

To Know Him By Name



An Intimate Look at the Names of God

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A Note From the Authors



“...My people will know my name...”

Isaiah 52:6

To Know Him By Name is a result of an honest desire to know our God better, who He really is, and how He works in our lives. It is our hope and prayer that through this study your understanding of your Maker, your Savior, and your King will expand beyond its current boundaries and you will develop a deeper level of intimacy with the Lover of your soul. He is, you will find, an incredibly complex personality with emotions, plans, and a longing to be loved by His people. This book is far from exhaustive; in fact, we admittedly have barely scratched the surface. Some of the names of God traditionally presented in such a study have been omitted, while others more obscure have been explored. Regardless, we have found that as our knowledge of Him is diligently cultivated through study, our love for Him flourishes and our desire to serve Him overflows from a grateful heart. Get to know Him better...you won't regret it!

In His Name,

Janet & Kristin

How to Use This Study



To Know Him By Name is a study for both individual and small group use. Based largely in the Old Testament, it is rooted in much Biblical history. Woven throughout, however, is practical application pulled from the pages of the New Testament and the words of Jesus Himself. Each chapter of study is divided into five sections. The first three are designed as a day's worth of personal study to introduce a particular name of God and exploring the context in which the name was revealed. This encourages digging into the spiritual principles found in the revelation of each name, some often hiding in plain sight. The fourth day of study links the name studied in that chapter to a particular psalm. Taking the time to journal through a psalm is well worth the effort and will hopefully provoke meditation and reflection with thoughts and prayers recorded in a separate journal. The intention of time spent journaling through a psalm is to be immersed in a time of praise and worship centered on the character of our God. Finally, the last section of each chapter is a set of small group questions that recap the week of homework, hitting the highlights and encouraging discussion. These questions can be answered

ahead of time or be explored together in a small group format. However
you choose to use this study, may you be blessed and enriched as you
seek to know your God better!

Yahweh Yireh: Our Provider

(yah-WEH yir-EH)

“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



DAY ONE: THE COMPOUND NAME

As we journey through Scripture, we see God continue to reveal Himself to the Hebrew people (and to us.) It is through this series of revelations that God worked His way toward a critical point with mankind: an exclusive relationship. With the revelation of His proper name YHWH (YaHWeh), God established a special and intimate relationship with His chosen people. He would be their God and they would be His people.

“God’s personal existence, the continuity of His dealings with man, the unchangeableness of His promises, and the whole revelation of His redeeming mercy gathers round the name [Yahweh].” –

Nathan Stone

It was by the name *Yahweh* that God delivered His people from bondage in Egypt and set them on a course toward the Promised Land, a place of blessings. But, before God took His people to the Promised Land, He wanted to forge an exclusive relationship with them that began with their deliverance.

This thought is echoed in Isaiah 45:1-6. As you read these verses, pay close attention to verses 3 and 6. Why did God provide deliverance for His people?

Why would God want His people to know His power to deliver before they experienced His ability to bring about blessings?

The way God revealed Himself to Moses and the Hebrew people is a beautiful picture of how God reveals Himself to us. God saves us, delivers us from our slavery to sin, binds us to Himself in an exclusive and intimate relationship, and together we set out toward the Promised Land. If first we know Him as “Deliverer,” we are then better able to know Him as “Provider.”

From this point on in our study, God’s names become more and more descriptive not just of His character, but of what He seeks to do *for* us and *in* us. It is within the context of a relationship with our God that He will reach far beyond Himself into our lives to address our deepest needs. What are some of those deep needs you desire God to meet?

If we are in relationship with God, we can depend on Him to address and meet those needs. But relationship is key. Can you recall when you entered into an exclusive relationship with your God? Think back to the circumstances for a moment. Thank Him for desiring a relationship with you, for hearing your cry, and for delivering you from your sins.

For some of us, this relationship has evolved in a less-than-dramatic fashion and our attachment to Him has happened gradually over the years, especially if we came to know God as a child. For others, like the Israelites, it was a definite moment in time, a leap from *I don’t know you* to *I know you and I am Yours*.

As I AM, the self-existent one, *Yahweh* delivered His people from their bondage in Egypt and made their relationship official. But this was just the beginning. From that moment forward, the Israelites would come to know *Yahweh* by many more names that were linked to YHWH. These

compound names, such as *Yahweh Yireh*, attach a specific attribute or promise of action on God's part for His people.

