

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

**פרק ט**

1. What do we know about אבימלך's background?
2. Were the people of שכם Jews?!?!?
3. Notice the irony in אבימלך becoming king! (Compare to the end of the previous פרק)
4. יותם uses a parable to explain the problem with אבימלך. Is this parable meant simply as an insult to אבימלך, or are there other messages? What are the various messages behind the parable? Which part of the parable is reminiscent of the previous פרק?!
5. Look at the verb used in כב פסוק to describe אבימלך's position. Is it similar to other verbs used to describe שופטים?
6. What relationship emerges between אבימלך and the people he governs?
7. Notice the pun on the name אבימלך vs גל בן עבד. Whose name does גל בן עבד invoke in fomenting his rebellion against אבימלך?
8. What is the nature of אבימלך's reign? How did he get to that position? In what way does it reflect what יותם understood about him?
9. What is the symbolism of אבימלך "salting" the city? Of what does it remind you? In what way does this represent אבימלך's style?
10. In what way does אבימלך's handling of the tower of שכם remind you of יותם's parable?
11. How does אבימלך meet his end? What previous story in ספר שופטים does it remind you of? What do you think is the message in that similarity?
12. Should אבימלך be counted as one of the שופטים? Explain!
13. Notice the theme of thorns in this פרק and the previous one. What other aspects of אבימלך are similar to those of his father?

**פרק י**

1. We are given very brief descriptions of two שופטים at the beginning of this פרק. In what ways are these different from previous שופטים we've seen? In what ways are they different from each other? Notice that the name יאיר הגלעדי is already familiar to us from the end of במדבר לב!
2. The middle of the פרק describes a new twist on בני ישראל suffering. Can you identify what that is?
3. The end of the פרק describes what can best be described as a cynical response from ה'. In what way does it remind you of the beginning of the story of גדעון?! In what way is it similar to ו:ח-י and ו:א-ה?
4. What does טז פסוק mean? (If you are using an English translation, check multiple translations!)
5. Notice that beginning with גדעון we are told where various שופטים are buried.
6. Notice that this פרק is approximately halfway through the ספר!