

**Close Reading Questions for High School Students on
Sefer Shmuel: Perek Gimmel - Dalet
by Zvi Grumet**

פרק ג

1. What information is conveyed in פסוק ב that seems to be irrelevant to the continuation of the story? Whom does this information remind you of?
2. What is unusual about where שמואל sleeps? Compare this to א:ט – do you see a pattern?
3. Notice that פסוק ז seems to be misplaced. Where would have expected to find it written?
4. Look carefully at what עלי tells שמואל to say (פסוק ט) and what שמואל actually says (פסוק י).
5. To whom does שמואל respond הנני in this פרק?
6. Look at the conversation in פסוקים טז-יז. In what way is it similar to the conversation between אברהם and יצחק on their way to the עקדה (בראשית)? In what way is it significantly different (including in the continuation of the conversations)?
7. If ה' already gave this message to עלי in the previous פרק, why does he need to tell it to שמואל here?
8. עלי accepts ה'’s decree. Two other leadership figures in the books of שמואל are faced with the loss of their leadership. Who are they? Do they follow עלי’s path or not?
9. In what way does שמואל’s status change from the opening פסוק to the closing פסוקים? How has שמואל’s role from what his mother had dedicated him to?
10. Notice how this פרק begins and ends. What does that tell about what happens in the middle of the פרק?
11. Think about what עלי knows or doesn’t know in the previous two פרקים. How does that connect with what he knows/doesn’t know in this פרק? What message is this ספר trying to give us?

פרק ד

1. Can you identify how the people viewed the ארון in this פרק? Was it similar to or different from the way the פלשתים saw it?
2. How many of בני ישראל died in the first round of battle? How many in the second round?
3. Why would ה' let the ארון get taken? Isn’t that a חילול ה'?
4. עלי receives some bad news. Read the text carefully – which piece of bad news was, for him, the worst?

5. Notice the similarity between פסוק יד and פסוק ה.
6. Find the similarities between the birth of בנימין and the birth of אבי כבוד.
7. Even though it is not explicit in this פרק, later on, it becomes clear that the taking of the ארון led to the imminent destruction of שילה as a religious center. What sin of בני ישראל caused this great tragedy?
8. שילה is the first place we hear of the destruction of שילה. Look at that פרק and see if you can find the idea underlying his rebuke to the people and how it connects with this פרק.
9. What new aspect of עלי's leadership do we learn toward the end of this פרק?
10. Notice the order of bad news as reported to עלי and contrast it with the order of the bad news given to פנחס's wife.