

Chiasmus in the New Testament

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For over a century and a half and with varying degrees of success, several New Testament commentators have seriously studied the presence of chiasmus in particular portions of the New Testament.¹ Time has come not to reiterate the individual presentations already made by these scholars but rather to recognize and evaluate the use of chiasmus throughout the Christian Canon. Such an evaluation reveals that chiasmus is indeed a prevalent literary form appearing significantly in many parts of the New Testament. The necessary consequence of this is that interpreters and critics of the New Testament can no longer confidently proceed without some awareness of chiasmus as a basic aspect of the literary structure of the texts of the New Testament.

Such a broad assertion may seem brash, overreaching or exaggerating. But ample evidence supports this claim, whether it is made in respect to the structure of certain sayings of Jesus, the composition of elegant theological prose, or the organization of entire books and letters. Most of the evidence speaks for itself so that little needs to be said in defense or in praise of understanding chiasmus in the New Testament. Particularly in the New Testament, where the first is already last, where death is life, gain is loss, and the lost is found, the correctness and importance of any given chiastic analysis generates its own credentials and convictions.

Due as much to this self-establishing characteristic as to the frequency and complexity of chiasmus in the New Testament, the present study will only display the basis chiastic outlines of longer New Testament passages. I am particularly concerned with the structure of the books of the New Testament as integral units and with the composition of their central passages. Chiasmus in shorter passages, of course, is not necessarily less interesting. It is, however, readily discernible and frequently noted by general textual commentators. In substantial compositions, on the other hand, it is easier for extended chiasms to go unobserved, both on account of the inadvertence of modern readers and on account of the greater complexity of the structures involved. Ironically, it is also the longer chiastic compositions which, once observed, are the most memorable and most significant.

The books of the New Testament will be examined in the approximate chronological sequence in which they were written beginning as a group with the New Testament Epistles and concluding with the Gospels and, finally, Revelation. The significance of chiasmus to these writings will ultimately be discussed in summation.

EPISTLES

James A convenient starting point is the Epistle of James. Although any attempt to date the composition of this epistle precisely presents serious problems of its own, the letter may be representative of the earliest Christian writings with its teachings concentrating primarily upon practical, ethical and religious instruction. Understandably, therefore, the Epistle of James has never won particular acclaim in the past for literary achievement. Nevertheless, the obvious parallelisms and the abundance of Hebraisms throughout the letter provide prima facie evidence that the letter was not composed in haste or without substantial literary precedents. One pervasive precedent upon which James appears to have relied is the Sermon on the Mount, in whatever textual form it may have existed when the epistle was written. Compare, for example, James 5:12 with Matthew 5:33, 37; James 3:11–12 with Matthew 7:16–22; James 1:13 with Matthew 6:13; and James 4:11 with Matthew 7:1–2. Given that James was consciously reworking or reorganizing a body of basic Christian teachings, it becomes plausible to anticipate that his epistle was written with some organizational concept or guideline in mind.

Numerous repetitions and recurring themes may be identified in the letter of James. So many, in fact, that the presence of chiasm here cannot be identified unequivocally. It appears, however, that the crux of the letter stands at chapter 2:14–26, expounding the doctrine that faith without works is dead. On either side of this section appear many teachings, each occurring once in the first and once again in the letter portions of the epistle. Thus, the organization of this letter may be approached as follows:

A Be patient in temptation (1:1–4) B Ask and you shall receive, being not double-minded (5–8) C The poor exalted, the rich shall fade (9–11) D Man is tempted of his own lust (12–16) E Every good gift comes from above (17–18) F Be slow to anger (19–20) G Save your souls (21) H Be ye doers of the word; the mirror of life (22–25) I Bridle your tongue (26) J Attend to the widows and orphans (27) K Do not be a respecter of persons (2:1–9) L One either keeps all of the law or none of the law (2:10–12) M Faith without works is dead (2:14–26) K' Do not offend in word (3:1–8) L' One either produces good fruit or bad fruit (9–12) E' The wisdom which comes from above (13–18) D' Lust in your members (4:1–5) B' God gives grace and purifies double-mindedness (6–10) I' Speak not evil (11) H' Be ye doers of the law; the vapor of life (11–17) C' The wealth of the rich shall be moth-eaten and worthless (5:1–6) A' Be patient in temptation (7–11) F' Swear not (12) J' Attend to the sick and sinful (14–18) G' Save your souls (19–20).

Without doubt, the organization of this epistle is far from exemplifying prototypical chiasmus. The inversion is not precise; there is no slavish adherence to this or any other literary form here. Yet how else can the complete balancing of elements in the first and second halves of this epistle be explained except by general reference to chiasmus? And indeed the equilibrium here is delicately maintained. Every section bears close affinities to its counterpart. Observe especially the use of complementary metaphors in C and C'; the recurrence of the *hapax legomenon* „doubleminded” (*dipsychos*) in B and B'; the strong similarities between H and H', both of which fall at the middle of their respective halves; the equally strenuous requirement of total righteousness elaborated in L and L'; and many other similar correspondences. Even the central exposition, M, begins and ends by duplicating the assertion, „Faith without works is dead.” (James 2:17, 26).

This is rudimentary chiasm within a context of extensive parallelism. Corresponding parts stand on either side of a clearly identifiable focal passage. Thus, even without attempting to establish the specific relationships involved between each matching pair of elements in this system, it is apparent that the faith-without-works theme of the letter becomes more obvious and each portion of the letter only comes to occupy a distinct position in relation to the development of that theme in the epistle as a whole when the composition is analyzed in the manner suggested above.

1 and 2 Thessalonians Paul's earliest letters, the two to the church in Thessalonika, appear to manifest little internal structure despite an early attempt by Thomas Boys in his *Tactica Sacra* to cast each of these epistles into a loose A–B–B–A arrangement.² Although it can be said that these letters are composed of relatively discrete sections, no indications are forthcoming from these texts themselves to the effect that these sections were in any way intended to be read in parallel relationship with corresponding sections in other portions of the writing. Nor is there any climactic weighting of certain sections in these letters, whether centrally or terminally. For purposes of contrasting these letters with Paul's later writings, brief outlines of 1 and 2 Thessalonians are stated:

1 Thessalonians A Epistolary (1:1) B Thanksgiving for the conversion of the Thessalonians (1:1–10) C Paul's defense of his missionary efforts and the equal status of his converts with the Judean Saints (2:1–16) D Paul's devotion to the service of love, suffering, and perfecting the Saints (2:17–3:13) E God's call unto a life of

cleanness and holiness (4:1–12) F The reassurance of resurrection of the dead (4:13–5:11) G A list of practical exhortations (5:12–24) A Epistolary (5:25–28).

2 Thessalonians A Epistolary (1:1–2) B Enduring tribulation shows worthiness for the kingdom and will justify vengeance on the day of judgment (1:3–12) C The coming open conflict with Evil and the demise of all those who believed not and took pleasure in unrighteousness (2:1–12) D The Saints' calling and election unto glory evokes comfort and goodness (2:12–17) E Commandment that each should work and not weary of well doing (3:1–16) A Epistolary (3:16–18).

Galatians Paul's first substantial epistle is his letter to the Galatians. The letter shows Paul's thought in its early development as he began grappling with the theological problems of taking the gospel to those who were not people of the covenant. The letter also shows maturation in Paul's literary techniques which he perhaps conscientiously promoted as he came to perceive the power which the written word could have in preaching and defending specific doctrines in the faith.

Chiasmus in *Galatians* has been studied exhaustively by John Bligh whose works on the subject are thorough and elaborate.³ Bligh divides the Epistle to the Galatians into the following major chiastic sections:

A Prologue (1:1–1:12) B Autobiographical Section (1:13–2:10) C Justification by Faith (2:11–3:4)
D Arguments from Scripture (3:5–3:29) E Central Chiasm (4:1–10) D' Arguments from Scripture (4:11–4:31) C' Justification by Faith (5:1–5:10) B' Moral Section (5:11–6:11) A' Epilogue (6:12–6:18).⁴

Bligh examines each of these sections in detail discovering abundant evidence of chiastic balances and overlays throughout the composition of this important letter. Although his meticulous examination of this letter may well be open to some criticism on specific occasions where the texts do not fit easily into the chiastic mold, Bligh, for the most part, has demonstrated the importance of chiasmus and concentric structure even in this, one of Paul's earliest writings.

In *Galatians*, the central chiasm bears special attention. The passage may be viewed as follows:

(a) The *heir* remains a *child* and *servant* (4:1) (b) Until the time appointed of the *father* (4:2) (c) When that time came, *God* sent forth his *Son* (4:4) (d) Made under the *law* (4:4) (d') To redeem those under the *law* (4:5) (c') Because ye are sons, *God* sent forth the Spirit of his *Son* (4:6) (b') That ye cry Abba, *Father* (4:6) (a') That ye are no more a *servant* but a *son* and *heir* (4:7);

Of all the arguments which Paul advances to show that salvation comes through faith in Christ rather than through obedience to the law of Moses, the most dispositive is his declaration of these principles of heirship. Analogies to Abraham (3:6–9) or Isaac (4:21–5:1) are pointless unless there is reason to think that believing in Christ makes the believer like Abraham or Isaac. Likewise, criticizing the law of Moses (3:19–29) does not yet affirm the effectiveness of faith in Christ. The required keystone of all Paul's arguments concerning justification by faith in Christ is the all-important affirmation, found only in the central assertion of heirship (4:1–7), proclaiming the belief that God has sent both his Son and the Spirit of his Son to transform the heirs-apparent from children and servants into sons and heirs who now do call God their Father and not their Master. This positive, personal assertion is a strong declaration of Paul's own faith. It is appropriate that such a statement should occupy the central position in this epistle. Indeed, we shall see that this type of affirmative, testimonial statement stands at the center of several of Paul's letters.

1 Corinthians In the past, the literary structure of *1 Corinthians* has perplexed commentators. Since the letter deals with numerous, seemingly unrelated practical difficulties which had arisen among the Corinthian Saints, some have suggested that Paul is simply responding, point by point, to these problems as they had been reported to him. This, of course, removes all necessity of detecting literary structure in the epistle as a whole. On the other hand, since the letter goes on to develop major points of doctrine, others have suggested that only chapters 1–6 comprise the actual letter as it responds to the Corinthian situation while chapters 7–16 are an unsolicited excursus volunteered by Paul. Obviously this only bifurcates the problem of detecting elements of literary composition. Other theories have also been advanced to explain away certain sections of the letter as interpolations, additions, glosses, or accretions. The ensuing analysis, it is hoped, will dispel most of these proposals.

For a letter which itself admonishes that „all things be done decently and in order” (14:40), an unstructured presentation would seem wholly unbecoming. That the overall structure of the epistle should be chiasmic should not be unlikely since the letter abounds in verses and short passages which are chiasmic.⁵ Among its chiasmic subsections, Paul’s „Hymn to Love” is surely one of the most pleasingly structured literary passages. This section, 1 Cor. 12:31–14:1, bears close examination and is strong evidence of Paul’s facility with chiasmic composition:

A Seek after the *greatest* gifts, and indeed here is the *greatest* way: B If I speak in tongues with men, yea even with angels But have not love I am but raucous bronze and rattling cymbals. If I have the gift of prophecy and know mysteries all and all knowledge But have not love I am nothing. If I give away all I have or lay down my body to get glory But have not love I have gotten absolutely nothing. C *Love is patient* toward others *Mercifully* kind is *love*. D Not greedy Not a show-off Not conceited Not shameless Not with ulterior design, selfishness or cliquishness Not irritable Does not rationalize wickedness Has no joy when things are not right But rejoices in truth. C’ *Love is patient* under all circumstances Always *believing* Always *hoping* *Love endures* to the end. B’ Love will never lose its importance But prophecy will come to an end Speaking in tongues will cease And some day knowing mysteries will be nothing special. For now we just know little bits And we prophesy of little glimpses But when Christ comes all will be perfectly whole And all our partial experiences will be no more. When I was a child I spoke like a child I had the intellect of a child I figured like a child When I became a man I had no more use for childish things. For now we just see faint images of our real selves But then we shall see face to face Now we just know little bits But then I shall know and be known completely. What lasts are faith, hope, love, these three, A’ But the *greatest* of these is love.⁶

The literary design of this chapter is impressive and effective. The key to the initial admonition in A, to seek after the greatest gifts, is contained in A’, „The greatest of these is love.” Both B and B’ compare the gifts of tongues, prophecy and knowledge to the gift of love. In B, the Apostle states that without love a person accomplishes nothing by exercising the gifts of tongues or prophecy or sacrifice. In B’, he explains why this is so, namely because all gifts of the spirit except love will eventually become inconsequential. B’ itself is nicely chiasmic, contrasting the three gifts which will cease with the three which will last, and further balancing two quatrains (each with two lines describing man’s present situation and two others, the future), and centrally focusing on what it is that a man becomes when he does have love, having no more use for childish things. C and C’ are each chiasmic sections describing what love is and does. D, at the center, describes eight things which love is not or does not, and concludes with the climactic colon: „But rejoices in truth.”

