



GOD'S CREATURES TELL THE STORY

Gideon and the Call to Valor

Teacher's Packet

FREE ♦ PHOTOCOPY FREELY FOR YOUR CLASS

Five lesson plans, discussion questions for two age bands, a reproducible Bible Detective worksheet with a full answer key, a ten-question quiz, background notes for the teacher, and projects that need a flashlight and a dark room. Built for readers ages 11–17 from the full narrative of *Gideon and the Call to Valor*.

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How to Use This Packet

Three tracks, one book. Pick the one that matches your setting and ignore the other two. Everything here may be photocopied for your own class or family.

Track One — Family Devotions (ten days)

- Eight chapters plus an epilogue, each built from three or four short scenes. One chapter a night runs a little over a week.
- Close each reading with one question from page 4, chosen for the age at your table.
- Assign each family member a reporter to follow — Penny, Professor Hoot, or Dominic — and have them report what their reporter noticed that the others missed.
- Use the devotion starters and prayer on page 6 for the two Sunday evenings.

Track Two — Sunday School (four weeks)

- **Week 1 — The Hiding.** Chapters 1–3. A nation stripped bare by raiders, and a young man threshing wheat in a winepress so no one will see him.
- **Week 2 — The Altar.** Chapter 4. Gideon does the right thing at night because he is afraid to do it by day — and God accepts the obedience anyway.
- **Week 3 — The Fleece.** Chapters 5–6. The Spirit comes on him, thirty-two thousand answer the call, and he still asks for two more signs.
- **Week 4 — The Three Hundred.** Chapters 7–8 and the epilogue. An army cut by ninety-nine percent, and a battle won with pottery.

Track Three — Homeschool (across subjects)

- **History.** The period of the judges — what happens to a people with no central government and a repeating cycle of forgetting.
- **Science.** Sound, dark adaptation, and sleep inertia. All three appear in a single midnight and all three are on page 8.
- **Geography.** Ophrah, the spring of Harod, the hill of Moreh, and the Jordan crossing. The chase is longer than the battle.
- **Math.** Thirty-two thousand to ten thousand to three hundred. Work the percentages.
- **Writing.** A first-person account from one of the twenty-two thousand who went home. See page 7.

A NOTE ON THE AGE BANDS

This packet is banded 11–13 and 14–17. The book’s own appendices still use younger bands from an earlier edition; where the two differ, follow the packet.

Before the First Session

- Read page 8. The number that matters most in this book is not three hundred.
- Photocopy pages 5 and 9 — one per student. Everything else is for you.
- One activity needs a room you can make genuinely dark.

Five Lesson Plans

Each lesson names a key verse, the chapters to read, one main point, and one activity that can be done in the room. The lessons require the book; the verses are ones the narrative itself puts on the page.

1. Mighty Warrior, in a Winepress

READ Chapters 1–3 · **KEY VERSE** *Judges 6:12*

Main point: The angel greets a man hiding in a winepress as “mighty warrior.” Gideon has done nothing yet to earn it. God is not describing what He sees; He is naming what He intends. Gideon’s reply is a complaint and a list of reasons he is the wrong man.

Activity: Ask each student to write down what someone would call them if they described only what they had done so far. Then ask what it would mean to be called something else first, and have to grow into it.

2. Obedience at Night Still Counts

READ Chapter 4 · **KEY VERSE** *Judges 6:27*

Main point: Gideon tears down his father’s altar to Baal — and Scripture says plainly that he did it at night because he was too afraid to do it by day. God does not rebuke the timing. Partial courage that acts still beats full conviction that waits.

Activity: Read Judges 6:31, where Gideon’s father defends him with a question: if Baal is a god, let him take up his own case. Ask what that one sentence did to the crowd.

3. Two More Signs

READ Chapters 5–6 · **KEY VERSE** *Judges 6:36–40*

Main point: The Spirit has already come on Gideon and an army has already assembled when he asks for the fleece — twice, apologizing the second time. God gives both signs without complaint. This is a story about a God patient with a man who keeps needing proof.

