

THE EIGHT BASIC VISIONS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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The book of Revelation is a remarkably well-constructed literary piece, containing a multiplicity of neatly intertwining patterns. Such patterns are more than simply demonstrations of aesthetic taste and compositional skill, and they also transcend the useful purpose of serving as mnemonic devices. Indeed, in a forthright and forceful way they highlight various aspects of the book's theological message.

In broadest scope, the entire Apocalypse is structured into an overall chiasmic pattern in which prologue and epilogue are counterparts and in which the intervening major prophetic sequences or visions are also paired in a chiasmic or inverse order. This broad chiasmic structure and its significance I have treated on several previous occasions,¹ and they need no further elaboration for our purposes here, except to notice two specific features: (1) Aside from the prologue and epilogue, there are *eight* major prophetic sequences—four that precede and four that follow a line drawn between chaps. 14 and 15. (2) The visions preceding the chiasmic dividing line have basically an historical perspective (that is, they relate to the Christian era), and the visions after the chiasmic dividing line depict the eschatological-judgment era.

With respect to the first item above, it should be emphasized that there are indeed *eight* major prophetic sequences in the

¹E.g., editions of *The Open Gates of Heaven* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1969 and 1972) and of its successor, *Interpreting the Book of Revelation* (Worthington, OH, 1976, and Naples, FL, 1979); also "Apocalyptic Prophecy and the Church," Part I, in *Ministry*, October 1983, pp. 22-23. See especially the discussion in *Interpreting*, pp. 43-51 and the diagram on p. 52. The exact divisions between blocs of text in the Apocalypse have in several instances been modified slightly in the present article from the way they have been given in earlier publications.

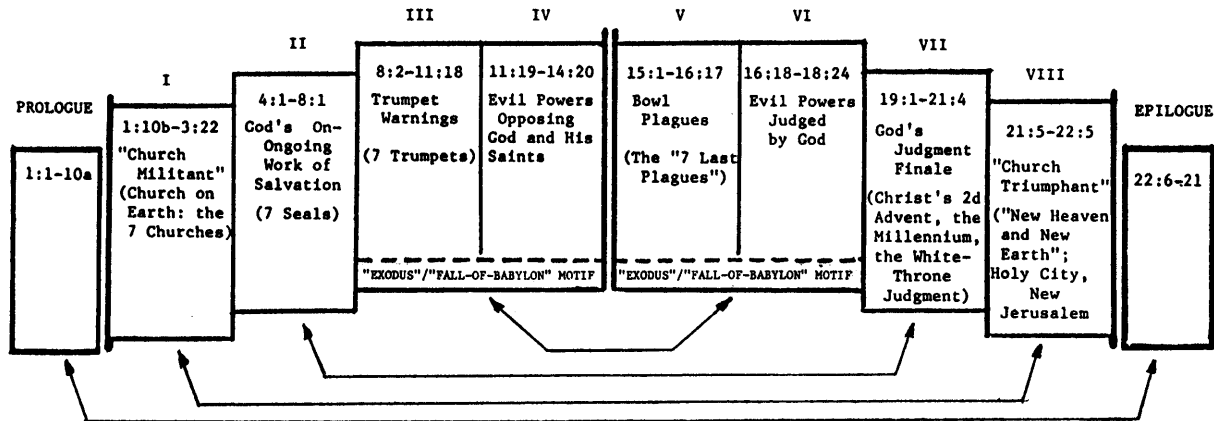


DIAGRAM 1. THE CHIASTIC STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Apocalypse, not seven, as various interpreters have assumed.² Concerning the second item, several qualifications should be noted: In the second through fourth visions, each historical sequence concludes with a section that portrays the time of eschatological judgment; and in the subsequent visions, which in their essence furnish an enlargement on that eschatological-judgment era, there are two kinds of material that pertain to the historical era—explanations (which must obviously be made in terms of the prophet's own perspective in history); and exhortations or appeals (which have value only prior to the eschatological judgment and which would, of course, be meaningless at the time of the final eschatological judgment itself). These qualifications concerning "exceptions" to the main thrust or coverage of the visions on each side of the chiasmic dividing line should not, however, be considered as "crossover" materials. These data are important parts of their own sequences, are in proper position as they stand, and speak significantly to the contexts in which they are found. Moreover, they are discrete and meaningful units as to nature, placement, and/or purpose, within their own specific visions.

