

The Numerical Features of the Book of Deuteronomy (Revised)

A New Approach to its Compositional Structure

Please read the [General Introduction](#)

Part II 4,1-49 Opening Prophetic Peroration

The verses highlighted by **17** and **26** are in **bold face**; the paragraphs highlighted as a whole are in **blue**.

Vs	Text	Words	Letters	יהוה	Sum-Words	Compositional Structure
1	Deut 4,1	24	97	1	24	§1 Observing my teaching means life for you!
2	Deut 4,2	20	74	2	44	
3	Deut 4,3	20	75	4	64	
4	Deut 4,4	7	33	5	71/71	
5	Deut 4,5	18	72	6	89	§2 Keeping YHWH's laws will enhance your esteem! Observe YHWH's statutes and laws, for thereby you will display your wisdom to other peoples and they will deem you incomparable among the nations: 52 (2x26) words.
6	Deut 4,6	22+	91		111	
7	Deut 4,7	14+	53	7	125	
8	Deut 4,8	16/52 (2x26)	63		141	
9	Deut 4,9	23	87		164/93	
10	Deut 4,10	31	115	9 1	195	§3 At Horeb YHWH made a covenant with you! First divine speech of 10 in 4-26: <u>4,10</u> ; <u>5,6ff</u> ; <u>5,28ff</u> ; <u>9,12</u> ; <u>9,13f</u> ; <u>9,23</u> ; <u>10,1f</u> ; <u>10,11</u> ; <u>17,16</u> ; <u>18,17ff</u> . See the Introduction to, and the analysis of Part I .
11	Deut 4,11	13	50		208	
12	Deut 4,12	14	60	10	222	
13	Deut 4,13	15	59		237/73	
14	Deut 4,14	17	69	11	254	§4 Remember what happened at Horeb! YHWH authorized me to teach you statutes and laws to observe. Take care not to make carved images in the form of any statue of a man, a woman or any animal. Nor must you worship the host of heaven: 17+78 words. 95 = 17 + 78 (3x26) .
15	Deut 4,15	15+	61	12	269	
16	Deut 4,16	12+	44		281	
17	Deut 4,17	12+	44		293	
18	Deut 4,18	11+	40		304	
19	Deut 4,19	28/78 (3x26)	113	13	332/95	
20	Deut 4,20	14+	57	14	346	
21	Deut 4,21	21+	81	16	367	§5 Do not forget YHWH's covenant after my death! <u>20-22</u> On your account, YHWH refused me entry to the land, but you will do so. Therefore, be faithful to YHWH: 51 (3x17) words.
22	Deut 4,22	16/51 (3x17)	61		383	
23	Deut 4,23	20	75	18	403	
24	Deut 4,24	8	25	19	411/79 P	
25	Deut 4,25	18	82	20	429	§6 You must realize that idolatry leads to disaster! <u>28</u> In exile you will serve fake gods: 17 words.
26	Deut 4,26	27	102		456	
27	Deut 4,27	13	55	22	469	
28	Deut 4,28	17	65		486/75	
29	Deut 4,29	12+	48	23	498	§7 In exile you will experience YHWH's mercy! <u>29-31</u> If you are in distress and turn to YHWH, he will be merciful and will not fail you or destroy you: 26+17 words.
30	Deut 4,30	14/26	58	24	512	
31	Deut 4,31	17	60	25	529/43	
32	Deut 4,32	28	106		557	§8 Remember your unique meeting with this God! Did any people ever hear a god speaking out of the midst of the fire as you have heard? Did any god ever try to perform such miracles as you have seen in Egypt?
33	Deut 4,33	11	40		568	
34	Deut 4,34	27	120	26	595	
35	Deut 4,35	10	37	27	605/76	
36	Deut 4,36	16+	62		621	§9 YHWH is God and there is no other! He gave you instructions, freed you and gave you a land of your own. Remember there is no other god! Keep his commandments and you will live: 85 (5x17) words. <u>4,29-40</u> , <u>§§7-9</u> Finalized and sealed by 204 (12x17) words.
37	Deut 4,37	13+	56		634	
38	Deut 4,38	14+	57		648	
39	Deut 4,39	16+	61	28	664	
40	Deut 4,40	26/85 (5x17)	100	29	690/85 P	
40	4,1-40	690	2708	29x	690	

