

half of the movement (12:18–29) with rich theophanic imagery continues the sense of urgency from the initial warning but mixes it with a more positive message of encouragement. The second half of the final movement (13:1–19) consists primarily of particular admonitions, but embedded within them (13:7–16) is a summons to Christian life that is based upon the exegetical strategies evident in the central movement.

This understanding of the overall structure of *Hebrews* can be expressed schematically as follows:

- a. 1:1–4 Exordium
- I. 1:5–2:18 Christ exalted and humiliated, a suitable High Priest
 - A. 1:5–14 Christ exalted above the angels
 - B. 2:1–4 Paraenetic interlude: hold fast
 - C. 2:5–18 Christ the Savior, a faithful and merciful High Priest
- II. 3:1–5:10 Christ faithful and merciful
 - A. 3:1–4:13 A homily on faith
 - i. 3:1–6 Introduction: the faithful Christ and Moses
 - ii. 3:7–11 Citation of scripture: the faithless generation
 - iii. 3:12–4:11 Exposition
 - a. 3:12–19 The failure of faithlessness
 - b. 4:1–5 The nature of the promised “rest”
 - c. 4:6–11 Faithfully enter the rest “today”
 - iv. 4:12–13 Concluding flourish: God’s powerful Word
 - B. 4:14–5:10 Christ the merciful High Priest
 - i. 4:14–16 Paraenetic prelude: hold fast and approach
 - ii. 5:1–5 The characteristics of high priests
 - iii. 5:6–10 Christ as High Priest “According to the Order of Melchizedek”
- III. 5:11–10:25 The difficult discourse
 - A. 5:11–6:20 Paraenetic prelude
 - i. 5:11–6:3 Progress to “maturity”
 - ii. 6:4–12 Warning and consolation
 - a. 6:4–8 The danger of failure
 - b. 6:9–12 Hopeful assurance
 - iii. 6:13–20 God’s oath: a sure ground of hope
 - B. 7:1–28 Christ and Melchizedek
 - i. 7:1–3 Introduction and scriptural citation
 - ii. 7:4–25 Exposition
 - a. 7:4–10 Melchizedek superior to the Levites
 - b. 7:11–19 The new priest and the new order
 - c. 7:20–25 The priesthood confirmed with an oath
 - iii. 7:26–28 Concluding flourish on the eternal High Priest
 - C. 8:1–10:18 An exegetical homily on Christ’s sacrificial act
 - i. 8:1–6 Introduction: earthly and heavenly sanctuaries
 - ii. 8:7–13 Citation of scripture: a new, interior covenant
 - iii. 9:1–10:10 Thematic exposition
 - a. 9:1–10 The old, earthly sacrifice
 - b. 9:11–14 The new, heavenly sacrifice
 - c. 9:15–22 The new covenant and its sacrifice
 - d. 9:23–28 The new, heavenly, unique sacrifice
 - e. 10:1–10 The new, earthly-heavenly sacrifice
 - iv. 10:11–18 Concluding flourish on Christ’s sacrifice
- D. 10:19–25 Paraenetic application: have faith, hope, and charity
- IV. 10:26–12:13 Exhortation to faithful endurance
 - A. 10:26–38 Paraenetic prelude
 - i. 10:26–31 A new warning against failure
 - ii. 10:32–38 Recollection of faithful endurance
 - B. 11:1–40 An encomium on faith
 - i. 11:1–2 Introductory definition
 - ii. 11:2–7 Faith from creation to Noah
 - iii. 11:8–22 The faith of the patriarchs
 - a. 11:8–12 The faith of Abraham and Sarah
 - b. 11:13–16 Faith’s goal: a heavenly home
 - c. 11:17–22 The faith of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph
 - iv. 11:23–30 The faith of Moses and followers
 - v. 11:31–38 The faith of prophets and martyrs
 - vi. 11:39–40 Summary: faith perfected in Christians
 - C. 12:1–13 A homily on faithful endurance
 - i. 12:1–3 Jesus, the inaugurator and perfecter of faith’s race
 - ii. 12:4–6 Citation of scripture
 - iii. 12:7–11 Suffering as discipline
 - iv. 12:12–13 Brace for the race
- V. 12:14–13:21 Concluding exhortations
 - A. 12:14–17 Paraenetic prelude: a final warning against failure
 - B. 12:18–29 The serious, but encouraging situation
 - i. 12:18–24 Not Sinai, but a Heavenly Zion
 - ii. 12:25–30 An unshakeable kingdom
 - C. 13:1–21 The life of the covenant
 - i. 13:1–6 Mutual responsibilities
 - ii. 13:7–19 The implications of Christ’s sacrifice
- b. 13:20–25 Concluding benediction and greetings

This articulation into five distinguishable movements follows many of the leads suggested by Vanhoye. Nonetheless, the rationale for the various tripartite schemes cannot be ignored. There is close relationship between movements I and II on the one hand and IV and V on the other. The first two develop, in a somewhat circuitous fashion, the major features of the text’s christological position and, at least in a preliminary way, introduce a key paraenetic theme. The final two movements are both primarily paraenetic and are involved with applications of and inferences from the preceding doctrinal exposition.

If one thing characterizes the structure of *Hebrews* it is the variety of structural principles within subsections. While there certainly are recurrent structural patterns, they never become repetitious. Instead, various kinds of paraenesis and exposition are gracefully alternated in a harmonious unity. A similar harmonious variation is