

The Numerical Features of the Book of Deuteronomy

A New Approach to its Compositional Structure

Please read the [General Introduction](#)

Part III 5,1-11,32 Moses Expounds the Horeb Covenant

Part III opens with an editorial note in [5,1](#) introducing Moses' summons to all Israel to hear the statutes and ordinances, in this case, specifically the terms of the covenant. Its outer boundary at [11,32](#) can easily be determined since there is a fresh start in the flow of the discourse at [12,1](#), the proclamation of the statutes and laws in Part IV, [12-26](#). The entire text of Part III is finalized and sealed as a self-contained literary entity by having **187** (11x17) verses. The inner boundaries of its sub-sections are not defined by a significant number of words (except for Sections 6 and 7), but by the Masoretic layout markers **Petuchah** and **Setumah** which divide the text into seven sections, with Section 4 ([8,1-20](#)) in pride of place at the centre of the overall menorah structure. All seven end with a significant number of words:

Section 1	5,1-6,3	Israel's Fundamental Religious Experience at Horeb	532 words	P	End: 156 (6x26) words.
Section 2	6,4-25	The Essential Tenets of Israel's Faith	258 words	S	End: 68 (4x17) words.
Section 3	7,1-26	Israel's Disposition in Relation to the Canaanites	412 words	P	End: 34 (2x17) words.
Section 4	8,1-20	Forgetting YHWH Means the Loss of the Land	293 words	P	End: 13 words.
Section 5	9,1-29	Moses Reviews Israel's Stubbornness in the Past	499 words	P	End: 78 (3x26) words.
Section 6	10,1-11	The New Stone Tablets Signify a New Beginning	180 words	P	End: 17 832 (32x26)
Section 7	10,12-11,32	"What Then, O Israel, Does YHWH Ask of You?"	652 wordsEnd: 238	= 14x17 words.

The present division of the text is strongly underscored by the demarcating technique we often found in Exodus, namely, to round off and end a passage by **17** or **26** words (or their multiples). Contrary to what we would expect, this is not the case in **Section 4** (at the focal point) which ends with **13** words. Since this is the letter value of the crucial word **אֶחָד**, 'one', which expresses YHWH's oneness and uniqueness, the choice was obviously deliberate in order to underline the stern warning to the Israelites not to forget their (*unique!*) God and serve other gods. Note that **Sections 6** and **7** have altogether **832** (22x26) words.

Overview in Terms of Words, Letters, the Divine Name, and Divine Speeches

The **verses** highlighted by multiples of **17** and **26** are in **bold face**. The **paragraphs** highlighted in their entirety are in **blue**. The **7** divine speeches are numbered as **1**, **2**, **3**, etc. as part of a string of **10** in [4-26](#). See the end of the file [12-26](#).

Vs	Texts	Words	Let.	יהוה	Sum-W.	Section 1: 5,1-6,3 The fundamental Horeb experience
1	Deut 5,1	22+	92		22	§1 The promulgation of the terms of the covenant
2	Deut 5,2	6+	25	1	28	5,1-5 Prologue: Moses reminds the Israelites of the covenant
3	Deut 5,3	16	56	2	44	YHWH made with them at Mount Horeb, where he spoke face to face to them. 52 words. Moses was the mediator (v. 5).
4	Deut 5,4	8/52 (2x26)	30	3	52	The Decalogue is introduced by לֵאמֹר in 5,5 . Compare 1,5 !
5	Deut 5,5	20	74	4-5	72/72 S	1 1 + 189 = 190 YHWH promulgated the stipulations.
DS 1						I, YHWH, am your God, who freed you from Egypt.
6	Deut 5,6	9	41	6	81/9	1 Therefore, you shall have no other god to set against me!
7	Deut 5,7	7	23		88	2 You shall make no carved image!
8	Deut 5,8	16	58		104	YHWH is a jealous god who will punish your sins, but he is also merciful and a loving god.
9	Deut 5,9	21	76	7	125	3 You shall not make wrong use of God's name! 17 words.
10	Deut 5,10	6	29		131 S	4 You shall keep the sabbath day holy!
11	Deut 5,11	17	51	8-9	148 S	You have six days to do all your work!
12	Deut 5,12	9 153 (9x17)	34	10	157 S	You shall not do any work on the sabbath day! 26 words.
13	Deut 5,13	6	24		163 S	Remember that you were slaves in Egypt!
14	Deut 5,14	26	109	11	189 S	5 Honour your father and your mother!
15	Deut 5,15	23	87	12-13	212 S	6 You shall not commit murder!
16	Deut 5,16	22	80	14-15	234 S	7 You shall not commit adultery!
17	Deut 5,17	2	6		236 S	8 You shall not steal!
18	Deut 5,18	2	7		238 S	9 You shall not give false evidence as a witness!
19	Deut 5,19	2	7		240 S	10 You shall not covet what is your neighbour's!
20	Deut 5,20	5 51 (3x17)	16		245 S	Moses emphasizes that YHWH spoke all these words.
21	Deut 5,21	16	60		261 S	
22	Deut 5,22	24	88	16	285/204	

