

**Close Reading Questions for High School Students on
Sefer Shmuel Bet: Perakim Yud Aleph - Yud Bet
by Zvi Grumet**

פרק י"א

1. This פרק opens with a description of the continuing battle to defeat עמון. What has changed from the previous פרק?
2. Contrast what דוד has been described as doing in the previous פרקים with the way he is described in this פרק.
3. In what ways is this story similar to the story with יהודה and (תמר) בראשית לח. In what ways are the characters and their actions very different?
4. Contrast the way אוריה is presented in this פרק with the way דוד is presented.
5. The reason אוריה gives for not going home to his wife (פסוק יא) is similar to something in פרק ז. What is the similarity?
6. What two points are dramatically highlighted in פסוק יג?
7. What is the similarity between בראשית כב: and פסוק טו?
8. Based on the way the story is described, do you think that people were likely aware of what transpired between דוד and בת שבע and the attempted cover-up?
9. In what way did יואב not follow דוד's instructions? Why do you think he acted differently from what he was told?
10. In what way did the messenger יואב sent to דוד change the message from what he was told? Why do you think that he changed it?
11. דוד makes many poor choices in this פרק, each with tragic consequences. How many can you identify? Can you identify a primary cause for all the poor choices he makes?
12. At what point in this incident does דוד get upset with ה'?
13. Did בת שבע play an active role in this story, or was she just a victim?

פרק י"ב

1. The parable used by נתן is not really parallel to what דוד did. Why do you think that נתן generated such a poor parable? Was he effective in what he tried to accomplish?
2. Try to explain דוד's response to the case brought before him by נתן seems extreme. After all, does a thief merit the death penalty?
3. What three punishments does נתן declare for דוד? In what way are they designed to match דוד's sins (מדה כנגד מדה)? Which of those does דוד try to avert? Why that one?
4. For what sins does דוד rebuke נתן? What is the point of פסוקים ז-ח in the rebuke?
5. Contrast דוד's reaction to the rebuke from the נביא to שאול's earlier reaction to the rebuke from (שמואל) שמואל א פרק יג ופרק טו. Compare דוד's reaction to the rebuke to (בראשית לח:כו) יהודה's reaction.

6. The תורה is very clear that children do not die for the sins of their father (דברים כד:טז). Why do you think that here ה' makes an exception? (See the striking formulation in (יג-יד).
7. Notice the way that the נביא refers to שבע in פסוק טו and later in פסוק כד.
8. Why were דוד's aides surprised by the way he reacted after the child had died? In what way was their understanding of the events different from דוד's?
9. Why does ה' think that it is acceptable, perhaps even desirable, for דוד to father additional children with שבע?
10. יואב plays an important role in both פרקים related to the incident with שבע. Would you say that יואב displays great loyalty to דוד?
11. Notice that this פרק closes by returning full circle to the opening of פרק יא. What change has taken place within דוד as a result of the incident with שבע?
12. By the end of פרק יב, what sense does the text seem to want to convey about the stability of דוד's throne?
13. Note: This is the last battle recorded with עמון. Later, we find עמון helping דוד and נעמה העמונית marrying דוד, who is the ancestor of all future kings in יהודה!