



Knowing God by Name

Lesson 9 ~ Yahweh Jireh – The LORD Provides

Genesis 22:1-14

♥ Heart Talk

When you meet with your small group, review the names of God that we have studied so far: *Elohim, El, El Roi, El Shaddai, El Elyon, El Olam, Adonai and Yahweh*. See if you can remember, together, what each name means. What is something you learned about God from each of these names that you would like to remember? How has your perception of God changed through your study of the Names of God?

Introduction

We learned that God's name, *Yahweh*, means that God is *dynamically present in every situation, actively intervening for good*. God is *I AM -- the One who always is* – and the name *Yahweh* implies *continuing, unfinished action*. As wonderful as this name for God is, and in all that it implies for us, it only gets better. Many times in the Bible, the name *Yahweh* is combined with another name, revealing God's desire to be even more to us than just *Yahweh*. In the compound names of *Yahweh*, we see that the very essence of God is *to love, to give, and to meet our needs*.

The compound name for God, *Yahweh Jireh – The Lord Provides*, implies all the meaning of

Yahweh plus the Hebrew word *jireh*, which means "to see." At first glance, we may not see the connection between "to see" and the word "provide." However, the Latin word from which we get the English word "provide" or "provision" means to "foresee" and "attend to." So, *provide* means *to see beforehand what is needed and then to attend to the need*. God is *Yahweh Jireh* – the God who not only *foresees* what we need, but also *provides* what we need. For us, to see a need and to provide for it are two different things; but with God, they are one in the same. Another way to translate *Yahweh Jireh* is to say that *God will see to it!* God's pre-vision IS his provision!

♥ Heart Preparation

Jesus' Encouraging Words to You . . .

I speak to you from the depths of eternity. Before the world was formed, I AM! You hear Me in the depths of your being, where I have taken up residence. I am Christ in you, the hope of Glory. I, your Lord and Savior, am alive within you. Learn to tune in to My living Presence by seeking Me in silence.

Jesus Calling (December 24) by Sarah Young

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him (Psalm 37:7). Continue to practice the discipline of sitting quietly before God, in silence, for 5 minutes. If your mind wanders during this time, gently bring it back to focus on God, saying something like, Here I am, Lord or I belong to you, God.

As we learned in the *Heart Therapy* section of **Lesson 8**, Jesus is a *living person, vital and personal in every situation – the key active ingredient in every circumstance*. As you practice silence, you might want to see yourself sitting in a quiet place with Jesus. Become still enough to just enjoy his Presence. Then, begin to listen with your heart. What do you sense Jesus is saying to you? How does your heart respond?

A Prayer to Help Prepare Your Heart

*"Praise the name of God forever and ever, for he alone has all wisdom and power.
He determines the course of world events; he removes kings and sets others on the throne.
He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars.
He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness,
though he himself is surrounded by light.
I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors, for you have given me wisdom and strength . . ."*

Prayed by Daniel in Daniel 2:20-23

Questions

In the Bible, the compound names of *Yahweh* usually arise out of a particular event that portrays some aspect of *Yahweh's* character that *meets a human need*. To study the name *Yahweh Jireh* – *The LORD Provides*, we will again pick up the story of Abraham in one of the last recorded events of his life. So far in these lessons, we have examined three different events in Abraham's life. In **Lesson 3 (Genesis 16)**, we saw how Abraham and Sarah tried to fulfill God's promise of a child in their own way which led to complicated consequences with Hagar; in **Lesson 4 (Genesis 17)**, we saw God renew his promise to Abraham that he and Sarah would have a son of their own in spite of their advanced age; and in **Lesson 6 (Genesis 21)**, we saw Abraham, after the birth of Isaac, calling on the *Eternal God* after he made a treaty with Abimelech that allowed him to settle down in one place and enjoy his son, the fulfillment of God's promise, in peace. After all that Abraham had been through in leaving his homeland to go to a strange, new land that God would show him and then waiting in faith for 25 years for his promised son, one would think that this was a good way for Abraham to spend the rest of his earthly life. But, as we shall see, Abraham had one, last, great crisis of faith to experience.

Read **Genesis 22:1-10** slowly and carefully. Even if you are familiar with this story, take in, again, the details of the story as you let yourself enter the drama of this event. Empathize with Abraham and Isaac – and what each must have been thinking and feeling.

1. What is your reaction to this story? What questions does it raise? What impressions does it leave with you? What, in the story, is hard for you to understand? What, in this story, speaks to your heart?

2. What was the purpose of this event (**22:1**)? What are some the things that made this test so difficult for Abraham (**22:2**)?

- ♥ What comes to mind when you think of something being *tested*? What do you hope to find out from a test? (You may want to look up "test" in a dictionary.)
- ♥ What emotions and thoughts would you have had if you were Abraham? Do you think a "test of faith" has to be difficult or involve some type of suffering? Why or why not?
- ♥ What is the difference between a *test* and a *temptation* (**James 1:13-15**)?

3. According to the verses below, what results from a test of our faith?

Verses	Results
Deuteronomy 8:2	
Zechariah 13:9	
James 1:2-4, 12	
1 Peter 1:6-7	

- ♥ Who benefits from a test of faith? God? Us? Others? How so?
- ♥ Do you personally think that the benefits or results you may receive from a test of your faith is worth going through it? Why or why not? Is there any other way to get these results? Why or why not?
- ♥ What circumstances or events have tested your faith? What were the results? Where do you sense God is testing you now? How are you doing? What are you learning?