There are many compound names of *Yahweh* in Scripture, and although we won't be able to cover them all, we will study a few. As we dig deeper into God's Word, keep in mind that whatever God reveals or promises in these names is reserved for those in a special, or covenant, relationship with Him. The world at large may know Him as *Elohim*, *El Elyon*, and even *El Shaddai*, but it is only His people, the people He delivered and redeemed, that will call upon Him as *Yahweh Yireh* or *Yahweh Shalom*. It is only those with whom He is in relationship that He will sanctify, shepherd, and heal as *Yahweh Mekoddishkem*, *Yahweh Rohi*, and *Yahweh Rophe*.

According to Isaiah 52:6, who will know God's name?

What does it mean to you that God reserves His compound names for those who are in relationship with Him?

Again, relationship is essential. But our relationship with God isn't all that's important to Him. Each of us is in relationship with others and God is interested in those relationships as well. Kay Arthur says:

*"As the Self-Existent One, He desires to meet the needs of those
He created in His own image... He reaches beyond Himself
because it is part of His character to do so. As you and I take on
His character more and more, we will reach out beyond
ourselves to manifest to others what He is to us."*²

What He is to us will become clearer as we grow in our knowledge of Him and as our relationship with *Yahweh* becomes more and more intimate. Make it your prayer today to manifest to others what He is to you. For example, if you have basked in God's unconditional love, resolve to show love to someone unconditionally. Jot down your ideas in your journal. If it

is difficult to articulate what God is to you, ask Him to reveal and clarify what He wants you to communicate about Him to others. He is faithful and if you resolve to pay attention, He will answer you.



DAY TWO: THE LORD PROVIDES

Most of *Yahweh's* compound names are found within historical incidents where God reached out to meet a human need. Mankind's first encounter with a compound name is when Abraham encountered God as *Yahweh Yireh*.

The Hebrew word *yireh* is derived from the verb meaning "to see." Our Bibles translate it "to provide," and the linguistic trail is pretty interesting. The English word *provision* is made up of two Latin words that together mean "to see beforehand." *Provide* is simply the verb form of *provision*. God, seeing the past, present, and future, can anticipate need and provide accordingly. So when our Bible says "*The LORD will provide,*" it could just as accurately read, "*The LORD will see to it.*"

This name *Yahweh Yireh* is revealed to us in the story of Abraham and his beloved son Isaac. This story is, as one scholar notes, the account of "*the last and greatest crisis in the life of Abraham.*" Read Genesis 22:1-19. What was God asking Abraham to do and according to verse 1, what was the purpose of this exercise?

Historians confirm that human sacrifice was practiced in ancient times in and around the region Abraham lived, but it was not something that Abraham's God had ever required. Thinking back to the circumstances surrounding Isaac's birth, why is this request by God so strange?

How does God describe Isaac in verse 2?

What does Isaac ask his father in verse 7?

How does Abraham respond to Isaac's question and what does that response tell you about Abraham's faith?

What are some thoughts that might have run through Abraham's mind as he and Isaac made their long journey to Mount Moriah?

Remember, Abraham had been down a similar road with God before. Certainly the circumstances of this particular situation were extreme and probably surreal to Abraham in a sense. But do you remember our study of the name *El Shaddai*? When God revealed Himself as *El Shaddai*, Abraham learned that God was able to fulfill His promises.

When God asked Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, there wasn't a promise for *El Shaddai* to keep. However, Abraham now believed God Almighty was **able** to somehow turn a bad situation into something good. It was within God's rights as Abraham's *Adonai* to ask this thing of him. And Abraham believed it was within God's power as *El Shaddai* to ultimately ensure a good result from this potential tragedy.

Read Hebrews 11:17-19 for a little more insight into Abraham's thoughts. What did Abraham believe God was able to do?

Admittedly, there seems to be a glaring irony here between God's original promise to Abraham regarding Isaac and the command in question. Even the writer of Hebrews acknowledges it. What is it and how does Abraham reconcile the contradiction?

Abraham had an ace in his pocket, so to speak. He believed his God was mighty in power and able to do the impossible. He had witnessed it firsthand. If Isaac were to be sacrificed on that altar, it was not beyond God's power to resurrect him from the dead. That is some faith! And Abraham's great faith was rewarded. How does God resolve the situation in Genesis 22:12-14?