Seeing the extensive chiasmic structure of this chapter, it is logical to ask whether Paul utilized a similar technique in organizing his first epistle to the Corinthians as a whole. The following outline suggests that he did.

I Introduction (1:1–9) II Divisions in the Church regarding Leadership: Resolution in Christ crucified (1:10–2:5) III Man is led by the Spirit of God (a) The mind of God is imparted by the Spirit to all those who will receive it (2:6–3:9) (b) Jesus Christ: the only Foundation (3:10–23) (a') All we have is imparted by apostles dedicated to giving their all (4:1–21) IV Sexual Problems within the Church (a) Excommunication of Fornicators (5:1–8) (b) The Power to Judge (5:9–6:20) (1) „All things are lawful unto me” (6:12) (2) „Joined to an harlot is one body . . . Joined unto the Lord is one spirit” (6:16–17) (3) „Flee fornication” (6:18) (a') Advice concerning proper sexual relationships (7:1–40) IV' Idolatry within the Church (a) Eating meats offered to Idols (8:1–8) (b) Avoiding the Abuse of the Power to Judge (8:9–10:33) (3) „Flee from idolatry” (10:14) (2) „Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils.” (10:21) (1) „All things are lawful for me” (10:23) (a') Advice concerning proper worship and eucharist (11:1–34) III' Man is led by the Gifts of the Spirit (a) Different gifts in Christ are given to all: unity in theory (12:1–34) (b) Love: the greatest of all (13:1–13) (a') All gifts have a place in the congregation of Christ: unity in practice (14:1–40) II' Divisions in the Church regarding Resurrection: Resolution in Christ resurrected (15:1–58) I' Conclusion (16:1–24)

Several significant observations can be made in respect to the organization of 1 Corinthians. First, it should not go unnoticed that both Paul's discussion concerning authority in the church (chapter 1) and his exposition of the doctrines of the resurrection (chapter 15) were necessitated by divisions within the Corinthian church over these subjects. The contention over leadership is summarized, „Each of you says I am of Paul, or I am of Apollo, or I am of Cephas, or I of Christ” (1:13). Paul responds by asking, „Is Christ divided?” (1:13) Likewise, the contention over resurrection is stated, „How say some of you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (15:12). Paul again responds by declaring, „If there be no resurrection of the dead, neither is Christ risen” (15:13). Only in these two sections, II and II', does Paul deal with divisions in the Corinthian congregation over points of doctrine. If Paul had organized his letter thematically, both of these sections would have belonged together. Instead, these balanced sections serve as two pillars supporting the first and the last statements made by this letter. Both of these sections claim that all preaching of Christ would be rendered in vain should the attitudes at Corinth continue (1:17, 15:14). Both sections make strong statements against the powers of the world, either taunting the wisdom of the world as foolishness (1:20–27) or deriding the powers of the grave as swallowed up (15:54–57). Paul, in both sections, writes in an argumentative, victorious style, which lends itself readily to grandeur, if not always to precision.

Furthermore, these sections II and II' themselves show chiasmic tendencies. 1 Corinthians 1:10–2:5 appears to center on 1:22–24 with the following expansion:

A Division over men's authority and Paul's cautious approach, baptising but a few (1:10–17) B God has promised he will destroy the wisdom of the wise (1:18–21) C Jews require a sign, Greeks seek wisdom (1:23) D We preach Christ crucified (1:23) C' To the Jews a stumbling block, to the Gentiles foolishness (1:23) B' Christ is the power and wisdom which destroys the wisdom of the wise (1:24–31) A' Paul's cautious approach declaring only the testimony of God, that faith is not built upon men but in God (2:1–5)

Likewise, the thought in section II', (15:1–58), is best followed if understood chiasmically:

A Witnesses to the resurrection of Christ (15:1–11) B Dispute over the reality of the resurrection (15:12) C Explanation that without the resurrection our preaching is in vain, we are false witnesses and we are most miserable (15:13–19) D Christ and Adam (15:20–23) E Christ has put all things under his feet including death (15:24–28) C' Explanation that without the resurrection our baptizing is in vain, our tribulations are worthless, and we may as well gratify ourselves (15:29–34) B' Possible dispute over the

nature of the resurrection and the problem answered (15:35–44) D' Christ and Adam (15:45–49)

A' Testimony of the mystery of the resurrection of all mankind (15:50–58)

The conceptual centerpiece of the foregoing passage is clearly found in its literary center, E. There it is told that Christ will put down all rule, all power, all authority, all enemies and all things, that God may be all in all (*panta en pasi*). This thought occurs nowhere else in the system. It also provides the logical underpinning for Paul's belief in the efficacy of Christ's resurrection unto mankind.

Sections III (2:6–4:21) and III' (12:1–14:40) are also nicely balanced. Both discuss the operations of the spirit of God among men. In III, Paul explains the difference between the spirit of man (*psychikos*) and the spirit of God in man (*pneumatikos*) and how the latter is received. This section centers on chapter 3, which singles out Jesus Christ as the only foundation upon which an enduring spiritual life can be built. In counterpoint, section III' explains the wide array of gifts of the spirit which are given to those in Christ and how each has its place in the body of his saints. The section readily appears to center on chapter 13, discussed in detail above, which singles out love as the only gift which will never lose its significance in the eternal course of spiritual existence.

The material contained in sections IV and IV' is of particular interest. Although the modern mind easily loses the train of thought through these sections, due largely to the differences between the social and religious problems which preoccupy the modern believer and those which concerned the early church, these sections are in fact well organized and systematic. Section IV deals exclusively with sexual problems, and IV' with idolatry. Both sections begin with blunt statements setting forth the problems of fornication and of eating meats offered to pagan idols. Both sections conclude with advice concerning the Christian approach to sexual conduct and to eating the body and blood of the eucharist. Central statements reiterated in both sections, especially the parallel assertions that no person can be joined to either harlotry or idolatry and to the Lord, indicate that these two sections were composed as a pair. Why these two subjects should be closely connected in Paul's mind at this point in his ministry, and indeed why these two sections should stand at the center of this epistle to the Corinthians, may now be explained by James' authoritative decree, recorded in Acts 15:19–29, concerning how the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles:

„Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them that they abstain from pollution of *idols*, and from *fornication*, and from things strangled, and from blood . . . Abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: From which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.”

These verses define the central message of the gospel as it was to be taken to the Gentiles. They emphasize but two religious imperatives: keeping oneself free from fornication and avoiding idolatry. It is therefore no coincidence that the central passages of 1 Corinthians, written not long after that council at which James presided and issued the foregoing instructions, reflect precisely the same gospel message as it is taken to the Gentiles. This harmony, in addition to the many other precisely balanced aspects of this epistle, goes a great distance toward justifying the conclusion that Paul intentionally and successfully utilized chiasmic principles in structuring both the composition of the individual sections as well as the full scope of this letter.

2 Corinthians and Romans Two major letters of Paul which appear to contain little chiasmic structure are 2 Corinthians and Romans. Why chiasmus is not evident in either of these letters is, of course, open to speculation.

With respect to 2 Corinthians, it may be that the version which has survived into modern times has been edited, redacted or amalgamated by certain of Paul's successors who reworked or combined earlier Pauline writings. Or

again, it may simply be that the substantial emphasis on biographical material in the letter precluded the author from utilizing a succinct chiasmic (or any other) formal structure. In any event, 2 Corinthians differs from most other epistles of Paul in more ways than this one alone.

With Romans, the absence of an overriding stylistic structure is also not surprising. Paul writes in Romans with a sense of doctrinal sophistication. His attention appears to turn to substance and content rather than form or style. Only in a loose sense is the letter divided into two halves: The first half, chapters 1–7, presents the problem of the human situation, and the second half, chapters 8–16, explains its solution. The problem, which is approached from several angles, is that man can only become righteous by becoming righteous inwardly; yet human conduct for Paul is not inward, but outward; therefore, the problem for man is to become „spiritually minded” when becoming such is not an inherent human capability. Paul discusses the inability of outward conduct to render man righteous, beginning with such vile conduct as is becoming to the Gentiles (chapter 1), then discussing such outward observances of the law of Moses and of circumcision which do not render man righteous (chapters 2–5), and finally discussing such inherent human weaknesses as tending to take advantage of exculpation and freedom (chapter 6) and being subject to the inevitable problems of the flesh (chapter 7). Surely the ultimate statement of the human plight comes at the end of chapter 7, at the point of furthest development of the first half of the epistle, as Paul cries out, „O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of death?” (7:24) The answer to this plea and the solution to the problem of the first half of the letter is given immediately, „through Jesus Christ our Lord” (7:25), and is then developed throughout the second half of the epistle. Paul expounds the course of salvation in Christ as a process of becoming spiritually minded sons of God (chapter 8), first in respect to the Gentiles and then the Jews (chapters 9–11), by accepting Jesus, believing unto righteousness and walking in the ways he prescribes (chapters 12–15). It may be that this letter is more chiasmic than this brief outline suggests. But at a minimum it is proper to see the letter in its two halves with weighted emphasis at the central transition between the two.

Hebrews Whoever the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews may have been, he was aware of basic chiasmic principles and employed them in a manner which is consistent with other New Testament epistolary. The purpose and theme of this letter is to expound and proclaim the supremacy of Christ in the spiritual and salvific world order. Its author utilizes chiasmus not only in numerous short passages in the letter, but also in its overall organization to place central emphasis upon this one main message of this writing.

Most indicative of its centrally organized structure is the express declaration at its center of the most important point of the epistle: „The main point of this letter (*kephalaion tois legomenois*) is that we have just such a high priest, who sits on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” (8:1–2) The use of the word *kephalaion* is particularly significant here. What stronger indication could the author have given that the main point of the letter is to be found *in nuce* -- not in the letter’s terse introduction or in its discursive conclusion -- but here at its very center. At this central point stands the „head,” the „capitol,” the „summation,” the „principal point” of the entire letter.

The balance of the letter revolves around this crucial declaration, as this outline shows:

- A Jesus is forever (1:8), so great a salvation we cannot neglect (2:3), who is a Son higher than the angels, whose house is more glorious than that of Moses (1:1–3:7)
- B The word preached unto the House of Israel did not profit them because they hardened their hearts and had no faith upon their day of temptation (3:7–4:13)
- C Christ’s priesthood is higher than that of Aaron or of the Levitical priests (4:14–7:28)
- D We have a high priest who officiates in the sanctuary built by God (8:1–2)
- C’ Christ’s covenant is the

eternal testament higher than the atonement administered in the temple by the Levites (8:3–10:35)
B' The word preached to some did profit them by faith unto becoming heirs of righteousness and
obtained good report by pleasing God (10:36–11:40) A' Jesus is forever (13:8), so great a witness we
cannot neglect (12:1), becoming sons (12:7–9), in Christ's house which is the heavenly Jerusalem (12:22–
28).

