

course of the ministry, as in 3:17 it gave approval to its inception. We may note the recurrence of ὄδοῦ in this section, as frequently in the more obviously supernatural events recorded in Chs 1-3.

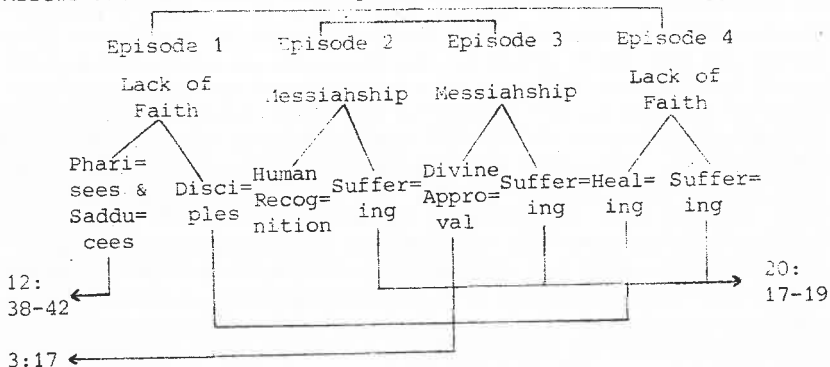
The second phase of the episode relates the conversation on the descent from the mountain (17:9-13). The presence of Elijah in the transfiguration scene raises the question of his eschatological role as popularly understood. Jesus' assertion that this role has already been fulfilled is an indication of the end of the old era. Only in Matthew is the "Elijah" overtly identified as John the Baptist, and the obscurities of Mark skilfully ironed out. Jesus uses the disciples' questions to remind them that his own fate will involve suffering as John's did, and thus to counteract any false messianic hopes which may have been stimulated by the glory of the transfiguration scene (v 12). And again they are given the encouragement of the resurrection hope (v 9).

The fourth episode 17:14-23 is thematically somewhat puzzling, and structurally rather unsatisfactory. The first phase of the episode is vv 14-20, and the second vv 22-23. Under this scheme the main emphasis of the incident with the demoniac boy is faith (ἄπιστος v 17 and ὀλιγοπιστία v 20). This fits into the broader picture of the block, yet it is hard not to see this pericope as something of an anticlimax after the transfiguration. The γενοῦν of v 17 may be the people at large, the disciples, or both.³⁷⁾ Is the incident intended to show that the disciples now have some true faith, even if not enough, or to show their slowness to believe despite all they had seen and heard? Probably the latter, since elsewhere ὀλιγοπιστος is used only in reproach. As noted in other healing miracles in this Act, the focus of attention seems to be on the discussion (vv 19-20) rather than the facts (vv 14-18). The closing statement which shows the boundless potential of faith, is again prefaced by ἄμην ... λέγω ὑμῖν (v 20).

The second phase of the episode is very short and consists of the second passion prediction. Thematically its links and relevance are obvious, but structurally it is too short to give a convincing balance to the episode as a whole. Its opening genitive absolute seems to be dealing purely with setting rather than with a switch of focus. The gloomy reaction of the disciples shows how very far they still were from understanding the true nature of Jesus' Messiahship. Perhaps we can take this as a further example of their "little faith", and if so, it would go some way towards explaining the location of the second passion prediction at this point.³⁸⁾

To sum up Scene 3 then, it may be viewed as four episodes which

give something of a subdued mirror image. The first and last episodes are both concerned with lack of adequate faith (10:8, 17:20), while the two central episodes are both concerned with various aspects of Messiahship. This can be diagrammed as follows, with the lines showing some of the main thematic links. Arrows indicate links with passages outside this scene.



This diagram is rather oversimplified, but the number and inter-connection of themes of various degrees of importance is now sufficiently large that it cannot be comprehensively shown on one diagram without becoming hopelessly obscure.

3.5 Formal Division of the Third Block

This Block, including setting material, extends from 17:24 to 19:2. The incident of the temple tax (17:24-27) is unique to Matthew. Jesus submits to the temple tax voluntarily rather than as of duty, and this attitude sets the key for the teaching on the values of the kingdom of heaven which follows in the discourse. Furthermore, Peter is singled out by the tax collectors as though he were in some way the representative of Christ's followers. This would afford an occasion for the question: "Who then is the greater?" i.e. "Why is Peter assumed to be the chief among us?". There is also, as previously noted, the verbal link ($\sigma\kappa\alpha\nu\delta\alpha\lambda\text{-}$) between 17:27 and 18:6-9, and the link of thought between the "sons of the king" of 17:25-26 and the question about greatness in the kingdom of 18:1. There is also a link between the $\alpha\rho\alpha$ $\gamma\epsilon$ of 17:26 and the $\alpha\rho\alpha$ of the 18:1. The RV is the only English translation that makes this connection. Perhaps the paragraph breaks of the printed texts are misleading. A check of the 20 occurrences of $\alpha\rho\alpha$ in Mt, Mk, Lk and Ac shows that in 17 cases $\alpha\rho\alpha$ refers backwards to a previous point in the argument, or draws a conclusion from a set of events or circumstances. In the three residual examples, the $\alpha\rho\alpha$ follows $\epsilon\upsilon$ in the protasis of a conditional clause, but even in these places, the condition is based on information given in the earlier part

of the same sentence. The six other instances of ἄρα in Mt all contain a clear reference to what has preceded (7:20, 12:28, 17:26, 19:25,27, 24:45) and it is probable therefore that the same is true here. The ἄρα in 18:1 looks back not only to the ἄρα of 17:26, but to the whole argument of 17:25-27, which, as suggested before, provides the setting for the question in 18:1.

The monologue section of this block, 18:3-35, is dominated by two questions, the first posed by the disciples in 18:1, and the second by Peter in 18:21. It is quite hard to disentangle the train of thought in the answer to the first question, and perhaps the paragraph breaks in the UBS edition of the Greek text are not very helpful. It seems best to regard the answer to the first question as given on two levels, the first in a broad generalisation, dealing with greatness in relation to God, and the second dealing with greatness in relation to other people. To this division correspond the conditionals εἰν (v 3) and εἰν δὲ (v 15). Within the first section, vv 3-4 are regarded as laying down a principle which answers the question of v 1; vv 5-10 as examining some implications of the principle; and vv 12-14 as illustrating the principle. However, the profusion of imagery renders this analysis less than certain!

The "secondary setting" of v 2 (i.e. Jesus' non-verbal response to the question) is crucial for the whole of this first section of the monologue. The presence of the child is assumed at least until v 14. To the question then of who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus says that people who do not become like children will not be included in the kingdom at all. Those who come closest to the humility of the child will be greatest in the kingdom. In some way it then seems that the adults' approximation to childhood virtues is measured by their treatment of children. The οἷς εἰν of v 5a and οἷς δ' ἄν of v 6a put forward alternative reactions to children. The apodosis of the first condition is very simple (5b), but the apodosis of the second (6b) is elaborated in the following verses (7-10). These verses contain a general principle (v 7); two specific ways of applying that principle to oneself (or rather three ways expressed through only two parallel clauses, vv 8-9, cf 6:19-21); and a concluding summary and justification (v 10). (Vv 8 and 9 are closely parallel in expression with 5:29-30, but the context is very different.)

In vv 12-14 the picture of the lost sheep (which is here neither called a parable as in Lk 15:3, nor introduced by the verb ὁμοιωῶ frequent in Mt 13) illustrates God's care even for the least (self-)important, such as the child whose very presence was an object lesson. It is thus different in purpose from the similar passage in Lk 15.³⁹⁾ Jesus for the second time in this D Block invites the disciples' opinion (18:12 cf 17:25) before suggesting an analogy to guide its formation. This may again be an oblique

form of reader involvement.

The second section, vv 15-20 appears to be tangential to the original question of v 1. It may be suggested that it deals with the question of greatness as shown by the handling of discord in personal relationships. Every effort is to be made to effect reconciliation. If a personal attempt fails, a delegation should try. If they fail, the whole ἐκκλησία (whatever that means in this context) is to be involved. And the decisions of such a believing community have in some way a binding force which is not merely earthly (cf 16:19). V 18 seems to make better sense if taken with 15-17 than if taken with 19-20. In favour of this is the initial ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν which as we have seen, often ends a section.⁴⁰⁾

Vv 19-20 seem to explore the spiritual potential latent in a reconciliation such as that desired in v 15. If this is so, the περὶ παντός πράγματος would refer to any matter under dispute, as in v 15, and the thrust of the passage would be that where people are humble enough to be reconciled, their meeting together is in Jesus' name and presence. In this is the true greatness of God's kingdom revealed.

The second half of the chapter is mercifully more straightforward. Peter's question of v 21 constitutes internal setting, and receives from Jesus a direct, though surprising answer (v 22). The question arises from Jesus' teaching in vv 15-16 above. The answer of v 22 is elaborated in explicitly parabolic fashion in the rest of the chapter. In some ways the parable pulls together the threads of the earlier part of the block, in that it shows not only the need for people to forgive each other, but also the reason, that each one owes to God an incalculable debt. The mention of the kingdom of heaven in 18:23, and the identification of the king with the *heavenly* father in 18:35 give a link with the original question of v 1, which was about greatness in the *kingdom of heaven*. In comparison with the king, none of the servants is great. Such greatness as any attain is but a reflection of the values and attitudes of the king himself.

Within the parable, v 23 is opening setting and v 35 concluding application. The story has three scenes, the first (24-27) between the king and the first debtor, the second (28-30) between the two debtors, and the third (32-34) between the king and the first debtor again. V 31 is transitional between Scenes 2 and 3.

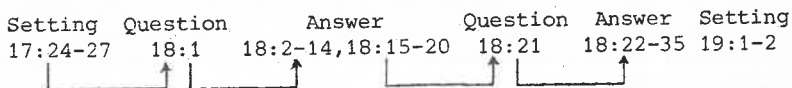
The three scenes have a measure of both parallelism and contrast. The first involves a good deed to an unworthy man, the second a bad deed to a worthy man, and the third the application of his

own standards to the unworthy man. It is thus aesthetically pleasing in structure, and morally satisfying in theme. It may be noted that apart from the genitive absolutes of vv 24-25, almost every sentence begins with a nominative participle.

Vv 34-35 may include an eschatological tinge, but if so, it does not have the same prominence as the eschatology in the two previous D Blocks.

