REVELATION 2 AND 3 –
UNIFORMLY STRUCTURED OR NOT?

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Abstract
Many scholars are of the opinion that the seven messages in Revelation 2 and 3 are uniformly shaped. The purpose of this paper is to research the possibility that each message has an individual pattern. The function of the relational particles and asyndeton in the pericope is investigated. By doing so, one arrives in a verified way at the thought-structure of these passages. The thought-structure is founded on the analysis of the syntactical structure. The conclusion of this paper is that each pericope has its own unique pattern. It’s therefore illegitimate to treat the seven messages as if they as are identically moulded.

Introduction
Scholars are of the opinion that the seven messages of Revelation 2 and 3 are uniformly structured. These patterns are usually vaguely outlined.

Examples of some results are as follows:

- Aune (1983:275) is of the opinion that Revelation 2 and 3 is simplistic and homogeneously constructed, consisting of (1) an introduction, (2) a middle part, and (3) a double conclusion. Aune (1990:184-191) gives the following general pattern: (1) the addressees, (2) the command to write, (3) the ἀνά ζειγεί formula, (4) the selfidentification of the author, (5) a description of the circumstances in the congregation (οῖς άφα phrase), (6) appeals in the light of the οίδα phrase, (7) exhortations, and (8) blessings.

- Shea (1983:76-81) identifies the following elements in the seven messages: (1) preamble, (2) prologue, (3) stipulations, and (4) blessings.

- The epic and standard works on the structure of Revelation, Collins, JJ (1979) and Hellholm (1986) do not even pay attention to the structure of Revelation 2 and 3.

In my opinion there are two main reasons why scholars so easily jump to conclusions that the seven messages are uniformly shaped.

1. They take some or other existing structure and use it as a mould for the seven pericopa. For instance, Shea (1983) takes the covenental structure, and Aune (1990) the structure of the royal edicts as basis to analyse the structure of the seven messages.

   This method to determine the structure of the seven messages bears the danger that one can artificially force the seven messages into a certain pattern. By using this method one does not take the structure of the seven messages as starting point, but an already existing framework.


In the following analysis it is indicated that these pericopa are shaped uniformly on macro level, but not on micro level. This distinction is not made by the above mentioned scholars.
In this article the function of the intersentence relational particles and asyndeton in Revelation 2 an 3 has been investigated in order to determine the thought-structure of the seven pericopae in a controlled way. The thought-structure is determined by means of an analysis of the syntactical structure of each pericope, and represented by means of a method developed by Van Rensburg (1980:67-116; 1988:415-438) and applied by him in two 1990 publications (1990a:283-300; 1990b:71-101).

The structure of the Philadelphia message is dealt with in detail, while the structure of the other six pericopae is presented in brief.

1. The Philadelphia message

In 3:7-13 – as well as in the other six messages – it is possible to identify three components, viz. 3:7a, 3:7b and 3:8-13. The pattern of the first two main parts is more or less uniformly formulated in all the pericopae.

- Revelation 3:7a is identified as the first main section. In this part the command to write, as well as the addressees are mentioned (Καὶ τῷ ἄγγελῳ τῆς ἐν Φιλadelφείᾳ ἐκκλησίας γράφον).

- The self-identification in 3:7b is the second main element (τάδε λέγει ὁ ἄγιος ὁ ἀληθινὸς ὁ ἐχων την κ λεῖν Δαυιδ ὁ ἀνοίγων καὶ οὐδείς κλείσει καὶ κλεῖσων καὶ οὐδείς ἀνοίγει).

- Οἴδα in 3:7a marks the beginning of the third main component. This part continues to the end of this pericope.

These three divisions can be visualised by the following grid:

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3:7a: The command to write, and the addressee
     ↓
3:7b: The selfidentification of the Author
     ↓
3:8-13: The various pronouncements of the Author
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The demarcation of the thought-units in the second and third main parts is less clear, as well as the determination of the relations within these units. A motivation for the interpretation is therefore needed.

1.1 The selfidentification (3:7b)

Ο ἄγιος is the subject of the verb λέγει, and ὁ ἀληθινὸς and ὁ ἐχων τῆν κλεῖν Δαυιδ are the adjectival statements to ὁ ἄγιος. The phrase ὁ ἀνοίγων καὶ οὐδείς κλείσει καὶ κλείσων καὶ οὐδείς ἀνοίγει is an adverbial clause of manner, in 3:7b and 3:8. The two καὶs in 3:7b (καὶ οὐδείς . . . καὶ οὐδείς) are both additive particles, which can be translated by and (Louw & Nida, 1989:789). In both cases these καὶs join two acts that succeed each other in a logical way. These two καὶs link these phrases in the relation Head ⇔ Argument. The καὶ in 3:7b (καὶ κλεῖσων) is interpreted as a co-ordinate equivalent particle that constructs a Head ⇔ Alternative addition relation.