This general outline does not attempt to represent the numerous individual chiasmic lines, the scattering of hortatory sections throughout the epistle, the many instances of inclusio and other stylistic nuances, many of which are discussed by Buchanan and others.⁷ It does, however, illustrate the fundamental character of the composition of this epistle, especially in regard to the centrality of the assertion that Jesus is the Eternal High Priest. Further it shows the contrasts between sections B and B' (concerning the consequences of belief and unbelief) and between C and C' (concerning the Christian concepts of priesthood authority and priesthood functions). *Ephesians* Several commentators have observed that the Epistle to the Ephesians divides succinctly into two halves. Chapters 1–3 expound points of doctrine, especially concerning the quickening of the spiritually dead and the reconciliation of the Jews and the Gentiles. Chapters 4–6, on the other hand, contain exhortation especially concerning the life of a follower of God and not of the ways of the world. A plausible reconstruction of the organization of this letter shows, again, Paul's tendency to give special prominence to the central passages in each of these sections. Superimposed upon the bipartite structure of the epistle, moreover, there occurs a poignant central interlude which in its own way constitutes the main point of the entire letter. This epicenter of *Ephesians* (and of all of Paul's theology for that matter) is a seven-fold declaration of the unity of the Christian's faith. Its elements are arguably chiasmic in their own right:

One body One spirit One hope One Lord One faith One baptism One Father in all (4:4–6)

The letter as a whole is, then, arranged as follows:

A Introduction: All are gathered in Christ (1:1–14, focusing on verses 9–10) B Doctrine: (a) *Paul's prayer* for wisdom and revelation that the saints may know the hope, riches and power in Christ resurrected and established (1:15–23) (b) The quickening of the *Gentiles*, through faith by *grace*, from the the spiritually dead (2:1–10, focusing on 5–8) (c) *The reconciliation* of the Jews and the Gentiles (2:11–22, focusing on verses 14–16, „breaking down the partition” „abolishing enmity” „making peace”) (b') *Paul's ministry* to the *Gentiles* through gift of *grace* (3:1–12), focusing on verse 7) (a') *Paul's prayer* for love that the saints may comprehend the love grounded in Christ (3:13–21, focusing on verses 17–19)
C Interlude: One Lord (4:1–6) B' Exhortation: (a) *Unity in gifts from Christ* (4:7–16, focusing on 4:13) (b) *Walk* not as the *Gentiles* (4:17–32, focusing on 24–25) (b') *Walk* as followers of God (5:1–21, focusing on 8–10) (a') *Unity* as members of Christ's body (5:22–6:9, focusing on 5:30–32) A' Conclusion: Gather Christ around you by putting on the whole armor of God (6:10–24, emphasis on 6:16).

From this we may see that, although this structure is perhaps not far removed from the basic A–B–B–A form of inverted parallelism, the letter to the Ephesians is clearly divided into two sections, each of which begins and ends with statements concerning the power, love and unity which the saints enjoy in Christ (the a and a' sections in B and B'), and each of which centers on the problem of explaining and reconciling the role of Gentiles in the midst of early Jewish Christianity (the b, b' and c sections in B and B'). In addition, the entire letter is crowned at its center with the seven-fold statement of the unity which all saints receive in Christ (4:1–6).

Although this organization does not follow a rigidly chiasmic pattern, the structure of this letter is not inelegant, nor ineffective. The bipartite treatment of the Gentile question allows Paul to offer solutions to the same problem from both doctrinal and practical perspectives, without, however, losing sight of the main point upon which the entire solution rests, namely enhancing the sense of unity and homogeneity amidst the church. Without unduly extolling the systematic composition of this epistle, let it simply be said that the present analysis at least tends to show that the letter is not, as some have said, an „insipid production, tedious, and an unskillful compilation.”⁸

Colossians Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians in many ways is one of Paul’s most masterful statements of his faith. Written at a mature point in his ministry and in close proximity to his writing of Ephesians, this letter captures a solid portion of Paul’s deep relationship with his Lord and Savior.

That chiasmus pervades *Colossians* has previously been observed by Lund⁹ and hinted at even earlier by Dibelius.¹⁰ How this literary technique enhances the message of this important letter, however, remains to be further explored. Consider, in this light, the most salient chiasmic features of this writing.

Setting the tone for the recurring structures in the Epistle, its introduction manifests pronounced chiasmic characteristics. The following illustrates the basic form of the prologue (1:3–9):

A We give thanks, always *praying* for you (1:3) B Since we heard (1:4) C of your *faith* in Christ and *love* for all saints (*eis hagious*) D On account of the *hope* laid up *in heaven* (1:5) E Whereof you *heard* (*proakousate*) in the word of truth which was unto you F Which just as (*kathos kai*) in all the world (1:6) G It bears fruit G’ It has grown F’ Likewise (*kathos kai*) in you E’ From the day you *heard* (*akousate*) and knew D’ Of the *grace* of God *in truth* C’ Which you also learned from Epaphras, *faithful* minister of Christ who reports your *love* in spirit (*en pneumati*) (1:7–8) B’ For this cause, since we heard (1:9) A’ We do not cease to *pray* for you (1:9).

The purpose of this introduction is to reaffirm the fruitfulness and dynamic growth of the faith in Jesus Christ. Thus, at the prologue’s center stands a distinctive doublet, „it bears fruit and it has grown” (G and G’). The growth of the faith is evident „in all the world”, but more specifically „in you” at Colossae (F and F’). It begins as the saints are first inclined toward (*proakousate*) the word of truth (E), and it progresses as they hear (*akousate*) and know (E’), first through hope laid up in heaven (D), but then by grace realized here upon earth (D’). This process begins with a general faith and love, and develops through faithful servants who foster that love (C and C’). To begin and conclude, the introduction is then embraced on both extremes by the assurance of Paul’s constant prayer on behalf of these saints (A and B, B’ and A’).

Building upon, and in character with this introduction, the letter to the Colossians approaches the Christian’s relationship with Jesus from three distinct perspectives. A separate section of the letter is devoted to each approach.

The first such section (1:1–29) approaches Christ as he relates to God the Father. In this section, Jesus is approached in his role as the mediator and as the reconciliator who was sent by the Father and who has pleased the Father in all things. Through his commission from the Father, Jesus became the representative of the Father on earth and became his firstborn, entitled to inherit the fullness of the Father’s kingdom. Also from the Father, Jesus acquired the full powers of God as Creator. These relationships with the Father make Jesus a sufficient condition of human salvation. Through him, the way has been opened; salvation is possible:

Col 1:1–29 A We minister (1:1,7) and pray, giving thanks, as your *faith* grows (4–6) in the hope of the gospel you have *heard* (5–6), and we desire for you all *wisdom* and understanding (9) that you might walk *worthy of the Lord* being fruitful in all works, strengthened in all might unto all patience (11) B Thanks to God who has made us partakers of the inheritance and translated us into the kingdom of his Son through redemption by *blood* (1:12–14) C Who is the image of the invisible God, the *firstborn* of every creature (1:15) D For in him were all things *created* In heaven/in earth//visible/invisible Thrones/dominions/principalities/powers All things were *created* in him and for him (1:16) C' And he is the head of the body, the church, being the *firstborn* from the dead (1:18) B' For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell making peace and reconciliation through his *blood*, presenting us holy and un-reproveable in God's sight (1:19–22) A' If you continue in *faith* (23) having, hope in the gospel you have *heard* (23), as I Paul am a *minister* (25) preaching even the mystery hid from the ages, teaching every man in all *wisdom* (28), that we may present every man *perfect in Jesus* (28), striving with him mightily (29).

In the second section of the epistle (2:1–3:4), Paul approaches Jesus in his relationship to man. Here Paul describes how Jesus offers to man steadfastness, hidden knowledge, completeness, glory and power. Paul emphasizes now the necessity of Christ for salvation, explaining that this required condition can be spoiled by what Paul calls the rudiments of the world. Here Christ is the purifier of man, the one who offers circumcision without hands and washing unto life:

Col 2:1–3:4 A I suffer great conflict for you, as for those who have not *seen me* in the flesh (1:1,5), that all may be blessed in Christ, in whom are *hid* all treasures (3). I joy and behold your order and steadfastness of faith in Christ (4). B Walk in Christ, rooted and built up in him (6–7), for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead *bodily*, and ye are complete in him, the head of all *principality* and *power* (9–10). Let no man spoil you with the *rudiments* of the world (8). C In Christ you are circumcised without hands in putting off the body of sins (11) Buried with him in baptism and risen with him through faith in God who raised him from the dead (12). B' He quickened you, having forgiven you all trespasses (13) having spoiled *principalities* and *powers* (14). Let no man beguile you, for if you are dead with Christ from the *rudiments* of the world, what need do you have of the doctrines and ordinances of men? (20). For the *body* is Christ (17). A' Seek those things above in Christ, for your life is *hid* with Christ in God (3:3). *We shall appear* in glory when Christ our life appears (3:4).

The third and final section of the letter (3:5–4:18) presents Jesus as a model for the practical achievement of righteous living. This section abounds with exhortations, but it particularly stresses the admonition that the saints „do all in the name of the Lord . . . for ye serve the Lord.” Much is to be learned by the servant, the child, and the wife. As Jesus subjected himself to God's will and pleased God, so man is to learn subjugation to his stewards and all are in turn to serve the Lord:

Col 3:5–4:18 A Exhortation: mortify evil and put on the virtues of the elect of God (3:5–16) B Do all in the name of the Lord (17) Wives and husbands (18–19) Fathers and children (20–21) Servants and masters (22, 4:1) For ye serve the Lord (3:24) A' Exhortation: continue in prayer and walk in wisdom (4:2–6) Epistolary (7–18)

Compressed within these three terse sketches, Paul charts the fundamentals of his faith: first, the relationship between Jesus and God which makes salvation in Jesus a possibility; second, the relationship between Jesus and man which is necessary to make that salvation effective; and third, the response of man to Jesus which makes righteousness a reality. In each case, the central portions of each section bear special weight. Jesus' divine creative

powers (1:16) give him the ultimate powers to create in man a new spiritual existence. Jesus' purifying powers (2:11-12) lift man from the body of sin and death to life. The strength of Jesus' role as an exemplar of human conduct begins and ends with the injunction that all be done in Him (3:17).

To the extent shown above, the centrality of each of these crucial passages forms the basis of the chiasmic arrangement of the terms and concepts within each of these sections of this epistle. By appreciating the divisions and development of these thoughts within this significant letter, one may follow Paul's thought with added clarity. What would otherwise appear as pointless repetitions or reiterations, especially in 1:12-15 and 1:18-22, and 2:8 and 2:20, become framing passages leading up to or away from each central statement. The total effect is satisfying, both literarily and theologically.

Philemon One of Paul's briefest letters is to Philemon. What this letter lacks in size, it makes up, however, in precision. Why Paul would have thought to use chiasmus in a short, seemingly business-like letter is hard to say. Perhaps he saw some irony in the way Onesimus had had to leave in order to return and had had to become a bondsman in order to become a brother. In any event, this change and his return are woven intricately into the text of this letter which requests Philemon to take Onesimus back as a brother.

Thomas Boys detected a double nine-part inverted system in this brief epistle to Philemon.¹¹ Building upon his observations, the following outline demonstrates that this system, as Boys remarks, is indeed „a very remarkable specimen of introverted parallelism.”¹² The letter is surely centrally focused and chiasmically balanced with purpose and precision:

A Epistolary (1-3)

B Paul's prayers for Philemon (4)

C Philemon's love, faith and hospitality (5-7)

D Paul could use his authority (8) E But prefers to make supplications (9-10) F Onesimus a convert of Paul's (10)

G Paul has made Onesimus profitable (11)

H Receive Onesimus as Paul's own bowels (12)

I Paul retained Onesimus as Paul's minister in the bonds of the Gospel (13) J Without Philemon's willing consent Paul will not require Philemon to take Onesimus back (14)

J' Perhaps the reason Onesimus left was so that Philemon could take Onesimus back forever (15)

I' Not as a servant but as a brother in the Lord (16) H' Receive Onesimus as Paul's own self (17)

G' Paul will repay any wrong Onesimus has done (18-19)

F' Philemon indebted as a convert to Paul (19) E' Paul makes supplication to Philemon (20)

D' Although he could ask for obedience (21)

C' Paul requests hospitality of Philemon (22)

B' Philemon's prayers for Paul (22) A' Epistolary (23-25)

The structure of this letter requires very little explanation. Each element is equally balanced in both halves of the letter. Towards the center, Paul reminds Philemon that he is like Onesimus inasmuch as both are indebted to Paul for their conversions (F and F'). This fact must weigh heavily upon Philemon, who was apparently apprehensive about Onesimus' return. Paul, moreover, will vouch for Onesimus' profitability now (G) to the extent of repaying any wrong he may have done (G'). At the center of the letter, Paul deals directly with the problem at hand: Only here does the letter clearly contain enough information for the reader to discover what the letter is about, namely Onesimus' return. Paul approaches the problem in two ways: first, ecclesiastically, he places the burden upon Philemon to willingly consent to Paul's request (J), and second, philosophically, he invites Philemon to consider the possibility that the prior problems were not all bad, since they led in the final analysis to a beneficial result (J'). These two central comments bind together the balance of the letter.

