

GOD PROVIDES™

A FILM LEARNING EXPERIENCE
FROM CROWN FINANCIAL MINISTRIES®



GOD PROVIDES™ SERMON OUTLINE

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

These sermon outlines are provided as part of your Large Group Viewing License*. In addition to showing the films in conjunction with a sermon, consider the other ways you can share the *God Provides*™ message with others.

LARGE GROUP VIEWING IDEAS

- Show one or all of these films in the *God Provides*™ Film Learning Experience to your entire congregation.
- Rent a movie theater and sponsor a local movie night in your community.
- Share the films in conjunction with local mission work.
- Host a “Lunch and Learn Movie Experience” with your coworkers or employees.

LARGE GROUP LICENSE - PACKAGE FEATURES

Don't forget to use all of the materials available with your Large Group Viewing License. Go to Crown.org/GodProvides, click on “Group Licensing,” enter your unique License Code, and download the following materials:

- **Six Downloadable Trailers** for each short film.
- **Sermon Outlines** provide pastors with a message based on each short film.
- **Promotional Materials** such as posters, bulletin inserts, tickets and more are provided in digital format to promote the learning experience.
- **License Certificate** enables unlimited viewings for groups larger than 100.

For additional help or questions, please call 1-800-249-6320 or visit us online at Crown.org/GodProvides.

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BEFORE AND AFTER THIS SERMON

- 1** Before using this sermon, contact your local Crown Consultative Servant who can assist you in developing a financial ministry plan to provide ongoing guidance for your church members after the sermons are delivered in your church. Go to Crown.org and click “In My Area” to find a local servant.

- 2** While using this sermon, become familiar with the *God Provides™* Web site. It offers solid biblical insight that can help your church members. In particular, encourage your congregation to do any of the following:
 - a. Purchase a copy of the *God Provides™ Companion Guide*, and continue a personal study of each short film.
 - b. Listen or Podcast Crown’s radio programs for daily wisdom and encouragement.
 - c. Sign up for free e-communication to get monthly articles and advice on a variety of financial topics. Go to Crown.org/SignUp to register.

- 3** After using this sermon, take your church members to the next level in their journey by encouraging them to do some of the following:
 - a. **Start Some *God Provides™* Small Groups** – encourage your church members to go deeper in studying the principles in these films. Small groups can view the films as part of an effective learning experience using the available *God Provides™ Companion Guide*.
 - b. **Encourage Next Step Resources** – encourage your church members to apply the biblical principles they’ve learned in practical ways. **Next Step Resources** from Crown can help them. See the last page of this document for details.

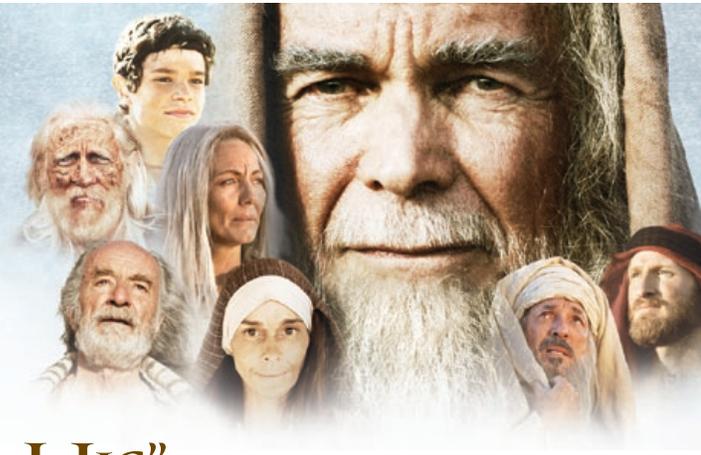
*A large group is defined as showing a short film to more than 100 people at one time. For 100 people or fewer, a large group viewing license is not required. A *God Provides™* Companion Guide is recommended for each participant. Additional Companion Guides are sold separately.



