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NEW RELEASE!

GOD PROVIDES

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Has God put a dream in your heart?

By Chuck Bentley, CEO

Only once in my life has anyone asked me this question. Quite unexpectedly, an elderly, godly friend that I had known for less than an hour looked me in the eye and said, “Chuck, what dream has God put in your heart?”

I was excited to be asked such a personal, probing question because I had great respect for how God had used the life of the one waiting for my reply. I was comfortable sharing openly with him and was humbled by his genuine interest in my life.

Sharing my heart's desire

I began to speak, trying to avoid too much detail but wanting to get his honest reaction to what happened to me: “I was standing in a remote area of Africa on a very quiet night under a canopy of brilliantly shining stars, sensing that I was all alone but that God was very near. After having spent almost a month showing the *Jesus Film* in the backcountry of Tanzania, my heart was full of joy from all the works of

God’s power that I had witnessed. The film was captivating to the audiences, and His Holy Spirit worked through the visual story in such a way that thousands received Christ as Savior and were born again. I saw lives change before my very eyes.

“But I was also heavy hearted, because each night we packed up the generators and the film and moved to a new location the next day. I could

hardly bear leaving these new brothers and sisters in Christ without any help or support to grow and know more about Christ. It was after one of those long days in the African bush that I stepped away from the crew of people I was traveling with, stood alone in a field looking into the sky, and spoke out loud to God from the depths of my soul.

“I said, ‘Dear God, I know I am just one →



Abraham, played by actor Dean Jones, on the way to Mt. Moriah with Isaac in the film, *Abraham and Isaac*.

person and I have very little experience or wisdom or resources, but Lord, please show me how I can help these new brothers and sisters in Christ learn more of who You are and of your financial principles. I want to see them liberated from their poverty. How can I help?"

"After that prayer, which I repeated every evening for the remainder of the trip, God slowly began to reveal His answer to me. In the years since then, I have prayed, fasted, and sought the Lord's will with all of my heart. Through this lengthy process, it has become very clear that God wants His people to know His



One of the final scenes in *Lifted Up*, a portrayal of the Gospel of Jesus Christ based on John 3:1-17.

Word. That is truly what they want and need, and that is what God wants us to share with them."

Fulfilling a big dream

"Yes, I agree with that," replied my friend. "So what dream did God give you?" he asked again.

"The dream He put in my heart is to share His financial principles with 'the least of these,' the followers of Christ who are in chronic poverty all over the world."

My friend pondered my words as I paused to let him speak. He was thoughtful and measured as he replied, "That's a big dream. How do you think you are going to do that?"

"I don't know," I replied, "but I am committed to following through however God may lead me."

That conversation took place in January 2007, and by April I had conducted a Listening Tour to interview some of the world's poorest people.

I also hosted a Poverty Summit to glean knowledge and best practices from experts in the field of serving the poor.

It was then that God made His plan clear. He directed me to dramatize key stories from His Word in short films that could convey the biblical princi-

ples in a dramatic and powerful way.

I went to work immediately, assembled a passionate, Kingdom-minded team, and we are now ready to release the result of years of work and preparation.

Despite countless trials and challenges that the Enemy has put forth to kill the dream, we have finally reached the point of launching the *God Provides™ Learning Experience*, a resource of six short films that dramatize some of the most well-known stories from God's Word.

What about your dream?

I'm thrilled to see the launch of *God Provides™* because my dream is to teach people everywhere how to live according to God's economy. I believe this film series will be a major part of achieving this goal, and it is the first of many learning experiences that will follow.

But now I'd like to ask, "What dream has God put in your heart?" If you know it, let me encourage you to go for it with all of your might. Follow the leading God has given you, and don't let anything stop you from fulfilling His special purpose for your life!

chuckbentley@crowns.org

A learning experience for everyone

In field tests around the world, the *God Provides™ Learning Experience* has proved to be a powerful teaching tool that impacts people in all walks of life.

On the surface it's easy to see how this series of six short films, which dramatizes well-known stories from the Bible, would be effective at teaching key financial principles to the billions of illiterate people around the world.