The terminal setting (19:1-2) contains the D-Block closing formula, and the important change of location which is taken as marking the end of Act 2. Involved in the journey from Galilee to Transjordan are crowds still seeking healing. Thus is the stage set for the third and final Act.

We may summarise this D Block in the following simple diagram, where arrows show the links of thought.



3.6. Summary of Act 2

Once again, a brief summary in diagram form may be helpful. The verbal labels under each section may be of some mnemonic value, but are not of great importance. They may just help to clarify a diagram that is becoming too complicated for comfort. The boxes in which episodes or D Block sections are placed are not significant in themselves - they serve to join those episodes or sections which seem to be more closely linked. The abbreviations P, C, and I stand for Parable, Comment and Interpretation. The lines with arrows link sections thematically related. More could be put in, e.g. to show the occurrence of σκανδαλ-, ὀλιγόπιστος etc, but such complexity seems better avoided. To save space, D Block settings are indicated only when they are more than minimal.

It is interesting to observe the heavy bunching of the thematic lines in Scene 3, which perhaps helps to show why this passage has always been regarded as an important one. It is also worth noting that no thematic lines link to the first section of Episode 2 - Peter's confession. Perhaps this is an indication of its "new information" value.

4 ACT 3

This Act embraces the rest of the gospel, Chs 19-28. It consists of an N Block (Chs 19-22), a D Block (Chs 23-25) and another N Block (Chs 26-28). All three are considerably longer than any previous block and give a total of 450 verses, as against approximately 350 for Act 2 and 270 for Act 1. In purely quantitative terms, this may seem rather unbalanced, but presumably it reflects the author's estimate of the importance of the last period of Jesus' ministry.

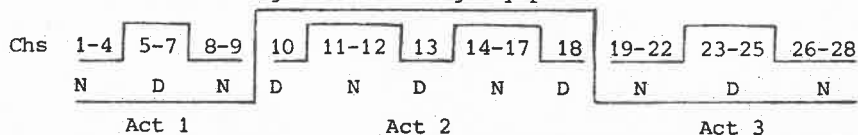
It will be recalled that the second N Block in Act 2 (Chs 14-17) was divided into two halves, so that within the whole Act it was possible to see three sections each containing some discourse and some narrative material. This was diagrammed as

(Blocks)	D	+	N		D + 1/2 N		1/2 N + D
(Chapters)	10		11-12		13 14-15		16-17 18

The reversal of the elements in the third section seemed curiously asymmetrical, so the possibility was investigated that some similar secondary division of the Act 3 blocks might serve to restore the balance somehow. It does indeed seem that such a division is feasible. In the D Block of Act 3 (Chs 23-25) there is a very obvious break at the end of Ch 23, where a change of theme from denunciation to eschatology is overtly marked by internal setting material. The change is such that at first it seemed doubtful whether Chapter 23 should be included in the D Block at all. In the end it seemed best to include it, but to allow a secondary division between Chs 23 and 24.

Then there was the question of whether the first N Block (Chs 19-22) permitted a secondary division like that of Chs 14-17. It seems not unreasonable to posit such a division at the end of Ch 20, for in Chs 19 and 20 there is largely "the mixture as before" of general teaching, and one healing miracle. At the beginning of Ch 21, Jesus enters Jerusalem where the climax of the story is set, and the events and disputes take on a different character. In terms of the formal flow of the narrative there is no major break at the end of Ch 20, but the switch of emphasis after that point is sufficient to justify a secondary division.

What is the effect of making such a division anyway? First let us give a diagrammatic summary of the main division of the gospel into Acts, indicating the resulting key patterns.



Now by linking Chs 19-20 with Chs 16-18 and linking Chs 21-22 with 23, a further set of key patterns can be derived from the secondary divisions.

Chs	1-4	5-7	8-9	10	11-12	13	14-15	16-17	18	19-20	21-22	23	24-25	26-28
	N + D	N	D	N	D + 1/2N	1/2N + D + 1/2N	1/2N + D + 1/2N	1/2N + 1/2D	1/2D + N					
No of verses	87	114	68	47	74	63	75	51	41	62	91	39	97	161

We cannot build too much on this since it deals only with the gross division of the gospel according to the broad types of material contained in it. But a couple of features seem worth pointing out. One is that the new patterns paper over the major breaks in the old patterns, so to speak. The other is that in purely quantitative terms, the various units in the secondary patterns seem remarkably well balanced. The number of verses in each $(1/2)N$ or $(1/2)D$ Block is indicated in the second diagram.

Where a piece of writing shows clear major divisions, it is quite likely that secondary divisions can be found which tend to offset the major divisions by showing links across their boundaries. As a type of analogy, we might consider the division of e g a Latin hexameter into feet. The caesura, a secondary division, has to come in the middle of one of the feet. In detail, this is a secondary feature breaking up a primary unit, whereas we are arguing above for a secondary pattern running across a primary boundary. But the general picture of secondary features tending to subdue and balance out primary ones seems broadly comparable.

Perhaps one of the ways in which good writing is good, is that patterns at different levels of analysis should *not* coincide - at least not all the time. If they did, the result would be too obvious and too dull. Could it not be that the writer's artistry depends on the way in which he interweaves patterns at different levels so that they sometimes coincide and sometimes do not?⁴¹⁾

There remains one more general topic to be discussed before the detailed analysis is begun. It is obvious even on a casual reading that the three synoptic accounts are closer to each other in the passion narrative than elsewhere. It therefore seemed a reasonable assumption that the structural divisions and the semantic purposes of the individual writers would show up most where their accounts are unique either in order or in content. The unique parts of Matthew do tend to have a patterned distribution which will be noted as we proceed.

4.1 Formal Division of the First N Block

The block runs from 19:3-22:46. It is divided into six scenes, each containing three or four episodes. The first extends from 19:3-15 and contains teaching on human relationships centred round family life. The second embraces 19:16-20:16 and holds teaching on wealth and rewards. The third runs from 20:17-34 and relates final incidents before reaching Jerusalem. In the fourth (21:1-22 Jesus' activities in the city are described, while the fifth (21:23-22:14) and sixth (22:15-46) focus on the reactions of the religious authorities to Jesus.

4.1.1 Scene 1

The topic of divorce (19:3-9) is introduced by a group of Pharisees attempting to get Jesus to align himself with one or other of the views then current. As often, Jesus parried a tendentious question by referring not to party traditions but to scriptural principles; he pointed out that, whereas their interest lay in evaluating various grounds of divorce, in God's purpose, marriage was to be an indissoluble union. The disciples were evidently so steeped in the popular views that they overreacted by asserting that in face of such strictness, it would be better not to marry.

Jesus uses this statement to give further teaching in the second 'episode' 19:10-12 (though this is hardly an appropriate label here) on the positive value of celibacy. While some people are through congenital defect or human cruelty unable to marry, there are others who voluntarily forego the privilege for the sake of God's kingdom. Such sacrifice is a challenge for anyone who can accept it.

The third episode (19:13-15) comes apparently to counterbalance any false exaltation of celibacy that may have arisen from the second. Though celibacy may have its purpose for some, marriage is evidently the normal state, and as if to emphasize this, Jesus goes out of his way to bless the children, who are the usual result of marriage. As he had stated before (18:3), such children are an object-lesson on the attitudes required for entry to God's kingdom.

4.1.2 Scene 2

Following the change of location of 19:15, the question from the rich young man opens up a new set of topics. Legalistic observance had left the questioner with an abiding sense of need (19:20). Jesus' reply is neither a call to make a histrionic gesture, nor a programme for economic reform, but rather an *ad hominem* challenge to break down the barriers which prevented full commitment. This seems to be the point of the command

not only to sell all, but also to come and follow. The young man's failure to accept the challenge (19:22) closes the first episode.

In 19:22-30 the second episode yields the teaching that arose from the previous incident. Jesus' comment on the young man reversed the popular estimate of wealth as an overt mark of God's blessing, and this, reinforced by the comical figure of v 24, evoked the astonishment of the disciples, which was perhaps not fully assuaged by the reassurance of v 26. Peter's thoughts remained very much on the material plane and his blunt "What do we get out of it?" must have been a disappointment to Jesus. Jesus meets him on his own level with the promise of a real reward, yet tries to lift Peter to a higher level by reminding him of the future and spiritual nature of that reward. The closing epigram (19:30) seems intended to provide a link both backwards to Peter's question, and forwards to the parable that follows as the third episode/topic. Peter was apparently considering himself and the other disciples as among the *πρωτοι*, and Jesus is reminding him that God's estimate may reverse human estimates.⁴²⁾

In the parable that follows Jesus illustrates how those in Peter's position, with good reason to consider themselves *πρωτοι*, found their self-estimate cut down to size by their employer's generosity (20:15). In the same way Peter is warned, the allotment of rewards in God's kingdom may hold surprises for those with high expectations. The parable itself calls for little comment, but the repetition of the epigram of 19:30 in 20:16 serves to bind the parable closely to what preceded rather than leaving it isolated. The addition of *ουτως* and the reversal of the word order in 20:16 make it seem unlikely that the repetition is erroneous or accidental. This parable is unique to Matthew, and as with other such pericopes in this block, comes at the end of a scene.

4.1.3 Scene 3

This scene is in some ways the most heterogeneous in the Act; it opens with a change of location (20:17) and consists of three discrete episodes that do not seem to have a close connection with each other. In the first of these (20:17-19) there is the third passion prediction, which looks back to 17:22-23 and 16:21, but is more detailed and specific.

In the second episode (20:20-28) there is the request on behalf of James and John by their mother and the teaching arising from it. And in the third (20:29-34) there is the healing of the two blind men at Jericho.

There is, however, some degree of unity of theme in terms of the

various estimates given about the person and purpose of Jesus. In the first episode, Jesus reinforces his own teaching on the Son of Man coming to victory through suffering and death. In the second, the two disciples emphasize the glory at the expense of the suffering and Jesus has both to remind them that to share the glory they must first share the suffering, and to remind the other ten that true greatness in the new era lies in sacrificial service. In the third episode the blind men again address Jesus as "Son of David" (cf 9:27) with its overtones of Messianic kingship. The interesting feature is that whereas in 9:30 Jesus had tried to suppress this term, here in Ch 20 he does nothing of the kind, but rather goes on at once to substantiate it in the triumphal entry.