41	Deut 4,41	9	34		699	§10 Editorial note 1: three cities set apart by Moses. 1,5-4,43 Altogether 2314 (89x26) words.
42	Deut 4,42	22	72		721	
43	Deut 4,43	14	58		735/45	
44	Deut 4,44	8+	29		743	§11 Editorial note 2: forming a bridge to Moses' second speech in which he proclaims YHWH's statutes and laws. 4,44-49 Altogether 78 (3x26) words.
45	Deut 4,45	12+	51		755	
46	Deut 4,46	20+	81		775	
47	Deut 4,47	16+	59		791	
48	Deut 4,48	11+	37		802	
49	Deut 4,49	11/78 (3x26)	43		813/78 P	1,5-4,49 Whole section sealed by 2392 (92x26) words.
	4,41-49	123	464		123	
49	4,1-49	813	3172	29x	813	1,1-4,49 Altogether 9520 (560x17) letters.

Observation 1 In terms of content, the Prophetic Peroration (4,1-40) is a distinct compositional entity but at the same time an integral part of Moses' first speech (1,6-4,40). This is attested by the fact that the speech, including its introduction (1,5) and the first editorial note (4,41-43) is composed of **2314** (89x26) words, by which it is finalized and sealed. Including the **78** (3x26) words of the second editorial note, 4,44-49, the entire text of 1,5-4,49 is finalized and sealed as a self-contained literary unit by its **2392** (92x26) words and delimited in Codex L by a **P** after 4,49.

Observation 2 A special feature of the prophetic peroration is the extremely high density of verses and words that are highlighted by the numbers **17** and **26**: 34 of the 49 verses (nearly 70%) and 523 of the 813 words (64%). The extra emphasis laid in this way on passages regarded as crucial is understandable because the speech is a passionate plea by Moses appealing to the Israelites not to serve other gods but to be faithful to YHWH by keeping his statutes and laws.

Observation 3 In this part of his speech Moses refers *only once* to YHWH's speaking in the past (4,10), contrary to what is the case in Part I, 1,6-3,29 where we find **10** divine speeches. This DS is the first in a string of **10** divine speeches Moses cites in chapters 4-26 – see [Part I](#), p. 2. The function of the string of **10** running as a red thread through 4-26 is not only to unify Parts II - IV, but also to symbolize YHWH's presence in the text as the real author of the statutes and laws. See [Part IV](#).

Observation 4 The peroration itself (4,1-40) constitutes the second part of Moses' first discourse. It divides into **9** paragraphs and two editorial notes in terms of content and on numerical considerations. In pride of place at the centre of the ninefold structure is [Paragraph 5](#).

1	4,1-4	Observing my teaching means life for you!	71 words.
2	4,5-9	Keeping YHWH's laws will enhance your esteem!	93 words.
3	4,10-13	At Horeb YHWH made a covenant with you!	73 [18+52(2x26)]+23 words.
4	4,14-19	Remember what happened at Horeb!	95 [17+78(3x26)] words.
5	4,20-24	Do not forget YHWH's covenant after my death!	79 [51(3x17)+28] words.
6	4,25-28	You must realize that idolatry leads to disaster!	75 [58+17] words.
7	4,29-31	In exile you will experience YHWH's mercy!	43 [26+17] words.
8	4,32-35	Remember your unique meeting with this God!	76 words.
9	4,36-40	YHWH is God and there is no other!	85 (5x17) words.
10	4,41-43	Editorial note 1: three cities set apart by Moses	45 words.
11	4,44-49	Editorial note 2: a bridge to Moses' second speech	78 (3x26) words.