However, field tests have shown that *God Provides™* also has a powerful impact in places like America, where literacy rates are high but many people are visual learners.

The impact of *God Provides™* has also been noted among people who are familiar with the Bible because films bring the Word of God to life in a dramatic, powerful way.

This teaching method lets viewers experience the emotions and inner struggles that the people in the stories were likely feeling at the time—the same emotions and struggles that people experience today.



A crew member makes adjustments to the costume of the character Nicodemus in the film *Lifted Up*.

Viewers also see the lessons that the characters learned in trusting God to meet their needs. Stories are powerful teaching tools—as Jesus so effectively demonstrated during His ministry on earth.

In addition, *God Provides™* will enable people worldwide to experience God's Truth again and again through repetitive personal viewing, discovery sessions in small group formats, or before a large-scale audience if necessary.

People have often wrestled with the concept of trusting God to meet their needs versus

relying on their own efforts, other people, money, or other things that society has to offer.

They look to “man's economy” for solutions, not to God and His economy. But, through stirring historic accounts as well as parables found in the Bible, God reveals how He is our Provider.

Stories featured in *God Provides™* are drawn from these accounts and parables, and they present us with wisdom, truth, encouragement, and practical steps that we can use to develop and deepen our relationship of trust with the God of the universe. →

Each of these six short films is theater-quality, and three of them feature veteran Hollywood actor Dean Jones in the role of Abraham.

“Many believe Dean’s work in *Abraham and Isaac*, one of the six films in the *God Provides™* series, is the finest portrayal of that story ever done in film,” said Crown CEO Chuck Bentley. “Jones was a tremendous witness to everyone who had the privilege of working with him. He is a great actor and a true, sold-out follower of Christ.”

The printed Companion Guide for *God Provides™* can be used for individual or group study in a variety of ways: homes, businesses, churches, academic institutions, and more.

This complete learning experience engages the head, heart, and hands (see Page 13) to ensure that the lessons learned will last for a lifetime. The balance of spiritual and practical truth is transforming. The films are followed by a time of discovery, which includes the opportunity for viewers to discuss what they’ve learned, a time of personal reflection, and participation in meaningful, practical activities.

Included in the series is a powerful gospel presentation adapted from John

3:1-17 called *Lifted Up*. Hundreds have given their lives to Christ after viewing this film during its testing phase.

God Provides™ is a continuation of the biblical teaching in which Crown has long been engaged and extends the legacy of the ministry’s cofounders, Larry Burkett and Howard Dayton. But it represents a new facet of Crown’s teaching, because it creates a learning experience for those who cannot utilize written materials.

“This new tool will enable Crown, and people who have a heart for sharing God’s financial principles, to reach people in America and around the world who are visual learners—people who have never encountered stories based upon God’s Word in any format,” Bentley said. “At the same

time, the films and their dramatic perspective bless people who are very well acquainted with the Bible.”

In America, *God Provides™* could not have come at a more opportune time. After what seemed like a time of never-ending prosperity, in which Christians were tempted to put their trust in material things, America is now struggling through an economic crisis in which government has assumed the role of both savior and provider.

But no entity can take God’s place, and *God Provides™* points Christians back to the reality that He still can and will meet the needs of His own.

Around the world, *God Provides™* is a powerful and effective tool for sharing His financial principles with the billions of people



Making set adjustments for the filming of *Widow and Oil*.



The death of the rich man in the film, *Rich Man and Lazarus*.

that the World Bank classifies as either Poor (living on \$2 per day) or Ultra-Poor (living on \$1 per day).

The Population Reference Bureau counts 1.2 billion people as Ultra-Poor and 2.6 billion as Poor. But when these people are taught how to live in God's economy instead of man's economy, they obtain the biblical means to solve chronic, generational poverty. We are on the front edge of this dream being realized.

God's economy is characterized by principles like hard work, honesty, and planning. His economic principles provide a way of life that eliminates corrupt materialism and unbridled greed.

These principles also discourage centralized control and dependency, they lead to the development of products and services that improve others'

lives, and they teach genuine personal concern for the needs of others and voluntarily providing for those in need.

God's Word is alive and powerful. It sheds light in dark places, and we can have confidence that it will be effective.

