

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

פרק ד

1. What do we know from the outset about דבורה that sets her apart from the other שופטים we've seen up until this point?
2. Where is דבורה located? Where is the king against whom she wants to fight located?
3. Which שבטים participated in the battle?
4. סיסרא relies on his chariots. Where have we read previously (in this ספר) about chariots?
5. Look at דבורה's message to ברק in פסוק ט. Why is that a bad thing? How does that come true in this story?
6. What do we know about יעל? Why did she do what she did?

פרק ה

1. This פרק is a poetic version of the story told in the previous פרק. The retelling of the story, however, adds details that were not in the version told in פרק ד! How many differences can you find between the two versions?
2. What role does ה' play in this story according to פרק ד? According to פרק ה?
3. According to פרק ה, which שבטים participated in the battle? Which did not? What was דבורה's attitude toward those who did not fight?
4. What does the language about יעל's method of subduing סיסרא (as described in this פרק) suggest that is different from the description in the previous פרק?
5. Look at the last four words of this פרק. Do you think that they would be more appropriate at the end of פרק ה or the end of פרק ד?! Explain.

פרק ו

1. What situation is described in the opening פסוקים of this פרק?
2. What do מדין and עמלק have in common?
3. פסוק ז describes something we haven't seen yet! What is it?
4. פסוקים ח-י describe something that might be considered a sequel to ב:א-ה. Notice the parallels!
5. גדעון is described as חובט חטים בגת. What does this mean? What is its significance?
6. גדעון responds cynically to the messenger. Is that surprising or understandable?
7. Notice the similarity between the conversation in פסוקים טו-טז and the conversation in שמות ג:א-יב. How is this similarity reinforced even further in פסוק יז?
8. Notice the similarity between the way גדעון treats his "guest" and the way אברהם treats his (פרשת וירא at the beginning of).
9. Notice the similarity between what גדעון does to his father's idols and the famous מדרש about אברהם and his father's idols!
10. Notice which שבטים join גדעון in the battle.
11. What signs does גדעון ask for at the end of the פרק? Does he receive them? What is strange about them?