Philippians Written at approximately the same time as Philemon, this letter contains no overall chiasmic structure, sharply contrasting with the tidy arrangement of the brief letter to Philemon. Shorter chiasmic passages, of course, may be observed in *Philippians*, some of which have been discussed by Lund,¹³ but these structures are for the most part relatively insignificant and unremarkable.

1 Timothy Paul's first epistle to his protégé, Timothy, is clearly chiasmic, as if to inculcate the form itself alongside of the practical advice and counsel which this letter communicates. At its center stands Paul's most intimate admonitions and personal declarations to Timothy (3:14-4:16), headed by an elegant Christological hymn (3:16). Before and after this central panel, Paul advises Timothy regarding the proper administration of certain ecclesiastical affairs (2:1-3:13; 5:1-6:2), both sections being practically identical in length and format. The letter is finally framed by two shorter four-part passages (1:1-20; 6:3-21), both addressed to the problem of overcoming sin and error in Christian doctrine, a theme which receives special emphasis again at the center (4:1ff). The organization of the letter may thus be displayed as follows:

I. Introduction (20 verses) A Watch that no other doctrine is taught (1:1-7) (a) shun fables (b) be pure in heart, of *good conscience*, faithful (a) shun vain jangle. B The Law can help overcome basic sins (8-11) (a) use the law lawfully (b) to overcome *many evils* (a) according to this glorious gospel. B' Christ ultimately overcomes sins (12-17) (a) I obtained mercy (b) from Christ, though the *worst of sinners* (a) I obtained mercy A' Hold the faith against false preachers (18-20) (a) *War well* against them (b) hold the faith in *good conscience* (a) against Hymanaeus and Alexander. II. Ecclesiastical Affairs (28 verses) C Offer prayers for political rulers (2:1-8) D Public silence of women in the Church (9-15) E-1 The calling of a Bishop (3:1-7) E-2 The calling of a Deacon (8-13) III. Personal Declarations (19 verses) (a) The Christological hymn (3:14-16) (b) The prophecy of false doctrine (4:1-5) (b) The charge to minister (6-11) (a) Timothy's ordination affirmed (12-16) II. Ecclesiastical Affairs Continued (27 verses) D-1 Treatment of Old Widows in the Church (5:1-10) D-2 Treatment of Young Widows in the Church (11-16) E' Public visibility of the Elders (17-25) C' Obedience to masters (6:1-2a) I. Conclusion (19 verses) A Teach these things for others are perversions (6:2b-5) (a) teach and exhort; (b) the *many evils* of disputations; (a) withdraw. B Contentment, not money, is gain (6-10) (a) godliness with contentment is gain (b) we can carry nothing out of this world (a) let us be content. (a) the rich fall into a snare (b) love of money is the root of all evil (a) the rich are pierced through with sorrows. A' Follow these things which are righteous (11-16) (a) *fight well* for eternal life (b) keep the commandment (a) for the only King who hath immortality B' Convert the rich to be rich in good works (17-21)

(a) trust not in uncertain riches but God (b) be rich in good works (a) keep that which is committed to thy trust.

The precision of this chiasmic system deserves some elaboration. Binding chapters 1 and 6 together, there is not only their equivalent use of a four-part organization in which each part is basically an a-b-a construct, but also their obvious repetition of important parallel expressions. For example, there is the doxology of the immortal, invisible God in 1:17, and its virtually identical counterpart in 6:16. There is a reference to pestering questions in 1:4, reiterated in 6:4; the charge to wage a good war (*kala strateia*) in 1:18, and the charge to fight a good fight (*kalon agona*) in 6:12; the purpose of the commandment to have charity and a pure heart is defined in 1:5, and the instruction to obey „the commandment” is given in 6:14; many sins are enumerated in 1:9–10, many evils resulting from riches are enumerated in 6:4–5; Paul gives himself as the chief sinner in 1:15, and identifies the love of money as the root of all evil in 6:10; Christ comes into the world to save sinners in 1:15, while we bring nothing into and take nothing out of the world in 6:7. These and other indications show that the opening and closing chapters of this epistle must be read hand in hand.

In both of these chapters, the A and A' sections deal with combatting the serious threat presented to the Church by false preaching. The members of the opposition, alluded to in 1:1–7 and again in 1:18, are finally identified by name in 1:20. The problems which these false preachers had caused are described in 6:3–5, and the antidote prescribed throughout is for Timothy to preach the truth in purity, good conscience, faithfulness and in keeping with the commandment of love (1:5, 19; 6:14). In the B and B' sections, Paul expounds on overcoming sin, first by proper use of the law (1:8–11), then by obtaining mercy of Christ (1:12–17), and finally by becoming rich in good works, realizing that it is futile to lay up one's treasures on earth (6:6–10, 18–19).

Chapters 2 and 5 are devoted to matters of ecclesiastical administration. They are evenly balanced with corresponding focus on family life in respect to both the selection of male leadership in the Church and to the solution of social problems arising because of single women in the Church. Paul's advice that women remain silent in Church (2:9–15) is incomplete without his corresponding advice that double honor (as well as public rebuke) be given to the men. In respect to both men and women, there is an express concern that neither assume authority improperly (2:12; 5:22).

The central material, finally, epitomizes the entire letter. It is here that Paul declares his deepest convictions about Christ, reveals his most pressing concerns, charges Timothy with his most critical obligations, and declares his deepest confidence in Timothy's ability to succeed. The chiasmic pattern here is evident by the twice mentioned reference to Paul's coming to Timothy (3:14, 4:13), and further by two parallel five-fold descriptions, first of God's appearance „in the flesh, in the spirit, in the nations, in the world, and in glory” and second of Timothy's leadership „in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, and in purity” (3:15, 4:12). The crux of the entire letter is, therefore, the sharp contrast which Paul draws at the center between false teachers who work destruction (4:1–5) and the good minister who promotes the promise of life, both in respect to the present existence and future life (4:6–11). Around this contrast, and with it constantly in mind, this entire epistle concertedly revolves.

Titus Paul's letter to Titus is not chiasmic. Most of this letter is directly related to material contained in 1 Timothy, and it can be assumed that the letter to Titus was abstracted from the more complete treatment of its topics given in 1 Timothy. If Titus had been written first, several statements which it contains probably would not have been made. For example, Titus 2:15, „Let no man despise thee,” appears to be a reiteration of the statement made quite fittingly and spontaneously to Timothy, „Let no man despise thy youth.” 1 Tim. 4:12. Therefore, it is indicative of

Paul's conscious implementation of chiasmus that he undoes the chiasmic structure of 1 Timothy as he condenses that letter for Titus' purposes in organizing the Church in Crete.

Titus contains the following main sections:

A The calling of a bishop (1:5–9, cf. 1 Tim. 3:1–7) B The need to rebuke falsehood taught for gain (1:10–16, cf. 1 Tim. 1:1–20, 6:2–21) C Teachings for old men, old women, young women and young men in the church (2:1–6, cf. 1 Tim. 2:9–15, 5:1–25) D Teachings to servants (2:9–14, cf. 1 Tim. 6:1–2) E Teachings to the church (3:1–11).

Of these sections, all but the last, which is more general in character than the others, have direct antecedents in 1 Timothy. Nevertheless, the divisions in 1 Timothy are conflated and simplified in Titus. Where Paul discusses the need to combat false teachers who preach for money twice in 1 Timothy, this problem is mentioned only on one occasion in Titus. Where Paul's instructions concerning men and women in the church are divided into two sections, one before and one after the central passage, in 1 Timothy, these matters are all handled together in Titus.

The absence of chiasmus in Titus is not inconsistent with the assumption that Paul utilized chiasmus as a higher form of literary style on other occasions. This letter to Titus is straightforward and pragmatic. Embellishing it with literary constructs of any sort might have detracted from its functionality, especially if Titus were less familiar with Paul, with his teachings, or with his approach to ecclesiastical writing than was a person like Timothy who knew Paul intimately.

2 Timothy

Second Timothy is a brief but penetrating letter which divides into four sections. The first and the last sections both contain personal statements about Paul's desire to see Timothy, about Timothy's ordination and ministry, and concerning Paul's struggle to spread the gospel and his gratitude toward those who have helped the cause. The central two sections contrast the future life in Christ with the future life on earth. The A–B–B–A pattern of the letter is further augmented by the fact that several of these sections are centrally weighted, just as so many sections of Paul's other letters have been chiasmically structured. The suggested organization of 2 Timothy is, therefore, as follows:

A Personal Remarks (1:1–18) (a) The promise of life (1:1) (b) Desire to see Timothy (2–4) (c) The faithfulness of Lois and Eunice (5) (d) Timothy's ordination by Paul (6–7) (e) Paul's afflictions, not ashamed (8) (f) Salvation and light in Christ Jesus (9–10) (e) Paul's sufferings, not ashamed (11–12) (d) Timothy's instruction by Paul (13–14) (c) The unfaithfulness of Phygelus and Hermogenes (15) (b) The visit from Onesiphorus (16–17) (a) The promise of life (18) B Future Life in Christ (2:1–21) (a) The good soldier (2:1–6) (b) Predictions of future blessings: If we be dead with him, we shall live with him, if we suffer with him we shall reign with him (7–14) (a) The good workman who is prepared for every good work (15–21) B' Future Life on Earth (2:22–3:17) (a) Instructions to the servant of the Lord (2:22–26) (b) Predictions of human evil (3:1–9) (a) Instructions to Timothy unto all good works (10–17) A' Personal Remarks (a) The Lord shall judge at his appearing (4:1, cf. 1:18) (d) Timothy's ministry (2) (c) Men will turn away (3–4, cf. 1:15) (e) Endure afflictions (5, cf. 1:2) (d) Make proof of thy ministry (5) (e) Paul's sufferings (7, cf. 1:11–12) (f) The crown of righteousness at his appearing (8, cf. 1:9–10) (b) Desire to see Timothy (9, cf. 1:2–4) (c) Those faithful and unfaithful (10–20, cf. 1:5, 15–17) (a) The promise of life (18) (b) Desire to see Timothy (21)

The structure of this letter is similar to that of many of Paul's earlier letters. It contains a carefully organized introduction. Its conclusion echoes all of the elements mentioned initially in the introduction to the letter, but it adheres less to formal structure at this point. The body of the letter is evenly balanced, first in juxtaposing one's future in Christ against one's future in the world, and second by interspersing exhortations to Timothy as a good soldier, husbandman, servant and student for the Lord

Since this is one of Paul's last letters, it is evident that Paul sustained his use of chiasmus throughout his apostolic career. Paul skillfully employs chiasmus here, as elsewhere, to give focus and organization to his writings. It is, therefore, no accident that Paul, as he faced his final hours of ministry and as his mind turned toward what might come next, saw to it that his final letter to Timothy centrally reflects his thoughts for the future. The Christian's calling unto life and immortality draws central attention in the preface (1:8-10), and the Christian's reward of a crown of righteousness remains central to the conclusion (4:8). The predictions of future life in Christ (2:7-14) and of future evil on earth (3:1-9) stand at the middle of the letter's two central passages. Older battles are now mere memories for Paul. Broader contrasts are now to be dealt with. As these sections are well balanced and artfully drafted, they should be read in conjunction, one with the other. Paul's prediction of evil forces gaining power in the world, particularly, cannot be viewed in isolation from the vivid hope which Paul maintains for overcoming that evil through Christ. Likewise, each part of this letter may be viewed in harmony with the overall structure of this writing as a whole. In this regard, this composition is certainly representative of and worthy of the best of the Apostle himself.

Jude and 2 Peter

Two closely related General Epistles, which contain a certain degree of chiasmus, are Jude and 2 Peter. Jude appears to be the earlier of the two for several reasons, especially because it is more likely that Jude was used to form the nucleus of 2 Peter than that 2 Peter was condensed to become Jude.