Imagine Abraham's relief when God called out to him from heaven that day. Though God didn't instruct Abraham to sacrifice the ram, Abraham did so, probably out of gratitude that his God had provided another way. God had seen to it.

What did Abraham call that place and what is said to this day?

It's interesting that Abraham didn't name the location:

The place where God tested me...

or

The place where I had faith in the face of hardship....

Naming it as he did, what do we learn about Abraham's perspective and what he wanted to ultimately communicate about his experience?

In the end, Abraham sought to magnify his God. Often when we persevere through a difficult trial, our tendency is to stay focused on ourselves and the hardship we endured. But if we glean anything from Abraham and this story, let it be that we resolve to, even in the midst of testing, unashamedly announce the greatness of our God.



DAY THREE: IN THE MOUNT OF THE LORD...

Let's put ourselves in Abraham's shoes for a minute. He had longed for a son with his wife Sarah. God had promised to give him a son. God had defied the laws of nature, performed a miracle, and brought Isaac into the world. And now, the same God that had been nothing but good to Abraham was asking for that son back. How could Abraham obey? How could he let Isaac go? He may have been thinking, *Ask anything of me, Lord God, but not this. Anything...but this*

Has God ever asked you to make a difficult sacrifice? Perhaps it's a relationship, a job, a dream. If so, how did you respond? Explain.

Though sometimes Scripture is less clear, here we are left with no doubt as to why God asked Abraham to make this particular sacrifice. What was the reason given in Genesis 22:1?

Do you believe a sacrifice God has asked you to make could possibly serve the same purpose and if so, does that change your view of your situation?

Let's be honest: testing is not fun and sacrifice is hard. Sometimes, though, sacrifice is the only way to truly test the depth of our love, and sacrifice would be meaningless if it didn't really cost us something. God does not dismiss or ignore the fact that He asked Abraham to sacrifice something he loved more than life itself. And therein may lay the point. God made it clear He understood Abraham's love for Isaac. But still, God asked for the sacrifice. God understood the cost because He is a Father Himself. Little does Abraham know, but someday God would sacrifice **His** one and only Son, proving through that sacrifice the depth of His love for us.

"God was teaching the awful cost to Himself of the provision of the sacrifice for sin. 'Does it break your heart, Abraham, to give up, to slay by your own hand, as an innocent sacrifice, your well-beloved and only son? Then think of the awful and infinite cost to ME of what I am prepared to do for man.'"³ – Nathan Stone

Here, like so many other places in the Old Testament, God is giving us a glimpse of His heart. He gives us a sneak peak at His redemptive plan and what it would cost Him. When Abraham breathed a huge sigh of relief that day for the ram in the thicket, he was seeing the future. What *Yahweh Yireh* did that day when He delivered Isaac by providing a substitute, *Yahweh Yireh* would do again centuries later for us. Our

deliverance, like that of Isaac, required a substitute sacrifice. Why is a sacrifice needed to resolve our sin problem? Read Hebrews 9:22.

If Isaac needed deliverance and, bound to the altar with the knife looming, he clearly did, it is safe to assume that he represents us in the story. What else can we assume from John 1:29?

How does Romans 3:23-26 confirm this? Focus on the first part of verse 25.

Lest we forget that sacrifice proves love, read Romans 5:5-8 and let the words melt your heart. *While we were still sinners*, broken, unworthy, and messed up, what did God do by offering up His Son?

According to verse 6, when did He do it?

That must have been Abraham's thought: just...in...time. What was needed was provided and he named the place appropriately "The LORD will provide." But what else does Abraham say in Genesis 22:14?

This drama played out, at God's specific instruction, in the region of Moriah. What does 2 Chronicles 3:1 tell us about Mount Moriah?

Centuries after Abraham's test of faith, Mount Moriah was the exact place where Solomon built God's temple and where the yearly sacrifice for sin would be made. It is widely accepted that Jesus, the Lamb of God, was crucified just a quarter mile away from Mount Moriah.

Abraham announced long before that just as *Yahweh Yireh* provided a substitute for Isaac, He would provide what was needed to save us from our sins. It was a sacrifice that cost God much. It was a sacrifice that proved His love. It was the provision only He could provide.