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“MINE OR HIS”

(referencing the film, *Abraham and Issac*, adapted from Genesis 22:1-18 and Hebrews 11:17-19)

[Note to Pastors: We prayerfully offer this resource material to you, believing that God will use it to guide and bless individuals and families within your congregation and the church body as a whole. Obviously you know your congregation's specific needs and interests, so feel free to adapt any of this material. This sermon addresses just a facet of the complete *God Provides™ Film Learning Experience*.]

Ice Breaker and Introduction of Suggested Film Clip

Imagine how surprised a 75-year-old nomadic herdsman named Abram was when the Creator God of the universe suddenly spoke seven amazing promises to him, including this one: “I will make you into a great nation” (Genesis 12:2).

Did God speak in a whisper? Did His voice sound like thunder? The Bible doesn't tell us. But we do know that God had a miraculous plan in mind for Abram and his wife, Sarai, an elderly couple who were childless.

As years passed, Abram started worrying about not having a child of his own. “Don't be afraid,” God responded.

“O Sovereign Lord,” Abram replied, “what can you give me since I remain childless?” And then he added, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir” (Exodus 15:1-3).

In some ways, Abram was politely saying, “O Lord, who has supreme power and authority, when will You fulfill what You already promised my wife and me? We are older, still have no child of our own, and it looks as if a servant will inherit all my possessions.”

God immediately answered. This time he stated that not only would Abram's wife bear a son, she and Abram would have so many offspring that to count them would be like counting all the stars in the sky!

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God then made a special agreement, called a covenant, with Abram. Each of them agreed to keep certain promises. Abram promised to be obedient to God, and his descendants also would have to remain obedient.

As more time passed, Abram and his wife began worrying again.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, and Sarai was about ninety, God appeared to him again and promised:

- To make them the father and mother of many nations.
- To make them fruitful and be their God
- To give them a huge area of land in which to live—the region called Canaan (that later became the land of ancient Israel).
- To give them a son they were to name Isaac, with whom God would establish an everlasting covenant.

God also changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means "exalted father." And he changed Sarai's name to Sarah. (Exodus 17)

In return, God again required Abram—and his descendants—to obey fully the terms of their agreement.

The next year, Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Once again the living God had demonstrated His faithfulness. No doubt Abraham and Sarah, and their household and friends, celebrated joyously and praised God. A great future lay ahead of them.

As we'll see now in a short film clip, adapted from Genesis 22:1-18 and Hebrews 11:17-19, a few years later Abraham faced the most challenging test of his life. God commanded him to make an unusual, costly, and—based on human standards—seemingly nonsensical and cruel sacrifice.

Why? To see if Abraham would trust God completely. To see if Abraham was willing to sacrifice everything he had—including his greatest treasures—in order to be obedient to God.

It would be a test the father and his son would never forget!

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As you watch the film, think about:

- How God had miraculously given Isaac to Abraham Sarah.
- Whether or not Abraham remained passionately obedient to God.
- How God's past faithfulness concerning Isaac might have influenced Abraham's decision.



Play First Film Clip of *Abraham and Isaac* (approx. 2 mins. 48 secs. long)

* Start: (approx. 2 mins. 28 secs. into the film) when we see Abraham's campfire. God speaks to Abraham about sacrificing Isaac. Abraham yells Isaac's name and then wakes up in his tent.

* End: After Abraham and Sarah talk about Abraham following God when He spoke to Abraham in the land of his fathers. It is the morning and Abraham is preparing for his journey (approx. 5 mins. 16 secs. into the film).

Key Message

Perhaps you are wondering, Why did God tell Abraham to sacrifice his beloved child—the one through whom all nations would be blessed? Many people have asked such questions.

Did you know that even before Abraham's time, thousands of years ago pagan people sacrificed children to obtain special favors from their gods? Abraham was probably familiar with this horrible practice.

God certainly was. He clearly stated in the Hebrew (Old Testament) Bible that such sacrifices were wrong. Any ancient Israelites—descendants of Abraham—who committed this detestable act were to be severely punished.

So why did God command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac?

