

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

"JEHOVAH JIREH: THE LORD WILL PROVIDE"

GENESIS 22:1-19

This Week's Core Competency

Personal God – I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life. Psalm 121:1-2

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills-
where does my help come from?

2 My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

"The Lord provides" is a common expression among Christians because it's true. The Lord does, in fact, provide for our every need. Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us today our daily bread" (Mt 6:11), and Paul makes it clear, "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him graciously give us all things?" (Ro 8:32). God not only provides for us, he provides for everyone. Jesus plainly says, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Mt 5:45). Paul concurs, saying to those who worshipped idols, "He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy" (Ac 14:17).

Jehovah-Jireh (Yahweh-Yireh), which means "The LORD Will Provide," is the name associated with Mount Moriah (Ge 22:14) where the LORD provided a ram for Abraham to sacrifice as a burnt offering. One commentator explains: "On the way to the place of sacrifice Isaac cannot contain his curiosity about the lamb for the burnt offering. 'Behold the

*The way of faith, tested by 'fire',
continues to reveal the genuineness of
God's servants, and to bring glory to him.*

– Joyce G. Baldwin

fire and wood'; he said, 'but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' (Gen. 22:7). Abraham's answer to this question is that God will provide Himself a lamb. It is not necessary to suppose that Abraham thought of an ordinary lamb in this answer, although he may have had some such dim hope in his mind. At any rate, in his instructions to his young men to wait for him he says: 'I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you' (v. 5). It is only at the last moment, when Isaac lies bound upon the altar, and any such hope he may have entertained is gone, and the knife in his upraised hand is about to descend, that the voice of the angel of Jehovah arrests and stays his hand, and Abraham looks about and sees a ram caught in a thicket by its horns, which he offers up instead of his son. Then in verse 14 we read in the Authorized Version of our Bible: 'And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord [Jehovah] it shall be seen.' In the American Standard Version of our Bible, however, instead of 'it shall be seen,' it reads 'it shall be provided'" (Nathan J. Stone, *Names of God*, 47-48).

On the significance of the name for the church, another commentator writes: "The name of the place, Jehovah-jireh (AV, RV), has become part of the church's heritage, particularly through the use made of it by George Muller and Hudson Taylor. For them God's provision included not only the spiritual resources but also such tangible gifts as buildings and daily bread for hundreds of people committed to their care. So sure was George Muller of the call of God to the work of looking after orphans, and in the case of Hudson Taylor of extending the church of God in China to the inland

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provinces, that they staked everything on the promise of God, the Lord will provide. On the principle that the greater includes the lesser, God, they believed, would provide not only the Lamb but every necessity for the fulfillment of his work. Paul's conviction summed it up: 'He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?' (Rom. 8:32). Like Abraham these men were obliged to rely on the Lord, because there was no human source of supply committed to financing them. They acknowledged that they had to do God's work in God's way if they were to receive God's supplies; the way of faith was no easy option, any more than it had been for Abraham, and in the face of dilemmas and tests it demanded not passive submission but a conscious bending of the will to accept the sacrificial cords and the raised knife. But they saw God's provision, and their works goes on.

"The Genesis record of Abraham's testing, then, is rather like the first drawing of a great artist, who has in mind a master work. The pencil sketch is perfect in its own right, yet the finished painting surpasses the original drawing in which the same hand can be seen to have been at work. The way of faith, tested by 'fire', continues to reveal the genuineness of God's servants, and to bring glory to him (1 Pet. 1:6-7)" (Joyce G. Baldwin, *The Message of Genesis 12-50*, TBST, 92).

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Genesis 22:1-19

1 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"

"Here I am," he replied.

2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

3 Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. 4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."

6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, 7 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

8 Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.

9 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Here I am," he replied.

12 "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

13 Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time 16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

19 Then Abraham returned to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba. And Abraham stayed in Beersheba.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Underline "some time later" in v. 1.

* Circle "tested" in v. 1.

* Bracket "your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love" in v. 2

* Circle "Moriah" in v. 2.

* Circle "wood" in vv. 3, 6.

* Highlight vv. 5, 8, 14.

* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 7, 11.

* Box "because" indicating *reason* in vv. 12, 16, 18.