For convenience, the comprehensive chiasmic structure of Revelation into prologue, epilogue, and eight visions is set forth in outline form in Diagram 1, which includes also my suggestions as to the textual boundaries and general topics of the various visions. In this diagram and throughout the remainder of the discussion in this article, the term "visions" will refer to these eight complete prophetic sequences, not to individual visionary experiences of lesser extent. Also, Roman numerals will be used to identify the visions in sequence.

The present study has two main purposes, and the data pertaining to each of these will be presented in separate articles: First, the present essay analyzes briefly some parallel patterns in the

²Such interpreters have apparently drawn the conclusion that because seven is a significant number symbol in Revelation—occurring, for instance, in four explicit septets: the churches, seals, trumpets, and bowls—there is also supposed to be a total of seven basic visions. For examples of the seven-vision approach, see Ernst Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (Tübingen, 1926); John Wick Bowman, *The Drama of the Book of Revelation* (Philadelphia, 1955) and "Revelation" in *IDB* 4:64-65; and Thomas S. Kepler, *The Book of Revelation* (New York, 1957). Lohmeyer and Bowman find septets, as well, within all of their seven major visions, though they lack agreement even as to these seven visions themselves. Kepler, on the other hand, finds only a total of ten subsections (called "scenes") within his seven major visions (major visions whose textual boundaries vary only slightly from the seven major visions outlined by Bowman).

DIAGRAM 2. PARALLELING STRUCTURES IN REVELATION'S EIGHT MAJOR VISIONS

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	
A	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	VICTORIOUS- INTRODUCTION SCENE	A
B	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION	B
C		INTERLUDE	INTERLUDE	INTERLUDE	INTERLUDE	INTERLUDE	INTERLUDE		C
D		ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION		D

eight major visions of the book of Revelation. Then a follow-up article³ will focus a bit more intensively on the particular blocs of text that introduce these eight visions and which can be designated as "victorious-introduction scenes," inasmuch as they provide for each vision a setting which portrays in dramatic fashion God's present care for his people and gives assurance of ultimate victory for Christ's saints or "loyal ones." For purposes of identification in the present article, Roman numerals (I, II, etc.) will continue to be used, as in Diagram 1, for designating the eight visions. Each vision, however, has either two or four main sections or blocs of text, and capital letters (A, B, etc.) will serve as identifiers for these.

1. *An Analysis of Patterns Within the Eight Visions*

The first and the final visions (I and VIII) of the Apocalypse are composed of a "Victorious-Introduction Scene" (A), plus one further main bloc of text (B) that may be called the "Basic Prophetic Description." The other six visions (II-VII) have these same two blocs, but with the addition of two further blocs (C and D).

In this essay, the third blocs of text in the second through seventh visions are throughout given the basic caption of "Interlude"—a term quite regularly applied by the exegetes for these particular sections in visions II, III, and IV, but equally applicable to the corresponding (but much shorter) sections in visions V, VI, and VII. It should be noted, however, that although the term "interlude" frequently suggests an interruption to, or hiatus within, the flow of thought, what these third blocs of material do in visions II-VII of the Apocalypse is to enhance or intensify the thrust of the immediately preceding material.⁴ The fourth bloc can be designated as the "Eschatological Culmination"; and in a certain sense, both it and the preceding "Interlude" are actually an extension of the "Basic Prophetic Description" begun in the second bloc.

Although it will be necessary later in this article to add certain further refinements to the foregoing basic analysis, at this point we may summarize in diagram form the results reached thus far. Such a summary is provided in Diagram 2.

³This will hopefully be presented in the next issue of *AUSS*, or at least within the present annual volume.