Activity: Ask honestly: is asking God for a sign faith or the lack of it? Take both sides. Then note that Gideon asked *after* obeying, not instead of obeying.

4. Too Many Warriors

READ Chapter 7 · **KEY VERSE** *Judges 7:2*

Main point: God gives the reason out loud: the army is too large, and Israel will claim the credit. Twenty-two thousand go home for fear; ninety-seven hundred more fail a test at the water. Three hundred remain against a host the book compares to locusts.

Activity: Put the arithmetic on the board. 32,000 to 10,000 is a 69% cut; 10,000 to 300 leaves three percent of what he started with. Ask what Gideon was thinking on the walk back.

5. Broken Jars and Borrowed Light

READ Chapter 8 and the Epilogue · **KEY VERSE** *Judges 7:20*

Main point: Every man carries a trumpet, a clay jar, and a torch — and no free hand for a weapon. The light only does its work when the jar is broken. The shout credits the Lord first and Gideon second, in that order.

Activity: Read 2 Corinthians 4:7 alongside Judges 7:20. Ask why God would put light in something breakable on purpose, and what that says about the people He uses.

Discussion Questions

Choose three or four per session. This is the best book in the series for students who suspect they are not the sort of person God uses.

AGES 11–13

1. The angel calls Gideon a mighty warrior while Gideon is hiding. Why start with a name he has not earned?
2. Gideon's first response to God is a complaint about everything that has gone wrong. Does God seem offended by it?
3. Gideon obeyed God at night because he was afraid to do it in daylight. Does being afraid while you obey make the obedience count for less?
4. Gideon asked for the fleece sign twice. Have you ever needed to be told something more than once before you believed it?
5. God said the army was too big. When have you had so much help that you stopped noticing who was helping?
6. The soldiers carried trumpets, jars, and torches — and no weapons. Would you have gone into that valley?
7. The torches only helped once the jars were smashed. What do you think that picture means?
8. Gideon's father saved his life with a single question about Baal. Have you ever seen one good question end an argument?
9. God let Gideon sneak down to the enemy camp and overhear a stranger's dream. Why might God give someone reassurance they did not ask for?

AGES 14–17

1. God explains the reduction in Judges 7:2: so Israel cannot boast. What does that tell you about why God sometimes removes the resources we were counting on?
2. Gideon is called a man of valor before he does anything valorous. Is God describing a fact, making a promise, or issuing a command? Argue from the text.
3. Twenty-two thousand men were sent home for being afraid, and no shame is attached to them. What does that suggest about how God handles fear in the people He calls?
4. Gideon's father defuses a lynch mob with one sentence about letting Baal defend himself. What kind of argument is that, and why does it work?
5. God offers Gideon one more reassurance before the battle — the overheard dream in the enemy camp — without Gideon asking. What does an unrequested sign say about God?
6. Compare Gideon's call with Moses at the bush. Both men list reasons they are wrong for the job. What is the same in God's answer, and what is different?
7. The shout is "a sword for the Lord and for Gideon." Is putting his own name in that sentence appropriate, or is it the first crack? Judges 8 may inform your answer.
8. After the victory Israel asks Gideon to be king and he refuses, saying the Lord will rule them — then makes an ephod that the nation ends up worshipping. How do you hold those two facts together?

Bible Detective

“Every good reporter knows that details matter.” — Penny the Squirrel. Answer from the book, then verify against the verse. Answer key on page 10.