* Box "so" indicating *result* in v. 14.

* Circle "swear" in v. 16.

* Circle the word "as" indicating *comparison* in verse 17.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What do you infer regarding Isaac's age from 21:6, 8-10, 20-21, 34 and 22:1?
2. In what sense was Isaac Abraham's *only* son?
3. What made this such a staggering test?
4. If God knew the outcome, what was the point of the test?
5. What words would you use to describe Abraham's response to God's command?
6. When Abraham said, "We will worship and then we will come back to you," do you think he intended for his words to be taken *literally* or were they merely *wishful thinking* on his part? (Cf. Heb. 11:19)
7. When Isaac inquired about the lamb for the sacrifice, Abraham gave him an ambiguous answer. Explain why he didn't he come out and say, "You, my son, are the lamb for the burnt offering."
8. What do you infer about Isaac from verses 9 and 10?
9. The Hebrew word translated "provide" is more often translated "see." Explain how "see" can also mean "provide."
10. **Discussion:** What the LORD said in verses 16-17 contributes to his promise to Abraham. How so?

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

When God asked for too much from Abraham humanly speaking, when God asked him to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, the son for whom he had waited for more than a quarter century, he responded instantly in unwavering obedience. As one commentator writes, "It was one thing to trust the Lord while waiting for the promise; but it was quite another thing to continue to trust the Word of the Lord when it called for the patriarch to do that which seemed unreasonable. Would Abraham cling to the child that God had given him, the child on which the future was based, or would he continue to obey? The test was designed to see to what extent he would obey" (Allan P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 391). Happily, Abraham passed the test with flying colors.

The story is told in Genesis 22:1-19. It has three major parts. In the first scene, Abraham is tested (vv. 1-2); in the second, he is obedient (vv. 3-10); in the third, he is rewarded (vv. 11-19).

In the first scene, the reader is alerted at the very outset to something unknown by the patriarch: It's all just a test! "Abraham's trust is to be weighed in the balance against common sense, human affection, and lifelong ambition; in fact against everything earthly" (Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, TOTC, 154). And thankfully so, since the alert "serves to cushion the listener from the full impact of the horrific command to Abraham, and it diverts attention from the question whether Isaac will be sacrificed to whether Abraham will stand up to the test" (Gordon J. Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 2, *Genesis 12-50*, 103). God speaks to Abraham in words eerily similar to those he spoke to him when he called him out of Ur. Then God said, "Get you out . . . to the land I will show you" (Ge 12:1). Now he says, "And get you to the land of Moriah . . . upon one of the mountains which I will tell you" (22:2). The repetition of these motifs, which mark the first and the last of the stories about Abraham, point to "the complete cycle in the patriarch's experience" (Ross, 394). God's command—"Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about"—goes clean contrary to both human reason and to the divine promise, "it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned" (21:12). Abraham stifles all comments, asks no questions, and simply does what he is told.

In the second scene, Abraham sets out for the place God told him to go. The narrator says nothing about Sarah or about Abraham's inner feelings, which gives free

rein to the reader's imagination. Three days and forty-five miles later Abraham looks up and spots his destination on the horizon. The extended timeline insinuates God's protracted test and Abraham's sustained obedience. The narrative pace suddenly slows as he leaves his servants at the foot of the mountain with the donkey while he and Isaac head to the top of Moriah. His instructions suggest that somehow, somehow, he fully expects to return with Isaac. They must be read as an affirmation of faith that "although he has been told to sacrifice Isaac, yet somehow the promises made to him that 'your descendants will be named through Isaac' would be fulfilled" (Wenham, 107). When Isaac breaks his silence and asks, "The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" readers sense the reason for his confidence. He tells Isaac, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." Somehow, somehow, he fully expects that God will provide. One commentator explains: "That statement of faith did not hinder Abraham from completely obeying the call to sacrifice his son, for at the place he bound Isaac and raised his hand to slay him on the altar. (Jewish tradition named the event the Aqedah, after this verb.) Abraham's explanation that God would provide was ambiguous enough to allow for this act. In telling Isaac that God would provide the sacrifice, Abraham actually deferred the answer to this son's question to God, gave God a way out of the ominous event that lay ahead, and covered his own intent to slay the son that God had provided. At the moment of truth Abraham did not look around for an animal or wait hesitatingly for God to intervene; he raised his hand to slay his son" (Ross, 399). At some point, Isaac could certainly have escaped from his aged father's grasp and fled, but he did not. Evidently, he must have shared his father's confidence to the extent of cooperating with him.