⁴Paul S. Minear has spoken poignantly to this matter in connection with the "interlude" which occurs at 16:15. See below, n. 9 and the quoted material to which that note refers.

2. *Summary of Contents of the Visions*

At this juncture it is useful to take an overview of the content of each of the eight visions. The summaries given here follow the broad lines of structure indicated above. It should be emphasized that these are indeed *summaries*, and the reader can fill in details by consulting the texts indicated for each of the visions.

THE HISTORICAL VISIONS

Vision I, 1:10b-3:22

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 1:10b-20. Christ appears to John on Patmos as the ever-living and all-powerful One, who walks among the seven golden candlesticks that represent the seven churches.

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, Chaps. 2 and 3. Christ gives messages of praise, rebuke, warning, and exhortation to the individual churches as their varying conditions require.

Vision II, 4:1-8:1

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, Chaps. 4 and 5. John sees a throne set in heaven, with a sea of glass and seven lamps of fire before the throne, and with four living creatures and twenty-four elders surrounding the throne. In a dramatic and suspenseful scene the declaration is made that the slain Lamb alone is able to take from the hand of the one seated on the throne a seven-sealed scroll and to break the seals and open the scroll. The Lamb then takes the scroll, and anthems of praise ascend from the four living creatures, the twenty-four elders, and the entire universe.

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, Chap. 6. The first six seals of the scroll are broken, with the result that four horsemen go forth, souls under the altar utter a cry of "How long" until there is judgment and vindication for them, and signs are given on earth and in heaven of impending judgment.

Bloc C, Interlude, Chap. 7. The sequence is "interrupted" to focus on the sealing of 144,000 during the end-time.

Bloc D, Eschatological Culmination, 8:1. The seventh seal is opened, at which there is "silence in heaven" for the duration of half an hour.

Vision III, 8:2-11:18

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 8:2-6. Seven angels with trumpets appear, and another angel goes to the golden altar and there offers incense whose smoke, mingled with the prayers of the saints, ascends to God. Next, the angel fills a censer with live coals from the altar and throws this upon the earth, resulting in the judgment symbols of voices, thunder, lightning, and earthquake.

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, 8:7-9:21. The first six trumpets are blown, releasing forces of devastation that embrace the symbolism of a storm of hail upon the earth, a great burning mountain thrown into the sea, etc. The first five of these trumpets draw imagery from the plagues on ancient Egypt, but the sixth trumpet shifts the background to Babylon by mention of the "great river Euphrates" in 9:14.⁵

Bloc C, Interlude, 10:1-11:13. An angel holding an open scroll announces (10:6) that "there should be time no longer" (KJV); or, alternatively translated, "there should be no more delay" (RSV).⁶ John is commanded to eat the scroll and does so, finding it sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach; the prophet is then instructed to measure the temple, altar, and people (a direct allusion, as I have shown elsewhere, to the year-end "Day-of-Atonement" ritual in the ancient Jewish cultus⁷); and the testimony and career of the two witnesses are described.

⁵The phenomenon encountered here may be termed the "Exodus-from-Egypt"/"Fall-of-Babylon" motif. It occurs twice, in each instance embracing two complete visions. The first occurrence is Rev 8:2-14:20 inclusive, and the second is Rev 15:1-18:24 inclusive. For further detail and a diagram, see K. A. Strand, "The Two Witnesses of Rev 11:3-12," *AUSS* 19 (1981): 128-129.

⁶The difference in rendition is not really as significant as might at first appear. The passage is an obvious allusion to the book of Daniel that was to remain sealed until "the time of the end" (Dan 12:4; cf. Rev 10:2) and to the query by Daniel, "Until when . . . ?" (Dan 12:6). Either translation of this particular statement in Rev 10:6 fits well as a response to the question raised by Daniel, and indeed is an emphatic proclamation of the arrival of the end of the time period projected—"a time, two times, and half a time" (Dan 12:7). The Greek of this last clause of Rev 10:6 reads, *hoti kronos ouketi estai*. (Cf. the "until when" in Dan 8:13.)

⁷K. A. Strand, "An Overlooked Old-Testament Background to Revelation 11:1," *AUSS* 22 (1984): 317-325.