Read 1 John 4:10 below. Meditate on this verse. Thank *Yahweh Yireh* for providing what was needed to save you from sin and death.

*"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us
and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." – 1 John 4:10*



DAY FOUR: JOURNAL PSALM 34

Aren't you glad you have a God who sees your needs and provides for you – both physically and spiritually? *Yahweh Yireh* not only provided deliverance for Isaac, but He also provided deliverance for us as well. The New American Standard Bible describes Psalm 34 as David's declaration that the LORD is a Provider and Deliverer. Read this psalm. As you read, record some of your favorite verses in your journal.

David begins his psalm with words of praise. Spend a few minutes praising *Yahweh Yireh* for who He is and what He has done for you.

Ponder verse 3: *“Oh magnify the LORD with me and let us exalt His name together.”* Let’s magnify the Lord together.

In verses 4 through 7 David confirmed that in his day of trouble he cried out to God and God answered and delivered him. If your heart is troubled, cry out to your great Provider. He will hear and answer you.

Read verses 8 and 9. In these verses David says he can taste and see that God is good. How have you seen God’s goodness and provision in your life?

What promise is made in verse 10? Thank God for knowing your needs and seeing to it in advance that these needs are met.

David encourages us to pursue godliness and then in verse 15 he says, *“The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and His ears are open to their cry.”* Examine your heart and your life. Invite the Holy Spirit to cleanse your life of anything that would prevent you from experiencing intimacy with God. Spend as much time as you need in heartfelt confession. Then, take comfort in knowing that God’s eyes are on you.

Verses 17-18 describe some of the ways God provides for us. When have you experienced His deliverance, nearness and salvation? End your time today by thanking God for His willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.



SMALL GROUP: DOING LIFE TOGETHER

In the last chapter, we learned that *Yahweh*, the great I AM, is all-sufficient and meets our every need. Just think: *Yahweh Yireh*, the great I AM who sees our needs in advance is, at this very moment, providing everything that is needed. He sees. He knows. He provides. And, as we learned this week, not only does He provide, but He is our provision.

Read Isaiah 52:6 aloud together. Discuss the significance of knowing God by name. What do the words, *“Here I am”* say about God’s desire to be known intimately?

Yahweh Yireh is the God who sees and provides. This divine attribute was illustrated through the account of Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice. Think back on this story in Genesis 22 and discuss what might have gone through Abraham's head as he contemplated what God had asked of him.

According to Genesis 22:1, we know God's motive for making such an extreme request. Read this verse and identify God's motive. In what ways has God ever tested your obedience and love? How did you experience His sufficiency throughout the testing process?

Fortunately for us, the writer of Hebrews sheds some light on Abraham's thought process. According to Hebrews 11:17-19, what did Abraham believe about God?

In what ways might this knowledge have brought encouragement and peace to Abraham as he walked the three days journey to Mount Moriah?

As was brought out in our lesson this week, God was not only testing Abraham's love and obedience, but God also wanted to provide an object lesson for us. God wanted to illustrate His willingness to provide the sacrifice of His beloved Son. Discuss any similarities you see between the story of Abraham and Isaac and God's provision on the cross.

After God stopped Abraham's hand and provided the ram for the sacrifice Abraham named that place "the Lord Will Provide." Think back over your life and identify times when God provided for you, either physically or spiritually. In what ways has God been your *Yahweh Yireh*? Briefly share how you have seen God's provision in your life.

Abraham chose to focus on God's provision rather than the difficulty of the trial. How can we learn from him? How can we choose to focus on God's ability and willingness to provide rather than our circumstances?

Read Romans 5:6-8. These verses tell us that God demonstrated His love for us by offering His Son as the sacrifice for our sins. In the story of Abraham and Isaac God stopped short of requiring Isaac's blood. However, when it came to the cross, God didn't stop short. He carried

sacrifice to the extreme end by providing Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice. Reflect on this thought. God required of Himself what He would require of no one else: His Son would provide cleansing for the sins of mankind.

"He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever – holy and awesome is his name." – Psalm 111:9

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Notes



¹ (Stone 1944, 22)

² Arthur, Kay. *Lord, I Want to Know You*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook, 1992, 2000, p. 59.

³ (Stone 1944, 68)