23	Deut 5,23	15	63		300	§2: 5,23-6,3 The aftermath of the promulgation of the laws The Israelites were aware of this, but feared to be confronted with God and asked Moses to act as mediator and reporter of what God has to say. They vowed to listen to him and perform what they had heard. 5,28-31 $2 \times 3 + 58 = 61$ YHWH accepted the people's pledge.
24	Deut 5,24	23	86	17	323	
25	Deut 5,25	18	70	18	341	
26	Deut 5,26	14	46		355	
27	Deut 5,27	21	80	19-20	376/91	
28	Deut 5,28	23+	87	21-22	399	
29	Deut 5,29	19+	69		418	
30	Deut 5,30	6+	22		424	
31	Deut 5,31	20/68 (4x17)	80		444	
32	Deut 5,32	11+	47	23	455	
33	Deut 5,33	17+ 156 (6x26)	71	24	472	
34	Deut 6,1	17+	74	25	489	
35	Deut 6,2	23/68 (4x17)	86	26	512	
36	Deut 6,3	20	76	27	532/156 P	
37	Deut 6,4	6	25	28-29	538	Section 2: 6,4-25 The essential tenets of Israel's faith §1 YHWH is one: love him and keep his commandments!
38	Deut 6,5	10	39	30	548	
39	Deut 6,6	9	35		557	
40	Deut 6,7	10	50		567	
41	Deut 6,8	8	32		575	
42	Deut 6,9	5	24		580/48 S	
43	Deut 6,10	21+	82	31	601	
44	Deut 6,11	19+	73		620	§2 6,10-15 Be loyal to YHWH, even when you enjoy prosperity! Moses urges the Israelites once again to keep YHWH's commandments and not to forget their God when they grow rich and prosperous in the beautiful land he gives them. Should they there serve other gods, YHWH will sweep them away from the face of that land. Altogether 85 (5x17) words.
45	Deut 6,12	12+	45	32	632	
46	Deut 6,13	8+	32	33	640	
47	Deut 6,14	9+	43		649	
48	Deut 6,15	16/85	58	34-35	665/85 S	
49	Deut 6,16	8	31	36	673	
50	Deut 6,17	10	43	37	683	
51	Deut 6,18	17	69	38-39	700	
52	Deut 6,19	8	29	40	708/43 S	
53	Deut 6,20	14	57	41	722/14	§3 6,16-19 Do not put YHWH to the test! Keep his directives! The Israelites must do what is right in YHWH's eyes! 17 words. Altogether 43 words (17+26).
54	Deut 6,21	11+	55	42	733	
55	Deut 6,22	11+	54	43	744	
56	Deut 6,23	13+	52		757	
57	Deut 6,24	18+	73	44-45	775	
58	Deut 6,25	15/68 (4x17)	58	46	790/68 S	
59	Deut 7,1	27+	119	47	817	
60	Deut 7,2	14+	57	48	831	
61	Deut 7,3	11/52 (2x26)	35		842	
62	Deut 7,4	14	54	49	856	
63	Deut 7,5	14+	66		870	
64	Deut 7,6	20/34 (2x17)	70	50-51	890 S	
65	Deut 7,7	14+	50	52	904	
66	Deut 7,8	22+	91	53-54	926	
67	Deut 7,9	16/52 (2x26)	70	55	942	
68	Deut 7,10	12	47		954	
69	Deut 7,11	12	51		966/176 P	
70	Deut 7,12	20+	83	56	986	§2 12-20 YHWH's promises for the benefit of the Israelites 12-15 If they observe YHWH's laws and do them, he will bless them in all possible ways. They, on their part, must destroy these nations, because they would be the snare which awaits them: 52+17 words. This S draws attention to Moses' words encouraging the people not to be afraid of the nations (7,17-20).
71	Deut 7,13	22+	94		1008	
72	Deut 7,14	10/52 (2x26)	39		1018	
73	Deut 7,15	17	63	57	1035	
74	Deut 7,16	21	71	58	1056 S	
75	Deut 7,17	10	43		1066	
76	Deut 7,18	13	47	59	1079	
77	Deut 7,19	25	107	60-61	1104	
78	Deut 7,20	12	50	62	1116/150	

