

Names of God from the Bible

8 – YHWH Yireh (Provider)

Every name of God is an eternal Name, so just as God provided for Abraham, He will provide for us.

Reading: Genesis 22:1-19

Abraham is the father of the faithful. He believed what God said and saw the fulfilment of the promise God made to him when Isaac, his son, was born.

Abraham and Sarah had waited many years for their own child. Both were very old and well passed the normal child-bearing age. Eventually, Isaac was born and we can imagine the immense joy both Abraham and Sarah shared over the miracle. I'm also sure Isaac would have been Abraham's shadow during the early years of his childhood.

The bond between father and son would have become extremely strong. Their relationship would have been a close and significant one during Isaac's teenage years. However, Abraham's first relationship priority was always with God. God had called him to leave Ur of the Chaldeans and led him to Beersheba in Canaan via Haran. Abraham not only recognised God's voice and obeyed it implicitly, but God had become his friend and they had many conversations together.

However, Abraham now faced his greatest challenge. God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son, his miracle child, his only future hope for the fulfilment of God's generational promise to him in that his descendants would number more than the grains of sand on the seashore.

Yes, God asked Abraham to sacrifice his most treasured possession, his present and his future – to put everything he ever had or dreamed of on the line for God. What would Abraham do? What if God asked you to do the same? How would you feel?

Abraham had only one plan, and that was total and absolute obedience to God. No matter how strange, how painful or how extreme or unthinkable God's request, Abraham would execute it to the letter, regardless of the cost to him and his wife.

I'm quite sure Abraham must have wondered what on earth was going on when he heard God's request. He must have questioned his own interpretation of what God said as well as God's motives and methods. Abraham knew that the surrounding pagan cultures that sacrificed their children to their gods was totally abhorrent to God, so what was God demanding of him? Surely God would not stoop to copy the ways of the pagan gods; God's righteous character could not have allowed it. So what was this all about?

How hard it must have been to rise early (to avoid Sarah's questioning) and take Isaac on that fateful journey. Abraham took all that was necessary and asked Isaac to carry the wood for his own sacrificial fire. When Isaac asked his father what they were going to sacrifice, Abraham responded with the prophetic statement – *"God Himself will provide the lamb."* However, that didn't stop Abraham going through with God's plan, and so he tied Isaac up, laid him on the altar and raised the knife in his hand to slay his only son. How could he do that? How could Isaac, by now a grown adolescent, just meekly go along with this horrendous action?

But God intervened. *STOP!* He shouted at Abraham. And God provided a ram for Abraham's sacrifice, saving Isaac's life. Yes, God provided the ram, no doubt pointing prophetically forward to

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the time when His own one and only Son would be the Lamb of God and take away the sins of the whole world.

Abraham recognised the mercy and provision of God, and named the altar – YWHW Yireh – *The Lord Will Provide*.

God has done all He can to provide all we need for our forgiveness and salvation. All we have to do is accept it and follow His ways thereafter.

What does that name mean for us today – God is a God of relationship, love and mercy. He longs for us to have an intimate relationship with Him. He sacrificed His Only Son so that we might be forgiven and set free. Having given us His Son, He will deny us none of His blessings.

Prayer

Father, thank You so much for providing the sacrifice for Abraham and Isaac. Thank You that it is a picture of the supreme sacrifice of Your Son for our sins. Please forgive me and set me free. Thank You that in Christ every spiritual blessing is now available to me. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Exodus 16:1-26
- John 2:1-11
- Romans 8:31-39

Questions

1. What does the sacrifice of Jesus mean to you?
2. Has God revealed Himself as Jehovah Jireh to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?