NAME _____ DATE _____ SCORE _____ / 10

1. What was Gideon doing when the angel of the Lord found him — and why was he doing it there? (*Judges 6:11*)

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2. What did Gideon name the altar he built, and what does the name mean? (*Judges 6:24*)

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3. Gideon was given a second name after tearing down the altar of Baal. What was it, and what does it mean? (*Judges 6:32*)

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4. What were the two fleece signs — and how was the second the opposite of the first? (*Judges 6:36–40*)

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5. Give all three numbers: how many came, how many left after the first test, and how many remained. (*Judges 7:3–7*)

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6. How did God test the men at the water, and what did the chosen three hundred do differently? (*Judges 7:5–6*)

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7. Name the three things each soldier carried. Which one had to be broken? (*Judges 7:16–20*)

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8. **Challenge.** What did Gideon and Purah overhear in the enemy camp, and what did the dream mean? (*Judges 7:13–14*)

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9. **Time Detective.** How many years of peace followed the victory? You will need the Bible for this one. (*Judges 8:28*)

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10. **Super Sleuth.** Israel asked Gideon to rule over them. What did he answer? (*Judges 8:22–23*)

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Family and At-Home

Five devotion starters, a prayer, and one application to carry into the week. None of these require a craft table or more than fifteen minutes.

DEVOTION STARTERS

One — Named before proven. God called Gideon a mighty warrior while he was hiding in a hole. Go around the table and name one thing you believe God intends each person to grow into. Read Judges 6:12.

Two — Afraid and obedient. Gideon did the right thing at night because daylight scared him, and God took it. Ask what our family has been putting off until we feel braver. Read Judges 6:25–27.

Three — Asking again. Gideon needed two more signs after he already had the Spirit and an army. Ask what each person still needs convincing about, and say it out loud without embarrassment. Read Judges 6:39.

Four — Too much help. God sent most of the army home so no one could take the credit. Ask where our family has grown so comfortable that we have stopped depending on God. Read Judges 7:2.

Five — Broken on purpose. The light could not get out until the jar was smashed. Ask, gently, where something in this family has been broken and light came out anyway. Read Judges 7:19–20 and 2 Corinthians 4:7.

MEMORY VERSES

- *Judges 6:12* — the Lord is with you, mighty warrior.
- *Judges 6:16* — I will be with you, and you will strike them down.
- *Judges 7:2* — you have too many men.
- *2 Corinthians 4:7* — treasure in jars of clay.

A FAMILY PRAYER

Father, You call people before they are ready and stay with them while they catch up. Thank You for being patient with Gideon and for being patient with us. Give us courage that acts while it is still afraid. Take away whatever we are leaning on instead of You, even if losing it frightens us. And if we have to be broken for anyone to see Your light, make us willing. In Jesus' name, amen.

APPLICATION FOR THE WEEK

Gideon did the hard thing at night, with ten servants, because he could not face doing it alone in daylight. Choose one thing this family has been avoiding and do it this week in whatever reduced, awkward, partly-brave form is actually possible. Do not wait until you can do it well.

Then, at the end of the week, name out loud what you were most afraid would happen. Compare it with what actually happened. Gideon's fears were reasonable and God worked around them rather than waiting for them to go away.

Activities and Projects

Ordinary household supplies only — a flashlight, a towel, a bowl, a calculator. Nothing here needs a craft store.

AGES 11–13

Dark Adaptation. *Supplies: a room you can darken and a flashlight.* Sit in full dark for five minutes and notice how much you can suddenly see. Then have someone switch on the flashlight without warning. That blindness lasted about two seconds. Now imagine three hundred torches and three hundred trumpets, at midnight, from three directions.

The Fleece Test. *Supplies: a wool sweater or towel, a baking sheet, a spray bottle.* Mist the cloth and the tray equally, then check both after an hour. Wool holds water far longer than a hard surface — which is why the *second* sign, dry fleece on wet ground, was the harder one to ask for.

Break a Jar. *Supplies: a cheap terracotta pot, a towel, a small light.* Put the light under the upturned pot in a dark room. Nothing. Wrap the pot in the towel and break it with one blow, then look at what the light does to the room. Talk about it before anyone sweeps up.

Do the Percentages. *Supplies: a calculator.* Work out what fraction of Gideon’s original army fought the battle, then find something in your own life that is three percent of a whole so you can see the size of it.