79	Deut 7,21	10+	39	63	1126	§3 21-26 Be not in dread of these nations; YHWH is with you! YHWH will drive out these nations little by little, which means that they will remain in the land. Therefore, the Israelites must utterly destroy their cult, lest they be ensnared by it. These things are an abomination to YHWH! The entire paragraph is highlighted by 52 + 34 words.
80	Deut 7,22	18+	64	64	1144	
81	Deut 7,23	9+	39	65	1153	
82	Deut 7,24	15/52 (2x26)	59		1168	
83	Deut 7,25	19+	72	66	1187	
84	Deut 7,26	15/34 (2x17)	57		1202/86 P	
85	Deut 8,1	19	83	67	1221	Section 4: 8,1-20 The land as a gift of God
86	Deut 8,2	23+	87	68	1244	
87	Deut 8,3	28/51 (3x17)	99	69	1272	§1 8,1-10 The march in the Wilderness and the Promised Land 2-3 The Israelites must remember that YHWH tested their loyalty and showed their dependence on him: 51 (3x17) words.
88	Deut 8,4	10	38		1282	
89	Deut 8,5	12	43	70	1294	6-8 They must keep YHWH's commandments and realize that YHWH gives them a rich and beautiful land: 34 (2x17) words. See Observation 11.
90	Deut 8,6	9+ 156 (6x26)	39	71	1303	
91	Deut 8,7	15+	58	72	1318	The entire paragraph is highlighted by 156 (6x26) words.
92	Deut 8,8	10/34 (2x17)	38		1328	
93	Deut 8,9	18	63		1346	§2 8,11-20 Do not be proud of yourself: YHWH helped you! 11-13 They must not become proud and forget their God when they gain wealth and enjoy the fruits of the land: 34 (2x17) w. Remember that YHWH brought you out of Egypt and led you through the terrible Wilderness to humble and test you!
94	Deut 8,10	12	44	73	1358/156	
95	Deut 8,11	16+	65	74	1374	The entire paragraph is highlighted by 104 (4x26) words. §§1-2 8,1-18 Altogether 260 words.
96	Deut 8,12	7+	30		1381	
97	Deut 8,13	11/34+ (2x17)	41		1392	§3 8,19-20 Moses warns the Israelites not to commit idolatry Idolatry will cause their downfall and death!
98	Deut 8,14	11+	48	75	1403	
99	Deut 8,15	16+	69		1419	Section 5: 9,1-29 The land in view; time to look back
100	Deut 8,16	13+	58		1432	
101	Deut 8,17	10+	34		1442	§1 9,1-8 Moses confronts the people with their stubbornness 9,1 Listen, Israel, you are going to cross the Jordan! 17 words. 4-8 They must know that their occupation of this land is not due to their merit, for they are a stubborn people: 68 words. They must remember how they roused YHWH's anger at Mount Horeb so that he was ready to destroy them: 34 words. The entire paragraph is highlighted by 156 (6x26) words.
102	Deut 8,18	20/104 (4x26)	72	76	1462/104 P	
103	Deut 8,19	20	83	77	1482	§2 9-21 Moses looks back on the dramatic events in the desert
104	Deut 8,20	13	56	78-79	1495/33 P	
105	Deut 9,1	17	68		1512	9,12 3 3 + 19 = 22 YHWH ordered Moses to go down. 9,13-14 4 4 + 23 = 27 YHWH considered destroying the people.
106	Deut 9,2	15	52		1527	
107	Deut 9,3	22	92	80-81	1549	16-21 They made themselves an image of a calf, causing Moses to shatter the stone tablets. On account of their sin Moses lay prostrate before YHWH and interceded for them, offering his life as atonement for their apostasy: 26+78=104 (4x26) words.
108	Deut 9,4	22+ 156 (6x26)	97	82-84	1571	
109	Deut 9,5	28+	117	85-86	1599	§3 22-24 Four examples of Israel's defiant behaviour 9,23 5 1 + 7 = 8 YHWH commanded them to occupy the land.
110	Deut 9,6	18/68 (4x17)	62	87	1617	
111	Deut 9,7	25+	90	88-89	1642	§4 25-29 Moses reminds the Israelites of his intercession Moses did his utmost to let YHWH overlook their stubbornness and spare them for the sake of their fathers and because they are the people he brought out of Egypt: 78 (3x26) words.
112	Deut 9,8	9/34 (2x17)	40	90-91	1651/156	
113	Deut 9,9	23	94	92	1674	
114	Deut 9,10	22	88	93-94	1696	
115	Deut 9,11	15	60	95	1711	
116	Deut 9,12	22	75	96	1733	
117	Deut 9,13	13	44	97	1746	
118	Deut 9,14	14	57		1760	
119	Deut 9,15	13	43		1773/122	
120	Deut 9,16	17+	66	98-99	1790	
121	Deut 9,17	9/26	41		1799	
122	Deut 9,18	24+	103	100-101	1823	
123	Deut 9,19	17+	66	102-103	1840	
124	Deut 9,20	11/(52)+ (2x26)	47	104	1851	
125	Deut 9,21	26/78(3x26)	91		1877/104	
126	Deut 9,22	8	40	105	1885	
127	Deut 9,23	24	90	106-107	1909	
128	Deut 9,24	7	28	108	1916/39	
129	Deut 9,25	16+	69	109-110	1932	
130	Deut 9,26	18+	72	111-112	1950	
131	Deut 9,27	15+	57		1965	
132	Deut 9,28	20+	84	113	1985	
133	Deut 9,29	9/78 (3x26)	40		1994/78 P	