It has been previously noted how the Beelzebul charge at the end of Act 1 (9:34) was taken up and amplified in Act 2 (10:25, 12:24). The first incident with the two blind men in Ch 9 immediately preceded the Beelzebul affair, and just as the latter was expanded in Act 2, so the former is resumed and given a different twist here in Act 3. It is again the final episode of a scene which shows something of Matthew's unique approach, though in this case it is not the content which is peculiar (20:29-34 is paralleled in Mark and Luke) but the repetition (9:27-31 is not in any other gospel).

To sum up the thematic structure of this scene then, we could suggest that the first and third (short) episodes give estimates of Jesus which he accepted, while the second (longer) episode gives a view which needed radical modification..

4.1.4 Scene 4

This scene (21:1-22) includes three episodes linked to Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem. They are obviously related in theme, but only Matthew records them in this particular order and juxtaposition.

The first episode (21:1-11) shows how in the triumphal entry, Jesus openly received the title "Son of David", and indeed symbolically encouraged it by his mode of travel, which fulfilled the prophecy of Zech 9:9.⁴³ This seems to have been planned well in advance, with careful arrangements made beforehand. As a result, the words of the pilgrims from Ps 118 took on a new meaning. Consequently the crowds in the city showed themselves willing to recognize Jesus at least as a prophet (21:11).

The second episode (21:12-17) contains an act of symbolic significance in keeping with the prophetic tradition. The temple, which had become polluted with mundane concerns, was cleansed and its spiritual purpose brought to the fore again (v 13). The open

display in Jerusalem both of Jesus' miraculous powers and his regal aspirations provoked the anger of the authorities, who confronted him especially on the latter point. In v 16 Jesus explicitly accepts the title 'Son of David' even though given by those unaware of its full implications. This presumably was the point of no return, both for him and for the authorities. His claims of kingly status were dangerous to their vested interests and he would therefore have to be removed if they were to retain their political positions. Thus prudence as well as convenience suggested Jesus' retirement to Bethany for the night (v 17).

In the third episode (21:18-22) concerning the cursing of the fig tree, Jesus used the wonder of the disciples to teach a lesson on the potential of believing prayer.

The three episodes of this scene, all heavy with both political and spiritual symbolism, represent the climax of this block so far as action goes. The remaining scenes consist almost entirely of a dialogue in which Jesus and his opponents are in open confrontation. This has been foreshadowed in 9:1-17 and developed in 12:1-14, 22-45, 15:1-20 and 16:1-4. The activities of Scene 4 here trigger the climax of the verbal duels in Scenes 5 and 6.

4.1.5 *Scene 5*

This scene runs from 21:23-22:14. It contains four episodes, the first an attack by the establishment and the others a three-pronged reply by Jesus.

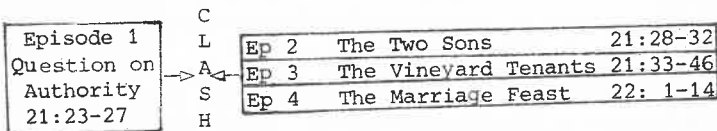
In the first episode (21:23-27) the high priests and elders demand to know Jesus' authority for his actions. The question is asked in the temple, the same location where Jesus had caused such a disturbance only the previous day. The point of Jesus' answer, or rather his refusal to answer, seems to be that the questioners had already by their attitude to John the Baptist shown themselves incapable of recognizing spiritual authority; they would therefore not acknowledge the source of Jesus' authority even if told it.

The second and third 'episodes' (21:28-32 and 21:33-46) reinforce the point. The parable of the two sons shows the religious leaders that despite their professed devotion to God, they in reality did nothing to obey him, whereas the tax-collectors and prostitutes, though lacking a façade of religious observance, nevertheless responded to John's call to repentance. The obstinacy of the hierarchy was compounded by their failure even to accept the results of John's ministry as evidence of his divine authority. (The complex textual problems of vv 29-31 do not affect the overall thrust of the episode.)

The parable of the vineyard tenants in the third episode is common to the three synoptists. Its emphasis is made clear in the editorial comment of v 43.⁴⁴) Abuse of privilege must lead to loss of privilege. The nation which, through its leaders, was about to reject God's representative, would find itself rejected by God. The hearers clearly saw that this lesson was directed against them, but instead of learning from it, they simply became even more set in their opposition (vv 45,46).

In the fourth episode (22:1-14), Jesus adds another parable, that of the wedding feast, which drives home the point that the rejection of the Jews is no hasty or capricious action by God but rather is caused by their own wilful and persistent refusal to accept God's invitation. A variant form of this parable occurs at an earlier point in the narrative of Luke (Lk 14:15-24) and lacks anything parallel to vv 11-14, the section about the guest with no wedding garment. It is very hard to understand the inclusion of this section in Matthew, as it does not seem to have any obvious interpretation, nor any clear relevance to the context. Indeed it appears rather to spoil the climax of the parable without any compensating value. v 22:13b and c contains phrases repeated elsewhere in Mt, but even these do not seem to shed any light.⁴⁵)

The order and juxtaposition of these three parables is unique to Matthew and the first is also unique in content. We can diagram the episodes of this scene as follows:



4.1.6 Scene 6

The final scene extends over 22:15-46. Like the previous scene it falls into four episodes, of which the first three recount questions put to Jesus by his enemies, and the last a question put by him to them.

Each of the three questions put to Jesus was an attempt to trap him. In the first episode (22:15-22) the Pharisees linked with their opponents the Herodians to try and bring Jesus into political disrepute. Jesus neatly turned their attack into an unforgettable lesson on the twin responsibilities of man to God and to society.

In the second episode (22:23-33), the Sadducees concoct an improbable situation with metaphysical implications, aimed at

embroiling Jesus in doctrinal controversy. Jesus sidesteps their question, declaring it to reveal the defectiveness of their knowledge both scripturally and experimentally. The false premises of the Sadducean view are shown up plainly even in that part of the OT whose authority they did purport to acknowledge.

The third episode (22:34-40) records a question which was presumably aimed at making Jesus align himself with some sectarian position. In an answer which is thematically somewhat akin to that in the first episode, Jesus states the pith of the law and the prophets to be the twofold duty of love to God and to man.

Finally, Jesus puts a question to his interrogators (22:41-46) which even at this late stage seems designed to bring a change of heart. It is indeed of David's line that the Messiah should come, but such is the Messiah's status that even David called him 'Lord'. That Jesus was that Son of David the crowds had already proclaimed; could the religious powers overcome their prejudice enough to perceive his Lordship? Apparently not, but at least they recognized their impotence against such a skilled teacher, and their subtle questions were stopped.

In some ways then, this scene is a mirror image of the previous one and could be diagrammed thus:

Ep 1	A Political Question	22:15-22	C L A S H	Episode 4 A Spiritual Question 22:41-46
Ep 2	A Metaphysical Question	22:23-33		
Ep 3	A Legal Question	22:34-46		

4.1.7 Summary of the First N Block

This block comprises six scenes, whose internal coherence is topical rather than formal. In the first, Jesus deals with various aspects of family life, and in the second with the rewards of devotion to God. The third gives various assessments of Jesus, while the fourth makes overt his Messianic claim. In the fifth Jesus warns the Jews of the dangers of rejecting him, and in the sixth they try to compromise him verbally. We may diagram as follows:

Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3	Scene 4
Divorce Celibacy Children	Wealth Its Significance Rewards	The Suffering Servant The Serving Lord The Coming King	Triumphal Entry Cleansed Temple Cursed Fig Tree
Scene 5		Scene 6	
Authority	Obedience Fruitfulness Responsiveness	Taxes Resurrection Love	The Messiah

This summary is oversimplified more than most, but it may still be of some value. In some ways the scenes seem to fall into pairs, 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, but the links do not seem close enough to be of great importance. There is overall a loose chain connection between all the scenes.

4.2 *Formal Division of the D Block*

This Block (23:1-26:2) is marked by minimal external setting material. From 21:23 we know that this section is set in the temple in the last week of Jesus' ministry and here in 23:1 Matthew adds that the audience initially included both disciples and "the crowds". In 26:1 the discourse closing formula occurs, and is linked with an announcement of the imminence of the passion. This serves both as a backward glance to the three passion predictions, and as a topical link with the plot against Jesus that immediately follows.

In 24:1-4a, by contrast, there is a more substantial piece of internal setting material which, as previously noted, divides this block into two, and marks a change of topic. In these verses we are given the information that Jesus comes out of the temple and goes to the Mount of Olives and that the audience is narrowed down to the disciples. According to the placement of this material, we shall examine the block in two halves.

4.2.1 *The First Half*

This section runs from 23:2-39 and in broad structure is not unlike the Sermon on the Mount. There is an introductory section (vv 2-12) giving a general description of Pharisaic hypocrisy; then a longer central section (vv 13-36) giving, if we follow the UBS text in omitting verse 14,⁴⁶ seven specific examples of the Pharisees' misdeeds; and finally a brief lament over Jerusalem (vv 37-39). In the first section the crowds are addressed in the second person, in the second the scribes and Pharisees are so addressed, and in the third the apostrophised city.

A detailed examination reveals that the structure is again very dense. The introduction opens with a general statement (v 2) about the relationship of the scribes and Pharisees to Moses. They are the "authorised interpreters" (TEV) of the Law. The deductions from this (οὐδὲν, v 3a) are firstly that their instructions, which rest on valid authority, are to be followed; but secondly their example is to be avoided. The reason for this second part is again twofold and introduced by γάρ (v 3b); their actions do not match their words (v 3b) and are merely for outward show (v 5). The first of these charges is illustrated in v 4 and the second in vv 5b-7. (These verses are discussed in connection with the diagrams on pp 57 and 58.)

In vv 8-10 Jesus sets out a contrasting behaviour pattern for his followers, first negatively with three types of activity which they are to avoid, each for its own reason; and second, positively, in a simple statement of the principle they are to follow. Finally, in v 12, there is a summary of the passage giving God's evaluation of the actual behaviour of the scribes and Pharisees and of the expected behaviour of Jesus' followers.

The semantic relationships in vv 2-12 are more clearly discernible in the diagram below, in which cola with the same degree of indentation have the same degree of semantic (not syntactic) subordination, or, to use a term that may be less ambiguous, involvement.