God said regarding His Word, "It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11 NIV).

"The stories in *God Provides™* have an impact on people in every walk of life, rich and poor, old and young," Bentley said. "These films cross every boundary and barrier because stories captivate our hearts and minds. It's hard to reach the younger generation, but visual media captivates them if it is done well.

"That's why Crown took so long to develop and release this new learning experience, and research indicates *God Provides™* will be effective with people either before or after they take Crown's *Biblical Financial Study*."

The *God Provides™ Learning Experience* is being launched this month in the United States (see Pages 14-15). It will then be released globally, where it will be available in more than 20 languages.

Be a part of changing your world!

We are looking for "champions" to help take *God Provides™* to the ends of the earth.

Will you pray about joining us? We need people who will facilitate it in their churches, businesses, schools, and neighborhoods.

We need to partner with ministries that want to use it in their work.

In addition, we need people who'll pray fervently and financial partners who'll join us for our global translation and distribution efforts. We need God's choice servants around the world to join us!

There could not be a better time to get this message out. If God puts this dream in your heart, please let me know, and together we will see a God-given dream fulfilled.

chuckbentley@crowns.org



The making of *God Provides*TM

By Jim Henry

WRITER/RESEARCHER, CROWN FINANCIAL MINISTRIES

Ambitious wouldn't begin to describe the tight shooting schedule envisioned for the *God Provides*TM short film series. Impossible comes close.

The series was shot on location at The Holy Land Experience theme park in Orlando, Florida and the wilderness terrain of Utah within extremely narrow production windows. For *God Provides*TM to come in on time and on budget, His providence would indeed be required.

In fact, the first film, *Widow and Oil*, was shot entirely in one day in June 2007 at The Holy Land Experience. The park is closed on Sundays, making available 24 precious hours to set up and shoot the film.

"As a first-time executive producer, I had no idea it was going to come together this well," said Crown CEO Chuck Bentley. "The amazing thing is that the story came so alive that people love it."

Months earlier, after seeing the script for *Widow and Oil*, brother directing team Andy and Jon Erwin had no clue where a story set thousands of years ago could be

shot today with authenticity. Fortunately, while on a project for ABC in Orlando, Jon saw a billboard for The Holy Land Experience and decided to investigate for the *Widow and Oil* project.

"I was blown away by these full-scale, period biblical sets that existed down there, and it just worked out where we could have the entire theme park for a day to shoot a 10-page script, which is impossible by most standards."

Besides the dramatic backdrops, the production required nearly 200 crew members, actors, and extras.

One of them was very special. Stanley Reiff, the 21-year-old son of Crown Executive Vice President Stan Reiff, is confined to a wheel chair.

When the Erwin brothers spotted Stanley watching the commotion on the set of *Widow and Oil*, they wanted him in the film.

So, Stanley Reiff, Sr., and Jr., became extras for *Widow and Oil*, appearing briefly as beggars in the market scene. The young man with special needs was overjoyed to offer his earthly limitations to the project, a matchless gift for God's glory.

The second visit to The Holy Land Experience required shooting at the same frenetic pace. Most of the interior and many key exterior scenes for the five other short films, *Jeremiah's Call*, *Abram's Reward*, *Rich Man and Lazarus*, *Abraham and Isaac*, and *Lifted Up*, had to be completed while the park was closed for the night or on Sunday in late April of 2008.

In one overnight marathon, cast and crew labored to shoot scenes from several films, including Jesus talking to Nicodemus in *Lifted Up* and the Fall of Jerusalem in *Jeremiah's Call*.

All of this was done to the highest standards normally reserved for Hollywood productions. Incredibly, the entire Florida shoot was completed in just five days.

Five weeks later in June of 2008, most of the exterior scenes were shot in the rugged country of Utah's Five Mile Pass, 45 miles southwest of Salt Lake City.

The land looks remarkably like undeveloped areas in the Middle East and is about as hospitable. It was there, during the shooting of *Abraham and Isaac*, that God made His presence known.