The command to write, and the addressee
1.2 The five pronouncements of the Author

In the third main part five units of thought are identified, and each unit represents a
pronouncement of the selfidentified Author. Each unit of thought consists of one of the
statements made by the Author (τάδε λέγει). These five units are represented in 3:8, 3:9,

The five pronouncements of the Author

* 3:8 The constructive role of the church
* 3:9 The constructive action of the Author towards those of the synagogue of Satan
* 3:10-11 The constructive action of the Author towards the church
* 3:12 The promise
* 3:13 The authoritative pronouncement

The relations within the first four pronouncements of the Author (3:8-10) are not
apparent. It is therefore necessary to analyse 3:8-12 in more detail. The fifth
pronouncement is less problematic and is therefore dealt with briefly.

1.2.1 The first pronouncement of the Author (3:8)

The first thought-unit (3:8: οἶδα σοι τὰ ἐργα - ἴδου δέδωκα ἐνόπιόν σου
θύραν ἥνεκηγμένην ἢν οὐδεὶς δύναται κλείσαι αὐτὴν - ὅτι μικρὰν ἐχεις δύναμιν καὶ
ἐπήρημος μου τὸν λόγον καὶ σὺ ἴρων τῷ διόμα μου) is a statement which is
introduced by the indicative verb οἶδα. This statement finds its completion at the end of this
verse. The beginning of the following thought-unit in 3:9 is marked by the imperative ἴδου

The phrase ἴδου δέδωκα ἐνόπιόν σου θύραν ἥνεκηγμένην ἢν οὐδεὶς δύναται
κλείσαι αὐτὴν in 3:8b is interpreted as a parenthesis. It interrupts the line of thought in the
statement οἶδα σοι τὰ ἐργα ... ὅτι μικρὰν ἐχεις δύναμιν ... The beginning of this
parenthesis is marked by the imperative οἶδα, and it emphasises the parenthesis. As far as
content is concerned this parenthesis links up with the selfidentification.

The ὅτι in 3:8 (ὅτι μικρὰν) is interpreted as (i) an epexegetical particle or (ii) a particle that
denotes reason, and can be translated respectively by namely (Louw & Nida, 1989:813) or
because (Louw & Nida, 1989:781) (see the discussion of ὅτι below). This double possibility
is coherent with the interpretation of 3:8b (ἴδου δέδωκα ἐνόπιόν σου θύραν ἥνεκηγμένην
The ὅτι in 3:8 (ὅτι μικρὰ ἐν) is interpreted as (i) an expositive particle or (ii) a particle that denotes reason, and can be translated respectively by namely (Louw & Nida, 1989:813) or because (Louw & Nida, 1989:781) (see the discussion of ὅτι below). This double possibility is coherent with the interpretation of 3:8b (Ἰδοὺ δέδωκα ἑκάστῳ σοῦ θύραν ἄναβε, ἵνα ὅσους δύναται κλεῖσαι αὐτῇ) as a parenthesis. The solidarity between the parenthesis in 3:8b and the rest of the pericope is discussed hereafter.

The parenthesis in 3:8b – which states the acts of Christ – has an umbrella function in the pericope. This conduct of Christ is interpreted as a meaningful link in the thought-structure of this passage. This viewpoint can be proved as follows:

1. Seeing that the open/shut theme of the self-identification occurs anew in 3:8b, it is possible to indicate a coherence of content between the self-identification in 3:7 and the parenthesis in 3:8b.

2. There is a noticeable repetition of ἰδοὺ in 3:8-9. This phenomenon is absent in the other messages. Each ἰδοὺ is succeeded by a verb in the first person; that means by a verb indicating Christ as the acting person. When ὅτι in 3:8c (ὅτι μικρὰ ἐν) is interpreted as because (see the discussion of ὅτι below), the implication is that the ἰδοὺ phrase in 3:8b and the ὅτι phrase in 3:8c in linked in a Reason ↔ Result relation.