	Degree of Verse semantic involvement	
2	1	GENERAL STATEMENT (asyndetic)
3a	2	DEDUCTIONS (οὖν)
		(i) Positive (ποιήσατε καὶ τηρεῖτε)
		(ii) δὲ Negative (μὴ ποιεῖτε)
3b	3	REASONS (γάρ)
		(a) Words without deeds
4	4	EXAMPLES
		(i) δεσμεύουσιν δὲ ...
		(ii) καὶ ἐπιτιθέασιν ...
		(iii) αὐτοῦ δὲ ... οὐ θέλουσιν ...
5a	3	(b) Actions merely for show (δὲ)
5b-7	4	EXAMPLES (see next two diagrams)
8	2	CONTRAST (ὅμως δὲ)
		(i) Negative
	3	(a) μὴ κληθῆτε ...
	4	REASON (γάρ)
9	3	(b) μὴ καλέσητε ...
	4	REASON (γάρ)
10	3	(c) μηδὲ κληθῆτε ...
	4	REASON (οἷτι)
11	2	(ii) Positive (δὲ)
12	1	SUMMARY (δὲ)

This diagram calls for a number of comments. The overall flow of the argument falls into two halves, with the second beginning at v 8. The number of degrees of semantic involvement are the same in each half, so that there is a broad semantic symmetry about the whole. The final summary is at the same degree as the open statement, so that the whole paragraph has an aesthetically satisfying balance, with the second half "unwinding" the convolutions of the first. The semantic involvement increases only by one degree at a time, but may decrease by more than one degree at a time. In the present paragraph there are two occasions when it decreases by two degrees (from 4 to 2 at the beginning of vv 8 and 11), and on both occasions this 2-degree shift signifies a major step in the flow of the argument. In the former instance it shows that the second section is beginning and in the latter it shows that the final wind-down has begun.

Next it must be noticed that particles, to use a rather loose term, do not always indicate coordinate degrees of involvement. Thus the first reason (degree 3, v 3b) is introduced by γάρ, but the second by δέ (degree 3, v 5a). In vv 8 and 11 δέ marks degree 2, whereas this is marked by οὖν in v 3a. Reason at degree 4 is marked by γάρ in vv 8, 9 but by ὅτι in v 10. This is only to be expected, as such particles as οὖν and γάρ mark a relationship between statements rather than the degree of involvement of an argument.

In the overall layout of the argument there is a large scale chiasmus centred on degree 2. In the DEDUCTION (v 3a) a positive aspect is first stated in simple form. Then a coordinate negative aspect is added. This is elaborated by degrees 3 and 4 in vv 3b-7. In the CONTRAST the negative aspect is first stated (v 8a), with elaboration at degrees 3 and 4 in vv 8b-10; the positive aspect comes in v 11 without elaboration.

The two degree shift between the first and second halves of the argument is "toned down" by the recurrence of the catch word 'Rabbi' in vv 7b, 8. This may be another instance on a small scale of papering over the cracks as suggested earlier.

In v 8 there is what may be termed a telescoping of the semantics in the syntax. The opening clause ὑμεῖς δὲ μὴ κληθῆτε, 'Ραββύ is syntactically only one clause, and is coordinate with καὶ πατέρα μὴ καλέσητε ... (v 9) and μὴδὲ κληθῆτε ... (v 10). After deliberation, this is analysed as manifesting *two* degrees of semantic involvement. The ὑμεῖς δὲ is taken to be alone on degree 2, and the μὴ κληθῆτε etc to be on degree 3 with the coordinate parts of vv 9 and 10. The reason is that the full pronoun form ὑμεῖς is used only in the first clause. Its emphatic nature and its being followed by δὲ seem to set it up in contrast

with the DEDUCTION in v 3a. Its absence from the parallel imperative clauses of vv 9 and 10 seems to support this. The whole of vv 8-11 derive some unity from the emphasis on "you", despite the different degrees of involvement. The double occurrence of ὑμῶν in vv 10, 11 strengthens the case, since none of the other records of this sentiment listed in the UBS text margin have exactly this form. Further support for putting ὑμεῖς δὲ on a separate degree is that it leaves a neat and unobtrusive key pattern in the verbs on the third degree. The alternation here is

passive κληθῆτε	active καλέσητε	passive κληθῆτε
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We have previously noted similar arrangements in the beatitudes and part of the Lord's Prayer (6:9b-10, p 21). This may be a feature of Matthew's individual style.

The change from the second person in v 11 to the indefinite ὅστις in v 12 serves to mark the decrease in degree of involvement from 2 back to 1 at the conclusion of the paragraph. Incidentally, v 12 shows an interesting clash between linguistic levels. Lexically, it has a chiasmic structure, but semantically its elements are simply polar.

In vv 5b-7 there is an interesting contrast of syntax and semantics. Syntactically there is a string of three co-ordinate verbs, the first two governing one noun each and the last governing a string of three nouns and a further verb in the infinitive. This could be set up as follows.

a	+	b	+	c
πλατύνουσιν		μεγαλύνουσιν		φιλοῦσιν
(i) τὰ φυλακτήρια		(i) τὰ κράσπεδα		(i) τὴν πρωτοκλισίαν
				(ii) τὰς πρωτοκαθεδρίας
				(iii) τοὺς ἄσπασμοὺς
				(iv) καλεῖσθαι ... 'Ραββί

However, semantically, the particles appear to indicate a rather different structure. The γὰρ links the whole sentence to degree 3 in v 5a. The first two verbs πλατύνουσιν and μεγαλύνουσιν are linked by καὶ, and thus form a pair with both morphological and phonological parallelism. The third verb is linked to these not by καὶ but by δὲ, and does not share the parallelism. Of the items which it governs, the first two πρωτοκλισίαν and πρωτοκαθεδρίας again share morphological and to some extent phonological parallelism; thus they form another pair and are, we suggest, the items which are semantically coordinate with the first two verbs. The verbs express two aspects of clothing, and the nouns two aspects of position. This leaves the third noun ἄσπασμοὺς (which does not share the morphological or phonological features of the

first two) and the infinitive verb. The difference in their word class, coming at the end of such a carefully balanced list, makes it likely that this is a hendiadys, with the καλεῖσθαι ... 'παῖς' as the content of the ἀσκαμοδός. If this is so there would be three types of ostentation which are semantically coordinate and could be set out as in the following diagram.

	Type 1 Clothing			Type 2 Position			Type 3 Deference		
a	+	b	(c)	(i)	+	(ii)	(iii)	=	(iv)
ἐλάτύνουσιν		μεγαλύνουσιν		ἠδαιοκλήτους		ἠρωτοκαθεδρίας	ἀσκαμοδός		καλεῖσθαι ... 'παῖς'

Thus the third verb φιλοῦσιν ends up semantically as a dummy item which is required in the syntax to carry the switch of word classes necessitated by the lexical structure of Greek at this point. We could say that φιλοῦσιν or something like it is implicit in the first two verbs, but does not need to be made overt because they are verbs.

The conclusion that there are basically three units semantically coordinate explains why despite the structural complexities, the whole of vv 5b-7 have been kept at the same degree of involvement in the diagram on p 55.

So much then for the introduction to the first half of this D Block! Fortunately the remainder is not quite so intricate. The main section (23:13-36), like the main section of the Sermon on the Mount, has seven parts. This section is usually called "The Seven Woes" from the formulaic opening Οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, γραμματεῖς καὶ φαρισαῖοι ὑποκριταί. This occurs in each instance except the third where the variant form Οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, ὁδηγοὶ τυφλοῦ οἱ λέγοντες ... is found. Each Woe ... except the third is followed by a reason introduced by ὅτι. The 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th Woes... are of comparable length, with the 3rd and especially the 7th much longer. The 7th Woe ... is rather different in content from the others, and gradually changes from denunciation to prediction of punishment.

As things stand there is no obvious significant pattern. It is interesting to see, however, that if v 14 is reinstated as the 2nd Woe... and each of the following ones moved up a number, then

something of a clearer pattern does emerge, as shown below.

Woes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Verses	13	14	15	16-22	23-24	25-26	27-28	29-36

Of the longer Woes, the one with the variant formula is now the central one, and is balanced by three shorter ones on either side. The last Woe, which we have already noticed to be somewhat divergent in content as well as in length, now stands apart as a conclusion and climax to the whole section. Considerations of discourse structure should not of course influence the evaluation of manuscript evidence,⁴⁷⁾ but on the other hand it is hard to deny that a more convincing pattern is evident if v 14 is not relegated to the margin. It would make no difference to the structural balance of this passage if v 14 were included before v 13, as in some manuscripts.

The final Woe (vv 29-36) calls for a few comments. The logic of v 31 does not seem too clear but presumably would have been acceptable in Rabbinic reasoning. Exactly where the theme moves from denunciation to prediction is hard to determine; v 33 has an eschatological ring, but is taken with the preceding verses, as the conclusion of a denunciation with a vocative is paralleled in vv 24 and 26. This would leave vv 34-36 as the predictive climax.⁴⁸⁾ These verses are also united by the use of the first person which starts in v 34. As we have often remarked before, the final sentence of the section opens with ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, and the use of τὴν γενεὰν ταύτην (cf 24:34) seems to make the passage refer primarily to the fall of Jerusalem.

This interpretation gains some support from the immediate switch to the lament over the city (vv 37-39). V 37 has three verbal links with v 34 (ἀποστέλλω, ἀποκτείνω and προφήτας), but otherwise this section requires little comment. It does appear however that v 39 would have sounded more appropriate if it had come in before the triumphal entry in Ch 21. In its present position it must refer to the parousia. At least it forms a fitting connection with the eschatological material in the following chapter.⁴⁹⁾

We can sum up this half of the block then in the following simple diagram.

Introduction	Main section	Conclusion
Pharisees/Disciples	7/8 Woes	Lament
vv 2-12	vv 13-36	vv 37-39

Any overall pattern would seem to be a loose chain connection rather than a key, unless the Lament is taken as dealing with the results of the Pharisaic behaviour of the Introduction.

4.2.2 The Second Half

This section extends from 24:1-25:46. It is the most difficult section of the gospel to interpret and the more one brings a pre-conceived eschatological scheme to its interpretation, the more difficult it becomes. How ever some of the details are to be interpreted, this section does have a reasonably clear thematic structure and this will be kept in focus.

