

# Journey INTO THE Bible

## Supplemental Material

Genesis, Part Two: Lesson One

Genesis 21—22

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## For God So Loved the World

**W**e hear echoes of the sacrifice of Isaac in the New Testament. John 3:16 reads: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” Genesis 22:2 states that Abraham is to sacrifice his only son (repeated in 22:12, 16) whom he loves. God’s love for the world in John 3:16 is matched by the blessing, which Abraham will win for all the nations of the earth (Genesis 22:18). Although the Gospel of John does not emphasize Jesus’ death as sacrificial, God’s giving of his only Son could be patterned in some measure on Abraham’s sacrifice of his only son.

A clearer link between Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac and the Father’s handing Jesus over to death is Romans 8:32: “He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for us all, will he not with him also give us everything else?” Here Paul emphasizes God’s love as demonstrated in the death of Jesus. The expression “not withhold” refers to Abraham’s faith when he did not withhold his only son Isaac. What Paul seems to be saying is that what God did not finally demand of Abraham he did demand of himself—he handed Christ over to death for us. In so doing, God revealed his vulnerability, but a vulnerability that focused on “us all.” This last note looks back to Genesis 22:28 where Abraham’s faith redounds to the benefit of all the nations of the earth.