On the other hand, the ἰδοὺ' sentence in 3:8b is part of the line of thought in the ἰδοὺ' phrase that begins in 3:8b. It seems that the chronological account of Christ’s work in the congregation is described by the verbs δέδωκα (perfectum), διδόω (praesens), and ποιήσω (futurum). The ἰδοὺ' διδόω phrase in 3:9 is a continuation of the line of thought which begins in the ἰδοὺ' δέδωκα sentence in 3:8. The perfectum δέδωκα implies that Christ has given, and that the result of his action continues. The sentence that begins ὅτι ἰδοὺ διδόω (3:9), is recaptured and completed by the ἰδοὺ' ποιήσω sentence. Consequently διδόω (3:9) is a futuristic praesens. Thus, διδόω describes how the activity to give is accomplished in the present and the future. The ἰδοὺ' διδόω sentence in 3:9 can be interpreted as in apposition to the ἰδοὺ' δέδωκα sentence in 3:8. The following coherence of content is noticed between the three ἰδοὺ' phases: The practical fulfilment of the open/shut activity of Christ in the church of Philadelphia is accomplished in the fact that he will make the members of the synagogue of Satan to worship before the church. Christ has given, gives, and will make.

There is a chain in the line of thought in 3:8-9: ἀνοίγω χαλεῖται (3:7b) → ἰδοὺ' δέδωκα ... ὅσους δύναται κλεῖσαι (3:8b) → ἰδοὺ' διδόω (3:9a) → ἰδοὺ' ποιήσω (3:9b). The ἰδοὺ' ποιήσω (3:9b) phrase is a grammatical completion of the ἰδοὺ' δέδωκα sentence (3:8b). Each following unit links up explicitly with the previous one.

There exists not only a stylistic coherence between the first ἰδοὺ' sentence and the other two ἰδοὺ' sentences, but also a coherent of content. Since the first ἰδοὺ' sentence echoes the open/shut theme of the self-identification, this open/shut theme functions also in the other two ἰδοὺ' phrases in 3:9. The repetitive occurrence of the open/shut activity of Christ and the incorporation thereof in the constructive actions of the church as well as of Christ (3:8-11) implies that the self-identification plays a weighty role in 3:8-11 as a whole.

In the light of the above discussions, scholars like Lenski (1963:141), Pohl (1973:145), Mounce (1980:117), Vonk (1991:36), ea. are of opinion that 3:8-9 describes how the open/shut operation of Christ in the church is performed.

The ὅτι in 3:8 (ὅτι μικρὰ ἐν) can express the meanings namely and because. When ὅτι is read with σοῦ τὰ ἔργα, and interpreted as namely, this ὅτι sentence spells out the work of the church in more detail. On the other hand, when the ὅτι sentence is linked with the ἰδοὺ' δέδωκα sentence, and interpreted as because, the implication is that the works of the
double function: viz. appositional to σου τα’ ἔργα (i.e. Generic [Head] ↔ Specific relation) as well in a Reason ↔ Result relation with the parenthesis. The definition of this διί as namely is shown in the grid below.

The καί in 3:8d (καί ἐτήρησας) is interpreted as a subordinate particle denoting result, and it can be translated by yet (Bauer, 1957:393; Louw & Nida, 1989:812). The group of words καί ἐτήρησας μου τον λόγον describes the unexpected result of the announcement μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν. The καί in 3:8e (καί οὐκ ἤρνησα) can be interpreted in two ways:

- When it is interpreted as a subordinate typifying particle, this καί can be translated by and (Louw & Nida, 1989:790). In this case the πραγμα, ἢν ἤρνησα τὸ ὄνομά μου defines the previous στάτημα καί ἐτήρησας μου τον λόγον (i.e. Head ↔ Manner relation).
- When this καί is interpreted as a co-ordinate additive equivalent particle, it can be rendered into English by and (Louw & Nida, 1989:789). In this case the καί links the phrase μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν and οὐκ ἤρνησα τὸ ὄνομά μου in a Head ↔ Alternative addition relation.

Both possibilities are given in the grid below.