It was a test—to determine whether or not Abraham would trust and obey his sovereign Lord fully and, in faith, make everything he had—including his beloved son—available for God's use.

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1 **Obedience to God demonstrates our love for Him and is the key to receiving His blessings.**

Abraham was not perfect, but he passionately trusted and obeyed God.

God loved Abraham, shared a dynamic relationship with him, and greatly blessed him, his family—and eventually the world.

The theme of obeying God—and how important such obedience is to our relationship with Him—flows powerfully throughout the entire Bible. For example:

- Just after creation, God told Adam to obey Him by not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And Adam and Eve disobeyed!
- As the Old Testament records, God evaluated the ancient kings of Israel by how completely they obeyed His commands.

Today, each of us—like Abraham—is challenged to obey God—and that includes having faith that He will keep His promises and carry out His perfect will for our lives.

God tells every follower of Jesus to be passionately committed to obeying Him. As 1 John 2:6 tells us, “Whoever claims to live in him [Jesus] must walk as Jesus walked.” We are to strive to be like Jesus—who always obeyed the Scriptures. His obedience to His Father took Him to the cross for the sins of humankind.

As it was during Abraham’s day, our obedience demonstrates our love for God. So it’s important for us to learn what He tells us to do—and what to avoid.

How much do you love God—as demonstrated by your commitment to obey Him in all areas of your life?

Additional Supporting Scriptures

[These are provided for your convenience. Feel free to select from them or utilize others at your discretion.]

Key Verses:

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that

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he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. But those who hate him he will repay to their face by destruction; he will not be slow to repay to their face those who hate him. Therefore, take care to follow the commands, decrees and laws I give you today. If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your forefathers. He will love you and bless you. —Deuteronomy 7:6-13

Additional Verses:

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." —Matthew 28:16-20

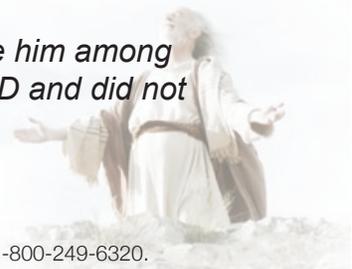
Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. —Romans 5:16-19

Related Stories from the Bible

In the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done. He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. . . .

Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. He held fast to the LORD and did not

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cease to follow him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses. And the LORD was with him; he was successful in whatever he undertook. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. From watchtower to fortified city, he defeated the Philistines, as far as Gaza and its territory. —2 Kings 18:1-8



Play Second Film Clip of *Abraham and Isaac*

* Start: (approx. 10 mins. into the clip) Abraham, Isaac and their servants are on their journey. The group stops and Abraham tells his servants to stay here and he and Isaac will go up and worship. He continues by saying, “We will come back to you here.”

* End: God stopped Abraham from making the sacrifice. Abraham helps Isaac off the altar, and they look toward the sunset. Abraham says, “thank you Lord.” A ram is seen caught in the thicket (approx. 16 mins. 04 secs. into the film).

2 To obey God passionately often involves *sacrifice*, making everything we have—including people and things we love—available for God’s use.

That final scene in the film clip was really powerful, wasn’t it?

It’s hard to imagine how difficult it was for Abraham as he pondered God’s costly command. This test was important. Abraham needed to determine in his heart and mind whether or not he would be completely committed—completely sold out—to obeying (loving) God.

Yes, we know how everything worked out, that God stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.

But why was Abraham willing to sacrifice Isaac?

Something Abraham said to the servant before he and Isaac left to make the sacrifice gives us a clue. He said that both he and Isaac would return after the sacrifice!

Abraham had great faith in his God:

- The God who had guided him to a new land
- The God who had miraculously given Isaac to him and Sarah
- The God who had promised to bless him and generations of his family . . . through Isaac

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Abraham knew that God would not break His promises and let Isaac remain dead after the sacrifice. Do you—and I—have that much faith in God?

That day God demonstrated to Abraham and Isaac—and readers of Scripture ever since—that He was not like any pagan gods that would have permitted Isaac to die a horrible death.