Jude was written for one major purpose: to issue a short but solemn assurance to the faithful that the Lord will destroy the wicked. This point is stated particularly forcefully at the center of the letter in a three-part woe (v. 11) and a four-part denunciation (vv. 12-13) of those who deny or abuse the faith. On either side of this central material stand two sets of historical sayings about the wicked (vv. 5-10, 14-19), and two groups of exhortations or encouragements given to the faithful to inspire them to remain stalwart in their faith (vv. 2-3, 20-23). This background provides the basic chiastic framework of this letter:

A Salutation (v. 1) B Exhortations: Mercy, peace, love, salvation, faith (2-3) C Sayings regarding the destruction of the wicked (4-10) Who are the wicked (4) Unfaithful Israelites (5) Fallen Angels (6) Sodom and Gomorrah (7-8) Michael (9-10) D Woe unto them! Cain, Balaam, Core (11) Spots in your love feasts (12) Rainless clouds, fruitless trees, waves, roaming stars (12-13) C' Saying regarding the destruction of the wicked (14-19) Enoch (14-15) Who are the wicked (16) Words of Jesus (17-19) B' Exhortations: Faith, love, mercy, salvation (20-23) A' Benediction (24-25)

The symmetry here is not perfect in some minor respects, but perhaps this too was intended. Part B is noticeably shorter than B', but Part C is longer than C', possibly, compensating for the difference while at the same time leaving the second half of this letter free to reflect more of the writer's positive, encouraging thoughts, and less of his harsh prophecies concerning the unrighteous. The centerpiece, D, is not itself rigorously structured, but it clearly stands as an independent unit at the middle of this letter. Here, Jude expresses his own thoughts concerning the Lord's judgment of the wicked, whereas in the C parts Jude reiterates the thoughts of others

concerning God's punishment of evil. At the very center of section D stands the one statement in the letter regarding the insidious impact which ungodly men have upon the Church: „These are spots in your feast of charity, when they feast with you feeding themselves without fear.” The import of this statement, and equally of the entire letter, is that the Church must keep itself unspotted from such ungodliness. Hence the opening exhortation, „ye should earnestly contend for the faith,” and the closing admonition „hate even the garment spotted by the flesh,” both integrate smoothly into the full composition of this letter.

It is apparent that 2 Peter 2:1–17, 3:3 are related to Jude 4–13, 18. Less apparent is the manner in which the Jude material is utilized in 2 Peter. Second Peter does two things with the main passages in Jude: First, it removes the emphasis which Jude places on the central woes and denunciation in verse 11, which Jude surrounds with sayings and historical anecdotes regarding the destruction of the wicked; and second, it adds new material both before and after this central core of earlier writing by adding chapters 1 and 3 to the structure. In regard to the removal of central emphasis, 2 Peter 2 contains no clear candidate which deserves to receive particular attention. The chapter is not systematic. No concern for design is evident in this epistle's unrestrained denunciation of those who walk after the flesh in lust and who reject lordship.

Despite the lack of unity within chapter 2, the entire epistle acquires an overall A–B–A pattern (perhaps by accident) as new material is added before and after chapter 2.¹⁴ Both chapter 1 and chapter 3 speak of the Second Coming of Jesus. Chapter 1 deals with the saints' entrance into the everlasting kingdom (1:11), of putting off the tabernacle of flesh (1:14), and of the day dawn and day star arising in men's hearts (1:19); Chapter 3 of the day of the Lord (3:10–12), and of the new heaven and new earth (3:13). The simple structure of the letter is therefore:

A Sure promises regarding Christ's Second Coming (ch. 1) B Destruction of the wicked (ch. 2) A' Sure promises regarding Christ's Second Coming (ch. 3)

This arrangement is not particularly elegant, and indeed it can be accounted for in terms of the accretion of new material to the basic text of Jude without requiring any reference at all to literary form. Nevertheless, even this small amount of formal content may reflect a limited concern for literary structure, since the writer of 2 Peter could easily have combined the two A sections into one rather than dividing them into two and surrounding the (more authoritative?) material from Jude with them, had he been totally unconcerned with form.

1 Peter, 1 John, 2 John and 3 John The remaining epistles of the New Testament to be discussed are 1 Peter and the Epistles of John. Chiasmus has not been detected in the general structure of any of these letters to any significant degree, which places these letters along with the few other nonchiastic epistles of the New Testament in a clear minority.

First Peter is eclectic in both approach and content. The letter covers a variety of unrelated subjects. It even appears to end twice, once in 4:11 and then again in 5:14. Although it contains many early Christian notions, this letter does not feature any kind of organizational coherence.

The Johannine epistles, likewise, follow no systematic structure. They develop one theme: that the righteous must embrace and love the light and refuse to follow the ways of the wicked one. This theme touches practically every verse in these three letters, and its recurrent phrases and concepts surface again and again throughout them. Only by arbitrarily singling out certain words within this thematic development can one attempt to identify a chiastic drift or any other organizational pattern in the material presented in 1 John. There is, for example, a discussion of the Antichrist in chapters 2 and 4, and chapter 3 might be taken as a central comparison between the

fate of the anointed righteous and the doom of the hopelessly wicked. But again, the words and phrases used throughout this letter are homogenous and interrelated, making it all but impossible to speak of an organizational substructure here. The final two Johannine epistles are brief notes whose style is as simple as the letters are short.

Perhaps John, who saw the gospel message in terms of one clearly delineated contrast between light and dark, between good and evil, and that in turn in terms of obedience or non-obedience to the commandment that we love one another, had little use for chiasmus for the following reason: Chiasmus presupposes intensification, but all of John's epistles are uniformly intense. Chiasmus could add little to John's already fully polarized view of the gospel.

THE GOSPELS

Mark The Gospel of Mark has been examined for chiastic content on a number of occasions,¹⁵ and in most detail by David J. Clark.¹⁶ None of these commentators has insisted that this gospel, is, as a whole, chiastic, yet several have argued eloquently in favor of „tight and well-worked out concentric or chiastic structures”¹⁷ within certain sections of this writing. In regard to these subsections, it may be that the latter have overstated their case in certain respects, and in regard to the gospel as a whole, it may also be that the book is not entirely without internal organization.

Those who find chiasmus within the various subsections of the Gospel of Mark must recognize that they do so by making divisions of convenience rather than substance. The content of this gospel is heterogenous. Jesus' miracles and teachings are interspersed throughout this writing in such a way that many possible configurations can be drawn up connecting or juxtaposing any one section of the gospel with many others. Therefore, it is not surprising that several inverted parallel structures have been suggested in the texts of Mark, sometimes even being said to overlap or to be superimposed upon one another. For example, Clark outlines one chiasm in Mark 1:16–2:17 (framed by the calling of four fisherman in 1:16–20 and by the calling of Levi in 2:13–17, centering upon Jesus praying and teaching in 1:35–39), but he also harmonizes this with Dewey's different arrangement in Mark 2:1–3:6.

Clark goes on to divide Mark into eight sections.¹⁸ His sections vary widely in both length and complexity, making it difficult to balance or compare them. Six of his sections are drawn up around certain conspicuous doublets (i.e. the feeding of the 5000 is said to parallel the feeding of the 4000 in an inverted system centering on Jesus' teaching regarding tradition and purity in 7:1–23; and the prediction of Peter's denial is said to parallel his actual denial in a chiasm focusing on Jesus' arrest in 14:43–52). But Clark himself recognizes that beyond these few obvious pairs, the other relationships called for in his arrangements in Mark are not very obvious, making the points of demarcation between any one section and the next uncomfortably obscure.

Of all the sections in Mark which may be chiastically significant, the most informative is, not surprisingly, at the center of the book. The section from 8:11–10:52 is clearly bounded at its end by Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. It is likewise defined at its beginning by the thematic quote from Jeremiah, „Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not?” (Mk 8:18).

In between is found the following material:

- A The healing of the blind man at Bethsaida (8:22–26)
- B Peter's declaration about Jesus (27–30)
- C Jesus foretells his death and resurrection I (31–9:1)
- D The Transfiguration (9:2–13)
- E Healing a boy (14–29)
- F Jesus foretells his death and resurrection II (30–32)
- Central Instructions (33–10:12)

E' Blessing children (13–16) D' Leaving all to enter the Kingdom (17–31) C' Jesus foretells his death and resurrection III (32–34) B' The request of James and John (35–45) A' The healing of blind Bartimaeus (46–52).

In Mark 8:22–10:52, the Apostles learn, albeit slowly, the major practical lesson of Christianity: that he who is greatest shall be the servant of all. The lesson is taught in many ways, from Peter's failure to understand that whosoever will save his life must lose it (8:35) to James and John's fully cognizant request that they be allowed to drink the same cup as Jesus (10:39, 44). The same theme is dominant in Jesus' predictions of his own suffering and also in the central instructions regarding true greatness, service in the Kingdom, and the need to avoid offending even the least.

Although the parallelisms are not always very strong here (particularly in D and D'), there is considerable unity of thought and form in this section of Mark, which is tied together by the healings of the blind man at Bethsaida and of blind Bartimaeus, both representing the awakening of understanding which comes to the Apostles in this central passage in Mark. All this suggests that the purpose of the Gospel of Mark is not just to tell the story of Jesus as such. It tells the story of how Jesus and God were understood by those who were willing to pay the price necessary to see and to hear what had to be said. Mark seems to indicate that the number of people who were willing to do so was small. When Jesus was finally confident that at least the Twelve had learned and seen what was to transpire, he was then able to commence with his final tasks in Jerusalem and finally on Calvary.

Luke The Gospel of Luke, rather certainly, was written as an expansion with occasional modification of the Gospel of Mark. Luke follows Mark closely in six sections of his gospel, and he introduces seven new sections of his own composition.¹⁹ The three largest sections added by Luke in his expansion of Mark are found at the beginning, the middle and at the end of his book, with the largest being the central section (9:51–18:14). This in itself suggests a modest effort on Luke's part to retain a certain degree of balance in his utilization of the Marcan material, but not much more can be said for the symmetrical structure in the gospel of Luke as a whole.²⁰

Perhaps there is some significance to the fact that the long Lucan insertion at the center falls between Mark 9:41 (Luke 9:49) and Mark 10:13 (Luke 18:15). These verses in Mark stand as close to its center structurally as any, emphasizing Jesus' instructions to the Apostles regarding the costs of true discipleship. In Luke, on the other hand, its long central section devotes primary attention to the *nature* of true religious life rather than to the *cost* involved in achieving it. It is in this long central section, of course, that Luke presents the many memorable parables of Jesus, many of which are contained only in Luke. These parables are not given to the Apostles alone. Unlike Mark, who shows Jesus preaching to an ever narrower group of devoted disciples until finally they are prepared for the end, Luke shows Jesus teaching and proselyting among an expanding universe of believers. And just as the Marcan emphasis upon the Apostles' securing understanding is largely eclipsed in Luke, so events like the transfiguration, which occupy a prominent position in Mark, are relegated to a lesser position by Luke, who for example treats the transfiguration in more mystical and dreamlike terms than does Mark.

Therefore, in several senses, Luke has opened up the gospel of Mark. Luke's major expansion of the Gospel of Mark comes as if Luke had simply wedged Mark open at its center and enlarged its central structures. This in turn opens the gospel story itself onto a broader subject, showing Jesus and his message in a more public light than in Mark.

Matthew

Chiasmus in Matthew, especially in the Matthean Sermon on the Mount, has been studied by individuals such as Paul Gaechter, Nils Lund, John Forbes, and others. The results of their research has usually been informative, although not entirely conclusive.