4. For Abraham, the test of his faith involved *sacrifice* and *obedience*. *Sacrifice* can be defined as "giving up something of great value for the sake of or to gain something of greater value." *Obedience* is "compliance with someone's wishes or orders in acknowledgment of their authority – even when you don't want to or understand why." What was Abraham's "sacrifice" and how did he demonstrate "obedience"?
- ♥ Do the words *sacrifice* and *obedience* hold a negative or positive connotation for you? Why? What are some reasons why *sacrifice* and *obedience* are important in our relationship to God? Which of the two is more difficult for you to do? Why?
 - ♥ Have you ever obeyed God when you did not want to or did not understand God's purposes? Was it worth it? Why or why not? When has obedience to God required you to give up or sacrifice something you loved? Was it worth it? Why or why not?
 - ♥ What helps you say "yes" to God when everything inside of you wants to say "no"? What does *sacrifice* and *obedience* teach us? How did **Isaac** demonstrate his obedience to God? What could he have done?
5. What are some ways that Abraham demonstrated his faith in God's character, power and purposes, even though he did not know how this story would end (**22:5, 7-8**)?

- ♥ What do you think the author might be trying to convey in giving us all the details of Abraham's actions in **22:3-10**? Why did God send him on a three day journey before he had to sacrifice Isaac? What do you think were Abraham's thoughts and feelings during this time? When have you "gone through the motions" when your heart and mind were in turmoil? How did the "motions" help?
- ♥ Do you think Abraham struggled with obeying God? Is struggling with God about *sacrifice* and *obedience* a sin? Why or why not? (**Matthew 26:36-44** may help you with your answer.)
- ♥ Do you think Abraham would have actually killed Isaac? Why or why not? What does **Hebrews 11:17-19** add to this story? What did this test of faith reveal about Abraham's view of God? How does your view of God compare with Abraham's?

Tests of faith are personal and no two are alike. This was Abraham's test of faith – given in his time, in his situation, addressing the issues of his heart. Although our *tests of faith* will not look the same as Abraham's – actually building an altar and placing a child on it – the principles behind Abraham's test of faith are the same as ours and we can learn much from Abraham's experience and example.

Read **Genesis 22:11-14**. Again, even if you are familiar with this story, take in the details and the drama.

6. What conclusions can you come to about God from all that happened in **22:11-14**?

- ♥ Why does God wait until the last second to stop Abraham? Do you think this was the "provision" that Abraham expected? What application can you make to your own tests of faith?
- ♥ Abraham was willing to *sacrifice* Isaac to God – *giving up something of great value*. What was the *something of greater value* that he gained? How might the test itself have changed Abraham's heart?

- ♥ Was God's provision dependent on Abraham's faith and obedience? Why or why not? Is God's provision in our lives dependent on our faith and obedience? Why or why not?
- 7. *Yahweh Jireh - The Lord Provides*. In the verses listed below, what do you learn about God's provision?

Psalm 104:10-15 -

Philippians 4:19 -

Matthew 6:31-33 -

1 Corinthians 10:13 -

2 Peter 1:3 -

- ♥ Reread the second paragraph of the *Introduction* to this lesson. What, specifically, speaks to you and encourages you about the name *Yahweh Jireh* and what do you need to believe for your life right now?
 - ♥ Describe an instance when God provided for you during a difficult time. How did this change you?
 - ♥ According to **Romans 8:32**, why can we be sure that God will provide all we need – whether that need be spiritual, physical, emotional or material?
8. We can not consider this story of Abraham and Isaac without acknowledging that this incident was a foreshadowing of God the Father's sacrifice of his one and only Son, providing the Lamb that would take away the sins of the world. What parallels do you see between Abraham's story and the story of the crucifixion? The following verses will guide you: **22:2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14**.

- ♥ What is the significance of God's willingness to do the very thing he asked Abraham to do?
- ♥ In the case of God sacrificing his own Son, how far was he willing to go? Who was there to stop him or provide a substitute? How is Jesus like Isaac? How is he like the ram substitute?

♥ Heart Therapy

God is *Yahweh Jireh - The LORD Provides - God will see to it*. God has promised to supply or meet all your needs (**Philippians 4:19**). This provision, however, requires faith and trust from us. And, as we have seen, *obedience* and *sacrifice* may be part of the process.

What is your need today? Does God see your need? Will he provide? How can you be sure? Tell God what you need. It may be helpful to use the following steps:

Present - Present your request(s) to God (**Philippians 4:6**). Tell God what you need.

Pray - Pray for grace to surrender your life again to God. As you bow or kneel before God, open your hands as a symbol of your willingness to give him whatever he asks for and to receive whatever you need.

Praise - Praise God that he is *Yahweh Jireh - The LORD Provides - God will see to it*. Tell him how wonderful, powerful and generous he is! Thank him ahead of time for his provision. Praise and thanksgiving will build your faith and trust.

Place your trust in *Yahweh Jireh*. Live (think and act) as if he has already provided – and your emotions will follow. Continue to trust and obey, realizing that God is never late, but seldom early!