Bloc D, Eschatological Culmination, 11:14-18. The seventh trumpet is blown, resulting in the announcement that “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ”⁸; then an anthem of praise arises, emphasizing, among other things, that the time has come for judgment of the dead, for rewarding the saints, and for destroying the “destroyers of the earth.”

Vision IV, 11:19-14:20

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 11:19. “God’s temple in heaven was opened,” making visible “the ark of his covenant”; then “flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail” occur.

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, Chaps. 12 and 13. The dragon, leopard-like sea beast, and two-horned earth beast persecute God’s people.

Bloc C, Interlude, 14:1-13. John sees (1) the Lamb and the 144,000 victorious saints standing on Mt. Zion, and (2) three angels flying in heaven and proclaiming warning messages.

Bloc D, Eschatological Culmination, 14:14-20. Earth’s twofold harvest is reaped—(1) the harvest of grain, and (2) the grapes that are thrown into the great winepress of God’s wrath.

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL-JUDGMENT VISIONS

Vision V, 15:1-16:17

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 15:1-16:1. The victorious saints stand on the sea of glass and sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb; and when the “temple of the tent of witness in heaven” is opened, seven angels come forth and receive seven bowls “full of the wrath of God,” smoke fills the temple so that no one can enter till the plagues of the seven angels have been completed, and finally instruction is given to the angels to go their ways and pour out the bowls.

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, 16:2-14. The first six bowls of wrath are poured out, with devastating effects on earth, sea, rivers and fountains, etc. (Again, as in the trumpets septet, imagery for the first five bowls is patterned after the plagues on ancient Egypt, with the scene shifting to Babylon as the sixth bowl refers to the “great river Euphrates” in 16:12.)

⁸Hereinafter the RSV will be used for English renditions of the biblical text, with the possible exception of brief two- or three-word excerpts.

Bloc C, Interlude, 16:15. Into the description of the sixth bowl—the drying up of the Euphrates and the presence of demonic spirits that deceive the kings of the earth and lead them to the “battle of the great day of God the Almighty” (16:12-14)—is inserted a striking macarism in vs. 15: “Lo, I [Christ] am coming like a thief. Blessed is he who is awake. . . .” Then follows an added comment to the effect that the place of the battle is called “Armageddon” (vs. 16).

Since we have now moved into the section of the Apocalypse that provides visions of the eschatological judgment, rather than pertaining to the historical era, it is obvious that a new sort of “interlude” can be expected, as is indeed the case here. The earlier interludes were somewhat detailed *descriptions* of events or conditions during a final portion of the historical era. The interludes that occur in visions V-VII are rather of a crisp, hortatory nature.

The question may be asked, Why such interludes here? For this particular one in Rev 16:15, Paul S. Minear has aptly pointed out: “The saying reveals the terrible danger in which the unsuspecting Christian stands. If one asks with R. H. Charles, ‘How could any one sleep through the cosmic earthquakes which were happening?’, one may answer, ‘That is just the point.’ There were Christians asleep, so John believed, quite undisturbed by din of doom, unaware that anything was happening that could threaten their treasure or leave them exposed and naked. To be asleep was to be unconscious of the urgent necessity of the time. (Compare the disciples in Gethsemane, Mk. 14:26-42.) The beatitude was designed for sentinels who had forgotten that a war was being fought.”⁹

Bloc D, Eschatological Culmination, 16:17. The seventh bowl of wrath is poured out, and there issues from the throne in the temple in heaven the declaration, “It is done!”

Vision VI, 16:18-18:24

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 16:18-17:3a. The traditional signs of judgment occur (voices, thunder, lightning, earthquake, and hail), and “great Babylon” comes into “judgmental remembrance” before God. John is then taken into the wilderness to see this judgment upon Babylon.

