

# Gideon and the Fleece



**Scripture Reference:** [Judges 6](#)

**Suggested Theme:** God can help us do amazing things. When we don't feel good enough, God reminds us His power is greater than anything.

**Memory Verse:** "Yes, God is working in you to help you want to do what pleases him. Then he gives you the power to do it." [Philippians 2:13, ICB](#)

## Story Overview:

As Israel again drifted away from God, the Midianites began to attack and destroy crops and loot the people. While Gideon was threshing wheat in a secret location, an angel of the Lord came to him and told him to lead the Israelites in a fight against the Midianites. Gideon came from the weakest clan in Israel, so he wanted reassurance that the Lord wanted him to lead. The Lord miraculously made wool fleece wet and then dry according to Gideon's request, so Gideon knew that he should obey God and become the new Judge of Israel. The Lord chose Gideon to lead even though Gideon's family was not famous or strong.

## Background Study:

[Click here for The Book of Judges: The Big Picture](#)

The Midianites (from the southeast of Israel), Amalekites (from the south), and some eastern nomads raided the Israelites annually. The Midianites were fierce desert nomads who banded together to raid the Israelites' crops and animals. These dreaded raiders rode on camels and brought their animals to graze on Israelite land in the spring when barley and wheat were growing in the fields. Politically and spiritually weak, the Israelites were no match for the invaders.

When the Israelites finally turned to God, He gave them a conqueror. But since God wanted to be recognized as the true deliverer, He chose an insignificant man as His instrument.

Gideon was threshing wheat in a rocky hollow usually used for crushing grapes, trying to keep out of sight of the invaders. Usually, Gideon would have used oxen for threshing wheat on the community threshing floor. Out of fear of the Midianites, however, Gideon threshed his grain in secret. Using a wooden flail, Gideon laboriously pounded the grain in his father's wine press – a pit dug out of the rocky ground.

The angel of the Lord sat down under an oak tree beside where Gideon was working. The angel gave Gideon a commission that Gideon hesitated to accept. So Gideon devised a test: he prepared a generous food gift and laid it on a rock as if for a sacrifice. By consuming the food with fire, the angel of the Lord revealed that He was God. Gideon was afraid because he realized no one could see God and live. But after some divine protection and reassurance, Gideon built an altar as instructed.

Before he could purge the land of invaders, Gideon had to purge his own family and town of idolatry. At this time, many Israelites worshipped the deities of the Canaanites, whom they had displaced in the land. Under cover of darkness, Gideon destroyed the local Canaanite worship places and built another altar to God, this time in the hills. Only his father's diplomatic reasoning saved him when the townspeople found him out.

At the next invasion, Gideon gathered forces from among his kinsmen and the northern tribes. Doubts remained in his mind, however. So he devised two more tests, both of which God patiently accepted. As with the food offering, Gideon put out a fleece for God to dampen and dry to prove that it was God who was giving him orders. We can see that a faith dependent on signs is usually short-lived; soon, it grows dependent upon signs to keep going.

More about Gideon in the story [Gideon and the Midianites](#).

### **Way to Introduce the Story:**

Bring fleece (sheep's wool) to the gathering and let all of the children touch it. If possible, pour some water on it and then ring it out. "If I were to leave this fleece outside in my garden tonight, what would it feel like in the morning? It would be wet with dew. I'm going to set this fleece in the corner of the room for now. Later, in our story, if any of you hear me talk about fleece and dew I want you to quietly go over to the corner and get the fleece. Bring it to the table so that we can look at it again."

Note: Also, see the [Gideon and the Midianites Story](#) on this site. Some of the resources relate to both stories.

### **The Story:**

Sometimes, it seemed like the Israelites never learned a lesson. The same thing happened again and again. First, the Israelites would begin to leave God and disobey Him. Then, the Lord would let enemies win battles against them and treat them badly. When the people were suffering, they were sorry they had disobeyed God. They would pray to God to help them. Finally, the Lord would send someone to help the people and save them from their enemies. This person was called a JUDGE.

Once again, the Israelites began to forget about God. They even began to build idols and worship false gods. The people from the land of Midian did not like the Israelites. They stole animals, fruit, and grain, leaving nothing for the Israelites to eat. The Israelites began to pray to God to help them.

Gideon was an Israelite farmer who came from a family that did not obey God. He had to work in a hidden place so the Midianites would not steal from him. One day, Gideon was threshing grain. His threshing stick hit the wheat, releasing grain seeds from the straw. The grain would be used to make bread. While he was working, the angel of the Lord came and sat down under an oak tree beside Gideon.

The angel told Gideon, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." The angel told Gideon he had been chosen to save Israel from the Midianites. Gideon couldn't believe what the angel was saying. Why would God choose him? He didn't think he was good enough. His family was not even a family that believed in God! They were small and weak.

"The Lord will be with you, Gideon. Go now and save Israel."

Gideon was still not sure. He didn't feel good enough. He wanted some proof. He begged the angel, "Could you please give me a sign? If you please stay here, I will make an offering for God."

