

June 16, 2013

## A Father's Love

By Bryan Hodge

*“Take now your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you” (Genesis 22:2).*

The word “genesis” means “beginning” or “origin”. The book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible, is a book of origins. As such, it contains many first appearances of words in the Bible. Here are some examples: man (1:26); woman (2:22); die (2:17); afraid (3:10); clothed (3:21); sin (4:7); rain (2:5 cf. 7:4); covenant (6:18); wine (9:21); altar (8:20); tested (22:1); love (22:2); obey (22:18).

Concerning our text (Genesis 22:2), Henry Morris commented, “Another word is mentioned in these verses for the first time... It is the word ‘love’ ... we have frequently in these pages referred to the ‘principle of first mention,’ pointing out that, when an important word or concept occurs for the first time in the Bible, usually in the book of Genesis, the context in which it occurs sets the pattern for its primary usage and development all through the rest of the scripture... with this in mind, it does seem strange, at first, that ‘love’ is first mentioned, not in connection with the love of man for his wife, of a mother for her children, of brotherly love, of love of country, or even man’s love for God. Instead, it is used of the love of a father for his son... Furthermore, it is used in connection with the sacrificial offering of that only, and beloved son... This might seem enigmatic until it is realized that in Abraham and Isaac God is giving us a beautiful picture of God the Father and God the Son. That Isaac is a type of Christ is confirmed by Galatians 3:16, and that the experience of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah is a type of the offering of Christ on Mount Calvary is confirmed by the terminology in Hebrews 11:17-19... This first mention of ‘love’ in scripture, therefore, calls attention to the fact that the love of a godly father for his only son is a miniature picture of the love existing among the persons of the Holy Trinity” (The Genesis Record, p. 374-375).

Henry Morris also points out that the first occurrence of love in Matthew, Mark, and Luke concern the Father’s love for the Son (Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). However, the first mention of love in John, he points out, concerns God’s love for us (John 3:16). “Three times God shouts His love for His Son from the very heavens; But then, He tells us that He loves us (yes, us) so much that He was willing to sacrifice His only and beloved Son, in order that we might be saved (ibid, p. 376).

What about the place? Henry Morris asked, "Why would God tell Abraham to go so far, and to just this spot? There is no explanation in the text; but there must have been a reason since God is not capricious. The answer can only be that God knew this would be the place where later His temple would be built (2 Chronicles 3:1). Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac was to foreshadow all of the sacrifices that would later be offered in this place, which in turn were types and shadows of the one great sacrifice that would be offered one day... when the Father would offer the son as the savior of the world" (ibid, p. 377).

Further, it seems significant that the word "obeyed" is used for the first time in the Bible in this context (Genesis 22:18). Man is not simply to obey the easy commandments, but even the difficult. Genuine faith will do so.

### ***Lessons to Learn***

1. While Abraham loved Isaac, he loved God more (cf. Matthew 10:37).
2. Abraham trusted God enough to know that God would still fulfill His promise through Isaac, even if a resurrection was necessary (Hebrews 11:17-19). Note: There is no record of any raisings of the dead to this point of Biblical history.
3. While the Father loved the son, He loved us enough to allow His son to endure the cross for our sake (John 3:16).