We have already noted the internal setting material of 24:1-4a, in which the scene is changed from the Temple to the Mount of Olives. Jesus' words on the destruction of the Temple (v 2) seem to provoke the disciples' question in v 3, and it is this verse which is the key to the structure of the next two chapters. The disciples ask two questions, the first simple in form (τίτε ταῦτα ἔσται), and the second complex (τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς οἰκ παρουσίας καὶ συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος). Chiastically, the second question is taken up first (24:4-35) and the first one taken up second (24:36-25:30). The change of topic is marked by the περὶ δὲ of 24:36. (Cf Paul's constant use of this phrase in 1 Cor 7:1,25, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1,12.)

The second question as framed by the disciples seems to anticipate that *one* sign will indicate both the parousia and the end of the age. This seems to be the force of the omission of the article before συντελείας.⁵⁰ Perhaps the οἰκ should also be understood before συντελείας. If so, this would seem to imply a transitive event, so that we might have to translate "What is the sign for your coming and bringing the age to a close?" This view seems to harmonise with the final judgement of 25:31-46, but is not required by anything in the answer of 24:4-35. Indeed within this answer (again chiastic) the end of the age and the parousia seem to be dealt with separately, though it is not clear whether or not Jesus is deliberately dissociating them. We may also note that Jesus uses the word τέλος (not συντέλεια) in 24:6,14, though presumably these words refer to the same event.

Let us now proceed to analyse the text. Jesus does not state explicitly which question he is answering first, but the expressions οὕτω ... τὸ τέλος of v 6 and τότε ἤξει τὸ τέλος of v 14 show that he is dealing first with the end of the age. Its negative indications are given first (vv 4-6), then its positive ones (7-14). Neither are spectacularly apocalyptic. Rather are they practical in nature and ethical in import. False Messianic claimants and the battles they cause show that the end is not yet (v 6), and the followers of Jesus must not be deceived (v 4), or anxious (v 6). However, international strife and natural disasters (v 7), persecution (vv 8-10) and apostasy (vv 11-12) show that the end is near, and form a challenge to the believer's endurance (v 13). Enough people will endure to ensure

the worldwide spread of the gospel before the end (v 14).

Now in vv 15-31 there is a kind of zoom lens effect. After giving some broad general features in vv 6-14, the focus is narrowed down to one of these features (θλιψις vv 9,21 29) and its after-effects. In those verses we have a description which is more spectacular and apocalyptic. It seems to begin with material fairly readily applicable to the siege of Jerusalem in A D 66-70, and end with material which can only be futuristic. Exactly where the change comes is hard to say. Vv 15-20 seem to refer primarily to the fall of Jerusalem and vv 23-27 primarily to the future. Vv 21-22 could refer to either or both. Such deliberate ambivalence is one of the distinctive marks of this type of topic. The exact relevance of v 28 is difficult to determine. It seems hard to connect it with v 27, but if taken to refer to the false prophets of vv 24-26 (cf vv 5 and 11), it could mean that it is where society is rotten that there will be many charlatans preying on it.⁵¹⁾

The contrast of the unmistakable evidence of the parousia (v 27) with the secret promises of the false Messiahs leads into a fuller description of the true parousia. At least vv 29-31 appear to refer to the parousia, though the word does not occur in these verses. Astronomical phenomena of OT prophecy will be fulfilled, and the Son of Man will come in glory on the clouds, gathering his followers. This will happen immediately after the θλιψις (v 29), but it is not clear whether the σημεῖον of v 30 precedes the parousia, accompanies it, or is identical with it.

Verse 31 seems to conclude the "close-up", and in vv 32-35 we are given a summary which takes the long-distance, more generalised view again. Just as in nature there are clear signs of the advancing temporal seasons, so the discerning should be able to detect signs of the spiritual season. V 33 however is very vague, presumably on purpose, both about the signs (πάντα ταῦτα) and their meaning (is the subject of ἐγγύς ἔστιν masculine or neuter?).⁵²⁾ The reference to ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη in v 34 (cf 23:36) appears to bring the fall of Jerusalem into the picture again, despite the futuristic import of the paragraph immediately preceding. This section is closed with the ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν formula, and an assertion of the permanence of Christ's words. The very vagueness of these verses suggests that the fig tree of v 32 (unlike that of 21:18) carries no particular symbolic reference, but is just a typical annually budding tree. The addition in Lk 21:29 of καὶ πάντα τὰ δένδρα supports this view.

V 36a marks a resumption of the first question of v 3, πότε ταῦτα ἔσται, but we should notice that whereas in v 3 the disciples seemed to be asking when the destruction of the Temple (v 2) would

take place, in his answer Jesus seems to be dealing with when the parousia will take place (vv 37,39,44). If the fall of Jerusalem is somehow symbolic of the end time (as it seems to be in vv 15-27), then the switch is understandable, though it is not explained. This change of perspective is only to be expected in apocalyptic material. As before, the answer to the question is first dealt with negatively. Jesus can give no answer, since the time is known to the Father alone. Nevertheless certain general characteristics can be given, in a parallel drawn from the flood. Not that they are very illuminating, for the physical and social behaviour mentioned is both normal and necessary in any age. Work in the field or in the home will be in its usual groove when the end comes and the elect are removed, presumably by the angels of v 31. This very ordinariness seems to mean that the end could come at any time, which is consistent with the morals drawn. These dominate the rest of the section up to 25:30, and are two in number. The first is that the believer must be watchful (γρηγορεῖτε v 42 and ἔτοιμοι v 44), and the second is that he must be faithful (πιστός ... καὶ φρόνιμος v 45). Each requirement is fortified by an analogy; just as the householder does not know when the burglar will come, so the believer does not know when the Son of Man will come. Hence the need to be constantly watchful. And just as the servants do not know when their κύριος will return to evaluate their work, so the believers do not know when their κύριος will return in judgement. Hence the need to be constantly faithful and not presume upon delay.

These two needs are each taken up in a parable. That of the ten girls (25:1-13) emphasizes watchfulness (γρηγορεῖτε 25:13, cf 24:42), and that of the talents faithfulness (πιστός 25:21,23, cf 24:45). The link of these two parables with 24:42-51 is further reinforced by the repetition of ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων 24:51 and 25:30. (The occurrence of this expression here perhaps throws back some more light on its earlier use in 13:42,50, 22:13).

There is no need to go into the details of the parables, since each makes but one main point. We may notice in passing that the first gives a simple contrast of the wise and the foolish, whereas in the second there are two examples of faithfulness and only one of wickedness. The second parable is thus a little more complex in formal structure.

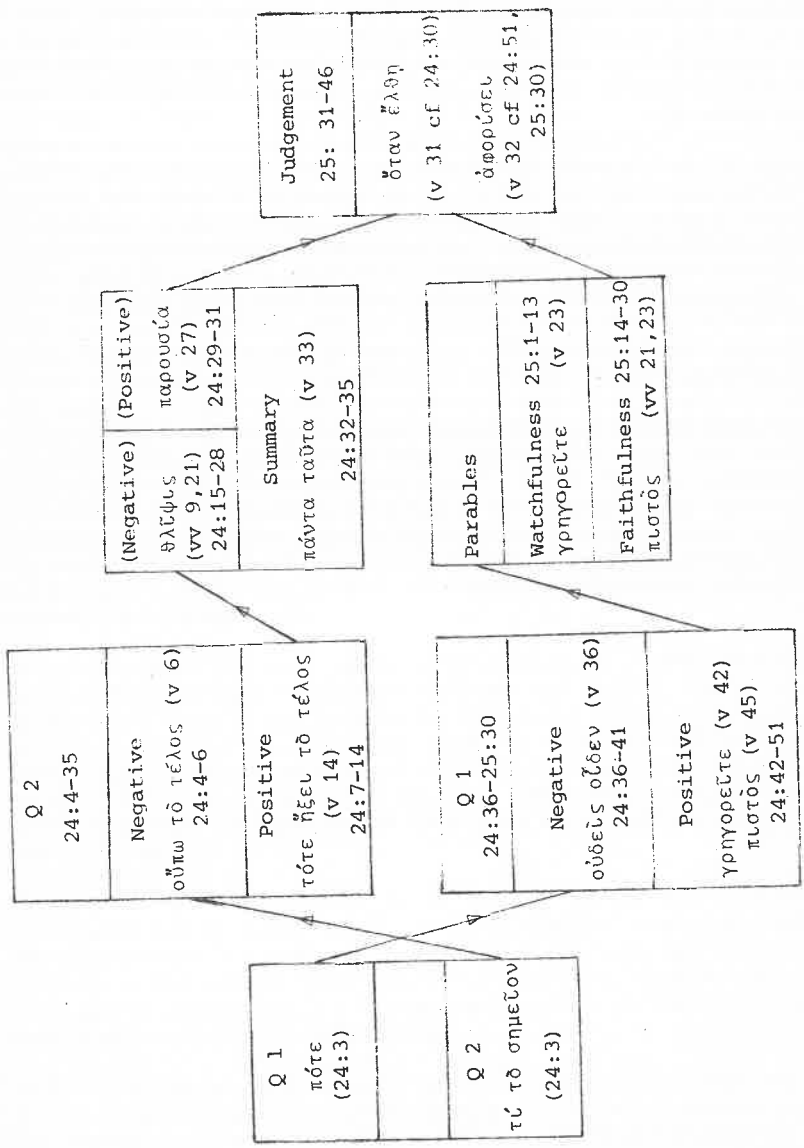
In 25:31-46 Jesus adds information which goes beyond what the disciples had originally asked, though it certainly arises from the answers to their questions. The theme of the coming of the Son of Man (24:30-31, cf 25:31-32) provides the jumping off point for the material on the final judgement, and the theme of sepa-

ration (24:46ff) gives a link of content. We may notice the tacit identification of the Son of Man of 25:31 with the King in 25:34. The judgement scene is in two contrasting and closely parallel halves, though the second is slightly reduced by comparison (e.g. 25:44 is shorter than 25:37-39). Both halves of the judgement are ended with a sentence beginning ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν (vv 40,45) and the concluding verse gives the (definitive!) closing setting.

Though these chapters have often been used in the construction of programmes for the end-time, we should note again the heavy ethical emphasis that pervades them. (24:4,6,13,23,42,44,46, 25:13,21,23,35,36,42,43). It can hardly be repeated too often that what scripture says about the future, it says so that we may be equipped with right attitudes rather than right answers.