The first pronouncement can be represented as follows:

The first pronouncement of the Author: aspects of the constructive role of the church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The pronouncement itself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:8a: I know your works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parenthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:8a: Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More detail on I know your works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:8c: I know that you have but little power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The unexpected result of little power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:8d: and yet you have kept my word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A detailed explanation of have kept my word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:8e: and have not denied my name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

or:

I know your works stipulated

| 3:8c: I know that you have but little power |
| The twofold unexpected result of the little power |
| • 3:8d: and yet you have kept my word |
| • 3:8e: and have not denied my name |

1.2.2 The second pronouncement of the Author

The second pronouncement has two parts, and both begin with ἰδοὺ. The first subunit is ἰδοὺ διδὼ ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς τοῦ Σατανᾶ τῶν λεγόντων ἑαυτοῦ 'Ιουδαίους εἶναι καὶ αὐτὸν ἀλλὰ οὐκ ἔδωκεν. The second subunit is distinguished as ἰδοὺ πού ἐντέλεσα ἡ ὁμοσπονδία καὶ προσκυνήσατο τὸν τάγματος σου καὶ γνώσα ὧν ἔγω ἠγάπησα σε. The first unit ends in the second ἰδοὺ sentence in 3:9d (ἰδοὺ πού ἐντέλεσα). The pronouncement which begins with the first ἰδοὺ sentence in 3:9a (ἰδοὺ διδὼ), is not completed. The second ἰδοὺ points to the fact that first ἰδοὺ sentence is recaptured by the second ἰδοὺ sentence.³
(ἐδεικνύει). The pronouncement which begins with the first ἰδοὺ sentence in 3:9a (ἰδοὺ ἔδεικνύει), is not completed. The second ἰδοὺ points to the fact that first ἰδοὺ sentence is recaptured by the second ἰδοὺ sentence.¹

The καὶ in 3:9c (καὶ οὐκ εἰσί τοι) is interpreted as a co-ordinate equivalent particle which can be translated by and yet (Louw & Nida, 1989:812). This καὶ phrase (καὶ οὐκ εἰσί τοι) describes the unexpected result that follows the statement τῶν λεγόντων ἐστι τοι ὡς ὀδύνασθαι πρὸς τοὺς ἱδοὺς καὶ πρῶτους ἔδεικνυμεν. These two phrases are linked in a Concession ↔ Contra-expectation relation. The ἀλλά in 3:9c (ἀλλὰ ὑπέκλεισεν) is interpreted as a co-ordinate particle, which describes contrast, and can be rendered as but (Louw & Nida, 1989:794). This ἀλλά ties the phrase ὑπέκλεισεν and ὑπέκλεισθη ἔδεικνυσιν in a Head ↔ Contrast relation.

The clause ὡς θεοῦ καὶ προκακώσωσαι (3:9e) is a group of words which denotes the result of ποιήσω αὐτῶς (cf. Louw & Nida, 1989:783 for this use of ὡς). These two phrases are joined in a Reason ↔ Result relation by ὡς. The καὶ in 3:9e (καὶ προκακώσωσαι) is interpreted as a co-ordinate equivalent particle, which can be translated by and/and then (Louw & Nida, 1989:789). This καὶ expression poses the result of ποιήσω αὐτῶς. Thus, the words ὡς θεοῦ and προκακώσωσαι are linked in a Head ↔ Sequential addition way by this καὶ. A progressive act is described. The clause ὡς ἐγὼ ἐγέρσησα shall functions as the object of γινώσκω.

The second pronouncement can be sketched as follows:

The second pronouncement of the Author: aspects concerning those of the synagogue of Satan

| The essence of the pronouncement (incompletely stated, then recaptured and completed) |
| 3:9a and d: Behold, I will make... - behold, I will make them |
| The double qualification with respect to them |
| • 3:9b: those of the synagogue of Satan |
| • 3:9c: who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie |
| The second result of the Author's reaction towards those of the synagogue of Satan |
| • 3:9e: come and bow down before your feet |
| • 3:9f: and learn that I have loved you |

1.2.3 The third pronouncement of the Author

The phrase ὅτι ἐτύχει γάρ τινι λόγῳ τῆς ὑπομονῆς μου states the reason for κατάτημα τοῦ προκακώσαι τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς καὶ τοῦ προκακώσαι τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἐπεξεργάσαι. The beginning of 3:11 is marked by an asyndeton. This asyndeton is interpreted as the marker of a Reason ↔ Result relation. The clause in ἐρχόμενοι τοι ἐπισκεψάσει 3:11 states the reason for the phrase τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἐπεξεργάσει in 3:10c. The beginning of 3:11b is also marked by an asyndeton. This asyndeton is likewise interpreted as the marker of a Reason ↔ Result relation. 3:11b can be rendered into English by: So, hold fast what you have. The unit ὁ Ἰησοῦς οὗτος ἐπισκέπτετο τοῦ στέφανου states the purpose of κράτει δ ἐξεληφθείς. The thought-structure of 3:10-11 can be visualised as follows:
The reason for the third pronouncement