In the final scene, God does intervene but only after the sacrifice is made in the mind of Abraham. The angel of the Lord stays Abraham's hand and immediately declares God's approval. When the patriarch looks up, he sees a ram caught by its horns in a thicket and offers it in place of his beloved son. And so he names the place, "The LORD Will Provide" (v. 14). After which, the angel of the LORD again speaks, this time reiterating the promised blessings to Abraham but adding the solemn oath. Because of Abraham's obedience, the LORD would surely bless him. And adding to the blessing, because of Abraham's obedience not only would his descendants be numerous, but they

would also triumph in the gate of their enemies.

There is more to the story of Abraham sacrificing his only son Isaac as an offering to God than meets the eye. Jesus told the Jews, "If anyone keeps my word, he will never see death" (Jn 8:51). His promise infuriated them. "Now we know that you are demon-possessed," they exclaimed (v. 52). They reasoned that Abraham had died and surely Jesus was not greater than their forefather. What Jesus said next no doubt stunned them. "Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad" (v. 56).

Jesus' words raise two important questions. What did Abraham see? And when did he see it? While a number of answers to these questions have been offered in the form of various interpretations of his words, it seems likely that Jesus was alluding to what Abraham perceived from the offering of his son. One author writes, "Abraham's personal experience at the sacrifice of Isaac could have been an object lesson to him of the coming incarnation, death, and resurrection of the promised Seed" (Merrill C. Tenney, *The Gospel of John*, EBC, 9:98, 99). Abraham saw Jesus' day the day he sacrificed his only son whom he loved (Heb 11:17-19).

The Message of the Passage

Prove you fear God by obeying him without reservation, even when what his word commands seems inexplicable or unreasonable, because he, whose timing is perfect, will provide for you.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes **N** **STUDY** – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 1 **tested** "The reader is alerted at the very outset that it was a test, thus removing from the story the tension about the ultimate danger to Isaac" (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 392). "People may subject themselves to extreme conditions in order to prove their capabilities, and Scripture reveals that testing is part of God's education of his children so that they may come to maturity (Jas. 1:2-4)" (Baldwin, 90). "When God tests, he tests some value, quality, or attribute by stretching it to its limits" (John H. Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary: Genesis*, 510).

v. 2 **Moriah** Based on the reference in 2 Chronicles 3:1, most identify Moriah as the mountain on which the temple later stood. It is about 70 kilometers (45 miles) from Beersheba to Mount Moriah, if the traditional identification of Mount Moriah with the Jerusalem temple site is correct. Even with an early start it would indeed be the third day before their destination came in sight" (Baldwin, 90). One commentator argues to the contrary: "Abraham knows where Moriah is, and if it is the area of Jerusalem, he would know that the wooded hills there would provide the necessary firewood. He has, after all, traveled through this region before (Gen. 14). Since he brings firewood, he must be aware that the region of Moriah is unable to provide enough wood for a sacrifice. In other words, this Moriah is not Jerusalem" (Walton, 510).

v. 2 **sacrifice** "Human sacrifice was known throughout the ancient world, and so the call might have seemed appropriate, except for the fact that Abraham had come to believe that the Lord was the true and righteous God" (Ross, 397). "In the Canaanite world view, the god who provided fertility (El) was also entitled to demand a portion of what had been produced. This was expressed in sacrifice of animals and grain and in the sacrifice of children . . . Abraham's compliant acquiescence, as much as it reflects the power of his faith, also suggests that human sacrifice is familiar to his conceptual worldview. However saddened he may have been, he is not dumbfounded by the macabre or peculiar nature of Yahweh's demand. It was culturally logical, despite being emotionally harsh, and only baffling in light of the covenant promises" (Walton, 510).

