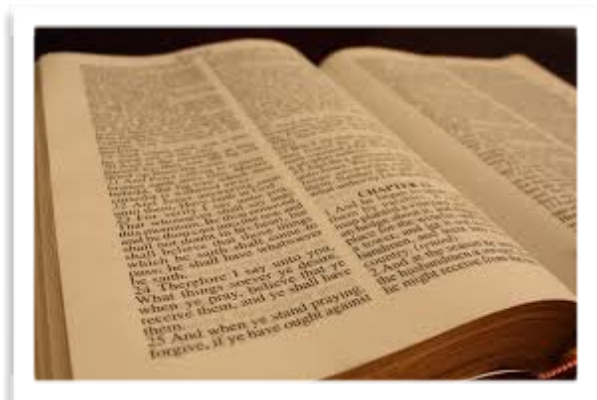


## When is the Word “Love” First Used in the Bible?

When is the first time the word *love is* used in the Bible? It is great fun to ask a million questions when you open the Bible. Good questions serve to unlock the treasure chest revealing untold riches.

Since the Bible is a book and books are made of words, it is great fun to see how God uses words and where they are placed in the sacred text. Nothing is random or by chance with the words of God.



When you search for the word *love* it first appears in the story of Abraham and his beloved son Isaac. As you read this verse ask yourself “Does this verse sound familiar — maybe similar to a well-known New Testament verse?”

*After these things God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here am I.” He said, Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you. (Genesis 22:1–2)*



If John 3:16 came to your mind, then you had the same reaction that I did. God loved His only begotten Son.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

These passages belong together — calling back-and-forth to each other for a reason. God gave us a human story of a father sacrificing his only son so we would understand His great sorrow when sacrificing His only Son whom He loved.

The word *love* was saved for this crucial moment to describe the love of a father for his only son. Abraham prefigures God the Father as he takes his son to Mount Moriah for the sacrifice.

And where is Mount Moriah — this place of sacrifice? It is the mountain of Jerusalem where Solomon built his temple (2 Chron 3:1). It is at this mountain that Abraham took his son for the sacrifice—and it is this same mountain that God offered His Son for us 2,000 years later.

Isaac carried the wood of the sacrifice on his back; Jesus the Son carried the wood of the sacrifice (the Cross) on his back. Abraham found the substitute ram with his head stuck in the thorn bush; God's Son, the Passover Lamb, had his head stuck in a crown of thorns.

Are these parallels by chance? Not on your life. The Word of God is rich, exciting and full of treasures for those who take the time to unlock the treasure chest.

In my next newsletter I will continue this exciting story with the *second* time the word *love* is used in the Bible. It will pull back the curtain in the next stage of God's great love affair with His people and His marvelous saga of salvation.



*If you would like to discover things like this for yourself, check out the most powerful Catholic Bible Study software on the planet at [www.Verbum.com/SteveRay](http://www.Verbum.com/SteveRay).*

*For Steve's adventure documentary on Abraham visit [www.SteveRaysStore.com](http://www.SteveRaysStore.com).*

