

Judges 6:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

Analysis

Despite Spirit-empowerment and successful mobilization, Gideon requests confirming signs: 'if thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.' The fleece test—dew on the fleece but dry ground—seeks tangible confirmation of divine promise. This request reveals ongoing weakness—God already provided miraculous fire (verse 21), prophetic word, and Spirit-empowerment. Yet God graciously accommodates Gideon's need for reassurance. Reformed theology recognizes the distinction between legitimate seeking of confirmation (assurance of salvation, guidance for major decisions) and presumptuous testing that demands proof despite clear revelation. Gideon's request seems borderline—understandable human weakness that God mercifully indulges.

Historical Context

Fleece (shorn sheep wool) was common in agricultural Israel. The test's design—dew collection on fleece while ground remained dry—requested meteorologically unusual phenomena that could only be divine intervention. Palestine's dew provided crucial moisture during dry seasons; its normal pattern was widespread deposition on all surfaces. Manipulating dew patterns demonstrated creative control over natural processes, proving divine agency rather than coincidence.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How can believers distinguish between legitimate seeking of divine guidance and faithless demands for signs?
2. What does God's gracious accommodation of Gideon's weakness teach about His patience with doubting believers?
3. When is it appropriate to request confirming signs, and when should believers act on existing revelation?

Interlinear Text

אָמַר בְּגַת כִּי הִנֵּה אַנְכִּי מֵצֵא יְמִינְךָ אֶת מֵצֵא יְמִינְךָ
H2009 H595 Behold I will put H853 a fleece H1492 of wool H6785 in the floor H1637 H518

בְּאֶרֶץ כָּל יְמִינְךָ לְבָדֵק הַגְּזֵה הַעַל יְהִי הַטָּל
and if the dew H1961 H5921 a fleece H905 H5921 H3605 upon all the earth H776

בְּבִדְךָ תַּחֲשִׁיבְךָ יְמִינְךָ תַּחֲשִׁיבְךָ בְּבִידְךָ
only and it be dry H2721 beside then shall I know H3045 H3588 that thou wilt save H3467 by mine hand H3027

דְּבָרָתְךָ כִּאֵשׁ רַיְשָׁא לְאַת
H853 Israel H834 as thou hast said H1696

Additional Cross-References

Hosea 14:5 (References Israel): I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

Matthew 15:24 (References Israel): But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

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