

**Close Reading Questions for High School Students on
Sefer Shoftim: Perakim Khaf - Khaf Aleph
by Zvi Grumet**

פרק כ

1. In this פרק, for the first time in all of ספר שופטים, we find בני ישראל united. What is the irony in this unity? Notice that they are united from דן to שבע – the same דן we just learned about.
2. In what way does the description of the soldiers from בנימין (the last story in this book) match the description of the first שופט in this book?
3. Notice the question in פסוק יח. Where have we heard this question and answer before? In which context does it make sense?
4. Why would בני ישראל twice tell בני ישראל to go to battle and then bring about terrible losses for them in those battles? What was different about the third attempt in which they were successful?
5. When בני ישראל are finally successful, which battle from ספר יהושע does it remind you of? In what way is this battle different from that one? What is the subtle message the text might be sending in paralleling those battles?
6. Note how swiftly בני ישראל acted to go to war against בנימין (and not allow the survivors to marry their daughters) and how swiftly they regret that decision!
7. פנחס הכהן was mentioned in a similar situation in ספר יהושע. What has changed?
8. Notice that the story of מיכה has idolatry while the extended story of פילגש בגבעה has שפיכות דמים and גילוי עריות.

פרק כא

1. What happened to שבט בנימין as a result of the civil war? How was that problem exacerbated by the pledge that the rest of בני ישראל had taken?
2. Notice who did not take that pledge. What happened to them?
3. How did בני ישראל solve the marriage problem of the rest of בנימין? What are the great ironies in their solution? Where else in this story did we find an ambush?
4. The story of פילגש בגבעה – particularly what happened to the פילגש – is clearly the low point of ספר שופטים. Does the continuation of the story – the reaction of בני ישראל – represent a recovery from that low point or a continuation of it?
5. Notice how the פרק (and the ספר!) ends. Why is it particularly appropriate for this story?