"We're on location at the top of this hill and we're shooting Abraham putting Isaac on the altar," reported an excited Chuck Bentley the day of the shooting. "And it's

Continued on Page 10



Photos are as follows: (opposite page) filming in Utah of the scene in *Abram's Reward* in which Lot, seen pointing, makes the fateful decision to live among the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah; (this page, top) Crown's Stan Reiff and his son, Stanley, portray beggars in *Widow and Oil*; (middle, left) Crown CEO Chuck Bentley reviewing a script; (middle, right) director Jon Erwin behind the camera; (bottom) the burial of the rich man in the film, *Rich Man and Lazarus*.

been cloudy; you can see the clouds are out. Just at the exact moment that Abraham lifted his knife, the clouds just absolutely parted and the sun shone right down on the altar!"

Veteran actor Dean Jones, who plays Abraham in three of the films, stayed in character and completed the scene as scripted. "I was so happy that God had met us there on this rugged mountainside."

"The burst of sunlight through the set was the exact effect that we were going for, but we had no idea how we were going to get [it]; it was pretty unbelievable," said Jon Erwin.

Tracey Fries, Chuck Bentley's executive assistant, felt God had effortlessly "one-upped" the entire production. "It's as if He was saying, 'You guys have done a pretty good job, but watch this.' And then the sky lit up."



Photos on this page are as follows: (left, top) actors practice sword handling skills; (left, bottom) a camera crew makes preparations in the Utah wilderness; (above, top) director Andy Erwin explains a scene to actors; (above, center) a Babylonian soldier stands guard as Jerusalem is destroyed in *Jeremiah's Call*; (above, bottom) Lazarus' first moments in heaven. The scene was shot before a green background, which was replaced with computer-generated images.

Making major life choices

By Chuck Bentley, CEO

Abram's Reward shares the story of the major life choices made by Abram and Lot as revealed in Genesis 12-15:6.

God told Abram to leave his home and go to a new land where He would bless him and make his family into a great nation. Abram chose to obey the Lord.

Abram set out for the land God had promised with his family, including his nephew Lot, whom he had been caring for.

When they arrived in Canaan, Abram and Lot both made major life choices. Abram chose to give Lot first pick of the portion of the land where he wanted to settle.

Lot chose the best portion for himself even though it was near Sodom, which was known to be a wicked city.

Lot's greed-driven decision would later lead to his being kidnapped. When Abram heard Lot had been kidnapped, Abram made another major life choice. Despite having only a small group of warriors, Abram chose to try to rescue Lot.



Director Jon Erwin discusses an upcoming scene for *Abram's Reward* involving the character Lot (pictured), whose greed-based choices led to difficult consequences that serve as a warning to us today.

God blessed Abram's actions and allowed him to bring back Lot to Canaan. And from the wealth he had recovered in Lot's rescue, Abram chose to give a tenth of it to Melchizedek, the priest of God.

You can learn valuable lessons by contrasting the wise choices of Abram and the foolish choices of Lot. Abram's choices were made from a heart committed to the Lord.

Abram sought to please God and obeyed Him when the Lord called him to go to the Promised Land.

Also, Abram loved Lot, loved the Lord, and knew a relationship with God was his real reward, so he allowed Lot to choose the best land. That's also why he generously gave to God's kingdom from what he had gathered in battle.

Lot's choices were made from a heart →

controlled by greed. Lot sought to please himself. He wasn't content with what he had. Lot wanted more, so he chose things over people. And, his choices had bad consequences for himself and others.

When you've been faced with major life choices, have you been more like Abram or Lot? Have you sought to serve yourself or God? Your life choices will indicate whom you really serve.

So, where are your priorities today? Consider what's more important to you: your comfort or serving others?

Acquiring more stuff or living on less? Keeping things for yourself or giving to others?

If what's most important to you is your own comfort, acquiring more things and keeping as much of them as you can for yourself, you are like Lot. And, you're probably making foolish choices, just as he did when faced with major life decisions.

How can you make wise life choices as Abram did? Follow his example.

• Give your heart to the Lord. Pray and tell

God you want to serve Him. Seek to please the Lord instead of yourself.

• Obey God. Spend time in His Word learning His ways. When the Lord calls you to do something, don't hesitate. Trust Him to lead even when you don't know where He's taking you.

