

YHWH Jireh (Yireh)

יְהוָה יִרְאֶה

YHWH Sees / Will Provide

Pronounced Yă-wá' Yir'eh, the compound name appears in the Old Testament only once—in a statement by Abraham to memorialize God's intervention in the sacrifice of his son, Isaac, by providing an animal substitute.

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."
(Genesis 22:14 emphasis added)

Etymology

Most people have been taught that this name means "**The LORD Provides**". However, that is a misnomer and imprecise teaching.

The word "*jir'eh*" (yir'eh) ("יִרְאֶה") derives from the Hebrew word "*ra'ah*" (râ'âh) ("רָאָה"), which means "**to see**" or "**to foresee**". In the Hebrew Bible, it is translated "**to see**" or "**to appear**", and it is often used to refer to someone who foresees, such as a seer—not to be confused with the word for prophet, "*nabiy*" (nâbîy').

Formerly in Israel, if someone went to inquire of God,
they would say, "Come, let us go to the seer (jir'eh),"
because the prophet (nabiy') of today used to be called a seer.
(1 Samuel 9:9 *parenthetical text added*)

The LORD (YHWH) warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets (nabiy') and seers (jir'eh): "Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your ancestors to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."
(2 Kings 17:13 *parenthetical text added*)

To be sure, not all words translated "seer" in the English Bibles have the same Hebrew root. For example, the Hebrew word for "seer" in 1 Chronicles 9:22 is "*ro'eh*", meaning "*one who sees a vision*"; and in 1 Chronicles 21:9 and many other verses, the Hebrew word for "seer" is "*chozeh*", meaning "*a beholder*".

What is the significance of the name "YHWH Jireh"?

Most of YHWH's compound names and titles arise out of an historic incident, and portray YHWH in some aspect of His character meeting specific human needs. Naturally, all of these names are significant because of their relationship to the name "YHWH".

It isn't enough that we simply know the various names YHWH has given us as some sort of rote learning exercise. If we truly desire to know YHWH on the intimate and personal level that He yearns to share with us, then we must study these names and designations and their significance in the historical settings in which they're given. Only then, may we even come close to grasping all that the Elohim of Heaven and Earth wants us to know about Himself.



Why else would He inspire these revelations about His character and His interactions with His creation?

The compound name "YHWH Jireh", as recorded in Genesis 22:14, is significant because it commemorates a great deliverance. The patriarch, Abraham, had just endured the most arduous emotional trial anyone could ever go through. After he and his wife, Sarah, had been blessed with the miraculous birth of their son, Isaac, now the LORD had asked him to sacrifice that same son.

Surely, Abraham would have gladly sacrificed thousands of bulls or lambs. But God said, "Take your son..." He might have been willing to sacrifice a servant or even Ishmael, his beloved son by the slave woman. But God said, "...your **only son** whom you love, Isaac..." (Genesis 22:2)

After all the tests, trials, and hardships he'd gone through prior to this—even leaving his country and loving God more than his own father—now the Almighty was asking him to give up his precious son whom he loved with all his heart!

The Bible doesn't tell us everything that went through Abraham's mind or what that three-day journey to Moriah was like. All we know is what Abraham **knew** for sure. YHWH had asked him to "take . . . your **only son** . . . Isaac . . . and **sacrifice** him."

And now, just as he was about to plunge the knife into Isaac's throat, the LORD called out and stopped him. **Just in time!** And there, caught in the thickets, was a ram which the LORD had provided for Abraham and Isaac to sacrifice together as a burnt offering to the LORD.

Naming the place "YHWH Jireh" serves as a perpetual reminder of the marvelous, awe-inspiring grace and provision of YHWH.

How did "to see" become "will provide"?

Obviously, there might be some confusion as to how the word meaning "to see" can then also be translated to "will provide"—unless we consider the nature of **YHWH Shaddai**.

In His eternality, our **covenant-keeping, self-existent** GOD knows all things and foresees all things. He foresaw man's fall into sin and our need for redemption, and "while we were yet sinners," He made provision for that in the Person of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8). In the same way, He foresees all our needs and **in foreseeing**, He **goes before** us and **provides** for them before we are even aware of the need!

So then, YHWH Jireh is El Shaddai . . . **fulfilled!** He is our Almighty GOD who abundantly **blesses** and **supplies** all that He foresees!

As the 19th Century Anglican pastor H. W. Webb-Peploe wrote in *The Titles of Jehovah*:

"...with God, to see is also to foresee. As the One who possesses eternal wisdom and knowledge, He knows the end from the beginning. . . . From eternity to eternity He foresees everything. . . . Thus with God foreseeing is prevision. As the Jehovah of righteousness and holiness, and of love and redemption, having prevision of man's sin, and fall, and need, He makes provision for that need. For provision, after all, is merely a compound of two Latin words meaning "to see beforehand". And we may learn from a dictionary that "provide" is simply the verb and "prevision" the noun of seeing beforehand. Thus to God prevision is necessarily followed by provision, for He certainly will provide for that need which His foreseeing shows Him to exist. With Him prevision and provision are one and the same thing."¹



Meditation

After we've gone through hardships or passed some particularly difficult trial, it is common for us to think, now that the storm has passed, we can relax. We might even be tempted to think the Almighty should give us a hearty pat on the back for a "job well done."

However, there's an important lesson to be learned from the trial Abraham faced here. Notice the words in Genesis 22:1—"...**after these things**, God tempted him..." Abraham had already proven his love for GOD many times over! He had risked everything he had to follow GOD, even to the point of leaving his father and his homeland. Surely, he had proven his love for GOD!

It's important to understand that GOD doesn't tempt us to sin (even though in Abraham's case, it would not have been sin because he would have been doing what God had commanded him to do). Rather, GOD places us in these trials to help us discover **His** grace and so that we might learn how strong we are in Him!

in all these things we are **more than conquerors** through him who loved us.
(Romans 8:37 *emphasis added*)

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I **am strong**.
(2 Corinthians 12:10 *emphasis added*)

From Abraham to Joseph, from David and the Prophets to the Apostles, Scripture makes it clear that victory in former trials neither supplants nor protects us from future trials. In fact, just as the strongest steel is forged in the hottest furnaces, so too, strong faith is forged in strong trials.

Another lesson to be learned from Abraham is that his deliverance was not due to any elaborate or clever scheme on his part. There is no indication that he argued, contrived, dodged, or even try to pray his way out of it. It was purely YHWH Jireh's doing!

YHWH Jireh always has His eye upon us. He always sees our sufferings, and He always provides exactly **what** He determines is needed **when** it's needed. He will not only manifest, but will **magnify** His **wisdom, power**, and **goodness** on our behalf so that He might be glorified in us and through us!

These have come so that the proven genuineness of your **faith**—
of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though **refined by fire**—
may result in **praise, glory** and **honor** when Jesus Christ is revealed.
(1 Peter 1:7 *emphasis added*)

¹ Webb-Peploe, *The Titles of Jehovah*, p. 24 as per Stone, Nathan, *Names of God*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1944, 2010. pp. 79-80.



