

This chapter contains the well known account of Gideon setting out the fleece before the Lord to authenticate the instructions he has received.

Gideon is very meticulous in his process. The first night, the fleece is damp and the ground is dry as requested. But who knows? Maybe fleece just naturally attracts dew. So the next night he asks for the opposite to rule out natural causes. Gideon is an early practitioner of scientific methods.

Christians often wonder if they too can place a fleece before the Lord for help in making a decision. Maybe. But here are some observations from Bible scholars:

- Gideon is not using the fleece to choose between two options. He uses it to confirm what he had already been told.
- The dew (and lack of it) on the fleece is supernatural – a miracle. Flipping a coin, or whatever fleece we are likely to put out, is not.
- Gideon cannot be guided by the mind of God as fully revealed in Scripture. We can.

- In verse 34 the Spirit of the Lord comes upon Gideon. We may suppose it was not present when putting out the fleece. We, on the other hand, are indwelt by that Spirit who will guide us into all truth (John 16:13).

But still, we read that Gideon tests God three times: once with the sacrifice and twice with the fleece. And the Lord provides the proof Gideon's weak faith has requested. Could He ever condescend to us that way?

That question and others are below

#### Notes:

**6:3** The Midianites and Amalekites were desert nomads, marauders and plunderers rather than settlers.

**6:11** The Abiezrites are the clan to which Gideon belongs (Josh. 17:2).

**6:11** Orphah would be in hill country of Ephraim.

**6:25** Altars to Baal were usually accompanied by Asherah poles (or trees or groves).

**6:32** Jerub-Baal means "Let Baal contend."

**6:37** A fleece is a coat of wool recently shorn from a sheep or goat.

#### Questions:

1. Does God forsake His people when they rebel against Him?
2. The unnamed prophet of verse 7 and Deborah are the only prophets mentioned in the book of Judges. Why do you suppose the Lord did not send more prophets in such a troubled time? Who would give this message if the prophet did not?

3. What do we know about the angel of the Lord in verses 21-22?
4. Gideon is hiding in a winepress when the angel of God visits him, and he conducts his first operation in the dark of night. What makes him a mighty warrior, as the angel says in verse 12?
5. How does the Lord make allowance for Gideon's lack of faith in this chapter? Does he ever let us test Him that way?
6. How do the events of this chapter paint a picture of someone embarking on a mission for the Lord?
7. Joash challenges Baal to defend himself if he truly is a god. Where else in Scripture is a false God mocked?