

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

פרק י"ג

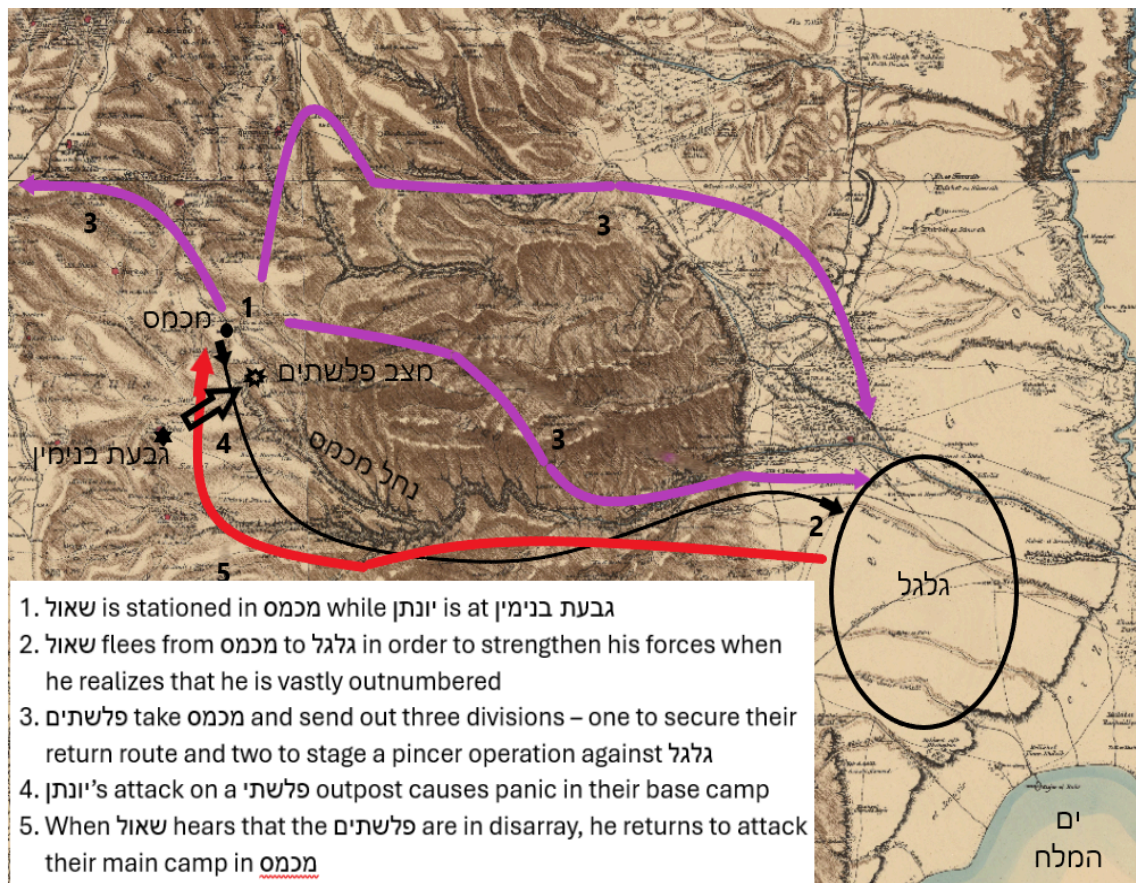
1. How do we understand the opening פסוק of this פרק?
2. Do we, the readers, know who יונתן is when he is introduced in ב פסוק?
3. Describe the sequence of events leading up to the great confrontation between ישראל and the פלשתים. Who actually initiated the events and who got credit for it?
4. Who are the עברים in this פרק? What role do they play in this battle?
5. Compare the number of soldiers שאול has in this battle with those who were available to him in the battle to save גלעד! Regarding battles with grossly lopsided numbers, see פרק ו-ז שופטים.
6. Why is שמואל so upset that שאול offered an עולה on the מזבח?
7. Based on the descriptions provided, what was the status of בני ישראל vis-à-vis the פלשתים prior to the breakout of hostilities between them? Notice where the פלשתים are located and where שאול gathers his people!
8. שאול intended to bring both an עולה and a שלמים, yet he only brought one. Why did he not do both?
9. What did שאול do that evoked שמואל's wrath? What did שמואל say was going to happen as a result of שאול's action?
10. The פלשתים split their forces into the attack group groups? Where else do you find armed forces being split into two or three groups?

פרק י"ד

1. On the map below, locate מכמש. Notice where the פלשתים have military outposts! Why is this important?



2. The previous פרק tells of the three-pronged attack by the פלשתים. What is שאול doing in response (פסוק ב)? How does this help to explain יונתן's actions? What other action does the text hint that שאול could have taken?
3. What sign does יונתן suggest about whether to attack the פלשתים or not? Is there any logic to this, or is it a random sign from God?
4. See the picture below for what some believe are the impassable cliffs of סנה and בוצץ.
5. See the map of the battle below to get a better sense of the sequence of events.
6. How do you think יונתן was able to succeed the way he did? What would you say about יונתן's character based only on this story?
7. Of what does כג פסוק remind you?
8. What happened with שאול and the ארון in this פרק? Why is the ארון back on the battlefield?
9. Compare the way יונתן relates to ה' with the way that שאול does in this פרק.



10. What happened with שאול and the ארון in this פרק? Why is the ארון back on the battlefield?
11. שאול forbade the people to eat until the battle was complete. What do you think was his reasoning? Why did יונתן disagree?

12. In ויקרא יט:כז the term לאכול על הדם is used. Look up this phrase in פסוק לג ח. What does this mean based on the context there?
13. שאול uses lots to find the guilty party. Are you aware of anywhere else in תנ"ך where lots are used to determine the responsible party? (See יהושע ט:טז-יט and יונה א:ז) Was שאול correct in his assessment that ה' didn't answer him as a result of someone violating שאול's oath?
14. The previous פרק concluded by pointing out that no one other than שאול and יונתן had weapons. How did בני ישראל defeat the פלשתים without weapons?
15. Note: פסוק מו-מח gives a summary overview of שאול's career as a king. It includes many things that happened afterward! Why do you think that the author of שמואל would do that?
16. שאול is prepared to kill יונתן because of his vow. A similar story appears regarding יפתח. What major differences do you see between these two stories? Do you think that this story is complimentary to שאול or critical of him?