Of all the sermons or discourses of Jesus recorded in Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount is by far the most structured. From the beatitudes to the golden rule, the Sermon is filled with poetically parallel statements of the highest literary quality. The fact that certain repetitions spring to mind readily as one reflects upon the Sermon as a whole (notably „the law and the prophets” being mentioned twice, once in Mt. 5:17–18 and again in 7:12) invites further investigation into the possible existence of chiastic unities and correspondences within the Sermon on the Mount. With slight modifications, this is the organization which Lund has suggested:

X Introduction: Multitudes, mountain, teaching (4:25–5:2) Y Observations on the Nature and Function of the Church (5:2–19) (a) The Beatitudes: qualities of members of the Church (5:3–9) (b) The True Prophets: their persecution and reward (5:10–12) (c) Unfaithful and faithful Disciples: salt & light (5:13–16) (d) Obedience and Disobedience: *break* or *do* (5:19) Z The Higher Quality of Christian Righteousness: It is Higher than that of Jew or Gentile (5:17–18, 20–47). „The Law and the Prophets are fulfilled” (5:17–18) (m) Higher than that of Scribe or Pharisee (5:20) (n) New definition of killing -- 3 sections (5:21–26) (o) New definition of adultery -- 3 examples (5:27–31) (p) New rule about oaths -- 4 examples (5:33–37) (o) New rule about retaliation -- 3 examples (5:38–42) (n) New rule concerning love of neighbors -- 3 examples (5:43–45) (m) Higher than that of publicans and gentiles (5:46–47). Z' The Higher Quality of Christian Righteousness: It is Perfection according to the Golden Rule (5:48–7:12) (q) The highest possible ideal: perfection (5:48) (r) New performance of religious duties (6:1–18) Alms; Prayer; Fasting. (s) New Attitudes in Daily Duties (6:19–7:6) (r) New regard toward religious duties in prayer (7:7–11) Delayed answers Invitation; Disappointing answers. (q) The Highest ideal realized: The Golden Rule (7:12) „For this is the Law and the Prophets” (7:12). Y' Observations on the Nature and Function of the Church (7:13–27) (a) Two Ways: Those inside and outside the Church (7:13–14) (b) The False Prophets: their test and punishment (7:15–20) (c) Unfaithful and Faithful Disciples: the will of God (7:21–23) (d) Obedience and Disobedience: *do* them or *do* them *not* (7:24–27) X' Conclusion: Teaching, mountain, multitudes (7:28–8:1).²¹

This arrangement has much to commend itself. The correlations between sections Y and Y' are close, both in terms of content and of structure. These two sections go hand in hand in expounding the overt role of the Christian's life within the Church. In Z and Z', on the other hand, the Sermon explains the character of the Christian's inward life, both as it progresses beyond the ideals espoused by the Jews and the Gentiles, and secondly as it advances toward the ultimate objective of becoming like God by doing unto others as if they were oneself. Lund's analysis, however, lacks convincing data where it is needed most, namely at the middle of his proposed chiastic units. Alternate arrangements are therefore also possible. In particular, it may be that the Sermon elaborates each of the eight beatitudes, taking them one by one in the reverse order from that in which they are initially introduced:

Introduction: 8 Beatitudes (5:1–10)

(8) Persecuted (a) Reward in Heaven (11–12) (b) Salt of the Earth (13) (c) Light of the World (14–16)

Law and the Prophets fulfilled (17–19)

(7) Peacemakers (a) No anger, rudeness, insult (21-22) (b) Be reconciled with brother (23-24) (c) Settle with enemy (25-26)

(6) Pure in Heart (a) No lust (heart/eyes/hands) (27-30) (b) No remarriage (31-32) (c) No oaths necessary (33-37)

(5) Merciful (a) No eye for eye (38-42) (b) No hate (43-48, cf. Luke 6:36) (c) No parade in mercy (6:1-4)

(4) Hunger for (a) No parade in prayer (5-8) Righteousness (b) How to seek in prayer (9-15)
(c) No parade in fasting (16-18)

(3) Meek to Inherit (a) Treasures in Heaven (19-21) the Earth (b) The single eye (22-24)
(c) No anxiety about daily needs (25-34)

(2) Mourners (a) Obtaining judgment as we judge (7:1-2) (b) Recognizing our own faults (3-5)
(c) Avoid the unrepentant (6)

(1) Poor in Spirit Ask, seek, knock

Law and the Prophets (7:12)

Peroration: The either/or (7:13-27) (a) Two gates and ways (b) Two trees and fruits (c) Two builders and fates

This scheme too, although not without certain difficulties (for instance, it divides 6:1-8 between the fifth and fourth beatitudes, whereas those verses are considered inseparable under many other criteria), has many intriguing aspects to stimulate further thought about the meaning of the beatitudes. If this analysis is accepted, then the meaning of purity in heart, for example, is immediately linked to sexual and verbal integrity; the meaning of hungering and thirsting after righteousness is found in fasting and prayer; the concept of meekness does not entail weakness but simply relying upon God to provide all needs and rewards; and the meaning of mourning is connected with the recognition of one's own sins and susceptibility to the judgement of God. The relationship between 5:48 and the beatitude of mercy is further reinforced by Luke's rendering of the same verse: „Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.“ The consistent use of three-part subgroups also unifies this arrangement into a tidy system. Whether one prefers this analysis of the Sermon, or the former, it may in any event be concluded that the Sermon on the Mount demonstrates certain features of repetitive style which deserve close scrutiny.

As for the Gospel of Matthew in overview, the most that has been said appears in Paul Gaechter's *Die literarische Kunst im Matthäus-Evangelium*.²² Beside discussing the artistic positioning of words and phrases in various passages throughout this gospel, Gaechter asserts that Matthew observes a seven part compositional pattern based upon the occurrence of Jesus' major sermons, as follows:

Part I. No speeches (chapter 1-4) Part II. Speech to the People (5-7) Part III. Speech to the Disciples (10)
Part. IV. The Parable Sermon (13) Part V. Speech to the Disciples (18) Part VI, Speech to the People (24-25) Part. VII. No Speeches (26-28).²³

Transitional material between these major parts also fits into this pattern on several occasions, as Jesus' testimony of John the Baptist in chapter 11 is answered by the account of John's beheading in chapter 14. The balance of the gospel is said to be held together by a continuous flow of narrative including accounts of Jesus' miracles and conversations with friends and enemies. At the center, the Parable Sermon contains seven parables, mostly dealing with the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. This seven part center perhaps reflects the seven part structure of the gospel as a whole.

If Gaechter's observations are given weight, it follows that Matthew is to be distinguished from both Luke and Mark. Speeches to the people and to the disciples receive equal attention in Matthew's perspective. Both are balanced around the center: neither comes at the center. Unlike Mark, Matthew does not make the conversion of the disciples the central preparatory event in the deliverance of the gospel message, for Matthew has Jesus return to the very end to preach to the people. Yet unlike Luke, Matthew does not transfer central importance to Jesus's preaching among the people at large either. By centering on the Parable Sermon, Matthew achieves a broad and compelling approach to his proclamation of the coming of the kingdom, as his gospel states to all: „Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

A Note on the Parables Several of the parables contained in the New Testament are written in a chiastic manner similar to that utilized in other Hebrew narratives.²⁴ The parables often are built upon a pattern of action which rises to a central crisis and falls to a resolution of the conflict. The respective elements in these parables are first introduced in one order and then their implications and consequences are developed in the opposite order. The impact, as is usually the case in any good chiastic style, creates a rich sense of completeness and totality within the parable as a literary unit.

In Matthew 13:24–30, the parable of the wheat and the tares provides a good example:

A A man sowed good seed in his field (24) B The enemy comes and sows tares (25) C *Crisis*: Bad fruit is discovered among the good and the servants doubt the master (26–27) B' The enemy is exposed and the tares left to grow (28–29) A' The good seed is ultimately harvested safely (30).

The turning point of this parable is not the master's decision to allow the wheat and the tares to grow side by side until the day of judgment. The central crisis of the parable is the servants' doubting of their master: „Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field?” From this point of conflict develops the solution, first by exposing the source of the tares and second by assuring the servants that a good harvest will be reaped in due time.

Matthew 25:1–13, the parable of the ten bridesmaids, is also an illustrative example of this style of narrative within the New Testament:

A Ten bridesmaids went forth to meet the bridegroom (1) B Five were foolish and took no oil and five were wise (2–4) C They all slumber and sleep (5) D *Crisis*: At midnight there is a cry: „The bridegroom cometh.” (6) C' They all arise and trim their lamps (7) B' Five ask for oil and the wise five send them to buy (8–9) A' The bridegroom comes forth and receives only those who were ready (10–12) Epilogue: Ye know neither the hour nor the day wherein the Son of Man cometh.

The crisis in this parable is clearly the cry at midnight, „He comes; go out and meet him!” The second half of the parable is a foregone conclusion once the first half has been laid out.

In Luke 14:16–24 a similar construction occurs in the parable of the great supper:

A Many are bidden to a great supper (16) B „Come, all things are ready” (17) C Antagonism: excuses are given for not coming (18–20) D *Crisis*: The master is angry (21) C’ Antagonism resolved: others invited (21) B’ „Yet there is room, let the house be filled” (22–23) A’ None of those bidden shall come to the supper (24)

Around the central crisis of the master’s anger stand several direct contrasts: The sorry excuses of those who had been invited oppose the sorry state of those who will be invited in their stead; the announcement of readiness requires the statement of fulfillment: and the invitation to many results finally with their prohibition. But it is the master’s anger which holds this narrative together, making it both coherent and meaningful.

Finally, in Luke 15:11–32, appears the great parable of the two sons. The moral of this parable, like the others, is particularly visible in light of its structure:

A One son takes his inheritance; conversation between Father and son (11–12) B One son goes out; his conduct (13–16) C The well-being of the Father’s servants recalled; „I perish” (*apollumai*) (17) D I will say „I have sinned” (18–19) E At the point of *crisis*, the Father runs to meet his son and is compassionate (20) D’ The son says „I have sinned” (21) C’ The Father instructs the servants to make well; the lost (*apolos*) is found (22–24) B’ One son refuses to go in: his conduct (25–30) A’ One son promised his inheritance: conversation between Father and son (31–32).

This parable, popularly known as the parable of the prodigal son, is not a story about one son, but about two. Both sons are equally important to the moral of this story, and one overlooks the impact of this parable by concentrating on the individual role or conduct of either son by himself. The central purpose of this parable is to illustrate the compassion of the Father, and he is equally compassionate to both sons. Each son occupies a position of equivalent weight in the structure of this narrative, and both sons commit their own sins: the one by squandering and the other by not forgiving. Yet the Father embraces them both: to the one he gives all, down to the fatted calf, and to the other he promises all. The point is not that there is any difference in the treatment given by the Father to either son. His compassion, standing at the center of this parable, unmistakably binds together this story of the Father’s love and understanding. When he says at the end, „All that I have is thine,” we must not forget that *this* is not the conclusion or focus of the story by itself, for in fact all that the Father has is *both* of theirs.

Not all of Jesus’ parables are chiasmic, but many are. Where chiasmus is present, it is evidently not accidental. It unifies and intensifies the spiritual crises which stand so frequently at the turning point of the parables. It is fundamental to the beauty and power of these deeply motivating masterpieces of religious instruction. Without cognizance of the structure of these parables, it would not seem that they can be fully understood or appreciated.

John It is recognized that the Gospel of John divides into four basic sections: The Prologue (1:1–18), the Book of Signs (1:19–12:50), the Book of Glory (13:1–20:31), and the Epilogue (21:1–25).²⁵ These four sections may be said to form an A–B–B–A pattern, whose parts deserve closer examination.

The chiasmic structure of the Prologue has been explained by Peder Borgen,²⁶ who presents convincing arguments for viewing the style of the Prologue in terms of certain aspects of targumic exposition, which on occasion proceeds by expounding upon a series of subjects in the reverse order from which the subjects may be initially introduced. Hence the structure of the Prologue of John: A The Word and God (1:1–2) B All things made by him

(3) C The light of all men (4–5) C' The witness of the light (6–9) B' The creation rejects the creator (10–13) A' The Word reveals God in the flesh (14–18).

Although Borgen takes the presence of chiasmus in the Prologue of John as evidence of Jewish targumic influence upon its composition (and well one might conclude that the Prologue was heavily influenced by Jewish Christian concepts on numerous other grounds as well), there is more than enough chiasmus in all sections of the Bible to prove that the writers of the Targums had no exclusive claim to the use of chiastic composition. The abundance of chiasmus in the Bible makes it difficult to point to the presence of it in any one passage and ascribe specific source critical significance to it. Furthermore, the continued use of chiasmus throughout the Gospel of John detracts additionally from the hypothesis that the Prologue is to be identified with the Targums simply because of chiastic patterns there.

The chiastic structure of several sections of the Gospel of John has been explored in great detail by C. Talbert.²⁷ He proposes dividing the Book of Signs into two chiastic systems, basically in the following manner:

A Witnesses of Jesus (1:19–2:11) B A feast (2:12–22) C An official's visit (2:23–3:21) D Ritual and Life (3:22–36) D' Ritual and Life (4:1–42) C' An official's visit (4:43–54) B' A feast (5:1–30) A' Witnesses of Jesus (5:31–47). A Jesus at a meal, proclaimed king, Judas (6:1–71) B Jews seek Jesus at a feast to kill him (7:1–24) C Jesus and the Father; division among the people and an attempted arrest (7:25–46) D Pharisees do not believe; they appeal to scriptures and consider the crowd sinful (7:47–52) E I am the light of the world (8:12–30) F The Jews' reaction to Abraham, God and the Devil (8:31–47) F' Jesus' reaction to the Devil, God and Abraham (8:48–59) E' I am the light of the world (9:1–23) D' Pharisees do not believe; they appeal to Moses and point to blindness as sin (9:24–41) C' Jesus and the Father; division among the people and an attempted arrest (10:1–42) B' Jews seek Jesus at a feast to kill him (11:1–33) A' Jesus at a meal, proclaimed king, Judas (12:1–50).