God did not allow His loving character to be compromised by such an evil action.

The God who commanded Abraham to sacrifice one of his most treasured possessions—Isaac—is the God of compassion, love, mercy

Will we listen to God’s voice—through prayer, the Bible, the wisdom of other people? And willingly obey Him no matter what sacrifices He tells us to make?

God is faithful and always keeps His promises. When our obedience requires us to make sacrifices, and we make them, we will experience His peace and contentment.

Most importantly, we will grow closer to the infinite yet personal God who loves us more than we can know and desires our love (obedience) in return.

Additional Supporting Scriptures

[These are provided for your convenience. Feel free to select from them or utilize others at your discretion.]

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
—Matthew 5:11-12

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.
—Matthew 16:24-27

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,



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that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. —2 Corinthians 8:8-9

3 When we sacrificially offer our *lives* to God’s service, it is an act of *worship* to Him.

Abraham had a long history of walking with God. Never once did he experience anything other than God’s complete faithfulness. Each time he obeyed, and each time God provided, Abraham learned that God is fully trustworthy.

We are all on a spiritual journey with God. Although we sometimes become discouraged with our individual progress, it’s helpful to remember that the development of faith is a life-long process.

The apostle Paul realized this principle that Abraham had learned so well: God is worthy to receive not only our possessions and what we hold most dear—He’s worthy to receive our very lives.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship” (Romans 12:1).

Pastoral Challenge

In which areas might God be testing your willingness to obey Him fully and trust Him with your life and all that you have?

What is the relationship between obeying God and receiving His blessings? In what way(s) might you obey God more completely from now on, as an “act of worship”?

Wrap Up and Close

[We recommend bringing in a short, modern-day illustration to close. For example:

- Moravian Missionaries who sold themselves into slavery, leaving comfort, family, and freedom, to bring the gospel to slaves in the Caribbean.
[http://www.pacificbaptist.com/me09/moravian_missions_bio.pdf]

Or, someone in the congregation might share a short, illustrative testimony—live or via video.]

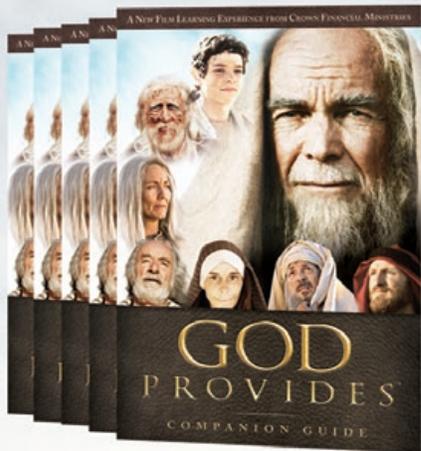
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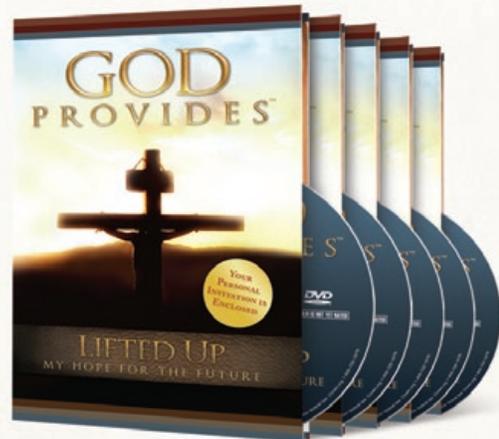


God Provides[™] Companion Guide

When using *God Provides*[™] in a group setting, a Companion Guide is recommended for each person. Purchase additional Companion Guides at your local Christian retailer or contact Crown.

Lifted Up - A Personal Invitation

Share the ultimate act of God's provision for all people—His gift of salvation and new life. This evangelistic packet features the short film *Lifted Up*, along with a special video invitation to Jesus Christ. Contact Crown for bulk purchase options.



Online Companion



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Are you facilitating *God Provides*[™] in your family or church? Obtain free additional information and tips to enhance your experience.

/ Next Steps

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