13. Numerical Structure of Jotham's Fable in Judges 9:8-15

Jotham's obliquely expressed criticism is formulated in an intricately structured composition in which the name of the useless king is numerically hidden in the text.

Verse	Total	Narrative	Introduction	"All Trees"	"Separate trees"
8	10	6	2+	2	
9	15		3+		Olive 12+
10	7		3+	4	
11	13		3+		Fig 10+
12	7		3+	4	
13	13		3 = 17		Vine 10= 32
14	9		5+	4	
15	24		4 = 9		Buckthorn 20
8-15	98 (2x 49)	6	13 + 13 = 26	14	52 (2× 26)

- The number **98**, which is 2 x **49**, represents the name of Abimelech by means of its numerical value, **49** (1 + 2 + 10 + 13 + 12 + 11 = **49**).
- The formulas introducing the speeches have altogether 26 words: 13 for all trees and 13 for the separate trees. Moreover, there are 17 words used in connection with the olive tree, the fig tree and the vine, and 9 with reference to the useless buckthorn.
- The words in the four speeches by the individual trees amount to 52 (2x26).
- Note that the buckthorn needs no less than 20 words to promote his candidature!
- The three useful trees speak altogether **32** words representing God's *kabod*.

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