These arrangements, by themselves, are quite compelling, and as Talbert correctly remarks, they become even more acceptable as further chiastic structures are identified in the latter half of the Gospel of John. Indeed, the division of the first half of the gospel into several chiastic panels is reinforced as it emerges that the second portion of the Gospel of John is likewise composed of several chiastic arrangements in succession. Talbert proposes an organization for the Book of Glory in which chapter 13:1–35 forms a short chiastic frontispiece, chapter 13:36–14:31 comprises a second chiastic system, and chapter 15:1–17:26 creates the longer conclusion. This in itself may be viewed as a balancing of the three chiastic sections which are contained in the first half of the Gospel of John, and in addition, each section deserves closer attention.

In the so-called frontispiece, Jesus discusses and attends to certain preparatory matters. He announces the fact that the hour of his departure has arrived, and removes the influence of Judas from the presence of the disciples. Most of all he washes the feet of his followers and quiets Peter's objections with assurances that Peter will soon understand that which is transpiring. The chiastic composition of this section organizes the treatment of these matters into a coherent sequence:

A The hour of departing to the Father and Jesus' love for his own (13:1) B Inspired by the Devil, Judas is to betray Jesus (2) C Jesus' knowledge of the betrayal (3) D Jesus rises from supper, lays aside his garments and begins to wash their feet (4–5) E Peter objects, but will understand later (6–11) D' When he has washed their feet, has taken his garments, he resumes his place at the table C' Jesus' knowledge of

the betrayal (18–26) B' Inspired by Satan, Judas goes out to betray Jesus (26–30) A' Now is the time of glorification and Jesus' going away, love for one another and by Jesus (31–35).

Secondly, Jesus puts the minds of his disciples at ease by assuring them and by giving answers to their questions. Jesus recognizes the willingness of the Apostles to follow him, but he also understands their need for further strength. Questions are asked by Philip and Judas, which Jesus answers by giving assurances that his words are those of the Father. Above all, Jesus provides the disciples with the surest formula for their success: If they truly love Jesus and desire to follow him, they are to keep his commandments. The structure of this section, also, reflects chiasmic characteristics:

A Peter claims that he can follow Jesus now (13:36–38) B Let not your hearts be troubled (14:1–7)
C Philip asks a question. Jesus' answer: My words are the Father's (14:8–14) D If you love me, keep my commandments (14:15–21) C' Judas asks a question. Jesus' answer: My word is the Father's (14:22–27)
B' Let not your hearts be troubled (14:27–30) A' Jesus follows the Father's commandment and goes forth (14:20–31).

Finally, Jesus discourses to the Apostles upon the eternal unity which exists between himself, the Father, and the disciples. Jesus explains the burdens of suffering and tribulation which must be borne by the Apostles because of this unity, but also promises great blessings which will flow from the relationship which the disciples will enjoy between themselves, the Father, and the Comforter. At the center of this section stands Jesus' prediction that these relationships will take on this new, eternal dimension in but a very little while:

A The unity of Jesus, the disciples and the Father (15:1–17) B The sufferings of the disciples in the world (15:18–16:3) C The Comforter to give all truth (16:4–15) D The Little While (16:16–22) C' The Father to give all truth (16:23–31) B' The tribulation of the disciples in the world (16:32–33) A' The unity of Jesus, the disciples and the Father (17:1–26).

Although the individual sections of the Gospel of John are chiasmic, the book as a whole is not. The Book of Signs deals with Jesus' contacts and conversations with people in the world; the Book of Glory is limited in content to Jesus' intimate advice to his select groups of disciples. Retelling the gospel story in these two halves restricts the operation of any overriding organizational principle in the Gospel of John. Nevertheless, the division of the book into two sections of divergent character is not inconsistent with the chiasmic or parallelistic view of life and of literature, as has been demonstrated above in respect to the composition of several portions of the Old Testament as well. Therefore, the lack of a single complex chiasmic structure in this gospel does not detract from the thoughtful and frequent use of chiasmus throughout the smaller units of this writing.

REVELATION The Apocalypse of John is easily the most enigmatic book contained in the New Testament. It is riddled with symbolism and imagery, which has enticed interpreters over the centuries into ascribing a whole host of meanings to this fascinating composition. While the import of the Revelator's statements is not always ascertainable, the writer is meticulous in his execution of linguistic and numerical devices; he profoundly communicates an overwhelming sense of the eschatological cataclysm hanging over the heads of the agents of evil; he has a keen sense of artistry, rhythm, balance, and adherence to scheme, which produces an unfolding composition which truly bespeaks an artist of the highest caliber. All of this, John the Divine accomplishes while epitomizing both the optimism and immanence of Christian theology and fusing them with the pessimism and anonymity of Jewish apocalyptic literature.

Although it is difficult to generalize about the character of apocalyptic literature in the two centuries before and after Christ (largely because what one includes in this category of Jewish and Christian writing is already determined by somewhat arbitrary criteria), perhaps one of the most telling traits of the apocalyptists is their use of numerical schemes. The numbers three, four, seven, twelve, seventy, one thousand, and others, but especially seven, permeate this body of literature. And with an intense focus on numerology, it should come as no surprise that the better examples of such writing should be highly schematized from beginning to end.

This is certainly the case with the Revelation of John. Its structure is not only systematic, but indeed chiasmic throughout. The presence of chiasmus in this apocalypse has been discussed at remarkable length by Lund, in his posthumously published *Studies in the Book of Revelation*. Lund shows many passages in the book to be elegantly chiasmic, demonstrating quite readily the overriding poetical characteristic of this work. The important declarations initially introduced in the Candlestick Vision, for example, are all precisely repeated in reverse order in the ensuing Messages to the Seven Churches. As A. Farrer illustrates, the initial Vision progresses with the following statements:

A „One like a son of man . . . his eyes as flaming fire and his feet like burnished brass” (1:13–15) B „And out of his mouth a sharp two-edged sword proceeding” (1:16) C „I am the first and the last and the living, and I was dead and lo am alive” (1:17–18) D „The secret of the seven stars thou sawest at my right hand and the seven golden candlesticks” (1:20)

The subsequent exposition of the first four Messages to the Churches repeats and reverses the order of these statements:

D' To Ephesus: „Thus saith the holder of the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden candlesticks” (2:1) C' To Smyrna: „Thus saith the first and the last who was dead and lived” (2:8) B' To Pergamus: „Thus saith he who hath the sharp two-edged sword” (2:12) A' To Thyatira: „Thus saith the Son of God who hath his eyes as flaming fire and his feet like burnished brass” (2:18).²⁸

Precise inverted repetition such as this is common in the Book of Revelation, and the minor effects created by repetitive systems such as these lend the Apocalypse as a whole a strong flavor of completeness and help to render its message more all-inclusive. Even shorter passages, such as Rev. 10:9–10, utilize chiasmus to promote a sense of fullness and fulfillment of the prophetic utterance:

A And he said unto me, „Take and eat it up; B It shall make thy *bitter belly* C But it shall be in thy *mouth sweet* as honey.” A' And I took the little book and ate it up; C' And it was in my *mouth sweet* as honey; B' And as soon as I had eaten it, *bitter* was my *belly*.

This is simple chiasm by any standard, but the device is employed effectively here to heighten the impact of the complete fulfillment of the angel's two-fold prediction.

Although both of the examples given thus far are relatively facile, they are evidence of the writer's proclivity to use chiasmus. This tendency becomes especially pronounced when we turn to examine the framework used by John in presenting his overall perspective on the destiny of the world. As above, we will not tarry longer to consider other chiasms in shorter passages in the Book of Revelation, but will turn directly to the broad overview of this panoramic book.

Sketching the most important elements in the outline of the book, we observe that Revelation begins by issuing promises to the Church which are contingent upon the Saints' righteousness; the book correspondingly ends with the fulfillment of these promises as the New Jerusalem is established. Second, the book unveils a vision of certain events in heaven, whereby it is seen that the Lion of Judah, the Lamb, comes forth and is praised as the only one strong enough to break open the seven seals binding together the Book of Judgment; second to last, the book displays a vision of the fall of Babylon and the defeat of Satan on earth, wherein Jesus again is the central figure who is praised as the only one who could achieve such a victory. Third in the book, seven trumpets sound the judgment, killing one-third of the inhabitants of the earth; third from last, seven bowls pour out that judgment, in like manner killing and scourging all the inhabitants of the earth. Fourth, seven thunders rock the sky; and fourth from last, seven angels proclaim the gospel flying through the midst of heaven. Fifth, two emissaries of God perform great signs, are killed, and are resurrected; fifth from last, two dragons work their evil deeds, one is mortally wounded, yet is miraculously healed. At the center, Satan threatens to devour the virgin's child as soon as he has been born, but the child is caught up to heaven; a war ensues and as a result Satan is cast out of heaven and thrust down to earth, where he pursues and makes war upon the remnant of the virgin's seed. This chiasmic structure may be displayed as follows:

A Prologue (1:1–20) a John and the Angel (1:1–3) b The coming Jesus (1:4–8) c John's commission to the Churches (1:9–20) B The Seven Letters (2:1–3:22) Promises to the Church as it exists in the World
 C The Seven Seals opened in Heaven (4:1–7:17) x Christ praised around the throne as the only one strong enough to break the seals (4:1–5:14) y The Judgment commences: The opening of the seals (6:1–17) x Christ praised around the throne by the 144,000 as the only one through whom there is salvation (7:1–17) D The Seven Trumpets (8:1–11:19) The trumpets sound (8:1–9:21; 11:15–19) The seven thunders roar and the bitter book eaten (10:1–11) The two witnesses slain and resurrected (11:1–14) E Satan attempts to devour the virgin's child (12:1–5) The woman flees into the wilderness (12:6) Satan is cast out of heaven (12:7–12) The woman flies into the wilderness (12:14) Satan pursues the virgin and the remnant of her seed (12:15–17) D' The Seven Plagues (13:1–16:21) The two beasts, one mortally wounded and healed (13:1–18) The seven angels cry out and bless the patient (14:1–20) The plagues poured out (15:1–16:21) C' The Seven Angels Survey the Judgment on Earth (17:1–20:10) y The fall of Babylon and the kings of the earth (17:1–18:24) x Christ praised by the multitude as the King of Kings (19:1–16) y The fall of Satan and the kings of the earth (19:17–20:10) B The New Jerusalem (20:11–22:5) Fulfillment of the promises made to the Church as it will exist in heaven A' Epilogue (22:6–21)
 a John and the Angel (22:6–9) b The coming Jesus (22:10–15) c John's commission to the Churches (22:16–21).

Surely it would be difficult to disregard the extensive and intricate chiasmic structure of this book. In further elaboration of this chiasmic arrangement, consider the following details:

In the Prologue and the Epilogue, one may favorably compare passages such as „And [Jesus] sent and signified [the Revelation] by his angel unto his servant John,” (1:1), with „I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things” (22:16). The Apocalypse begins with a blessing to those who read and keep the things written in the book (1:3), and it ends with a related invitation to all to read the book (22:17) and curse upon any person who changes the writing (22:18f). The coming Jesus is also described in similar detail in each instance: In the prologue it reads, „I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty” (1:8), and in the epilogue, „I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last” (22:13). Likewise, John's description of his own experience before the Lord in the prologue parallels the comparable account given in the epilogue: „I John, your brother, *heard* behind me a great voice . . . when I saw him, I

fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon, me saying unto me, Fear not" (1:10, 17) This is echoed by „I John heard these things, and saw them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel And he said, Do not, for I am thy fellowservant" (22:8–9). These refrains are surely distinct enough to constitute strong evidence of an inclusio formed by the material contained in the first and last chapters of this book.

In B, many promises are given to the Church as it struggles along in its present situation. The rewards for faithfulness and endurance include the promise that one may eat of the tree of life (2:7), not be harmed by the second death (2:11), eat of the hidden manna, receive a white stone and a new name (2:17), have power over the nations (2:26), obtain white raiment and a new name which is not blotted out of the book of life (3:5), become a pillar in the temple of the New Jerusalem (3:12), and sit with Christ upon his divine throne (3:21). The fulfillment of these promises is specifically recounted in B', the description of the New Jerusalem or the state of the Church after the forces of evil have been annihilated. In particular, the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem eat of the tree of life (22:2), are not harmed by the second death (21:8), behold the radiance of the city which is like unto a stone of crystal (22:11), have power over nations (21:24–26), receive a new name (22:4) which is not blotted out of the book of life (20:12–15), serve the temple which is none other than the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb (21:22), and serve the Lamb in the presence of his throne and God's (22:3). Whatever else one thinks about the meaning or origin of this material, it is evident that chapters 2 and 3 are intimately related to chapters 20:11–22:5. And the evidence continues that this relationship is in no way coincidental.