The Winepress Problem. *Supplies: paper.* Look up how wheat was actually threshed — an open floor, high ground, wind to carry off the chaff. Then draw a winepress. Write three sentences on what Gideon gave up by working there, and what it bought him.

Trumpet Math. *Supplies: a phone and a friend.* Have one person make a loud sound from a known distance and time how long it takes to reach you. Sound covers about 767 miles an hour, so across a valley the delay is nearly nothing — which is why three hundred horns at once gave the Midianites no way to count or locate the attackers.

AGES 14–17

The Twenty-Two Thousand. *Supplies: paper.* Write eight hundred words as one of the men sent home for fear, on the night he hears what happened in the valley without him. He answered the call. He was honest about being afraid. Do not make him a coward and do not make him a hero.

Map the Chase. *Supplies: a map app.* Plot Ophrah, the spring of Harod, the hill of Moreh, and the Jordan fords. Then measure how far the pursuit in Judges 8 ran past the battle. Ask which took more endurance.

Three Callings. *Supplies: Exodus 3–4, Judges 6, Jeremiah 1.* Chart all three call narratives: the objection raised, God’s answer, the sign given. Write five hundred words on the pattern and on where Gideon breaks it.

Faith Without Certainty. *Supplies: Hebrews 11:32–34.* Gideon is listed by name in the New Testament’s roll call of faith, doubts and ephod and all. Write five hundred words on what the writer of Hebrews must mean by “faith,” given who made the list.

The Ephod Problem. *Supplies: Judges 8:22–27.* Gideon refuses a crown with an excellent answer and then builds something Israel worships. Write a page on how a person can be right about the big temptation and lose to the smaller one.

For the Teacher

Background you will want before a sharp fourteen-year-old asks. Every figure below has been checked against the text.

WHERE THIS SITS IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Judges runs on a repeating cycle: Israel forgets God, an oppressor arrives, Israel cries out, God raises a deliverer, there is peace, and the cycle restarts. Gideon is the fifth judge, and the Midianite oppression had run seven years before he appears. Knowing the cycle keeps students from reading his rescue as the end of the story. It is one turn of a wheel.

WHY A WINEPRESS

Wheat is normally threshed on an open, elevated floor where the wind can carry the chaff away. A winepress is a sunken pit, sheltered and hidden — the worst possible place to do the job and the best place to avoid being seen. The setting is the character sketch.

THE NUMBERS, AND THE ONE THAT MATTERS

Thirty-two thousand answered the muster. Twenty-two thousand left when fear was given as permission to go. Of the ten thousand remaining, three hundred passed the test at the water — three percent of the original force. The number that actually matters is in Judges 7:2: God says the army is too large *lest Israel claim the credit*. The reduction is not a military tactic. It is an argument about authorship.

TWO NAMES FOR ONE MAN

Gideon builds an altar and calls it *Jehovah-Shalom*, the Lord is Peace (6:24). After he tears down Baal's altar, his father names him *Jerubbaal* — roughly “let Baal contend against him” (6:32). He carries the taunt as a title for the rest of his life.

THE BARLEY LOAF

The Midianite's dream shows a loaf of barley bread tumbling into the camp and flattening a tent. Barley was the poor man's grain, and the raiders had been stealing Israel's harvests for seven years. His own comrade reads it instantly as Gideon's sword. The enemy interprets the sign correctly before Gideon does.

THREE SCIENCES IN ONE MIDNIGHT

All three of these are real and all three are in the book. **Sound.** Three hundred rams' horns sounding together in a valley at night, with echoes off the hills, gives no way to count the attackers or locate them. **Dark adaptation.** Eyes adjusted to darkness take real time to recover from sudden light; torches appearing at once from three sides produce a few seconds of useful blindness. **Sleep inertia.** People woken abruptly from deep sleep think and decide poorly for a while, and Judges 7:19 places the attack at the start of the middle watch, just after the guard changed. The panic in 7:22 is the predictable result.