134	Deut 10,1	18	65	114	2012	Section 6: <u>10,1-11</u> New stone tablets for the Ten Words 10,2 6 3 + 27 = 30 YHWH ordered Moses to make new stones. 10,3-4 Moses reminds the people that he made an ark and cut two new stone tablets on which YHWH wrote the Ten Words: Altogether 34 (2x17) words. 10,6-9 Editorial note about the death of Aaron and the status of the tribe of Levi and the Levites. They have no holding of ancestral land: YHWH is their holding, as he promised them. 10,9 YHWH is the holding of the Levites: 17 words. 10,11 7 3 + 14 = 17 YHWH's order to start the march.
135	Deut 10,2	14	55		2026	
136	Deut 10,3	14+	58		2040	
137	Deut 10,4	20/34 (2x17)	79	115-116	2060	
138	Deut 10,5	15	55	117	2075/81	
139	Deut 10,6	16	63		2091	
140	Deut 10,7	9	37		2100	
141	Deut 10,8	21	78	118-120	2121	
142	Deut 10,9	17	57	121-122	2138/63	
143	Deut 10,10	19	82	123-124	2157	
144	Deut 10,11	17	64	125	2174/36 P	
145	Deut 10,12	26	99	126-128	2200	
146	Deut 10,13	12	43	129	2212	
147	Deut 10,14	10+	38	130	2222	
148	Deut 10,15	14+	58	131	2236	
149	Deut 10,16	8+	31		2244	
150	Deut 10,17	19/51 (3x17)	74	132	2263	
151	Deut 10,18	10	36		2273	
152	Deut 10,19	8	31		2281	
153	Deut 10,20	10	38	133	2291	
154	Deut 10,21	15	57		2306	
155	Deut 10,22	12	54	134	2318/144	
156	Deut 11,1	11+	54	135	2329	
157	Deut 11,2	23+	82	136	2352	
158	Deut 11,3	13+	52		2365	
159	Deut 11,4	21/68 (4x17)	81	137	2386	
160	Deut 11,5	9	31		2395	
161	Deut 11,6	26	103		2421	
162	Deut 11,7	10	34	138	2431	
163	Deut 11,8	19	75		2450	
164	Deut 11,9	16	65	139	2466/148 S	
165	Deut 11,10	22+	78		2488	
166	Deut 11,11	13+	52		2501	
167	Deut 11,12	16/51 (3x17)	60	140-141	2517/51 S	
168	Deut 11,13	20	80	142	2537	
169	Deut 11,14	10+	48		2547	
170	Deut 11,15	6+	28		2553	
171	Deut 11,16	11+	52		2564	
172	Deut 11,17	24/51 (3x17)	86	143-144	2588/71 []	
173	Deut 11,18	17	67		2605	
174	Deut 11,19	12+	54		2617	
175	Deut 11,20	5/17	25		2622	
176	Deut 11,21	17	68	145	2639/51 S	
177	Deut 11,22	22+	83	146	2661	
178	Deut 11,23	12/34 (2x17)	54	147	2673	
179	Deut 11,24	21	77		2694	
180	Deut 11,25	19	72	148	2713/74 S	
181	Deut 11,26	7	187 (11x17)		2720	
182	Deut 11,27	13	50	149	2733	
183	Deut 11,28	23	89	150	2756/43 S	
184	Deut 11,29	23	79	151	2779	
185	Deut 11,30	17	68		2796	
186	Deut 11,31	18	66	152	2814	
187	Deut 11,32	12	50		2826/70	
54	10,1-11,32	832 (32x26)	2344	39x	832	Sections 6-7: <u>10,1-11,32</u> have altogether 832 (32x26) words.
187	5,1-11,32	2826	10191	152x	2826/238	§§5-8: <u>11,18-32</u> have altogether 238 (14x17) words.

Observation 1 As in Parts I and II, a considerable number of verses and words in Part III are highlighted by the divine name numbers **17** and **26**, 155 of the **187** verses (83%) and 2383 of the 2826 words (91%).