Sections C and C' both contain a wide variety of imagery and expressions. Strikingly common to both, however, and equally unique in the book as a whole, is the attention which is given here to the preeminence of the Lamb. Significant about the breaking of the seals in C is not so much the description of each individual seal as it is opened, but rather the astounding strength of the Lamb, as he comes forth, takes the book out of the hand of the majesty seated on high, and opens the seals to the very last one. Those surrounding the throne shout, „Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (5:12). In much the same way, crucial to the description of the fall of Babylon and the allies of evil is not the description of the particular encounters between the forces of good and evil, but rather the resounding victory which belongs to the Lamb, as he leads the way to victory. Those in heaven shout, „Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord, our God . . . the marriage of the Lamb is come" (19:1,7). At the crowning moment of this section it is Jesus who emerges bearing the title „King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (19:16).

As for the seven trumpets and the seven plagues of wrath, little need be said. From even the most casual expositors, the similarities between these two sets of seven evokes comment. The announcement of the woes proclaimed by the trumpets looks specifically forward to the execution of those woes poured out from the seven bowls of wrath. The trumpets sound forth (1) hail, fire and blood upon the earth (8:7), (2) the turning of the sea to blood (8:8), (3) the turning of the rivers to wormwood (8:10), (4) the darkening of the sun and the day (8:12), (5) pit, smoke, locusts and torment (9:1ff), (6) armies from the Euphrates (9:14f), and (7) the announcement „It is the Lord's" (11:15). In like manner, the vials pour out (1) noisome and grievous sores upon men (16:2), (2) the turning of the sea to blood (16:3), (3) the turning of the rivers to blood (16:4), (4) the overheating of the sun (16:8), (5) darkness in the kingdom of the beast, and pain (16:10), (6) the drying up of the Euphrates (16:12), and (7) the announcement „It is done" (16:17). The interrelationships here, for the most part, need no qualification.

At the end of the Trumpet section stands a vision of two witnesses of God who preach for forty-two months (11:3) and are eventually slain in the streets of Jerusalem and, after three days, ascend to God before the eyes of their enemies. The inevitable suggestion of the present analysis is that the counterparts of these two witnesses are the

two beasts, described at the beginning of their respective sections regarding the Plagues. Not only is the number two significant in each case, but the fact that both the witnesses and the first beast overcome mortal wounds (11:12 and 13:3) and the fact that both the witnesses and the beast speak for forty-two months (13:5) ties these elements of the Apocalypse closely together. Without attempting to assign historical antecedents to the two beasts themselves, it becomes apparent that they are agents of Satan, just as the two witnesses are agents of Jesus. As the witnesses provide the world with final evidences and signs of the power of God in respect to the impending judgment, so the beasts represent the last efforts of Satan to prevail among men on earth.

At the center of the Apocalypse, Satan is expelled from heaven. This is the crux of the Apocalypse and its centrality is reinforced in many ways. First, it is the defeat of Satan in heaven which truly seals his fate. His efforts to pursue the remnant of the seed of the virgin on earth appear to be formidable, but this is only an appearance, for the forces of evil are handily expunged when the vials begin to pour out their wrath. Even following the millennial reign of the martyrs, when Satan is finally loosed a last time from prison, he is devoured without the faintest hint of resistance (20:9). Thus, the war and victory which transpire immediately after the child of the virgin is caught up to God and to his throne (12:5–8) stand at the center of the Apocalypse. Second, it is the transfer of the conflict from the battleground in heaven to a battleground on earth which is of particular concern to John the Revelator. It went without saying for him that Jesus had already defeated Satan by resisting the temptations in the wilderness, by driving out devils from those who were possessed, and by overcoming death by his own resurrection. Jesus had won, at least in theory; yet the problems of evil and weakness still continue to plague mankind, both inside and outside of the Church. Only by understanding that Satan had been driven out of heaven and had been forced to take a final futile stand on earth and to use mere mortals as his warriors does the defeat of Satan by Jesus remain consistent with the continuing disappointments which arise out of the sinfulness and unrighteousness of mankind. It is this transfer of conflict from heaven to earth which, therefore, is placed alongside of the keystone in the structure of this account. Finally, it cannot be entirely by happenstance that there are 194 verses in chapters 1–11, and 193 verses in chapters 13–22, making chapter 12, containing Satan's aborted effort to devour the child of the virgin, Satan's defeat in heaven, and his pursuit of the remnant of the seed of the virgin, the physical as well as the substantive centerpiece of the entire book.

Perceiving this overall chiasmic structure of the Book of Revelation both accents the importance of viewing its individual sections in conjunction with their chiasmic counterparts, and also highlights the central message and dominant characteristics of this work. Since the Apocalypse has proved puzzling in the past, it is significant that chiasmus is an effective tool in exposing some of its basic design and meaning. The following observations may be made:

First, the foregoing analysis provides a basis for recognizing a greater degree of unity in this work than many other approaches seem to allow. To many readers, the book appears to be disjointed and unsystematic. To most commentators, the book appears to be a collection of severable visions and distinct scenes. Especially the Messages to the Seven Churches are frequently singled out and treated as an unrelated vision not belonging to the body of the book as such. Other attempts have been made to segregate those sections of the book which are said to be of Christian origin from those passages thought to be attributable to John the Baptist.³⁰ Each of these approaches may have some merit, for the influence of John the Baptist on Christian apocalyptic thought was undoubtedly profound and the Book of Revelation is indisputably composed of an arrangement of apocalyptic episodes. Yet each of these approaches stands to disregard, if not completely preclude, a comprehensive perception of the book's overall design and scheme. The proposed interpretation, on the other hand, gives substantial grounds for seeing this Apocalypse as an integrated work of a single mind. It sees the book as a tightly focused composition, whose pattern is highly organized and consistently executed throughout.

Second, while not ruling out the possibility that the writer of the Apocalypse may have been guided by many principles operating simultaneously in his composition, the foregoing analysis points to the conclusion that the book is predominantly schematic, not historical, in character. Through imagery, numerology, analogy, as well as chiasmus, the book describes one panoramic vision of the destruction of evil. The order in which the events in the book occur is not dictated by chronology; references to time periods seem themselves to be abstractions, and the entire apocalyptic scene unfolds as if removed from earth's temporality and historicity. Do the events described in chapter 5 occur before the events in chapter 12? How can the servants who are sealed in chapter 7 be seen in all their glory praising the Lamb at that point in the book, when the cause for rejoicing is not supplied until chapter 19? The answer to these and many similar questions is found in the simple fact that dischronologies abound throughout this book. Time sequence is not the governing principle of the structure of this composition; chiasmus is. Thus it is that efforts to extract an eschatological timetable for the end of the world from the pages of this book have proved unsatisfactory, *ad hoc* and contrived.

Finally, when we turn to identify the ultimate meaning of the book, we find that it was not written in order to describe impending persecutions which were to befall the Christian church at the hands of either Nero or Jewish persecutors. Nor does the book appear to be written about Hitler, the Pope, or any other historical character. Central to the book is, much rather, the defeat of Satan and his expulsion from power. Whatever John may have actually seen or heard, this is what he tells and says. All else in the book revolves around this critical demise of the forces of evil. We need look no further to understand the message of the Apocalypse of John.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the foregoing examination of the books in the New Testament has been to demonstrate the presence of chiastic organizational patterns within the New Testament in such a way as to form the basis for an appraisal of the significance of chiasmus in this body of early Christian writings. As such, this study does not purport to be a complete examination of all possible chiastic structures within the New Testament. Nor does it attempt to impose upon or derive from such literary patterns any particular theological interpretations.

The evidence which has been compiled above, it is now submitted, amply substantiates the claim which was made at the outset of this essay: that serious readers of the New Testament cannot afford to proceed with these texts without an awareness of chiasmus as a basic element in the literary composition of the New Testament. Chiasmus has been found to be particularly influential in the books of James, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Jude, Revelation, and in certain respects in the four Gospels as well. Where chiasmus is present, it has been found to hold a key to the perception of the central message of the book in questions. This offers significant clues for understanding the unity of the writing, the personal quality of emphatic central declarations or assertions, and the meaningful relationships existing between seemingly repetitious sections in the book. Where present, chiasmus also offers insights into an entire way of thinking which was important, if not dominant, in antiquity, but which the modern mind easily overlooks when it happens to have been conditioned differently, e.g. to think syllogistically or to avoid repetitiveness.

Thus, students of the New Testament should not be reluctant to observe chiastic patterns in most portions of that book. The writings of the New Testament often have an air of self-evident importance and authoritativeness about them, but this is not always accompanied by an equally evident direction or meaning within the composition as a whole. As has been seen, however, chiasmus may often supply the needed element of order, or coherent structure, which draws to one's attention the central meaning and fundamental artistry of the writing being studied. Such are benefits which, when found, cannot and will not be ignored.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 See, e. g., J. Jebb, *Sacred Literature* (1820); T. Boys, *Tactica Sacra* (1824); J. Forbes, *Symmetrical Structure of Scripture* (1854); N. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament* (1942). (1942).
- 2 Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, pp. 18ff.
- 3 J. Bligh, *Galatians in Greek and Galatians – A Discussion*.
- 4 Bligh, *Galatians – A Discussion*, p. 39.
- 5 Lund, for example, identifies as chiastic 1 Cor. 6:12–14, 5:2–6, 9:19–22, 11:8–12, among several others.
- 6 See N. Lund, „The Literary Structure of Paul’s Hym to Love,” *JBL* 50:268–69.
- 7 G. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews*, p. xxvi–xxvii.
- 8 De Wett took this position, although it has been rejected by most others; see. e. g., S. Salmond, „The Epistle to the Ephesians,” *Expositor’s Greek Testament*, W. Nicoll ed., III, p. 208.
- 9 Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, pp. 207–15.
- 10 M. Dibelius, *Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament: An die Colosser*, p. 3.
- 11 Boys, *Tactica Sacra*, pp. 65–66.
- 12 *Ibid*, p. 67.
- 13 Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, pp. 216–19.
- 14 A similar phenomenon occurs in the pseudepigraphic Narrative of Zosimus, in which three strata of composition can be identified. The earliest is the central section, the second level comes both before and after that, and the third level is found at the beginning and the end. This produces an onion-skin effect with the most ancient material at the center. See J. Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research*, pp. 224–25.
- 15 Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, p. 303; J. Dewey, „The Literary Structure of the Controversy Stories in Mark 2:1–3:6,” *JBL* 92:394–401.
- 16 D. Clark, „Criteria for Identifying Chiasm,” *LB* 35:63–72.
- 17 J. Dewey, *op. cit.*, p. 399.
- 18 Namely 1:1 – 3:12, 3:13 – 6:29, 6:30 – 8:10, 8:11 – 10:52, 11:1 – 12:12, 12:13–44, 13:1–36, 14:1 – 16:8.
- 19 J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, I, pp. 40–41. Luke’s additions are Luke 1:1 – 4:30, 5:1–11, 6:20–8:3, 9:51–18:14, 19:1–28, 19:39–44, 22:14–24:53.

- 20 But see suggested patterns in Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1974).
- 21 Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, p. 241.
- 22 Gaechter, *Die Literarische Kunst im Matthäus-Evangelium* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1965).
- 23 *Ibid*, p. 13.
- 24 Compare the narrative style of the parables with that of the Aggadic-Talmudic writers discussed above by J. Fraenkel. See also E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant, A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parable in Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976).
- 25 See R. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, I, p. cxxxviii.
- 26 Borgen, „Targumic Character of the Prologue of John,” *NTS* 16:291–93.
- 27 C. Talbert, „Artistry and Theology: An Analysis of the Architecture of John 1:19 – 5:47,” *CBQ* 32:341ff.
- 28 A. Farrer, *St. Matthew and St. Mark*, p. 166.
- 29 Certain manuscripts do not read „The beginning and the ending” in 1:8. It appears that transcribers attempted to harmonize the two verses, which again is further evidence of the strong affinity between these two sections of the book.
- 30 J. Ford, *Revelation*, pp. 50ff.