Paragraph 7 (29-31) has **26+17** words: should Israel commit idolatry, YHWH will forgive them.

Paragraph 9 (36-40) has **85** (5x17) words: Moses' last warning against idolatry in this speech.

Paragraphs 7-9 (29-40) has **43+76+85=204** (12x17) words.

The strong emphasis laid on these sections demonstrates the importance of Moses' warning against the making of carved images and idolatry which will have far-reaching consequences for the Israelites. As a matter of fact, this warning constitutes the essence of Deuteronomy's message.

Observation 5 There is a string of **10** instances of the key-phrase **מתוך האש**, 'from the heart of the fire'. The phrases with their context have altogether **85** (5x17) words. See also Observation 10 in [Part I](#).

- 1 4,12 וידבר יהוה אליכם **מתוך האש**
- 2 4,15 ביום דבר יהוה אליכם בחרב **מתוך האש**
- 3 4,33 השמע עם קול אלהים מדבר **מתוך האש**
- 4 4,36 ודבריו שמעת **מתוך האש**
- 5 5,4 פנים בפנים דבר יהוה עמכם בהר **מתוך האש**
- 6 5,22 את־הדברים האלה דבר יהוה אל־כל־קהלכם בהר **מתוך האש**
- 7 5,24 הראנו יהוה אלהינו את־כבודו ואת־גדלו ואת־קלו שמענו **מתוך האש**
- 8 5,26 כי מי כל־בשר אשר שמע קול אלהים חיים מדבר **מתוך האש**
- 9 9,10 ככל־הדברים אשר דבר יהוה עמכם בהר **מתוך האש**
- 10 10,4 את עשרת הדברים אשר דבר יהוה אליכם בהר **מתוך האש**

As in the case of all other strings of **10**, this one also attests to the unity of the passage: [4,1-11,32](#) (Parts II and III). This is additional evidence of the bridge function of Chapter 4 which is structurally part and parcel of Moses' first speech starting in Chapter 1. We may therefore conclude that [1,1-11,32](#) is a coherent compositional unity. This is reinforced by another unifying string: the **10** instances of the key-phrase **ארץ טובה / הארץ הטובה**, woven into the text from [1,25](#) to [11,17](#):

- 1 1,25 ויאמרו **טובה הארץ** אשר־יהוה אלהינו נתן לנו
- 2 1,35 אם־יראה איש באנשים האלה...**הארץ הטובה** אשר נשבעתי לתת לאבותיכם
- 3 3,25 אעברה־נא ואראה את־**הארץ הטובה** אשר בעבר הירדן
- 4 4,21 ולבלתי־בא אל־**הארץ הטובה** אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לך נחלה
- 5 4,22 ואתם עברים וירשתם את־**הארץ הטובה** הזאת
- 6 6,18 למען ייטב לך ובאת וירשת את־**הארץ הטובה** אשר־נשבע יהוה לאבותיך
- 7 8,7 כי יהוה אלהיך מביאך אל־**ארץ טובה**
- 8 8,10 וברכת את־יהוה אלהיך על־**הארץ הטובה** אשר נתן לך
- 9 9,6 לא בצדקתך יהוה אלהיך נתן לך את־**הארץ הטובה** הזאת לרשתה
- 10 11,17 ואבדתם מהרה מעל **הארץ הטובה** אשר יהוה נתן לכם

Observation 6 There is only one divine speech in Chapter 4, but it does not stand alone, being part of the second of three strings of **10** in Deuteronomy. This string constitutes the theological backbone of [4,1-26,19](#). For an overview of these **10** divine speeches, see [Part IV Deut 12,1-26,19](#), Observation 20, and for the first string of **10**, see [Part I, 1,1-3,29](#) Observation 8.