a theme-line. In practice such organization is often based on a system of parallel coordinates. Thirdly, all these biblical genres typically have some kind of septenary arrangement, and chiasmic organization at various levels of the hierarchy is particularly typical of the Old Testament literature. An awareness of these features would normally have led the

⁸See Aune 1997,lxx-xc; Beale 1999,37-43; Clendenen 1993; Boring 1989,31; Longacre 1983a,4-19 and 1992b; Smith 1994; Collins 1979; Doty 1973; Dorsey 1999; O'Connell 1994 and Limburg 1987 for a sample of references to issues concerning genre.

original readers, and should also guide a modern analyst, to expect similar features in a book like *Revelation*.

Genre definitions can be used in two ways, either to predict what one may expect as mentioned above, or to confirm findings based on internal evidence alone. The element of predictability is what helps prepare the reader for optimal communication, but, at the same time, it helps him to recognize those elements which are different and which, therefore, may be prominent in a specific discourse. The element of confirmation is useful for evaluating incompatible structural analyses,⁹ since those which correspond more fully with the predicted genre characteristics are likely to have more credibility than those which do not. In the case of the present study, the major elements of the proposed structure correspond well with the formal elements of the three relevant genre types which have so far been proposed in the published literature.

1.6 Johannine Authorship

The exact identity of John, the narrator of the Apocalypse, has been a matter of debate for many centuries but, nonetheless, one of the options which remains open is that he was the apostle John who wrote both the Gospel of John and the Letters of John.¹⁰ An important feature of the present analysis is that it proposes that the series of seven signs form a crucial part of the structure of the book. It is, therefore, intriguing to remember that the Gospel of John may also be viewed as being structured around the same feature of seven signs.¹¹ In both cases, the signs lead into expository material which develop important parts of the informational content of each book. Yet, having said that, the over-riding objective of both books is hortatory in nature (see *John* 20:30-31). Comparative study of the features shared by these two books may possibly contribute some important insights to the authorship debate.

Longacre 1983b,3 proposes that the First Epistle by John is ‘a hortatory discourse... (which) is repetitive and recursive’. His analysis proposes that the letter is also organized on the basis of an introduction plus a body composed of seven main parts followed by a conclusion. These

⁹It should be borne in mind that not all analyses which are different are incompatible. Some may be compatible; in other words they are complementary and mutually enlightening. Cf. Longacre 1983b,43 note 1 and Smith 1994,393.

¹⁰See, for example, Beale 1999,34-6.

¹¹See for example Tenney 1948,27-31 and 1953 (1985),192. Cf. Brown 1966,xi and 39-42 who calls the first part of John’s Gospel ‘The Book of Signs’ with the first sub-title being ‘The Opening Days of the *Revelation of Jesus*’ (emphasis added) and Johnson 1981,510 who describes *Revelation* 12-14 as ‘a Book of Signs’.

similarities with *Revelation* could be studied in greater depth although whether this would elucidate the authorship issue is less clear, since hortatory objectives and a septenary structure per se are not characteristics unique to John.

1.7 The Wider Field of Biblical Studies

Within the wider field of biblical studies some scholars have been urging for some time that studies within their field should be informed and influenced by studies of language and text, which is the domain of linguistics. Ronning 1995,23-4, for example, proposes that, in order to avoid ‘modern psychologizing (and) creative guesswork... a consistent philological methodology is required, one that is consistent with Jesus’ time in terms of language, thought patterns and literary styles’. In the meantime, as representative of an earlier generation of scholars Baldwin 1972,9 had already expressed the following testimony and aspiration:

It is my hope that others will be helped to understand Zechariah, as I myself have been, by discerning its symmetry of structure. If this is an intrinsic feature of the book its purpose becomes clear and its message coherent.

Many of the younger generation of scholars have now had first-hand contact with linguistics, and armed with the additional insights which such cross-pollination can produce, have been more than forthright in their enthusiasm for such inter-disciplinary research. Reed 1999,62 expresses his opinion on the matter in the following way:

Undeniably, the use of modern linguistic models for historical-critical questions is not a panacea for all of the hermeneutical difficulties faced by New Testament interpreters, nor should it be proposed as such. Nonetheless, it has much to contribute to New Testament studies by way of methodological clarity and quantitative analysis of Hellenistic Greek. And can a historical critic, whose only real access to the original is via the language of that text, ignore the very secular enterprise that concerns itself with human language?¹²

As a consequence of this process of osmosis between the two disciplines, an increasing number of studies of biblical texts are showing the marks of the influence of various methodologies which can be subsumed under the rubric of discourse analysis.¹³ What is remarkable is that various works demonstrate that the system of topical arrangement in the form of parallelism,

¹²Guthrie 1999,34 expresses a more personal testimony in these terms: ‘As I continued to struggle with the text...I took up discourse analysis and discerned the strength of this approach to be in its attempt to analyze a text as an act of coherent communication in written form’. Other references to appraisals of discourse analysis can be found in Chapter 1, note 3 above.