Observation 2 The 7-word **introductory note** in 5,1 is numerically linked to the two **editorial notes** in Chapter 4 by the fact that they constitute altogether **130** (5×26) words ($45+78+7=130$). Another significant feature of Section 1 is that vs. 1-4 are highlighted by having **52** (2×26) words, and that the Decalogue passage, 5,1-22, ends with **51** (3×17) words, to be followed by **187** (11×17) in 5,23-33. Moreover, within the latter passage we find **68** (4×17) words in the section dealing with Moses' report to the people about YHWH's reaction to their request (5,28-31). And to crown it all, the following passage, (5,32-6,2) is made up of **68** (4×17) words. All this shows that the author/editor did his utmost to weave the divine name numbers as often as possible into the fabric of this focal passage, clearly in order to signify the presence of YHWH in the events described and the words spoken in the text dealing with Moses' exposition of the Horeb covenant.

Observation 3 The divine name occurs, remarkably enough, not **26** but **27** times. This is all the more conspicuous because in Part III as a whole the name YHWH occurs **152** times instead of **153** times (9×17) as one would expect in the light of the situation in Exodus – see p. 2 in the [Conclusions](#). The same goes for the 186 occurrences of the name in Part IV, 12,1-26,19 instead of **187** (11×17). Is this simply a matter of coincidence or was it for some unknown reason intentionally designed?

Observation 4 The Decalogue passage, 5,1-22, is structured in a symmetrical menorah pattern, followed by four reactions to the promulgation of the Ten Words (5,23-6,3):

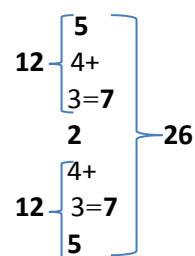
§I	5,1-5	Prologue
§II	5,6-11	Prohibitions: the first, second and third
§III	5,12-14	Commandment: the fourth
§IV	5,15	<i>Why the sabbath was instituted</i>
§V	5,16	Commandment: the fifth
§VI	5,17-21	Prohibitions: the sixth-tenth
§VII	5,22	Epilogue
§VIII	5,23-27	Reaction of the Israelites
§IX	5,28-31	Reaction of YHWH
§X	5,32-33	Reaction of Moses: "Do as YHWH has commanded you!"
§XI	6,1-3	Reaction of Moses: "If you listen to YHWH, you will prosper and live long."

The eleven paragraphs of Section 1 are structured in a 7 + 4 pattern. This pattern occurs many times, especially in Genesis – see chapter 4 in my [Numerical Secrets of the Bible](#).

Observation 5 Two commandments are especially highlighted: the third (5,11) and fourth (5,14) which have **17** and **26** words respectively. The **17** words of the third commandment are made up of **51** (3×17) letters, giving it extra emphasis.

The **26** words of the Sabbath commandment, on their part, have been arranged in such a way that they constitute a beautiful symmetric menorah pattern structured by the number **7**:

- 1 The seventh day is a sabbath for YHWH your God;
- 2 on it you shall not do any work,
- 3 you, or your son, or your daughter,
- 4 **or your slave, or your slave-girl**
- 5 or your ox, or your ass, or any of your cattle
- 6 or the alien residing among you,
- 7 so that your slave and slave-girl may rest as you do.



There are no less than six pairs having **7** words together: the 1st branch of the menorah, like its counterpart the 7th, together with the mathematical centre have $5+2=7$ words; the 2nd branch and its counterpart the 6th, like the 2nd and 3rd, and the 5th and the 6th have $4+3=7$ words; the 3rd branch and its counterpart the 5th have $3+4=7$ words. The two words at the centre are flanked by **12** words before and after.

The mentioning of the slave and slave-girl at the centre of the menorah is of special importance for the interpretation of the text. Being positioned at the focal point, this category receives special emphasis,

which should not surprise us, since the slave and slave-girl were the most vulnerable members of the household and subject to being called upon first to carry out chores or run errands on the Sabbath. No wonder that they are explicitly referred to once again in the last sentence: “so that your slave and slave-girl may rest as you do”!

Observation 6 In contrast to Exodus which connects the Sabbath with the Creation-story, Deuteronomy asserts that it was instituted to remind the Israelites of the slavery in Egypt from which YHWH freed them (5,15). As a result of this, the Deuteronomic version of the Decalogue is longer, most intriguingly by exactly **17** words: **189** in Deuteronomy and **172** in Exodus. Far from being a matter of coincidence, precisely **17** words were chosen, in my view consciously, to symbolize that the deviant view of Deuteronomy on the Sabbath is sealed by YHWH’s name giving it divine approval.

Observation 7 The **68** (4x17) words at the end, in 6,21-25, finalize and seal this section.

The term שִׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, ‘Hear, Israel!’, occurs 5x in the book as a whole: 5,1; 6,4; 9,1; 20,3; 27,9.

The words יהוה אלהינו, ‘YHWH our God’, occur in two strings of **10** instances in Deuteronomy 1-11: 1,6.19.20.25.41; 2,29.33.36.37; 3,3 (**10x**); 4,7; 5,2.24.25.27a.27b; 6,4; 6,20.24.25 (**10x**).