v. 2 **burnt offering** "A burnt offering involves cutting up and burning the whole animal on the altar and was the commonest type of sacrifice . . . The usual victims of burnt offerings were birds, sheep, or if the worshiper was very wealthy, a bull. But to offer one's child was quite out of the question for devout orthodox worshipers. 'Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' asks Micah (6:7), expecting his hearers to reply with an emphatic no (cf. Lev 18:21; 20:2-5)" (Wenham, 105).

v. 5 **we will come back** "Although he does not know how God will work it out, his faith harmonizes God's promise that in Isaac his offspring will be reckoned (21:1-13) with God's command to sacrifice Isaac. According to Heb. 11:17-19, he expresses a type of 'resurrection' faith, and according to Rom. 4:16-25 his faith is of the same quality and caliber as Christians who believe in Christ's resurrection from the dead" (Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis*, 307).

v. 12 **fear** Abraham was not afraid of God. "In this context fear refers by metonymy to obedience that grows from faith" (NET Bible, Ge 22:12, **tn** 28). "Now I know that you honour [sic] and obey God" (TEV). "Now I know that you are a God-fearing man" (NEB).

v. 14 **provide** "A key word of the Abraham narrative r'h, often meaning 'to see,' is here translated 'provide'" (Waltke, 308). "The verb translated 'provide' by the NIV in 22:8, 14 is simply the verb 'to see.' This usage approximates one of the idiomatic uses of the verb 'to see' that we also have in English. When we say 'I will see to it that the report is done on time,' we are using the verb 'to see' to convey that the details will be taken care of. But the idiom also suggests by nuance a supervisory role rather than an active one. Hebrew uses the verb this way in Genesis 38:23, where the warden did not have to 'see to' anything under Joseph's care. Abraham is convince that the Lord will work out all of the details (v. 8), and when he does, Abraham names the place accordingly ('Yahweh Yireh,' i.e., 'The LORD Will Provide')" (Walton 511).

v. 17 **swear** "This oath represents an advance in the covenant in that it strengthens even further Yahweh's obligation . . . This reiteration is also an advance because it explicitly promises that Abraham's descendants 'will take possession of the cities of their enemies' (v. 17). This is the first indication of a conquest . . . Finally the oath and the accompanying advancements in the covenant agreement are here cited as a consequence of Abraham's obedience (v. 18). In all prior statements, the covenant promises were motivated purely by God's grace with no indication of conditions or suggestions that God's favor was earned. The statement made here does not suggest that the promises are conditional on the future obedience of Abraham and his descendants, but it does identify his obedience as having served as a stimulus for this advance" (Walton, 512).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

The story of Abraham and Isaac is a powerful one. There is one thing, however, that resonates in my heart as a parent. Isaac had complete trust in his father. No doubt he had seen his father make sacrifices many times before. He knew his dad had a personal relationship with God and listened to Him. He trusted his dad to do the right thing and act in accordance to God's will. What peace that must have given Isaac. Only when they were almost there did he even inquire about the sacrifice. As the events unfolded, we have no indication that Isaac feared his dad. How, as a parent, can we build that kind of trust in our kids? (1) Practice what you preach. Am I living out the truth of God's Word every day in front of my kids? Do I acknowledge when I mess up and seek forgiveness? (2) Tell the truth. Little "white lies" or partial truth will damage my integrity with my kids. (3) Keep your promises. Am I making promises I can't or don't intend to keep? (4) Be consistent. Am I setting consistent boundaries and following through with discipline when needed? When you and I are living a devoted life to our Lord, our kids will learn what trust and worship look like. This type of modeling sets our kids up to have a trusting intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father. Praying for you this week!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Genesis 22:1-19

1. Fill in the blank. "Some time later God _____ Abraham." (v. 1)
2. What was the test?
3. How did God provide for Abraham's need?

What Do You Think

1. Why do you think Abraham trusted God?
2. How does it make you feel to know that one of God's names is The Lord Will Provide?
3. Does God always keep His promises?

What R U Going To Do

Sit down with your family and make a list of all the things you need and the way God provides for those needs. (Ex. Food - money from a job, love - your family, to know truth - His Word) If there are things you still need, ask God to supply those needs and then watch to see how He will provide.

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Personal God - I believe God cares about everything in my life.

Memory Verse

Psalm 86:10 - *For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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