3:10a: Because you have kept my word in patient endurance

The pronouncement itself

3:10b: I will also keep you in your hour of trial

Trial qualified in more detail

3:10c: which is coming on the whole world

The aim of the coming trial

3:10d: to try those who dwell upon the earth

The reason for the statement that the trial is coming

3:11a: I am coming soon

The resultant exhortation

3:11b: So, hold fast what you have

The aim of the command to hold fast

3:11c: so that no one may seize your crown

Remarks on 3:8-11
In 3:9-11 the church is encouraged in three ways:

- Christ controls events in such a way that the enemies of the church will come and bow down at their feet (3:9). Christ offers the prospect of victory.
- Christ also promises that He will keep them safe from the time of trouble because they have kept his word.
- Christ inspires the church by stating his relation to them: they can live under the expectation that He will be with them soon. They must therefore keep safe what they have.

The coherence between 3:8b and 3:8-11 can be tabulated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The role of the church (3:8)</th>
<th>The role of Christ (3:9-11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The church has little strength</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The church kept his word</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relation of the church to Christ</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Constantly Christ's actions link up with a facet of the role of the church. Revelation 3:8b describes in more details the consequences of the open door. In the selfidentification Christ reveals Himself as the One who opens the door, while in 3:9-11 Christ is also sketched as the acting One. Christ's activities generate a continuation in the line of thought in 3:9-11. The logical coherence in 3:7-11 can be represented as follows: the open/close theme in the selfidentification (3:7) → the role of the church (3:8b) → the role of Christ (3:9-11).

1.2.4 The fourth pronouncement of the Author (3:12)

Revelation 3:12 is interpreted as the fourth pronouncement. An asyndeton marks the beginning of this proclamation. The main verb in this sentence is ποιήσω. The καί in 3:12a (καί ἐξω) is interpreted as a subordinate particle that denotes result. Hence, this καί can be translated by and/and then/and so (Bauer, 1957:393). The clause καί ἐξω οὐ μη ἐξελθῃ/ and the activity ποιήσω αὐτοῦ στῆλον ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ θεοῦ μου are linked in a Reason
translated by *and* and *then* and *so* (Bauer, 1957:393). The clause καὶ ἔξω ὦ μη’ ἔξελθη/ and the activity ποιήσω αὐτοῦ στίλον ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ θεοῦ μου are linked in a Reason ⇔ Result relation. The καὶ in 3:12c (καὶ γράψω) is interpreted as a co-ordinate particle that can be rendered in English by *and* (Louw & Nida, 1989:789). This καὶ places ἔξω ὦ μη’ ἔξελθη ἐτι and γράψω in a Reason ⇔ Result relation, and is describes the second result of ποιήσω. The two καὶ in 3:12d-12f (καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς πόλεως ανδ καὶ τὸ ὄνομά μου) are interpreted as co-ordinate equivalent particles. In this way two Head ⇔ Alternative addition relations are constructed in this way. Both these καὶ are translated with *and* (Louw & Nida, 1989:789). These clauses – linked by the two καὶ – present the threefold subject of χρὶνγγυ. The thought-structure of 3:12 can be portrayed as follows:

**The fourth pronouncement of the Author: the promise to overcome**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The essence of the proclamation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3:12 a:</strong> He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3:12b:</strong> and so he shall never go out of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3:12c:</strong> and I will write on him</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The threefold description of what will be written on him**

- **3:12d:** the name of my God
- **3:12e:** and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven
- **3:12f:** and my own new name
1.3 Representation of the thought-structure of 3:7-13

The preceding interpretation can be represented as follows:

**The command to write, and the addressee**

3:7a: And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write

**The essence of the self-identification**

3:7b: The words of the holy one

- **The first qualification of the holy one**
  - 3:7c: the true one

- **The second qualification of the holy one**
  - 3:7d: who has the key of David
    - **A double qualification of who has the key of David**
      - *3:7c: who opens and no one shall shut
      - *3:7f: who shuts and no one opens

**The first pronouncement of the Author: aspects of the constructive role of the church**

3:8a: I know your works

**The parenthesis**

3:8a: Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut

**More detail on I know your works**

- 3:8c: I know that you have but little power

  **The unexpected result of little power**
  - 3:8d: and yet you have kept my word
    - **A detailed explanation of have kept my word**
      - 3:8e: and have not denied my name

  or:

  **I know your works stipulated**
  - 3:8c: I know that you have but little power

  **The twofold unexpected result of the little power**
  - 3:8d: and yet you have kept my word
  - 3:8e: and have not denied my name
The second pronouncement of the Author: aspects concerning those of the synagogue of Satan

The essence of the pronouncement (incompletely stated, then recaptured and completed)

3:9a and d: Behold, I will make... - behold. I will make them

The double qualification with respect to them

* 3:9b: those of the synagogue of Satan
* 3:9c: who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie

The second result of the Author's reaction towards those of the synagogue of Satan

* 3:9e: come and bow down before your feet
* 3:9f: and learn that I have loved you

The third pronouncement of the Author: aspects regarding the constructive role of the Author in the church

The reason for the third pronouncement

3:10a: Because you have kept my word in patient endurance

The pronouncement itself

3:10b: I will also keep you in your hour of trial

Trial qualified in more detail

3:10c: which is coming on the whole world

The aim of the coming trial

3:10d: to try those who dwell upon the earth

The reason for the statement that the trial is coming

3:11a: I am coming soon

The resultant exhortation

3:11b: So, hold fast what you have

The aim of the command to hold fast

3:11c: so that no one may seize your crown
### The fourth proclamation of the Author: the promise to overcome

#### The essence of the proclamation

3:12a: He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God

- **The first result of being a pillar in the temple**
  - 3:12b: and so he shall never go out of it

- **The second result of being a pillar in the temple**
  - 3:12: and I will write on him

- **The threefold description of what will be written on him**
  - *3:12d:* the name of my God
  - *3:12e:* and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven
  - *3:12f:* and my own new name

#### The fifth proclamation of the Author: the authoritative proclamation

3:13: He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the church

### 1.4 Summary

The build-up of 3:7-13 can be summarised as follows: Christ identifies Himself as the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens (3:7b). And to the church in Philadelphia He has given an open door (3:8b).

The first pronouncement states that the Author knows the works of his church: *they have little power, and yet they have kept his word and have not denied his name* (3:9).

In the second pronouncement the Author deals with those who say that they are Jews. However, the unexpected opposite is true: *They are not. They lie. They are of the synagogue of Satan.* Christ will make them *come and bow down before the feet of the church, and they will learn* that Christ *loves his church* (3:9).

The third pronouncement describes the Author’s activity towards the church. They have kept his word, and therefore He will also keep them from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole world. The reason why the trial will come, is because He is coming soon. The church must therefore *hold fast to what they have, so that no one may seize their crown* (3:18,11).

The fourth pronouncement states the promise that the church will overcome. Christ promises that He will make the church *a pillar in the temple of God.* He will also write a threefold name on it: *the name of God,* of the new Jerusalem, and of Christ Himself (3:12).

The fifth proclamation is the repetitive authoritative proclamation. Christ calls on the church to listen to what the Spirit says to them (3:13).
2. The six remaining pericopae

The thought-structure of the six remaining pericopae can be determined and represented in a similar way as in §1.2. Cf. Grové (1992:18-19, 56, 83-84, 127, 164-165, 206-208, 250-251) for a detailed analysis of the thought-structure on syntactical grounds of these pericopae.

2.1 The Ephesus message (2:1-7)

- 2:1a: The command to write, and the addressee
- 2:1b: The selfidentification of the Author
  - 2:2-3: The first pronouncement of the Author: aspects concerning the works of the church
  - 2:4-5: The second pronouncement of the Author in contrast with the first: aspects connected with the fact that the church has abandoned its first love
  - 2:6: The third pronouncement of the Author which is in contrast with the second: aspects regarding the church and the Nicolaitans
  - 2:7a: The fourth pronouncement of the Author: the authoritative statement
  - 2:7b: The fifth pronouncement of the Author: the promise to overcome

2.2 The Smyrna message (2:8-11)

- 2:8a: The command to write, and the addressee
- 2:8b: The selfidentification of the Author
  - 2:9: The first pronouncement of the Author: aspects about the present tribulation
  - 2:10a-d: The second pronouncement of the Author: aspects regarding the forthcoming sufferings
    The third and fourth pronouncements of the Author: the twofold promise and the authoritative proclamation
    - 2:10f: The third pronouncement (a): promise formulated positively – the repletion of life
    - 2:11a: The fourth pronouncement: parenthetic authoritative announcement
    - 2:11b: The third pronouncement (b): promise, formulated negatively – the defeat over death
2.3 The Pergamum message (2:12-17)