The **17th** instance counted from the beginning, coinciding with the **7th** occurrence counted from 4,7, falls precisely in 6,4 by which special stress is laid on the Shema. See Observation 10 in Part I.

Moreover, the decimal value (400 Gematria) of the words שִׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד, happens to be $410+541+26+102+26+13 = 1118$ (43x26).

In terms of content, the **33** words of 24-25 are skilfully structured in a symmetrical menorah pattern:

1 ויצונו יהוה לעשות את-כל-החקים האלה	YHWH commanded us	7	} 15
2 ליראה את-יהוה אלהינו	We must fear him	4	
3 לטוב לנו כל-הימים	It is for our own good	4	
4 לחיתנו כהיום הזה	He will preserve our lives	3	} 15
5 וצדקה תהיה לנו	We will be in the right	3	
6 כי-נשמר לעשות את-כל-המצוה הזאת לפני יהוה אלהינו	We must listen to him	10	
7 כאשר צונו:	As YHWH commanded us	2	

The **3** words at the centre of the menorah have pride of place and receive special emphasis, for they express what it is all about: keeping YHWH’s commandments is a matter of life and death.

Observation 8 The importance of Chapter 7 is underlined by the fact that it is made up of **26** verses, of which 18 are governed by the numbers **17** and **26** (69%) and 293 of the 412 words (71%). The seven passages highlighted by the divine name numbers and focussed upon as of paramount importance speak for themselves. The last highlighted passage, vs. 25-26, with its **34** (2x17) words, concludes the section.

In terms of the Masoretic layout markers Petuchah and Setumah, the text divides into two main parts, of which their number of verses (6, 5, 5, 10) spell the name YHWH in a cryptic way. The strong marker P after v. 11 divides the **26** verses into **11** (1-11: WH) and **15** (12-26: YH).

However, in terms of content, and due regard being given to the **34** (2x17) words of vs 5-6, the **52** (2x26) words of vs. 21-24, and the **34** (2x17) words of vs. 25-26, the text divides into a sevenfold form with a beautiful symmetrical menorah pattern, with YHWH’s blessings in pride of place at the centre:

§I 1-4	You must put these nations under the ban!	66	} 136 (8x17)
§II 5-6	Destroy their cult objects: You are YHWH’s people!	34 (2x17)	
§III 7-11	Remember what YHWH did for you in Egypt!	76	
§IV 12-16	If you obey YHWH, he will bless you in all possible ways!	90	
§V 17-20	Remember what YHWH did for you in Egypt!	60	
§VI 21-24	Do not fear these nations: YHWH is in your midst!	52 (2x26)	
§VII 25-26	You must regard abominable things as under the ban!	34 (2x17)	

In my opinion, the present simple symmetrical architecture of the text overrules the extremely complicated structure put forward by R.H. O’Connell, “Deuteronomy vii, 1-26: asymmetrical concentricity and the rhetoric of the conquest”, VT 42 (1992), pp. 248-265.

Observation 9 The epithet יהוה אלהיך, ‘YHWH, your God’ (‘your’ singular), occurs no less than **15x** in Chapter 7 and altogether **71x** in 1-11. In 12-26 it occurs **122x**, and in 27-34 **41x**, which brings the total number of occurrences in the book as a whole to **234x (9x26)**! The purpose of the high density in combination with the significant number of occurrences is to lay stress on the unique relationship between YHWH and his people: he, and only he, is your God! Its plural counterpart יהוה אלהיכם is to be found only **46x** in the book as a whole, while the first person form יהוה אלהינו occurs only **23x**. This shows that יהוה אלהיך is a theological key-label of paramount importance.

Observation 10 Chapter 8 is throughout governed by the number **7**, seeing the five heptads and the unmistakable symmetrical menorah pattern of its general framework:

§I 8,1	Admonishment: “Keep YHWH’s commandments, that you may live and multiply!”	19	-----	
§II 8,2-6	“Remember what YHWH did for you in the Wilderness!”	82	156 (6x26)	
§III 8,7-10	Laudatory description of the good land YHWH gives his people.	55		
§IV 8,11	Admonishment: “Do not forget YHWH! Keep his commandments!”	16	-----	68 (4x17)
§V 8,12-16	“When you enjoy the fruits of the land, remember what YHWH did for you!”	58	104 (4x26)	
§VI 8,17-18	“Remember that it is YHWH who gives you power, when you get powerful!” P	30	-----	
§VII 8,19-20	Admonishment: “If you forget YHWH and serve other gods, you shall perish!”	33	-----	

The **3** admonishments are extra emphasized by the fact that they have altogether **68 (4x17)** words.

