

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

פרק ז

1. What request does דוד make of ה'?
2. Notice that there are two issues in דוד's desire and ה' initial response. One focuses on the structure (אהל vs בית) and the other focuses on what the nature of God's presence amongst בני ישראל is (מתהלך vs יושב). In what way are those issues connected, and in what way are they distinct?
3. ה' responds to both of the issues raised by דוד in the previous question. Find where ה' responds to each in terms of what he wants to do for דוד. Notice how ה' plays on the words in both issues דוד raised.
4. Read the פרק carefully!! What reason did ה' give for denying דוד's request?
5. By what name does דוד repeatedly refer to ה' in his response to ה'?
6. Compare דוד's comment in כב-כד to משה's comments in ח-לג-לד. דברים ד:ז-ח.
7. Contrast כז פסוק with יד:יז-יט במדבר. In what way are they very different?
8. Look carefully at דוד's response to ה' message to him. What is דוד's basic message?
9. Some people like to call this פרק "the great love story between דוד and ה'." See if you can explain why.

פרק ח

1. This פרק describes a series of military victories. Do you think that all these took place at the beginning of דוד's reign, or do they span an extensive period of time?
2. Earlier, when דוד was running from שאול, he sought refuge in מואב (where his great-grandmother came from). Why is he now going to battle against them and treating them with extreme severity?
3. דוד's first two victories end with his taking or using some kind of measuring device. What do you think the text is trying to convey?
4. What is דוד's goal in his conquests – is it expanding the boundaries of the kingdom or something else?
5. What values did דוד establish as central to his reign?
6. The text describes דוד's sons (along with בניהו בן יהוידע and mysterious כרתי ופלתי) as כהנים. What does that mean?
7. In what way is this פרק connected to the two previous פרקים? In what ways is it connected to פרק ה?
8. What sense does the text want us to get by the time we finish reading this פרק?

פרק ט

1. We were introduced briefly to מפיבשת a few פרקים ago. Who was he, and how did he become lame?
2. Why is דוד nice to מפיבשת? See if you can suggest two different answers!
3. From the descriptions offered in this פרק, who is the more significant figure, מפיבשת or ציבא? Based on what, can you determine who is more significant? Whose name is more prominent?
4. Why is מפיבשת in far-way דבר לו while ציבא is sitting on שאול's homestead?
5. מכיר בן עמיאל, from דוד appears in this פרק and again in יז:כז. What do these situations have in common?
6. How many things in common can you find between מפיבשת and איש בשת?
7. The expression that מפיבשת will "eat at my table" appears three times in this פרק. Which one is different than the other two, and why is it so surprising?
8. מפיבשת calls himself a מת כלב in the face of דוד. Who, in שמואל א, called himself a כלב before which king?

פרק י

1. Does this פרק take place after the previous ones, or is this the expanded version of the story in פרק ח?
2. Notice that in sending men to comfort the son of the king of דוד, עמון is repeatedly identified as דוד and not as מלך. (In the previous פרק he is consistently called המלך).
3. In what way is the story of the son of the king of ארם similar to the earlier story of יואב killing אבנר? Could this have affected the reactions of דוד and יואב here?
4. Do you think that there was a Divine hand involved in the actions of מלך עמון? See דברים ב:ל.
5. Do you think that the point of this פרק is here to highlight something about דוד, about יואב, about both, or about something else altogether?
6. What does the reaction of מלך עמון say about דוד's international status? Notice how similar this is to במדבר כא-כב!
7. There are two different battles against ארם in this פרק. What are the main differences between them?
8. What creative military strategy did יואב and his brother אבישי devise to deal with a threat on two fronts?