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, 17:3b-18:3. A description of Babylon as a harlot and also of the seven-headed and ten-horned scarlet-colored beast upon which she rides is introduced in the early verses of chap. 17 (vss. 3b-8). This descriptive scene is followed by

⁹Paul S. Minear, *I Saw a New Earth* (Washington, DC, 1968), p. 150.

considerable explanatory detail (vss. 9-18) that culminates in a reference to the devastation of the harlot by the beast's ten horns (vss. 16-17) and the identification of this harlot as the great city that rules over earth's kings (vs. 18). In the first three verses of chap. 18, a recital of various aspects of Babylon's corruption sets the stage for the interlude appeal and the description of destruction that follow.

Bloc C, Interlude, 18:4-8, 20. Before the actual portrayal of Babylon's devastation through fire, an appeal is made for God's people to "come out" of Babylon, so that they do not become participants in her sins and recipients of her plagues. In this connection there is also a reiteration, in elaborated form, of God's decree of judgment against Babylon.

Inasmuch as in the chiasmic structure of the material in chap. 18, vs. 20 is a chiasmic counterpart to vss. 4-8,¹⁰ both of these "interludes" within this particular chiasm should probably be considered as the total "interlude" for the larger sequence from 17:3b-18:24. Vs. 20 gives a call for rejoicing over the fact that God has proclaimed against Babylon herself the judgment which she had imposed upon God's people.¹¹

Bloc D, Eschatological Culmination, 18:9-19, 21-24. The central section of chap. 18 (vss. 9-19) portrays, through a threefold dirge, Babylon's utter desolation by fire; and the final section of the chapter (vss. 21-24) emphasizes Babylon's doom and her utterly desolate condition after God's judgment upon her.

Vision VII, 19:1-21:4

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 19:1-10. In a heavenly setting that parallels the setting given in chap. 4, anthems arise in praise of God for his having judged the great harlot Babylon and vindicated God's people; then reference is made to the Lamb's bride being ready for the wedding, and a blessing is pronounced upon those who are "invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." (It should be

¹⁰See William H. Shea, "Chiasm by Theme and by Form in Revelation 18," *AUSS* 20 (1982): 249-256; and Kenneth A. Strand, "Two Aspects of Babylon's Judgment Portrayed in Revelation 18," *AUSS* 20 (1982): 53-60.

¹¹See Strand, "Two Aspects of Babylon's Judgment," pp. 55-59; and for an updated more-literal rendition of Rev 18:20b, see idem, "Some Modalities of Symbolic Usage in Revelation 18," *AUSS* 24 (1986): 43-45. In the background of both Rev 18:4-8 and vs. 20 is the law of malicious witness (cf. Deut 19:16-19; and also see Esth 7:9-10).

noted that though the heavenly temple setting of chaps. 4-5 and chap. 19 is the same, there is difference with respect to activity and perspective—a fact also made clear by the content of the anthems in the two visions. The former vision pertains clearly to the historical era, and this one pertains just as clearly to the era of eschatological judgment.)

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, 19:11-20:5. Christ's second advent is dramatically portrayed, and consequences of it are given. Among the negative results enumerated are the birds' feast consisting of the enemies of God (19:17-18), the lake-of-fire fate for the beast and false prophet (19:19-20), and the imprisonment of Satan in the "bottomless pit" or "abyss" for a thousand years (20:1-3). On the positive side is the first resurrection, in which the martyred saints arise. They then live and reign with Christ for a thousand years (20:4-5).

Bloc C, Interlude, 20:6. "Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power. . . ."

Bloc D, Eschatological Culmination, 20:7-21:4. The culminating events at the end of the thousand years are set forth. On the negative side are the loosing of Satan, the resurgence of his deceptive work, the vain effort of his evil confederacy to capture "the camp of the saints," and the final fiery destruction of this confederacy. On the positive side is John's vision of "a new heaven and a new earth," with the holy city New Jerusalem descending from heaven to earth, and God himself tabernacling with his people.

Vision VIII, 21:5-22:5

Bloc A, Victorious-Introduction Scene, 21:5-11a. The proclamation is made that Christ's victorious ones will inherit all things, and John sees the holy city New Jerusalem descend from heaven to earth. (As a backdrop, the final section of the preceding vision has already portrayed the condition on earth after the descent of the New Jerusalem [21:1-4].)