The only **P** to be found in the text appears after v. 18. As a result, vs. 1-18 divides into **156 (6x26)** in vs. 1-10 and **104 (4x26)** in v. 11-18, which is a strong indication that there are also caesurae between v. 10 and 11. All this substantiates the present organization of the text in a menorah pattern.

Observation 11 The laudatory description of the good land in vs. 7-10 is an indivisible literary entity in its own right. It is demarcated by the two inclusions ‘good land’ in the first and last sentences, v. 7a and 10b respectively, which happen to have altogether **7+10 = 17** words. The *atnach* divides the **55** words of the text into **26a** and **29b**, which underscores its unity:

- 7a. Since YHWH your God is bringing you into a **good LAND**¹ -
 7b. **a LAND**² with streams,¹ springs,² and underground waters gushing out in valleys and hills³,
 8. **a LAND**³ with wheat¹, and barley², vines³, fig trees⁴, and pomegranates⁵,
a LAND⁴ with oil-rich olive trees⁶, and honey⁷;
 9. **a LAND**⁵ in which you will eat food without scarcity,⁴ in which you will lack nothing;⁵
a LAND⁶ whose stones are iron,⁶ from whose hills you shall mine copper⁷—
10. you must eat and be sated and bless YHWH your God for the good LAND⁷ he has given to you.

Note that v. 7a opens with a subordinate clause: “Since...”, of which the main clause: “you must eat...” is to be found in v. 10, with the description of the land in between in v. 7b-9. The conjunction ׀ does not relate to what precedes in v. 6, but to what follows in v. 10. It is the fact that (not the reason why) YHWH is bringing his people in a good land that they must eat their fill and bless him! In my opinion, this is the only correct rendering. Most translators have: “For the Lord your God is bringing you...” and inevitably miss the main clause at the end by translating “And you shall eat...”.

Observation 12 In my commentary (Volume Ib, 1987) I delimited the text of this section not as 8,1-20 but as 8,1-9,6, because I failed to see the evident break in the flow of thought after 8,20 (clearly marked by a *Petuchah*). That 8,20 marks the end of a larger passage (Sections 1-4: 5,1-8,20) is also illustrated by the fact that Sections 1-4 have exactly **104 (4x26)** verses. Moreover, I did not realize sufficiently that the key phrase “Listen, Israel...” in 9,1 marks the beginning of a totally new phase in the discourse. This is a clear case of progressive insight.

Observation 13 The fact that Section 5: 9,1-29 opens and concludes with a significant number of words is the first sign that we have to do with a high grade numerical composition: 9,1 has **17** words, while the concluding passage, 9,25-29, is made up of **78 (3x26)** words, and in between there are no less than **7** passages governed by **17** or **26**.

In order to establish its compositional architecture, we have to look for other features of the text than layout markers, because there is only the **P** after v. 29. Four instances of multiples of **17** and **26** can help us to do so: **68 (4x17)** words in 4-6, **182 (7x26)** in 7-17, **78 (3x26)** in 18-21, and **78 (3x26)** in 25-29.

Assuming that Chapter 9 also divides into **7** paragraphs like the Decalogue passage and Chapters 7 and 8, we can divide the text into 1-17, 18-20, and 21-29; moreover the **7** paragraphs constitute an asymmetrical heptad in a menorah pattern:

§I	Vs. 1-3	Moses assures the people that YHWH will fight for them	54 words.
§II	Vs. 4-6	The reason why YHWH will drive the nations out	68 (4x17) words.
§III	Vs. 7-17	Moses recalls the events at Mount Horeb	182 (7x26) words.
§IV	Vs. 18-20	Moses recalls his intercession for the people	52 (2x26) words.
§V	V. 21	Moses recalls how he smashed and burned the golden calf	26 words.
§VI	Vs. 22-24	Moses recalls how Israel provoked YHWH in the Wilderness	39 (3x13) words.
§VII	Vs. 25-29	Moses recalls how he beseeched YHWH to spare them	78 (3x26) words.

There are good reasons to choose decisively for the present tripartite menorah structure: first, 7-17, the Golden Calf Episode, is an indivisible literary entity in terms of content; second, its unity is bolstered by the string of **7** instances of the key-word **לוחות**, 'tablets' (9,9 2x; 9,10 1x; 9,11 2x; 9,15 1x; 9,17 1x); third, the **52** words in 18-20, dealing with Moses' intercessory prayers to spare Israel and Aaron, stand in pride of place at the centre as of paramount importance; and fourth, the deliberately chosen **26** words dealing with the destruction of the golden calf by which v. 21 stands out as a distinct highlighted section.

