

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

**פרק י"ג**

1. Why did דוד get involved in bringing תמר to his room?
2. Was תמר also אמנון's sister?
3. Did יונדב intend for אמנון to rape תמר? Did אמנון initially intend to rape תמר, or did he have something else in mind?
4. In what way is it surprising or unusual that דוד came to check on אמנון?
5. Notice that the language used by יונדב regarding what תמר should do is similar to the language used by דוד. On the other hand, the language used by אמנון is different, and is similar to what the text describes תמר as doing. Did דוד have any clue of what אמנון was thinking about?
6. Compare what אמנון says in בראשית לט:ז-יב to פסוק יא.
7. תמר says to אמנון, לא יעשה כן בישראל. Compare this to בראשית לד:ז. In what other ways are these two incidents similar? What roles did the father and brothers of the victim play in each of the stories?
8. Contrast אמנון as described in פסוק יד-טו with שכם.
9. The phrase כתונת פסים is used to describe תמר's clothes. Who else wore כתונת פסים?
10. Why did אמנון invite דוד to join him at the sheep-shearing festival? Why did דוד refuse to go? Why did דוד send all of his sons when אבשלום insisted that אמנון come?
11. The text indicates that אבשלום persisted (ויפרץ) in asking דוד to encourage אמנון to come to the festival. That word appears in four other places in תנ"ך (although with a slightly different spelling) – בראשית יט:ג, בראשית לג:יא, שופטים יט:ז, מלכים ב ה:טז. Which of those do you think is most similar to this one?
12. Although אבשלום killed only אמנון, the rumor was that he killed all of דוד's sons. What could have sparked such a rumor? What would the implication be if it were true? How did the rumor get to דוד long before the rest of his sons returned home?
13. Contrast דוד's reaction to the news about the rape of תמר to his reaction to the news of the death of her rapist.
14. This is the second time in two פרקים that we find דוד sitting on the floor. In what way are they very different? In what way do they express similar feelings to those דוד has?
15. פסוק לז describes דוד as mourning for his son for many days. Which son is that referring to?
16. Why does אבשלום run for safety to the king of גשור? (Hint: See ג:ג) Note: This is similar to דוד running to מואב when he initially fled from שאול!
17. In what ways is the story of תמר and אמנון linked to the story of שבע and דוד?
18. The root שלח is associated repeatedly with דוד's actions in פרק יא and in his actions in פרק יג. What is that word trying to convey in each of these פרקים?

## פרק י"ד

1. Remember the משל that נתן הנביא gave to דוד and compare it to the one used by the wise woman in this פרק. Notice how long it takes the woman to get to her point and how long she stretches out the ruse! Why do you think she spends so much longer than did נתן?
2. Why does דוד send this woman from יואב בן צרויה? Why was he interested in reconciling דוד with אבשלום?
3. The story told by the woman has parallels to the story of קין והבל. What are those parallels? Why do you think that she portrayed the story that way?
4. Before דוד answers the woman, he tries the same delaying tactics. Why do you think that he hesitated?
5. After דוד promises to protect her living son, the woman engages in a lengthy and mysterious speech in which she seems to be struggling to say what she wants to say. What happened to this wise woman?
6. How did דוד figure out that it was יואב who sent the woman?
7. In the end, why did יואב's plan not work?
8. Why does the text interrupt the story with a lavish description of אבשלום's good looks?
9. Why would אבשלום have started a fight with יואב if יואב was the one who arranged for his return to ירושלים?
10. In what ways is אבשלום similar to שמשון? Are those positive or negative? In what ways is he very different from שמשון?
11. Notice that both אבשלום and אמנון have their roots in חברון (see the beginning of פרק ג). Which other son of דוד was born in חברון who later tried to take the throne?
12. דוד promises the woman from תקוע that not a single hair of her son will be endangered – אם יפול משערת בנך רצה. Compare this to שמואל א יד:מה. In what way is דוד's behavior here similar to שאול's behavior there? Note the irony: While דוד promises that not a hair of her son will fall to the ground, see how אבשלום finally finds his downfall (יח:ט).
13. Notice how דוד in this פרק is not acting like a king (which is quite unusual for him) while יואב is not acting like a hot-headed general (which is also quite unusual).