

QUEENMAKER Reading Group Giggles

1. The prophet Samuel chooses Israel's first two kings by picking the handsomest young man he sees. Is this really the best way to choose a king? Don't you find this behavior just a tad bit suspicious?
2. Like Joseph, David is the youngest and handsomest boy in his family; like Joseph, David is always showing up his brothers in public. Why don't David's brothers sell him into slavery as Joseph's brothers did? Were they nicer, or just dumber?
 - 2a. For extra credit, answer the following: If David's brothers HAD sold him, how much do you think they would have gotten? Considering inflation during the intervening centuries, how would this amount compare to the price Joseph sold for?
3. King Saul suffered from what many now believe to have been severe migraines; David's playing and singing was supposed to soothe and heal Saul. Now that you know this, are you still surprised to learn that Saul threw a spear at David while David was playing the harp?
4. The brideprice for Michal is two hundred Philistine foreskins. Wouldn't a crockpot have been more useful?
5. Do you think David and Jonathan were gay, or just cheerful? What actual difference do you think it can possibly make today?
6. Since Saul and Samuel parted on the worst of bad terms, why do you think Saul asked the seeress at Endor to call up Samuel? Did Saul actually think Samuel would be nicer dead than alive?
7. On page 76, Michal refers to a recipe for "stewed dates in cream that no one had liked." Did she really think anyone would like stewed dates in cream? Discuss what recipe would have been better.
8. The Philistine concubine Zhurleen always seems to make a profitable life for herself. How does she embody traditional feminine power? How much of David's treasury do you think she smuggled out when she was sold after she befriended Michal?
9. Many of the characters in QUEENMAKER are too stupid to pound sand with a stick. How would their actions have differed had they possessed the brains of a newborn newt? How much shorter would the book have been?
 - 9a. For extra credit, rank the following in descending IQ order: Bathsheba, Nathan, Michal, Amnon, Absalom, Abigail, Jonathan, Tamar, Saul.
10. Joab is King David's nephew and hit man, specializing in "smiting" David's enemies "under the fifth rib". How does Joab determine this? Does he count?

- 10a. For extra credit, discuss how YOU would have dealt with an uncle like David, and how hard.
11. How revolting IS Absalom? Compare and contrast with the unpleasant character traits of your own brother.
- 11a. For extra credit: Who has worse brother problems, Tamar in QUEENMAKER or Dinah in THE RED TENT? Discuss.
12. King David has many of the characteristics of that boyfriend your parents didn't want you to date; as you will recall, your parents turned out to be right. Compare and contrast David with that boyfriend. Does the fact that David's king compensate for his shortcomings as a human being?
13. Despite the emphasis on female bonding throughout the book, Michal's mother is barely mentioned. Does this lack have some deep literary and emotional thematic meaning, or did the author just forget about her? Discuss.
- 13a. For extra credit: When was the last time you called your mother? That long? Why? So it would kill you to pick up the phone and call her once in a while?
14. Both Dinah in THE RED TENT and Michal in QUEENMAKER have stupendously rotten luck with men. Which woman had worse experiences? Today, which would be therapy longer, Dinah or Michal? Discuss. Compare their interactions with men with your own experiences.
- 14a. Extra credit: If you haven't read THE RED TENT, why not? Discuss.
15. Since Jerusalem is an impregnable fortress city, why do you think King David fled it when Absalom revolted? Can you think of a better reason than the one the author used? If you can, please contact the author!
16. What does the title QUEENMAKER convey? Can you think of a better title for the book? If you can, please contact the author!

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