

8. Numerical Features of Exodus 14

My logotechnical analyses of Exodus 23 and 33 necessitated an investigation into the numerical features of Exodus 14. The theme of the 'angel of God', who journeys with the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan, links these three text not only in terms of content but also numerically, particularly by the conspicuous use of the number **47**, the numerical value of מַלְאָכִי, 'my angel' (13+12+1+11+10). The word occurs explicitly in 23:23 and 32:34. In Exodus 14, the first and second speeches of YHWH (vs. 2-4 and 15-18) are both composed of **47** words. For the use of this number, which occurs no less than six times, see my analysis of [Exodus 33](#).

In this impressive composition the divine name numbers **17** and **26** as well as the *kabod* numbers **23** and **32** give prominence to the crucial events.¹ This also holds true for the conclusion of the Passover passage in chapter 12, Exod. 12:50-51 and 13:17-22, the prologue to Reed Sea passage:

12:50-51	After the Passover ritual, YHWH brought the people of Israel out of Egypt	51 (3x17)
13:17	God decides not to lead the people by way of the land of the Philistines	24
	These 24 words divide into 17 in the narrative and 7 in God's speech	
	The number 24 may have been chosen to symbolically signify the 12 tribes, all the more, so, because Exodus 19:1-2 (the arrival of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai) also opens with 24 words (12 in 19:1 and 12 in 19:2). Compare Exodus 1:1-7 .	
13:17-19	God makes them go round by way of the wilderness towards the Reed Sea	60
	These 60 words divide into 28 before, and 32 after <i>atnach</i>	
13:20-22	The cloud and the pillar of fire, representing YHWH's <i>glory</i> , guide them	32
	These words 32 words divide into 23 before, and 9 after <i>atnach</i>	
13:18-22	Total number of words in the passage dealing with God's guidance	68 (4x17)
13:17-22	Total number of words in the pericope: 92 with 51 (3 x 17) before <i>atnach</i>	
14:1-4	YHWH informs Moses about his plan to win <i>glory</i> at the expense of Pharaoh	52 (2x26)
	These 52 words divide into 5 in the introduction and in the divine speech	47
14:4	He intends to harden Pharaoh's heart and tells the people to camp by the sea	17
14:5-8	Pharaoh is alerted: he pursues the Israelites and overtakes them	55
	The number 55 represents the double <i>kabod</i> pattern (55 = 23 + 32) signifying the <i>glory</i> of YHWH, which is explicitly referred to in v. 4 and 17! Also consult Exodus 33 .	
14:6-8	Pharaoh and his army set out to pursue the Israelites	34 (2x17)
14:2-8	Total number of words in the passage dealing with Pharaoh's pursuit	102 (6x17)
14:10-11	Realizing their predicament, the Israelites call to God and blame Moses	34 (2x17)
14:9-12	Total number of words in the passage dealing with the people's reaction	75
	These 75 words divide into 21 words in the introduction and 34 (2x17) in the speech	
14:13-14	Moses tells the people not to fear, for YHWH will fight for them	32
	Here the <i>kabod</i> number symbolically refers to YHWH's <i>presence</i> in the situation	
14:15-18	YHWH instructs Moses what to do in order to execute his plan (cf. 1-4)	51 (3x17)
	These 51 words divide neatly into 4 in the introduction and 47 in the divine speech	
	Note how this passage resembles vs. 1-4, where YHWH reveals his plan!	
14:15-20	The 86 words in the passage divide into 52 (2x26) before, and 34 (2x17) after <i>atnach</i>	
14:21-22	Moses holds out his hand over the sea and YHWH performs a miracle	32
	As in vs. 13-14, the <i>kabod</i> number symbolically refers to YHWH's <i>presence</i>	
14:23-25	YHWH throws the Egyptians into a panic and they decide to flee	43 (17+26)

¹ For the *kabod* numbers, see my analysis of [Exodus 33](#), note 1.

- The **26** words before and **17** after *atnach* determine the division of the **43** words
- 14:26 YHWH orders Moses to hold his hand out over the sea to let the army drown **17**
 The **17** words divide into 4 in the introduction and **13** in YHWH's speech
 It may not just be coincidence that this is the **26th** verse. It supports the function of **17**
 to symbolically express YHWH's presence!
- 14:26-28 At YHWH's command the water covers the Egyptians and no one survives **55**
 The **55** words divide into 42 in the narrative and **13** in YHWH's final speech
- 14:31 YHWH's plan executed: the Israelites put their faith in him and in Moses **17**
- 14:15-31 Total number of words used to describe the execution of YHWH's plan **260!**
- 14:1-31 The name YHWH occurs **17** times.