¹³For example, Dorsey 1999 proposes analyses for all the OT books. A cursory survey of works other than Dorsey’s has brought to light published works on over 30 biblical books which have gained insight into the exegesis of the book by taking account of structures such as those discussed above.

chiastic structures and septenary organization, as exemplified in the above analysis of *Revelation*, is much more common throughout the whole range of biblical books than was once thought. It is doubtless too soon to be categorical on this point, but further research may well demonstrate that these types of structure are the most common of all the structures used in the biblical corpus.

It is to be hoped that some or all of these avenues of research may be pursued by others in the future.

2 Exegetical and Hermeneutical Implications of the Analysis

If the analysis described above becomes generally accepted as providing a helpful insight into how and why the author of this book organized his material in the way which has come down to us, then it should constrain and guide our understanding of what the author was trying to communicate. Structures of all kinds constrain whatever is contained within them and this is no less true for linguistic structures. It is the structure which the author himself has placed within his text which should be allowed to guide the expectation of the reader, and which should be allowed to be the principal arbiter when meanings are not immediately clear, rather than data which is external to the text and which may or may not be relevant to its interpretation, or presuppositions which the reader brings with him before even beginning to read. All the following issues would bear more research and more detailed application.

2.1 The Hortatory Intent

The organization of the book indicates that the primary aim of the author was not just to provide information about future events, interesting though that may be, but to influence the behaviour of the readers in their immediately present situation. There is certainly a great deal of information in the book, but in understanding the book as a whole, this aspect should be kept subordinate to the primary aim of indicating how the readers should conduct themselves in the light of the information given. Any interpretation of the book which fails to keep the hortatory aspects in primary position will be lacking in an important way.

2.2 The Overlap Links

The unusual overlap links are not simply neat, structural devices but they can also be interpreted as being intended to influence the reader's view of the book. Firstly, they indicate that the Prologue and the Epilogue are integral parts of the total structure. This militates against any suggestion that they were after-thoughts added by well-meaning disciples or editors. This

means, in turn, that the hortatory implications outlined above cannot be separated from the rest of the book and thereby reduced to an editorial aside. The implications are that these parts of the book were intended from the outset to be read together with, and to organically permeate, the whole of the rest of the book. Similarly, the linking together of Cycles 2-6 in this way so that they cannot reasonably be separated from each other, suggests firstly, that they contain a message which is different from that of Cycles 1 and 7, and also that they should be read as a single unit all contributing to the same principal themes.

The phenomenon of the overlap link is also an example where the structure mimics the message and thereby creates support for the message by providing a concrete illustration.¹⁴ In this case an overlap link is a linguistic unit which is, at first glance, an ending, but which, on closer inspection, is found to be simultaneously a new beginning. This mimics an important part of the message which becomes clear at the end of the book. At first glance the end is just that, it is the end of the book and it describes the end of evil and the end of the world as we now know it. Nonetheless, its true importance is to be found in the fact that it also describes a radical and wonderful new beginning. In a similar vein, the information given about judgment in the book seems to indicate that this is a process designed to bring life to an end. However, that is not the most important part of this aspect of the book, because the real interest is that for those who heed the exhortations of the book, judgment need not be the end. On the contrary, in the midst of judgment and even arising directly out of judgment type events, salvation and the beginning of a new life can arise, and this is the hope of all those who follow the Lamb. As Oswald Chambers once put it: 'It is not judgment inaugurating salvation, but judgment that *is* salvation'.¹⁵

2.3 The Interludes

The interludes are striking because they are relatively brief passages which occur without warning or formal introduction in a context which is dominated by a much larger quantity of different material. This context is dark and negative in content, since it is the judgment theme which is dominant, whereas the interludes speak of hope, of Heaven and herald the approach of the heavenly Bridegroom. In this way, they appear like flames of light on a dark canvas and concretely illustrate a subtle part of the message, namely that for those who repent and persevere, hope of salvation still burns brightly, even in the midst of the dark night of the soul which is

¹⁴Other references to this phenomenon may be found in Longacre 1992a,285; Wendland 1992a,61; Terry 1995,78 and 165-8.

¹⁵ Chambers 1934 (1989),33.

experienced by all those who are impacted by such negative events as described in the seven-fold motifs of Cycles 2-6.