A summary of these chapters is aided by the diagram on the following page.

Each question is first answered negatively and then positively, and in each answer the second half expands on some particular feature(s) of the first. The first answer (that to the second question) contains a brief summary to which there is no parallel in the second answer. The final section on the judgement draws together themes from both answers, and goes beyond what the questions originally asked.



The arrows indicate the connections of thought.

4.3 Formal Division of the Second N Block

This block covers the remainder of the book, Chs 26-28, and may be analysed as six scenes (numbered 7-12) with a short epilogue. The narrative is much more continuous in this section than in any previous section and, to that extent, any division into scenes is rather more arbitrary than previous divisions. However, in most cases there is some credible unity of theme to hold the scene together and the key pattern is often in evidence again. The scene division is as follows: Scene 7, 26:1-16; Scene 8, 26:17-30; Scene 9, 26:31-75; Scene 10, 27:1-14; Scene 11, 27:15-61; Scene 12, 27:62-28:15; Epilogue, 28:16-20.

4.3.1 Scene 7

This scene embraces 26:3-16 and holds three episodes. The first of these (vv 3-5) is closely linked in sense with the παραδύομαι of v 2, and gives the definite decision of the authorities to take action against Jesus. The third (26:14-16) shows how their opportunity arose through the treacherous greed of Judas. The middle episode (26:6-13) is in stark contrast with this dismal background and reveals the costly devotion of the unnamed woman. Despite the disciples' objections, Jesus accepts the gift and relates it to his coming death. (And again the concluding sentence of his remarks is introduced by ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν.) The inclusion of this incident between the two references to the plot on Jesus' life seems quite deliberate and of high dramatic effect. Thematically it gives the scene a key pattern.

Plot Ep 1, 26:3-5	Anointing Ep 2, 26:6-13	Plot Ep 3, 26:14-16
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4.3.2 Scene 8

This scene, covering 26:17-30, deals with the Last Supper and is in some ways the thematic converse of the previous scene. The first episode (26:17-19) deals with the preparations for the Passover and the third (26:26-30) with the Last Supper. Between these, we are taken again to the theme of the plot (26:20-25) in which Jesus shows his knowledge of the treachery of Judas and relates it to God's purposes as revealed in scripture (v 24). The resumption of the ἐσθιούτων αὐτῶν of v 21 in v 26 is a formal bracketing of the plot theme in this scene.

Passover Preparation Ep 1, 26:17-19	Plot Ep 2, 26:20-25	The Last Supper Ep 3, 26:26-30
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4.3.3 Scene 9

This scene is taken to run from 26:31-75; it thus embraces all the material between the prediction of Peter's denial and its occurrence. The scene is thus considerably longer than the two

previous scenes and can be divided into five episodes. The first of these (26:31-35) takes place on the journey from the house where the Passover was celebrated to the Mount of Olives. Jesus' attempt to lift the disciples' eyes past the crucifixion to the resurrection (v 32) evokes a protest of loyalty from Peter which Jesus firmly sets aside (v 34). The formula ἀμῆν λέγω ὑμῖν here (as in v 21 above) seems to be used purely for emphasis and not to be of significance for the discourse flow.

Episode 2 (26:36-46) takes us into Gethsamene where there is the thrice offered prayer of Jesus and the thrice lost opportunity for the disciples to support him at this hour of great stress. If the transfiguration revealed the divine glory underlying the humanity, this passage shows more fully than any other the humanity quailing at the divine task that lay just ahead. There is almost a sense of physical relief when the tension breaks and the action is resumed (v 46).

The third episode (26:47-56) outlines the betrayal (v 47), the token resistance by the disciples (v 51) and its rejection by Jesus (v 52), and emphasizes the divine purpose behind the untoward arrest (vv 54, 56). When the note of fulfilled prophecy is sounded (v 56), then the disciples' flight is recorded, just as Jesus had predicted. The uncertain meaning of v 50 does not affect the discourse flow.⁵³⁾

In the fourth episode (26:57-68) the scene moves to the High Priest's residence where the council was waiting. With Peter in the shadows (v 58) and the false witnesses failing to produce adequate evidence, the main focus is on the clash between Jesus and the High Priest. Here Jesus accepts (v 64 cf v 25) the claim of Messiahship thrust on him by Caiaphas, and is thereupon condemned to death (v 66) and subjected to the humiliation of a condemned man (vv 67-68).

The fifth and final episode details Peter's threefold denial, in progressively stronger terms, of his connection with Jesus. The cock crow made Peter's memory overcome his sense of self-preservation and, in the bitter realisation of his failure, he departed in tears.

To sum up this scene then, the first and last episodes deal with Peter and the puncture of his self-image. The second and fourth episodes show Jesus in different relationships to God and man, with some thematic contrast between them. In Scene 2 Jesus is accompanied by his friends and shown on his face before God in private supplication as a Son. In Scene 4 he is surrounded by his enemies and shown on his feet before men in public declaration of his Sonship. The earlier episode is a sort of spiritual

preparation for the latter. The third, or central episode highlights Judas' treachery in bringing about Jesus' arrest. We could diagram the scene as follows:

Peter's denial predicted
Ep 1, 26:31-35

Prayer in Gethsemane
Ep 2, 26:36-46

Arrest
Ep 3, 26:47-56

Trial before Caiaphas
Ep 4, 26:57-68

Peter's denial performed
Ep 5, 26:69-75.

4.3.4 Scene 10

This scene (27:1-14), containing the account of Judas' death unique to Matthew, is plainly and artificially formed on a key pattern. In the first episode (vv 1-2) Jesus is taken to Pilate, and in the third (vv 11-14) is interrogated by him. The intervening verses of the middle episode (3-10) relating Judas' remorse and suicide, are deliberately inserted at this point (by contrast with Mark and Luke who do not have this Palestinian tradition). This may be intended to signify some slight delay before the interrogation took place, but another possible explanation is suggested below in Appendix C. Even the traitor's conduct and demise is seen to be related to God's purposes, as shown by the citation from Zechariah and the allusion to Jeremiah in vv 9-10.⁵⁴) We may finally note the change from the Jewish capital charge of blasphemy in 26:65 to the Roman capital charge of sedition in 27:11. The diagram of the scene is again simple:

Transfer to Pilate Ep 1, 27:1-2	Death of Judas Ep 2, 27:3-10	Interrogation by Pilate Ep 3, 27:11-14
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4.3.5 Scene 11

This scene is taken to extend from 27:15-61 and is the most continuous in narrative and loosely knit in theme. It is here regarded as comprising five episodes, though other divisions are possible.

The first episode (27:15-26) deals with the release of Barabbas and seems at first an aside from the main theme of the fate of Jesus. It does however serve to emphasize both the determination of the authorities to have Jesus executed (v 20) and Pilate's reluctance to do so (v 24). Political expediency (θρόνος γύεται v 24) eventually overcame both his own conscience and his wife's superstition (v 19) and secured Jesus' condemnation (v 26).

The details of the dream and the handwashing peculiar to Matthew undoubtedly heighten the effect of the account.⁵⁵⁾

In the second episode (27:27-31) Jesus is handed over to the governor's soldiers for further degradation prior to the crucifixion. Not surprisingly, it is the political side of the accusation against Jesus which forms the focus of the soldiers' mockery. The "king" is decked out with the imitation trappings of royalty - the robe, crown and sceptre. When finally sated with their cruelty, they returned to Jesus his own clothes (v 31).

Episode 3 (27:32-44) gives a brief but poignant picture of the actual crucifixion. Being already in a weak condition after the flogging of v 26, Jesus needed help with the task of carrying the cross and an unfortunate foreigner was pressed into service for this (v 32). The widespread use of bold face type in the 1st and 2nd editions of the UBS Greek text between vv 34 and 48 shows how very much the suffering and death of Jesus is seen by the evangelist as linked with God's purpose as revealed in the OT. Psalms 22 and 69 are especially echoed. The charge over Jesus' head relates to his alleged royal claims (v 37) and it was thus appropriate for him to be executed along with a pair of bandits who had probably been involved in political insurrection (cf Mk 15:7, Lk 23:19). The mockery of the onlookers centres rather on his claims to divine Sonship (v 40), while that of the authorities takes up both aspects (vv 42, 43). No detail of the physical suffering of Jesus is given, nor any indication of his reaction to the insults flung at him.

The fourth episode (27:45-56) relates the death of Jesus with minimal detail, for the interest is heavily upon its significance and interpretation. The darkness (v 45) may be seen as an echo of Ex 10:22 and Amos 8:9-10 and indicates the wrath of God. The torn temple curtain (v 51) shows that entry to God's presence is no longer barred and Matthew alone adds the cryptic account of the resurrection of the (? recently) dead saints.⁵⁶⁾ The strange phenomena of the darkness and the earthquake are evidently seen by the centurion in charge of the execution squad as related to Jesus' death, and wring from him an acknowledgement at least of Jesus' supernatural powers and perhaps of his deity (v 54). The whole chain of events was watched from a distance by some women who had evidently been among Jesus' followers for a considerable time (vv 55-56).

The fifth and last episode (27:57-61) relates how Joseph of Arimathea obtained the body of Jesus and gave it respectable burial. The stone across the grave entrance must have given the setting an air of awesome finality as the two Marys took up their lonely vigil (v 61).

In summing up this scene, it is hard to find any diagram scheme that is very helpful. We might see some thematic balance between episode one, where the mob's howls obtain the release of Barabbas, and episode 5, where Joseph's request secures the body of Jesus, but it is hard to see any patterning in episodes 2, 3 and 4, which might even be regarded as one long climactic episode. They are certainly more closely bound together in terms of their unity and continuity of narrative than any other three episodes in the gospel. In the diagram below the broken line indicates a possible key pattern and the square with dotted internal lines indicates the close unity of the scene. It is interesting to observe that it is here at the climax of the story that the patterns that emerge fairly readily elsewhere are hardest to find.