2.12a: The command to write, and the addressee

2.12b: The self-identification of the Author

2.13: The first pronouncement of the Author: aspects of the dwelling place and the activities of the church

2.14-16: The second pronouncement of the Author: aspects connected with the sin of the church

2.17a: The third pronouncement of the Author: the authoritative statement

2.7a: The fourth pronouncement of the Author: the promise

2.4 The Thyatira message (2:18-29)

2.18a: The command to write, and the addressee

2.18b-d: The self-identification of the Author

2.19: The first pronouncement of the Author: the constructive works of the church

2.20-23c: The second pronouncement of the Author: the sin of the church – Jezebel is allowed to prophesy; conclusion regarding the role of the Author

2.24-25: The third pronouncement of the Author: the rest of you in Thyatira addressed and specified

2.26-28: The fourth pronouncement: the promise formulated in terms of power and the morning star. The double specification of those to whom the promise is given

2.29: The fifth pronouncement of the Author: the authoritative statement
2.5 The Sardis message (3:1-6)

3:1a: The command to write, and the addressee

3:1b: The self-identification of the Author

3:1-35: The first pronouncement of the Author: aspects regarding the sin of the church

3:4: The second pronouncement of the Author: aspects concerning a few names in Sardis

3:5: The third pronouncement of the Author: the promise

3:6: The fourth pronouncement of the Author: the authoritative statement

2.6 The Laodicea message (3:14-22)

3:14a: The command to write, and the addressee

3:14b: The self-identification of the Author

3:15-16: The first pronouncement: the negative role of the Author links up with the fact that the church is lukewarm

3:17-19: The second pronouncement: the positive role of the Author which links up with the poor, blind and naked in the church

3:20: The third pronouncement: regarding the knock at the door

3:21: The fourth pronouncement of the Author: the promise

3:22: The fifth pronouncement of the Author: the authoritative statement
3. Summary

Variations in the structure of the seven pericopae manifest themselves specifically in the different pronouncements. A synopsis of these pronouncements can be tabulated as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Work of the church</td>
<td>Present tribulation</td>
<td>Dwelling place and church activities</td>
<td>Constructive role of the church</td>
<td>Sin of church</td>
<td>Constructive role of the church</td>
<td>Negative role of the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Abandons first love</td>
<td>Sufferings</td>
<td>Sin of church</td>
<td>Sin if church</td>
<td>Concerning a few names</td>
<td>Synagogue of Satan</td>
<td>Positive role of the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Church and Nicolaitans</td>
<td>Promise: reception of life</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>The rest</td>
<td>Promise to overcome</td>
<td>Constructive role of Author</td>
<td>Knock at the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Promise to overcome</td>
<td>Promise to overcome</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Promise to overcome</td>
<td>Promise to overcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Promise to overcome</td>
<td>Promise: defeat over death</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
<td>Authoritative pronouncement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remarks

1. In the light of the syntactical analysis above, one can point out a few gaps in the proposals of Aune (1990).11
   - Revelation 2:2-6 is incorporated by Aune in components (5) and (6) of his outline, while these verses are in fact the first three pronouncements of the Ephesuses message.
   - Aune’s scheme does not make provision for the fact that there is a twofold promise in the Smyrna message – there is a positive promise prior to the authoritative pronouncement, and a negative promise following this pronouncement.
   - According to Aune’s proposal 2:12-15 is the οἶδα phrase in the Pergamum message. On syntactical grounds, however, these verses are in two separate pronouncements. An implication of Aune’s viewpoint is that there should be a coherence between 2:13-15 and the appeal in 2:16. This is not the case. The appeal is only part of the second pronouncement (Grové, 1992:81-83).
   - Aspects which belong to components (5) and (6) of Aune’s scheme occur in a mixed order in the first, second and third pronouncements of the Thyatira message. The οἶδα phrase, as well as the appeals in the light of the οἶδα phrase, are not defined so exact as Aune put it. In the case of Sardis and Laodicea messages similar criticism can be brought forward.
The parenthesis (3:8b), as well as the constructive role of the Author (third pronouncement), in the Philadelphia message are not provided for by the proposals made by Aune.

2. The order of the promise and the authoritative pronouncement is reversed as from the fourth message. Until now this phenomenon has not been satisfactorily explained by scholars. The proposals of Shea (1983), Aune (1990), ea. do not accommodate this change in order.