IF A STUDENT ASKS HOW IT ENDS

Honestly: not well. Gideon refuses the crown with a good answer — the Lord will rule you — and then collects gold and makes an ephod that Israel treats as an idol (Judges 8:22–27). Forty years of peace follow, and after his death the nation returns to Baal. Older students should meet this. A book that only reports the victory has told them half.

Professor Hoot's Quiz

Ten questions. Circle one answer for each. Scoring guide and answer key on page 10.

NAME _____ DATE _____ SCORE _____ / 10

1. What was Gideon doing when the angel of the Lord appeared?
a) Hiding in a cave b) Threshing wheat in a winepress c) Praying on a mountain
2. What did the angel call him?
a) Mighty warrior b) Faithful servant c) Wise teacher
3. What did God command Gideon to tear down first?
a) The city walls b) The enemy camp c) His father's altar to Baal
4. How many men remained after the first reduction?
a) 32,000 b) 22,000 c) 10,000
5. How did God cut the army from ten thousand to three hundred?
a) A footrace b) By how they drank from the stream c) An archery test
6. What did each of the three hundred carry?
a) Slings and stones b) Trumpets, jars, and torches c) Swords and shields
7. What did Gideon overhear in the enemy camp?
a) The battle plans b) A dream about a barley loaf c) An offer to surrender
8. When did the attack begin?
a) At dawn b) At midday c) At the start of the middle watch, about midnight
9. What did the three hundred shout?
a) "Run for your lives!" b) "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!" c) "You are surrounded!"
10. Why did God reduce the army?
a) So Israel could not claim the credit b) To move faster c) To save on supplies

Bonus. Gideon asked for signs more than once. Write one sentence on whether you think that was faith, doubt, or both.

Answer Keys and Where to Go Next

QUIZ ANSWER KEY — PAGE 9

1	b — threshing in a winepress	6	b — trumpets, jars, torches
2	a — mighty warrior	7	b — a dream about a barley loaf
3	c — his father's altar to Baal	8	c — the middle watch
4	c — 10,000	9	b — a sword for the Lord and for Gideon
5	b — how they drank	10	a — so Israel could not boast

Bonus. Accept either answer if it is argued. The strongest responses notice that Gideon had already obeyed before he asked, and that God granted both signs without rebuke.

BIBLE DETECTIVE ANSWER KEY — PAGE 5

1. Threshing wheat in a winepress, hiding it from the Midianite raiders (6:11).
2. Jehovah-Shalom — the Lord is Peace (6:24).
3. Jerubbaal — let Baal contend against him (6:32).
4. Dew on the fleece with dry ground, then dry fleece with dew all around it (6:36–40).
5. 32,000 came; 22,000 left; 10,000 remained before the water test (7:3).
6. They drank at the stream; the three hundred lapped from their hands rather than kneeling down to drink (7:5–6).
7. A trumpet, a clay jar, and a torch inside the jar. The jar had to be broken (7:16–20).
8. A dream of a barley loaf tumbling into camp and flattening a tent; his comrade read it as Gideon's sword (7:13–14).
9. Forty years (8:28).
10. He refused: "I will not rule over you... the Lord will rule over you" (8:22–23).

SCORING GUIDE

9–10 correct — Senior Correspondent. Reading at the level of detail Penny would sign off on.

7–8 correct — Field Reporter. Solid. Send them back for the two they missed and let them find the verse themselves.

5–6 correct — Cub Reporter. The story landed; the numbers did not. Re-read chapter 7.

Under 5 — Back to the Newsroom. Not a failing grade. Read the book together rather than assigning it.

WHERE TO GO NEXT — MORE FREE DOWNLOADS

- **The Six Sacred Rules of Divine Reporting** — one-page classroom poster.
- **Meet the Divine News Team** — one page, four character cards.
- Teacher's Packets for seven more titles — Origin Story, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, David, Elijah, and Daniel.
- **52 Questions: A Year of Family Bible Conversations** — one a week, from across the series. Coming soon.

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