Release of Barabbas	Mockery by soldiers	The Cruci= fixion	Death of Jesus	Burial of Jesus
Episode 1 27:15-26	Episode 2 27:27-31	Episode 3 27:32-44	Episode 4 27:45-56	Episode 5 27:57-61

4.3.6 Scene 12

This scene runs from 27:62-28:15 and gives a rather clear key pattern with the resurrection in the second episode set between the despatch of the guards to the tomb and their report. Both the pericopes involving the guards are unique to Matthew and their placement seems a deliberate means of throwing the resurrection into higher relief.⁵⁷⁾

In the first episode (27:62-66) the Jewish authorities are represented as anxious to prevent the spreading of any resurrection story, which presumably shows that Jesus' teaching to the disciples on this had not gone entirely neglected by a wider audience. They are even able to specify that the third day is the crucial time. Pilate somewhat curtly accedes to their request for a detachment of soldiers for guard duty at the tomb.

Episode 2 (28:1-10) opens with the loyal women at the tomb again early in the morning. How different things were from their previous visit! The angelic presence paralysed the guard (οἱ τηροῦντες v 4) but by contrast brought reassurance to the women (the emphatic ὅμως of v 5 is unique to Matthew). The resurrection is asserted, and a meeting with Jesus promised for the disciples in their familiar Galilean homeland. The women themselves did not have to wait for this but met Jesus while on the way to spread their news to the other disciples. Again the promise of a meeting in Galilee was given.

The third episode (28:11-15) shows the guards sufficiently recovered to report to the high priests, who make one last despe-

rate attempt to discredit Jesus. No doubt the soldiers were more than willing to cover themselves and make some extra money in the process. In relating these two incidents involving the guard, Matthew is clearly giving the lie to the official Jewish version of what happened.

We may represent this scene with a simple key diagram.

The Guard Set Ep 1, 27:62-66	The Resurrection Ep 2, 28:1-10	The Guard Bribed Ep 3, 28:11-15
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4.3.7 *The Epilogue*

Why treat the last five verses of the gospel (28:16-20) as an epilogue rather than just another episode in the previous scene? There are several reasons. Firstly, there is a clear break of time and (more prominently) place, from the events of Chs 21-28:15; the location is moved from Jerusalem back to Galilee. Secondly, these verses have the typical function of an epilogue in that they pull together some loose ends, notably the thrice repeated promise of a resurrection appearance in Galilee (26:32, 28:7, 10), but also the three earlier and more general predictions of the resurrection (16:21, 17:23, 20:19). These are here fulfilled not only to the women (as in 28:9-10) but to the very disciples to whom the promises were given. Thirdly, the inclusion of these verses with the previous scene would not simply fail to yield a coherent pattern, but would actually obscure the one which is otherwise there. The fourth reason is in a way the converse of the third; taking these verses as an epilogue gives the whole gospel a nicely rounded balance both of structure and of theme. The Prologue of 1:1-17 links Jesus as the central character of the gospel with Israel's historic past; this epilogue, especially in its closing words, links him with the open-ended future of the new community which his ministry has brought into being. Whereas before Jesus' birth, God's purposes were narrowly channelled through one particular nation and through successive members of it, now in the resurrection era, they can embrace all nations through the authority and perpetual presence of the one representative Man. Thus will come the completion of God's purposes in the consummation of the age.

4.3.8 *Summary of the Second N Block*

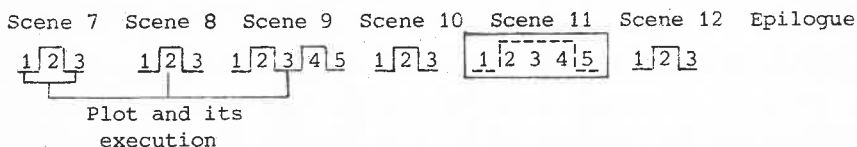
This block holds six scenes in whose thematic structure Matthew's careful arrangement can frequently be observed. Scenes 9 and 11 each have 5 episodes and the other scenes have 3 episodes each. The longer scenes hold the crucial events of the arrest, trial, crucifixion and death of Jesus and the shorter scenes give the related and supporting events.

In the seventh scene the devotion of the woman at Bethany is contrasted with the crystallisation of the plot on Jesus' life, and

in the eighth the betrayal prediction is contrasted with the solemn celebration of the Passover. Scene 9 covers the events from the prediction of Peter's denial to its occurrence, with Peter (anonymously) active again in the 3rd and central episode of Jesus' arrest. Scene 10 sets Judas' death (? a flashforward) between Jesus' transfer to Pilate and Pilate's interrogation. Scene 11 in a continuous narrative moves from the release of Barabbas and condemnation of Jesus through his mockery, crucifixion and death to the burial in Joseph's tomb. Scene 12 uses the appointment and bribing of the guards as a foil for the great discovery of the empty tomb. The Epilogue rounds off the immediately preceding narrative with the promised resurrection appearance and links Jesus with the future as the Prologue did with the past.

We may diagram the block as below.

Diagram for Summary of 2nd N Block



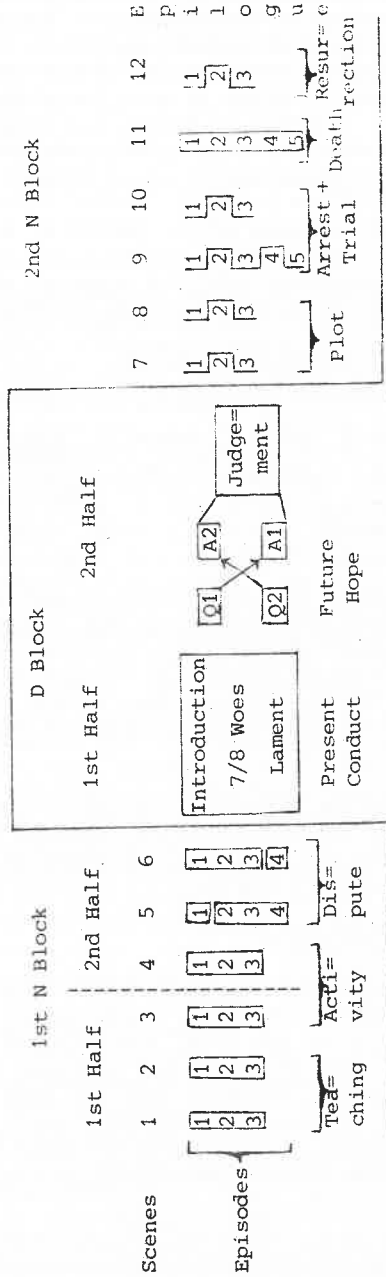
As already noted, the key pattern is much in evidence again, but in contrast with the diagram for Act 2 on p 45, there is relatively little thematic complexity. The plot and its execution stand out, but are clearly integrally related to the main part of the narrative. The themes laid down in Act 1 and developed in Act 2, are brought to a conclusion through one clear and dominant train of events.

In the diagram the left-hand forking of the line linking the occurrences of the plot motif is intended to indicate how the plot moves from the peripheral episodes of Scene 7 to the central episodes of Scenes 8 and 9.

4.4 Summary of Act 3

Again a diagram may be helpful (see following page). In this case it is complicated by the large number of scenes, so, in order to keep it on one page, the episodes have been written vertically. This gives the key patterns in the 2nd N Block a curious appearance, but they mean the same as before. Rings around groups of episodes indicate a chain link of varying degrees of closeness. The one or two word summaries under the scenes give some minimal assistance to the memory about the content!

Diagram for Summary of Act 3



5 SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL

In this final section an attempt must be made to outline the overall development of themes in the gospel. This will inevitably involve some over-generalisation, and if only because of the limited length of the page, labels must be used which do not embrace the whole content of the sections to which they are attached.

The overall balance of the N and D Blocks has been amply noted before. We might pause to add that certain features such as the use of the key pattern and the frequency of genitive absolutes and ἰδοὺ are much more characteristic of Acts 1 and 3 than of Act 2, but focus will be mainly on the themes. Perhaps somewhat unexpectedly one can usefully separate the N Blocks from the D Blocks, as the subject matter of the D Blocks is not closely related to the unfolding of the story.

5.1 The N Blocks

Perhaps we can diagram some of the main N Block themes as on the next page.

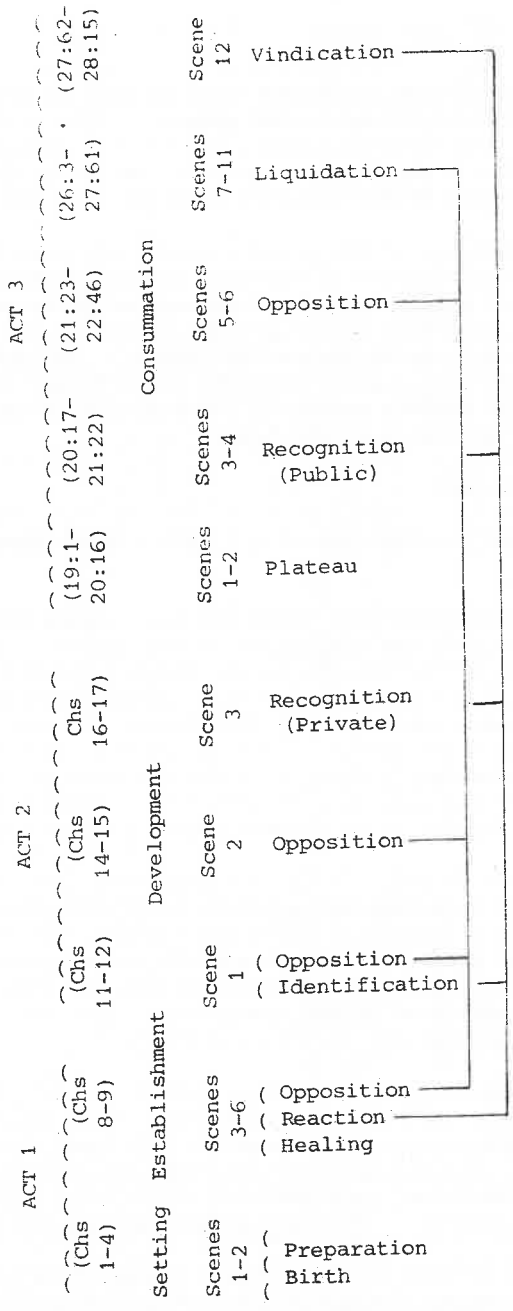
It must be emphasized that these are main themes only and cannot do full justice to the complexity of the gospel. In Act 1 the first N Block is now seen to be the *setting* for the whole gospel, but setting in which both opposition (derived ultimately from Satan) and human response (e.g. from Herod, the Magi, or the first four disciples) are latent. The second N Block gives the *establishment* of the main themes, with the healings bringing a challenge that evokes varying reactions from the beholders. The opposition from the establishment begins to make itself felt.