3. Each message is compiled in a unique way. Although there is uniformity on macro level, each message has its own line of thought, in which relational particles play a major role.

4. Conclusion
4.1 On the basis of syntactical grounds and semantic phenomenon each message can be divided into three main parts on macro level:
   - The command to write and the addressee
   - The selfidentification of the Author
   - The various pronouncements of the Author

4.2 The seven messages in Revelation 2 and 3 are not uniformly structured on micro level. It is thus an oversimplification of the problem concerning the structure of these pericopae and illegitimate to deal with them as if they are uniformly shaped on this level.

4.3 The self-identification of Christ plays a prominent role in the thought-structure of each message.\textsuperscript{12}
ENDNOTES

1. For more detail on the relations, see Van Rensburg (1992). The way in which Van Rensburg (1992) describes these inter-sentence relations is an adaption of what Cotterell and Turner (1989:207-217) present.

2. The three ἰδοὺ ἦν in 3:8-9 are interpreted as prompters of attention, which serve to emphasise the following statements; it can be translated by look (Louw & Nida, 1989:812). However, they do not serve as markers at the beginning of a thought-unit.

3. This type of uncompleted sentence construction is called an anacolouthon (Blass & Debrunner, 1961:239; 1990:388-389).

4. Bauer (1957:393) defines the καί in 2:5 (καί τε μετανοήσαν) as "to introduce a result, which comes from what precedes". The closest description of Louw and Nida (1989:813) of such a καί is "and then" and is defined as "(a) marker ... of a sequence of closely related events". Similar occurrences of such a καί is in 2:20 (καί διδάσκει, 2:21 (καί ἔδιδα), 2:23 (καί ἰδοὺ ὄντα), 2:23 (καί διδόει), 2:27 (καί πολλαπλασίαν), 3:3 (καί οὐ μὴ γινώσκει), 3:4 (καί περιπατήσασθαι), and 3:17 (καί οὐδε νοὐ) (Bauer, 1957:393). Δὲ in 2:5 (καί δὲ μὴ) continues the καί in 2:5 (καί μετανοήσαν), which denotes result.

5. The third and fourth pronouncements (2:10f-11) are woven together. It begins with the καί in 2:10 (καί διδῶσα σοι). This καί is interpreted as a subordinate particle. The third pronouncement continues in 2:11b (the ἐγκώφη phrase). The fourth pronouncement (ὁ ἐξωθέν ὁ δὲ κοινοῦσα τι πρῶτον λέγει ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις) is embedded in the third. There is however another possibility to interpret this last part of 2:10. This καί in 2:10 (καί διδῶσα σοι) can function as a particle that denotes a Reason ↔ Result relation. This means that the promise of 2:10 is the result of the fact that the addressees remained faithful.

6. The δὲ παρασε (δὲ εἰς ... ὁμοίωσ) which begins in 2:14 continues to the end of 2:15. This δὲ phrase describes δάγκα in the clause ἐκατοστά σοι ὑπερ ἐκατοστά σοι ὁδόγα (2:14).

7. Ἰδοὺ in 2:22 functions in a similar way as in 3:8-9 (cf. discussion in footnote 2; Louw and Nida, 1989:812).

8. The conjunction ἐκ νῦν in 3:3 (ἐκ νῦν οὐκ ἀναγνωρίσεις) marks the beginning of the subordinate clause ἐκ νῦν οὐκ ἀναγνωρίσεις, (ἐκ νῦν ... μὴ γρηγοροῦσας) functions as a conditional clause at οὐν ... ἢκαν οὐκ κλέπτης (3:3). Οὐν in 3:3 (οὐν οὐκ ἀναγνωρίσεις) is the conjunction of the main verb ἢκαν. This οὐν marks the sentence οὐν ... ἢκαν οὐκ κλέπτης (3:3) as a sentence that denotes result in a Reason ↔ Result relation.

9. The καί phrase (καί τε πεπληρωθηκα) emphasises the preceding πληροφοροὶ εἰμι. An asyndeton marks the beginning of 3:19. The έγκώφη ὄντας clause in 3:19a gives the reason for the activity described by the verb συμβούλευα in 3:18. This asyndeton can be translated by yet or indeed.

10. The Ἰδοὺ in 3:20 is interpreted as a prompter of attention. It emphasizes the statement that follows. One can translate it with look or behold (Louw & Nida, 1989:812). It does not mark the beginning of a thought-unit.


BIBLIOGRAPHY