2.4 The Cycles

This analysis supports the recapitulative view of the book since it is viewed as a series of seven, semi-autonomous cycles which deal with the same themes from different points of view. The analysis does not contain any references to chronology apart from that contained in the narrative framework. That is to say that the book as a whole is not a true narrative and is not therefore structured according to events on a time-line. It is a book which is expository (in terms of its informational content) and hortatory in nature. Such discourses are usually topically organized and *Revelation* is no exception. Thus it is, that Cycles 1 and 7 describe the Church, but from different points of view, and Cycles 2-6 describe the judgment events which fall on the earth from the throne of God but with each cycle portraying different aspects of the message which God intends to communicate by these events. Having said that, it must also be said that the structure is complex which, in turn, suggests that the message is also complex and cannot be understood in simplistic terms. In this particular case, the internal structure of each of the central cycles, coupled with the fact that they are inextricably linked to each other in a chain by the overlap links, as well as being bounded by an introduction and a conclusion, suggest that there is internal movement towards an ending, both within each cycle, and also within the whole series. The best solution then would seem to be a balance between both points of view. On the one hand, the structure is cyclic and this, in turn, guides the reader's understanding to perceive God's plan of judgment as being cyclic and repetitive, but at the same time the book comes to a final end, which is illustrative of the content which indicates that God's plan is also moving inexorably towards a final end. Both insights are true at the same time.

2.5 The Function of *Revelation* 20

Linguistic analysis of the book as a whole sheds considerable light on the exegesis of *Revelation* 20. Commentators are divided as to whether Chapter 20 carries on directly from the end of Chapter 19, or whether it is a new beginning which is in parallel to earlier parts of the book. The proposed analysis supports the latter point of view for several reasons. The data that leads to a division into seven cycles of equal weight and importance leads also to a division between 19:21 and 20:1. This is supported by the fact that 19:11-21 is viewed as being a conclusion to Cycles 2-6, with 20:1 naturally being the beginning of the next major section. This proposal is supported in turn by the fact that there is considerable evidence for a culturally

appropriate system of tail-head connections, which makes it clear that the division between major units falls at this point and not elsewhere. The evidence internal to Cycle 7, which needs to have a setting and a body to be in conformity with the rest of the book, demonstrates that Chapter 20 is the beginning of the last cycle and that it quite naturally creates a setting for what follows, which is in harmony with the antithetical nature of the structure of the whole cycle. Finally, the chiasmic nature of the book throws into relief the fact that Cycles 1 and 7 are in parallel. As a consequence, it can be observed that the description of Satan's career in the setting of Cycle 7 (20:1-3 and 7-10) is quite naturally in antithetical parallel with the description of Christ in the setting of Cycle 1 (1:12-18).

2.6 The Chiasmic Structure of the Book

The chiasmic structure which has been proposed for the book also confirms the cyclic and parallel nature of the discourse. This implies that each pair of parallels can be fruitfully compared as it is likely that they inform and complement each other. This structure also gives insight into which parts of the book are the most important.

2.7 Prominence

The principles of prominence described in the study need to be pursued further and their implications for interpretation of the book to be developed in more detail. These same principles can also be fruitfully applied to the lower levels of the structure of the book.

If each of these seven areas of study were developed in detail the boundaries of knowledge concerning this book would be considerably extended.

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Since the above study is interdisciplinary in nature, the bibliography has been divided into two parts in order to indicate the two major disciplines from which the bibliographical resources have been drawn. Section 1 is composed of commentaries and other biblical resources, while Section 2 contains works which are primarily linguistic in nature.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| AUSS | Andrews University Seminary Studies, Andrews University Press, Berrien Springs MI. |
| CBQ | The Catholic Biblical Quarterly |
| CTR | The Criswell Theological Review |
| CTB | Cahiers de Traduction Biblique, l'Alliance Biblique Française, la Société Biblique Suisse et l'Association Wycliffe pour la Traduction de la Bible. |
| CUP | The Cambridge University Press |
| EQ | The Evangelical Quarterly |
| ET | The Expository Times |
| FN | Filologia Neotestamentaria |
| Int | Interpretation |
| IVP | The Inter-Varsity Press |
| JBL | The Journal of Biblical Literature |
| JETS | The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society |
| JOTT | The Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics, The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Dallas. |
| JP | Jerusalem Perspective, Jerusalem Perspective Publishing, Jerusalem. |
| JSNT | The Journal for the Study of the New Testament |
| JSOT | The Journal for the Study of the Old Testament |
| NIGTC | The New International Greek Testament Commentary |
| NOL | Notes on Linguistics, The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Dallas. |
| NOT | Notes on Translation, The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Dallas. |
| NovT | Novum Testamentum |
| OPTAT | Occasional Papers in Translation and Textlinguistics, The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Dallas. |
| OUP | The Oxford University Press |
| SCM | The Student Christian Movement |
| SIL | The Summer Institute of Linguistics |
| SJT | The Scottish Journal of Theology |
| START | Selected Technical Articles Related to Translation, The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Dallas. |
| TBT-TP | The Bible Translator - Technical Papers, The United Bible Societies, New York. |
| TBT-PP | The Bible Translator - Practical Papers, The United Bible Societies, New York. |
| TT | TIC Talk, The United Bible Societies, New York. |
| WTJ | The Westminster Journal of Theology |

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