Bloc B, Basic Prophetic Description, 21:11b-22:5. The holy city New Jerusalem is described in detail.

3. Further Analysis of Text-Blocs A, B, C, and D

With the foregoing background, we may now proceed to some further generalizations concerning the nature of the respective sections (A, B, etc.) within the eight visions. Also, we can suggest additional notations for the captions to these blocs of text, beyond

what has already been indicated in the earlier sections of this article and in Diagram 2.

As we consider the "Victorious-Introduction Scene" for each of the eight visions, we find that there is always a basic temple setting and/or temple-imagery background of some sort.¹² Therefore, our caption of "Victorious-Introduction Scene" (bloc A) can now be supplemented with the phrase, "with Temple Setting."

As for the second through fourth blocs of text (blocs B, C, and D), a difference in perspective should be noted between the visions preceding the chiastic dividing line (visions I-IV) and the visions following it (visions V-VIII). With respect to the former, the "Basic Prophetic Description" is within the historical arena; with respect to the latter, the basic vision material in the B blocs pertains to the eschatological or final judgment. For visions I-IV, therefore, the "Basic Prophetic Description" needs the added qualification "in History"; and for visions V-VIII that qualification would be "in Final Judgment."

As for the third blocs of text (C), in visions II-IV the basic designation of "Interlude" may likewise be supplemented with an additional phrase—"Spotlight on Last Events" (meaning prior to Christ's second advent), inasmuch as the "Interlude" in each instance enlarges on the period of time just before the eschatological culmination. For visions V-VII the added phrase "Exhortation or Appeal" is appropriate, for the terrors of the final-judgment scenes are "interrupted" in order to give short blocs of text setting forth

¹²In some cases the temple in heaven is mentioned explicitly, as in the introductory scenes to visions IV and V; and in other cases, the allusion to temple furniture gives evidence of a temple setting, even though the word "temple" does not occur, as in the scenes for visions I, II, and III. The only introductory scenes that do not have so obvious a clue to temple imagery are those for visions VI and VIII. In the case of the former, there is, however, in the preceding verse (16:17, the final bowl plague, but also a "swing element" to what follows) the mention of a voice "out of the temple, from the throne." With respect to vision VIII, there is reference to the one who "sat upon the throne"—identified earlier as God in his temple (cf., e.g., 4:2-11, 19:1-5); and moreover, the immediately preceding bloc of text (again a sort of "swing element") refers to God as "tabernacling" in the "new earth"/"New Jerusalem" with his people (21:3). Additionally it should be noted that the following bloc of text, or "Basic Prophetic Description" for vision VIII, states that the temple in the holy city New Jerusalem "is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (21:22). My second article in this series will elaborate on the nature and theological significance of the temple imagery that appears in the introductory scenes to the eight major visions of the Apocalypse.

encouragement to faithfulness and/or appeals for repentance. (In two of these instances of exhortation or appeal, the interlude is cast, as we have already seen, basically in the form of a macarism—16:15 and 20:4.)

The sections on “Eschatological Culmination” (the D blocs) all pertain to the final eschatological consummation, as noted earlier; but those concluding sections for visions II-IV provide a climactic conclusion to series that relate to the historical era, whereas those for visions V-VII deal specifically with the final or terminating portion of eschatological-judgment series already in progress in the earlier sections of those visions. Blocs D for visions II-IV may therefore be designated as “Eschatological Culmination: Climax to History,” and the D blocs for visions V-VII may be termed “Eschatological Culmination: The Judgmental Finale.” Diagram 3 (on the next page) incorporates the above-mentioned refinements to the data given in Diagram 2, and also includes my suggestions as to the textual boundaries for the blocs of material as set forth in the second section of the present article.