Gideon left, prepared a young goat, and made bread to offer as a sacrifice. He quickly brought these back to the angel. The meat was in a basket, and the broth was in a pot. Gideon wanted these to be a gift to the Lord. The angel told Gideon to put these on a rock. The angel pointed his staff at the offering when Gideon put them on the rock. When the tip of the staff touched the food, fire came from the rock. The fire burned

up everything that had been on the rock. Now Gideon knew that this was an angel. He knew that God had chosen him to save the Israelites. Gideon built an altar and worshipped the Lord.

The first thing Gideon did was tear down the altar his father had built. This altar was not built to worship God; it was built like an idol. Gideon's family worshipped the false god, Baal, at this altar. They even made a tall pole to worship an idol. Some Israelites were angry with Gideon, but Gideon did what the Lord commanded.

When the Midianites started to come and hurt the Israelites again, Gideon gathered together an army. He still wanted to make sure that he was doing the right thing, so he prayed to God to give him another sign. Gideon put a piece of fleece (or lamb's wool) outside on the ground. Usually, if fleece were left outside on the ground, then dew would fall on it and make it wet. Both the ground and the fleece would be wet. This time, Gideon asked the Lord to do something different. He asked the Lord to make the fleece wet at night but keep the ground dry.

When Gideon looked at the fleece the next morning, guess what had happened? The fleece was wet, and the ground was dry!

Next, Gideon asked the Lord to do it one more time. This time, he asked God to make the ground wet and the fleece dry. The next morning, the ground was wet, and the fleece was dry. Just like Gideon asked! Gideon knew that God wanted him to fight the Midianites. He knew the Lord thought he was good enough to do the job. Gideon decided to follow the Lord and do exactly what He wanted Him to do!

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### **Ways to Tell the Story:**

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

[Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.](#)

View this slideshow and download it from the original source: <http://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/gideon-fleece/>

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### **Review and Reflection Questions:**

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. [Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.](#)

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### **Review:**

- How were the Midianites hurting the Israelites? (They stole their crops and animals. The Israelites were so afraid that they often hid in caves in the mountains)
- What happened to Gideon while he was threshing grain? (The angel of the Lord appeared to him)

- What did the angel of the Lord tell Gideon to do? (Save the Israelites from the Midianites)
- Why do you think Gideon made these two tests with fleece for God to complete?
- What did God ask Gideon to do before fighting the Midianites? (To tear down his father's idols and altars to false gods)
- When Gideon put the fleece on the ground on the first night, what did he ask the Lord to do? (Make the fleece wet and the ground dry)
- What about the second time Gideon put the fleece on the ground? (Dry the fleece, but the surrounding ground will be wet from the dew)
- What did Gideon learn from this story?
- What did you learn about God from this story?

### **Reflection:**

- What is something you wonder about in this story?
- What question would you ask God about this story?
- What do you think the angel of the Lord looked or sounded like?
- Gideon makes a sacrifice to God of meat, bread, and broth. Fire consumes it, and God accepts the sacrifice! What do you think this looked, smelled, or sounded like?
- Why do you think God chose Gideon to save Israel from the Midianites?
- How do you think Gideon felt to be chosen by God to save Israel from the Midianites?
- How do you think Gideon felt when he and ten servants went in secret at night to tear down his father's idols and altar to a false god?
- Have you ever heard a story from a friend or family member of God doing something amazing in their life, like how God completed Gideon's tests with the fleece? Do you have a story like this that happened to you?
- God likes to choose people to do great things who will trust and rely on Him and praise Him for helping them. Do you think God could help you do great things? Why or why not?

### **Prayer:**

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a life-long friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. [A variety of prayer methods are found here.](#)

### **Song Suggestions:**

- [I'm in the Lord's Army Song](#)
- [God is Listening When We Pray \(Song\) English/Cebuano](#)
- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more song options.

## Activities and Crafts:

- [How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.](#)
- [Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.](#)

### Activities:

- Use magazine pictures to make a poster comparing the world's heroes with God's heroes.
- Outline the letters G-I-D-E-O-N in fat letters on a large piece of paper. Each letter should have enough space inside so that you can write words. Help the children write facts they know about Gideon inside the letters.
- Each person is unique and special to God. Guide each child to write down his/her favourite colour, food, eye colour, hair colour, etc. on paper. Collect the papers and read them out loud to the children. Let them guess who that person is. Give only one clue at a time.
- Gather samples of wool and wool fabrics (try a fabric store or craft store) and have children experiment with making them wet and dry, as in the story.
- The time of the judges can be depicted as a repeating cycle. Try this simple idea to illustrate the idea of a cycle that goes round and round. The [Judges Review Wheel](#) explains the cycle of the Judges.



Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable “God’s Story” printable reflection page. [Free printables for this story.](#)

### Crafts:

- Draw pictures of heroes of the Lord you know of, or the children know. This can include children who have said “no” to drugs, stood up to peer pressure, etc.
- Cut stiff paper into the shape of a sheep’s skin. Glue cotton wool to it.
- Divide the group into pairs. Let the children draw portraits of each other. Each person is unique and special.
- Make a miniature model of the story. If you teach over several weeks, you could add to the model to form a collection that reviews the stories. You can place the models in boxes. One box could display one judge. Ideas for a Gideon Box might be idol figures, jars, lamps or torches, wool (fleece), or toy soldiers.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. [Free printables for this story.](#)

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### **Other Online Resources:**

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets at \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Craft: Make a fabric collage out of wool \(Fabric Collage\)](#)

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### **Date**

2026/06/05