• Choose contentment. Realize God is your real reward and that nothing of this world compares to Him. Seek a deep and abiding relationship with Him. Be willing to sacrifice material things.

• Love others more than yourself. Put their needs ahead of your own. Allow God to use you to minister to them. Ask Him to show you people you can help.

• Be generous to the Lord. Tithe and give offerings. Acknowledge that everything you have comes from God. Give out of your love for the Lord and your desire to honor Him.

When you do these things, you'll be making wise choices, as Abram did, when faced with major life decisions. And, you'll receive the true riches of God.

An inside look at *God Provides™*

*Summaries of the
six short films*

• **WIDOW AND OIL**

(2 Kings 4:1-7)

What do you have?—God has given us all something, and He wants us to be faithful with whatever we have.

• **JEREMIAH'S CALL**

(Jeremiah 29:1-14)

God's design for hope—This poignant story shows us God's part and our part in His plans for our future—even in very challenging circumstances.

• **ABRAM'S REWARD**

(Genesis 12:15-6)

Making major life choices—God is near to those who are faithful, even with things as small as money and possessions.

• **ABRAHAM AND ISAAC**

(Genesis 22:1-18)

Mine or His?—God teaches Abraham that obeying Him is better than holding tightly to any of His gifts or blessings.

• **RICH MAN AND LAZARUS**

(Luke 16:19-31)

My heart decisions affect eternity—This story dramatically illustrates God's love for the poor and His rebuke for the selfish and prideful.

• **LIFTED UP**

(John 3:1-17)

My hope for the future—This powerful portrayal of the Gospel of Jesus Christ uniquely connects the 1,400-year span between the time of Moses and the ministry of Jesus as told in Numbers 21:4-9 and John 3:1-17.

A true 'learning experience'

The God Provides™ Learning Experience has been carefully designed to guide, support, and even challenge us along the way. It has been created to produce lasting impact by engaging three key areas.



Our head

This occurs as we view and discuss the films.



Our heart

As we reflect on the personal implications of the stories, our heart is impacted.



Our hands

This occurs as we apply our discoveries through meaningful activities.

People around the globe will be joining us on this *God Provides™* journey. Our prayer is that you will be deeply impacted by taking this journey and will share it with those whom you love.



Crown ignite! is coming to the West Coast and Midwest! For churches and organizations in these areas, now is your chance to attend our two-day training.

You will be equipped with Crown's foundational international resources to bring sustainability to your worldwide partners or relationships.

This is a huge need across the globe, and now is your opportunity to be trained to teach others God's life-changing financial principles.

For information about the training and to register, visit CrownIgnite.org.

Upcoming ignite! trainings

• **October 23-24, 2009**
Orange County, California

• **November 6-7, 2009**
Kansas City, Missouri

SEMINARS

JOURNEY TO TRUE FINANCIAL FREEDOM

- AZ, Gilbert OCT 17
- CA, Brea OCT 03
- CA, Fresno SEP 19
- CA, San Diego OCT 10
- CA, San Jose OCT 17
- CA, Ventura OCT 17
- FL, Altamonte Springs SEP 18
- FL, Belleview SEP 12
- FL, Sarasota SEP 18
- IL, Dolton SEP 19
- IN, Upland OCT 03
- IN, Valpariso SEP 26
- KS, Overland Park OCT 03
- MD, Baltimore SEP 12
- MN, Esko SEP 26
- MN, Minneapolis OCT 17
- MS, Long Beach SEP 19
- NC, Charlotte SEP 19

SPANISH OCT 17

- NC, Raleigh

SPANISH OCT 03

- NC, Rocky Mount SEP 26
- NJ, Netcong SEP 26
- NJ, Vineland OCT 03
- NY, Wappingers Falls OCT 31
- OH, Fairborn SEP 12
- OH, Lancaster OCT 17
- OR, North Bend SEP 26
- PA, Allentown OCT 03
- PA, Conneaut Lake SEP 26
- PA, Hanover OCT 17
- PA, New Providence OCT 24
- PA, Williamsport OCT 10
- TX, Carthage SEP 20
- WA, Oak Harbor SEP 19
- WA, Tacoma SEP 26
- WA, Tacoma OCT 03
- WA, Walla Walla OCT 10

MONEY MAP COACH TRAINING

- IN, Indianapolis SEP 05
- IN, Indianapolis SEP 12
- MN, Plymouth OCT 17
- NC, Cary NOV 07

Crown included in federal charity list

Crown is included in the 2009 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Charity List.

CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign.

Federal civilian, postal, and military employees will be able

to designate Crown as beneficiary of their charitable giving through payroll deductions.

Learn more about CFC at www.opm.gov/cfc.



NEW!

GOD PROVIDES

A NEW FILM LEARNING EXPERIENCE FROM
CROWN FINANCIAL MINISTRIES®

**Do you know God's purpose for your life?
Is your future uncertain?
Need answers to make financial choices?**

Timeless illustrations will leap off the pages of Scripture to teach you how to faithfully live with trust and hope in God, the ultimate Provider, no matter what you are facing.

For more about the making of the *God Provides*™ films, visit Crown.org/GodProvides.

Widow and Oil

WO426

Includes DVD and Companion Guide

Length: 14 Minutes

\$25.00



Jeremiah's Call

JC431

Includes DVD and Companion Guide

Length: 16 Minutes

\$25.00



Abram's Reward

AR430

Includes DVD and Companion Guide

Length: 18 Minutes

\$25.00



Abraham and Isaac

AI427

Includes DVD and Companion Guide

Length: 22 Minutes

\$25.00



Rich Man and Lazarus

RL428

Includes DVD and Companion Guide

Length: 17 Minutes

\$25.00



Lifted Up

LU429

Includes DVD and Companion Guide

Length: 21 Minutes

\$25.00



Featuring Golden Globe Nominee Dean Jones



God Provides™ Companion Guide

GC281
\$7.00

God Provides™ Boxed Set

GH424
Home/Small Group Version - Includes 6
Companion Guides
Length: Approximately 108 min.
\$125.00

Bonus!

Share the
powerful story
of the Gospel
with a friend

THIS LEARNING EXPERIENCE CONTAINS EVERYTHING YOU NEED:

God Provides™ Film Learning Experience Companion Guides

- Discussion questions, reflection opportunities, and application experiences for each film for individuals or groups
- A Family Guide containing unique questions for family study
- A Facilitator's Guide to help when leading a group
- Special Features – Director's Cut, trailers, and behind-the-scenes footage

Licensing for groups of 100 or more:

Individual Films	\$50
All Films	\$250

Six Short Films

- *Widow and Oil* – What Do You Have?
- *Jeremiah's Call* – God's Design for Hope
- *Abram's Reward* – Making Major Life Choices
- *Abraham and Isaac* – Mine or His?
- *Rich Man and Lazarus* – My Heart Decisions Affect Eternity
- *Lifted Up* – My Hope for the Future

Films not included.

Call 800.249.6320 for details.

Sharing the *God Provides™* message

*The little we have
can make a difference*

Poor people in Africa were astonished. They felt they had nothing. Then, they learned that even the land they lived on could become productive in God's Economy.

"From what we have learned from the films...we will be able to make better use of our land and from that, we will have more than enough."

Imagine impoverished people learning that their little becomes more than enough when God provides! And, if you haven't already, we encourage you to experience the *God Provides™ Learning Experience* for yourself.

For more than 30 years, Crown has been the comprehensive source for the best in resources pertaining to biblical financial stewardship.

And now, through *God Provides™*, Crown will engage hearts through storytelling and reach visual learners in nations around the world—both those who read and those who can't.

You can personally join in sharing this message. We need your help to translate all six of these short films, and the accompanying learning tools, into 25 major languages.

We are engaging with at least 50 faith-based mission organizations worldwide to distribute the films. As a result, you'll be touching lives in places like Africa, Asia, Europe, India, North America, and Latin America—regions populated by nearly 70 percent of the world's people.

The cost to translate each film is \$15,000, and gifts of any amount are greatly appreciated. You may donate online at Crown.org/donateonline, call us at 1-800-249-6320, or send your gift in the envelope provided inside this newsletter.

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