4. *Conclusion*

In this article, we have observed that there is a very consistent and balanced literary structure in the book of Revelation. This structure not only has aesthetic and mnemonic values or qualities, but also speaks significantly to the theological message of the book. Various aspects of the theology will be dealt with in a follow-up article that will explore in further detail the “victorious-introduction scenes” to the eight visions, but one significant theological focus may be mentioned here: The broad chiasmic structure itself emphasizes a twofold theme that embraces and undergirds the various messages of the book—(1) that Christ is Alpha and Omega, and (2) that he will return at the end of the age to reward all persons according to their works (Rev 1:7-8 and 22:12-13). In other words, he is a consistent, trustworthy, and ever-present help and support to his faithful ones during this historical era of adversity for them (cf. Rev 1:17-18; Matt 28:20b; John 16:33; Heb 12:2a; 13:8); and he will personally return to usher in the series of events that destroy the “destroyers of the earth” and that provide to his loyal followers the inheritance of the “new earth” and the fulfillment of all the good promises made to them (see Rev 11:15-18; 21:1-4, 7,

DIAGRAM 3. OVERVIEW OF STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE APOCALYPSE

HISTORICAL-ERA VISIONS				ESCHATOLOGICAL-JUDGMENT-ERA VISIONS					
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII		
A	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (1:10b-20)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (Chaps. 4 & 5)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (8:2-6)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (11:19)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (15:1-16:1)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (16:18-17:3a)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (19:1-10)	VICTORIOUS-INTRODUCTION SCENE WITH TEMPLE SETTING (21:5-11a)	A
B	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN HISTORY (Chaps. 2 & 3)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN HISTORY (Chap. 6)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN HISTORY (8:7-9:21)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN HISTORY (Chaps. 12 & 13)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN FINAL JUDGMENT (16:2-14,16)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN FINAL JUDGMENT (17:3b-18:3)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN FINAL JUDGMENT (19:11-20:5)	BASIC PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION IN FINAL JUDGMENT (21:11b-22:5)	B
C	INTERLUDE: SPOTLIGHT ON LAST EVENTS (Chap. 7)	INTERLUDE: SPOTLIGHT ON LAST EVENTS (10:1-11:13)	INTERLUDE: SPOTLIGHT ON LAST EVENTS (14:1-13)	INTERLUDE: EXHORTATION OR APPEAL (16:15)	INTERLUDE: EXHORTATION OR APPEAL (18:4-8,20)	INTERLUDE: EXHORTATION OR APPEAL (20:6)	C	C	
D	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION: CLIMAX TO HISTORY (8:1)	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION: CLIMAX TO HISTORY (11:14-18)	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION: CLIMAX TO HISTORY (14:14-20)	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION: THE JUDGMENTAL FINALE (16:17)	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION: THE JUDGMENTAL FINALE (18:9-19,21-24)	ESCHATOLOGICAL CULMINATION: THE JUDGMENTAL FINALE (20:7-21:4)	D	D	

22-27; 22:1-5).¹³ The four prophetic sequences preceding the chiasmic dividing line deal primarily with the first aspect, and the four major visions subsequent to that dividing line are devoted mainly to the second aspect.

In closing, one further item may also be briefly introduced here: It is noteworthy that in the introductory scenes of the eight visions, the temple imagery reveals a pattern of first an earthly venue in vision I (candlesticks that represent churches on earth), followed by a heavenly venue in visions II-VII (either [a] an explicit mention of the "temple in heaven" or its furniture and/or [b] a background that indicates this heavenly setting¹⁴), and followed finally by a return again to an earthly venue in vision VIII (God tabernacling in the "new earth"/"New Jerusalem" [cf. 21:3, 22]). This is a striking phenomenon, whose theological significance and whose correlation with emphases in general NT theology will be set forth in the subsequent article in this series.

¹³It is noteworthy that the items of promise made to the "overcomers" or "conquerors" in the seven churches (2:7b, 11b, 17b, 26-28, and 3:5, 12, 21) are for the most part mentioned again specifically in 21:5-22:5 as fulfilled (e.g., 21:27, 22:2,4), as well as being alluded to in a general way in the statement that the conqueror will inherit "these things" (21:7).

¹⁴Concerning the apparent exception in the case of vision VI, see n. 12, above.