

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

**פרק טז**

1. Notice how שמשון's weakness continues to play itself out. Does that weakness advance his cause, hinder his cause, or play some other role?
2. Can you detect a pattern in the stories of שמשון's strength?
3. Is דלילה Jewish or פלשתי? What are the implications of this question?
4. Notice the parallel in language between יד:טו and טז:ה.
5. Notice the use of a tent peg by דלילה. Where have we seen that before?! (Even the verb is the same!)
6. How does דלילה know that this time he was telling the truth?
7. Did שמשון know that his strength was in his hair?
8. Why does שמשון repeatedly fall for her tricks? Didn't he realize after the first and second times (and remembering what his first "wife" did to him) that she was setting him up for trouble?
9. At the end of this פרק is one of only two times where we see a religious side to שמשון. Where is the other one and what do they have in common?
10. What image of שמשון do the stories about him leave us with?
11. Notice how both the opening and closing of this chapter deal with pillars.
12. The word וילפת appears only twice in תנ"ך – once here and the other in מגילת רות.
13. Why didn't שמשון wait until he returned to full strength and continue his battle against the פלשתים?

**פרק יז**

1. Notice how similar the opening of this story is to the beginning of the שמשון story (פרק יג). In what way is it significantly different?
2. Notice where מיכה is from. Where else have you seen this region in ספר שופטים?
3. The פרק opens up with a story that has a background to it, but we are not told that background explicitly. Can you decipher what happened before the opening of this פרק?
4. Can you figure out why the phrase איש הישר בעיניו יעשה is the final line of the opening section in this פרק?
5. Try to imagine what was happening throughout the land based on the descriptions and stories you find in this פרק.
6. What is the link between the story of מיכה and the story of דלילה and שמשון?
7. Why is this story in ספר שופטים? It doesn't follow the pattern outlined at the beginning of the ספר!



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