In Act 2 Jesus is led, through the questions from John the Baptist, to make a private but explicit self-identification. The opposition to his ministry grows and hardens, but through the confession at Caesarea Philippi and the transfiguration, there is a corresponding growth in understanding and conviction on the part of at least some of the disciples. Thus Act 2 can be said to give the *development* of the main themes.

Act 3 sees the culmination of the ministry in the public recognition of Jesus at the triumphal entry. This naturally brings the opposition to a head and leads to its final action in the crucifixion. In the resurrection, however, God gives an open vindication of Jesus' life and work which is of universal and eternal application. Thus the gospel reaches its *consummation*.

If the above outline is a reasonable presentation of the gospel themes, then we can categorize Matthew as being basically polar

Main N Block Themes



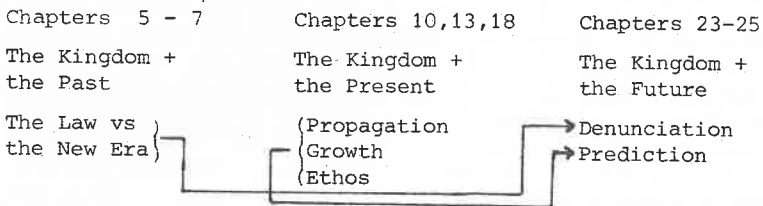
in its outlook. Jesus' life and ministry provoke fundamentally only two types of response, acceptance or rejection. Both are manifested in different ways, but the variety of expression conceals what is essentially a dichotomy.

A general movement forward from the setting, through the establishment and the development to the consummation is now visible. The only large break in this scheme comes in Chs 19 and 20 at the beginning of Act 3. Until the healing of the two blind men at the end of Ch 20, this section does not carry the action forward at all. Rather, we are simply given more examples of Jesus' teaching on such specific issues as family life and wealth. If this section is to be integrated into the outline, it has to be regarded as a sort of plateau (the label in the diagram), a pause before the final climax begins. Such a device would not be without literary parallels.

This outline is painted with broad strokes only, but does seem to yield a coherent direction and purpose behind the gospel as a whole, into which the various sections fit fairly readily, each making its contribution.

5.2 The D Blocks

Now we must look at the D Blocks and here again the labels can only be rather general. All the D Blocks make considerable mention of the Kingdom of Heaven, and we might use this as a basis for labelling them as in the following diagram:



The first D Block, the Sermon on the Mount, with its frequent "You have heard ... but I say to you ..." sets up the Kingdom of Heaven in contrast with life under the Law as in the past. They are in contrast, but not in opposition, since in Jesus' ministry, the Law is not destroyed but fulfilled.

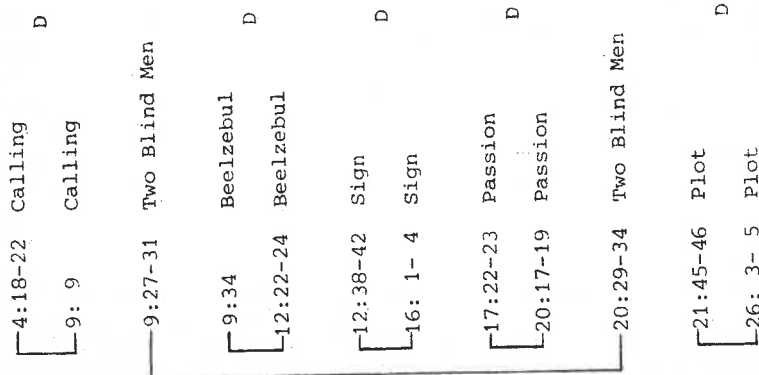
The three separate D Blocks in Act 2 give three windows into the Kingdom as Jesus expounds it. Its manner of propagation, growth and conduct are each dealt with. Since they embody principles which are as relevant today as when Jesus taught, the label "The Kingdom and the *Present*" seems not inappropriate.

In the final D Block, with its two distinct parts, the two previous aspects of teaching are picked up. The practical rejection of the New Era by those who preferred life under the Law leads to the denunciations of Ch 23. The spread of the Kingdom through the life and witness of its members leads naturally to teaching on its consummation as found in the predictions of Chs 24 and 25. The *future* reference of this gives rise to the label in the diagram.

5.3 *Integration of the N and D Blocks*

Now though the N and D Blocks have been considered separately with regard to their themes, and though the removal of the D Blocks would still leave an orderly narrative, we can see that the D Blocks hold material which is appropriate to the stage of the narrative where each is placed. The Sermon on the Mount, with its broad contrast of old and new, is consonant with its position in the section where the narrative is being *established*. Considerations of the propagation, growth and ethos of the Kingdom are fittingly set amid the *development* of the narrative themes. And to set teaching on the future fulfillment of the Kingdom in the *consummation* of the narrative is natural and congruent.

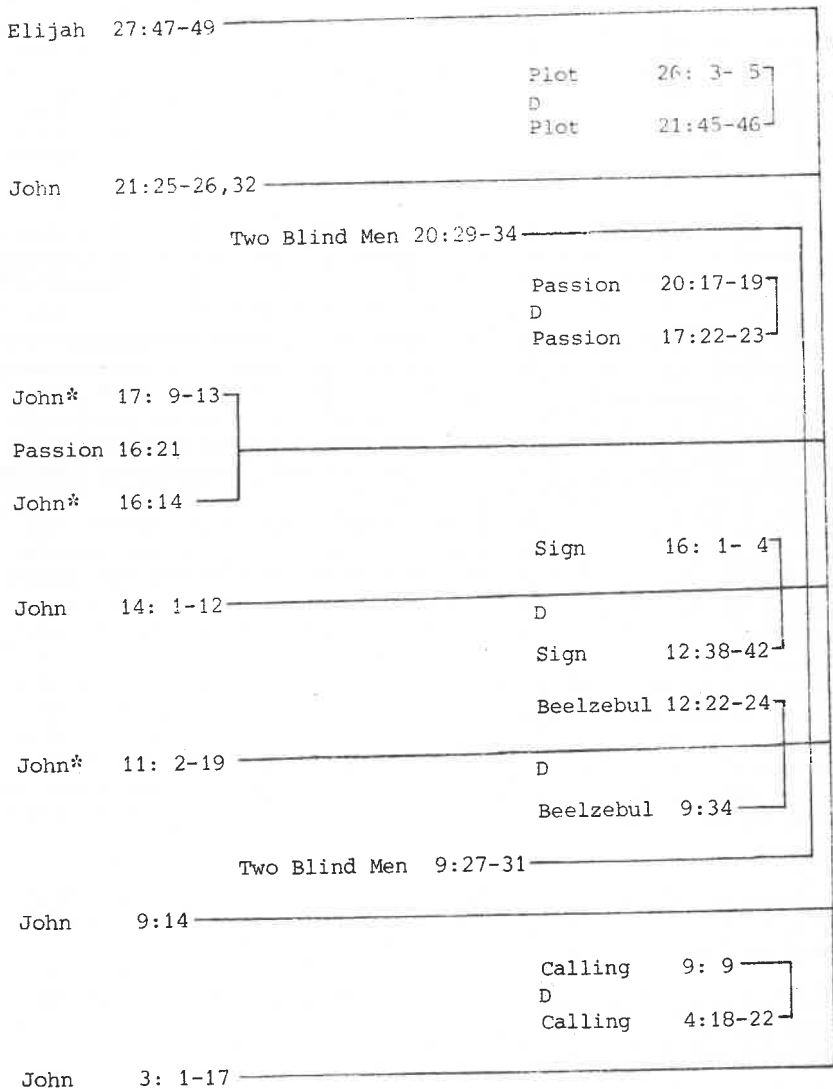
We have already noticed some of the use made in this gospel of repetition. It is interesting to observe a rather consistent patterning in the placement of repeated motifs in relation to the discourse blocks. Each block has a distinct motif occurring both before and after it. The distance of the repeated motif from the D Block itself is variable, but with under-the-surface patterning of this kind, complete symmetry is not to be expected. The first D Block (Chs 5-7) is preceded by the calling of the first four disciples (4:18-22) and followed by the calling of Matthew (9:9). The second D Block (Ch 10) is preceded and followed by a Beelzebub charge (9:34 and 12:22-24). The third (Ch 13) is enclosed by the demands for a sign (12:38-42 and 16:1-4) and the fourth (Ch 18) by passion predictions (17:22-23 and 20:17-19). References to the evil designs of the authorities (21:45-46 and 26:3-5) surround the fifth block (Chs 23-25). We may note furthermore that the two incidents involving two blind men (9:27-31 and 20:29-34) fit neatly into this pattern, since they enclose the three central discourses and their enclosing repetitions. This pattern may be represented diagrammatically:



We may observe furthermore that the motif of John the Baptist interweaves and interpenetrates this whole pattern. References to John precede the first incident involving the two blind men, and follow the second (9:14 and 21:25-26, 32). Other references to John occur within the inclusions formed by the Beelzebul and sign-demand repetitions (11:2-19 and 14:1-12). The other references to John in Act 2 of the gospel (16:14 and 17:9-13) form their own inclusion of the first passion prediction (16:21), in some measure setting it off and highlighting it. There remains the further section 3:1-17 that deals with John. For the interweaving of John's appearances with the D Block inclusions to be complete, it would be necessary for another reference to John to come at some point after 26:5. There is no such reference, but there is the reference to Elijah in 27:47-49. Since elsewhere in the gospel Elijah is mentioned only in close connection with John (11:14, 16:14, 17:3-4, 10-12), it seems quite possible that the mention of him in 27:47-49 can be regarded as the completion of the pattern of references to John. If this is acceptable, the total interweaving of these motifs is as shown in the diagram below.

It appears that not all the motifs in Matthew exhibit this kind of distribution. For instance, references to gentiles, and to Jesus as the Davidic king, show no such patterning.

Thus the gospel as a whole has an impressive unity of structure, theme and movement which is not fully apparent when only shorter sections are under consideration.



* indicates those points where John is associated with Elijah. At 11:14 and 17:13, this explicit association of the two is peculiar to Matthew.