The **39** words in 22-24 are significant, because they represent the letter value of *YHWH-èchad*, 'YHWH is One', signifying that YHWH is a unique God who surpasses and rules out all other gods. At the same time, the number **39** anticipates Moses' **78**-word intercessory prayer in 25-29 which divides in terms of content into **39 + 39** laying extra stress on YHWH's uniqueness and on the man **Moses** (letter value: 13+21+5=39):

Vs 25-27a Moses reminds YHWH of his redeeming act and his promise to the patriarchs **39** words.

Vs 27b-29 Moses urges YHWH not to regard Israel's stubbornness, wickedness and sins **39** words.

Section 5 concludes with an open end: Moses' prayer functions as a cliffhanger anticipating YHWH's response. This means that Section 5, 9,1-29, is inextricably linked to Section 6, 10,1-11, which is a literary entity in its own right. I shall demonstrate that the two sections interconnect by means of the well-know 7+4 pattern which we encountered in Section 1, 5,1-6,3.

Observation 14 Section 6, 10,1-11, is delimited by a **Petuchah** after v. 11 and concluded by **17** words. In terms of content, the **11** verses of the text divides into **4** paragraphs, constituting together with the **7** paragraphs of Section 5 the well-known 11=7+4 pattern (see Observation 4 above). Note the skilful use of multiples of the divine name numbers **17** and **26**!

1-2	Moses cites YHWH's speech in which he ordered him to cut two new stone tablets	32
3-4	Moses cut them like the first and YHWH wrote the Ten Words as before	34
5-9	Moses returned, put the tablets in the ark and reflects on the status of the Levites	78
10-11	Moses recalls his intercession: YHWH orders him to lead the people to the land	36
		68 (4x17)

Observation 15 The editorial note (vs 6-9) is fully integrated into Moses' discourse, because its **63** words are part and parcel of the **78 (3x26)** words of vs 5-9. See Observation 6 in [Part I](#). The fact that Israel is addressed in the 2nd person form at the end of the editorial note clearly shows that the author/redactor intended it to be part of Moses' discourse.

Observation 16 The word **לוחות**, 'tablets', is 6x written defectively except the first instance which is written **לוחות**; this brings the number of letters to **22**, evidently in order to refer symbolically to all the letters of the alphabet.

Observation 17 Section 6 and 7 have altogether **832** (32x26) words (180+652), which is a strong indication that they are inextricably linked together despite the fact that they constitute two distinct literary units.

Observation 18 The use of a **Petuchah** at the end of Section 7, after 11,32, was obviously not deemed necessary because in 12,1 a new phase starts in the discourse: the proclamation of the statutes and ordinances (12-26). In accordance with most sections in Part III, Section 7 divides into **7** paragraphs, in this case in an asymmetrical menorah pattern. They are delimited by 5 **Setumahs**, not 6, because a **Setumah** after 10,22, between 10,12-22 and 11,1-9 was not considered necessary. Here is an overview of the **7** paragraphs in terms of the **43 verses** and the 652 words:

§1	10,12-22	YHWH requires Israel to fear and obey him	11+	144	
§2	11,1-9	They should love him and remember his great deeds S	9=20	148	
§3	11,10-12	Moses reminds them of his intercessory prayer S	3	51 (3x17)	
§4	11,13-21	If they lay these laws in their hearts, God will bless them S	9	122	
§5	11,22-25	If they love and obey him, he will dispossess the nations S	4	20	74
§6	11,26-28	Moses confronts them with the blessing and the curse S	3	43	187 (11x17)
§7	11,29-32	They must set the blessing and the curse on two mountains S	4	70	

The reference to Moses' intercessory prayer in **§3**, 11,10-12, stands out, being positioned in pride of place at the mathematical centre in terms of the **43 verses** ($43 = 20 + 3 + 20$). This is reinforced by the fact that it is made up of **51 (3x17)** words. The **editorial note** in 11,30 is highlighted by its **17** words.

The last three paragraphs are strongly emphasized by their **187 (11x17)** words. They function as the grand closure of Part III (5,1-11,32). Seeing the strong focus on YHWH as the One and Only God in Section 7 (10,12-11,32), it is not surprising to find that the key-term יהוה אלהים occurs **10x** (the number of laws).

Observation 19 There are altogether **7** Divine Speeches in Part III (5-11). Together with the single DS in 4,10 and the two DSs in 12-26, (17,16 and 18,17-18), they form the second string of **10** in 4-26 – see there Observation 20. The first string is in 1-3, and the third in 31-34. The numerical features of the present string are illustrative of the meticulous care with which the Divine Speeches were composed.

Texts	Introductions	Speeches	Totals
1 5,5-21	1	189	190
2 5,28,31	3	58 289 (17x17)	61
3 9,12	3	19 323 (19x17)	22
4 9,13-14	4	23	27 338 (13x26)
5 9,23a	1	7 34 (2x17)	8
6 10,1-2	3	27	30
7 10,11	3	14	17
7 Speeches	18	337	355 = 338 + 17