

On the Beginning

18. The Most High God

NOTE ESPECIALLY Genesis 14:1-24

It could be said that, in the Book of Genesis, God is introducing Himself to us! We learn much about Him, even in the first half of the book. One of the ways God reveals Himself in Genesis is through the Hebrew terms used for Him. In Chapter 1, our Creator is called simply “*God*,” using the Hebrew word *Elohim*. It means the Mighty One, and, through its plural ending, implies the Trinity. In Chapter 2, He begins calling Himself “*the LORD*” (with all capital letters), using the Hebrew word *Yahweh* or *Jehovah*. It is God’s personal name used in connection with His relationship to His people. He begins using it with the account of His dealings with Adam. “*The LORD*” is put with “*God*” in Chapters 2 and 3, and alone beginning in Chapter 4. “*God*” and “*the LORD*” are interchangeable throughout the Book of Genesis. In the story of Abram, the patriarch knows God as “*the LORD*” (Notice Genesis 12:7-8), although the meaning of the name is not explained until God explains it to Moses in Exodus 3 and 6. Exodus 6:3 (Read it) means that, although the patriarchs of Israel were familiar with the name “*Jehovah*,” God had not yet revealed Himself in the fullness of the meaning of that name. In the fascinating story told in Genesis 14, we meet God as “*the Most High God*” (vs. 18-22). In Hebrew, it is *El Elyon*.

1. It is a Name for **Gentiles**.

“*The Most High*” is a designation for God used many times in the Bible in many contexts. However it is especially a Gentile term for the Lord. The story of Genesis 14 is about a war between Gentile kings. The word “Gentile” refers to the nations of the world that have no special covenant with God. Of course, the nation Israel, descended from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, is the one nation on earth with a covenant with God. The rest of us are Gentiles. The war was between several kings under one named Chedolaomer (v. 1) and several other kings including the king of Sodom (v. 2). Abram’s nephew Lot was caught in the middle of the mess (See vs. 11-12). Back in Chapter 13, he “*pitched his tent toward Sodom*” (vs. 12-13), and by Chapter 14 he “*dwelt in Sodom*.” The wicked character of the city tells us that he was moving in the wrong direction. And now he was a prisoner-of-war, or more exactly, a slave of the victors. When Abram heard about Lot’s capture, he joined with others to rescue him and the other captives (vs. 13-16). Miraculously, his small band was successful. When he was coming home, two kings came out to meet him (vs. 17-18), the grateful king of Sodom and “*Melchizedek king of Salem*.”

Melchizedek is a very important Bible figure, featured prominently in the New Testament book of Hebrews (Look at 5:1-10 and 6:20 - 7:28). He is a type of Christ. He was the Gentile King of Salem (Later called Jerusalem) and also “*the priest of the most high God*.”

Abram was not the only one in the world that knew the true God. Many Gentiles also knew and worshiped Him. Melchizedek was actually His priest (vs. 18-20)! The Book of Daniel is all about Gentiles, Gentile nations, and Gentile kings, and it uses the term “*Most High God*” many times (See Daniel 3:26, 4:17, 4:24-25, 4:34, 5:8-21 and 7:18-27). The emphasis of this term is God’s sovereign authority. Even devils understand this (See Mark 5:7, Luke 8:28, and Acts 16:17). God is the Ruler over all, including those who do not really have a covenant with Him.

2. It is Related to **Tithing**.

Genesis 14 gives the first record of a man giving “*tithes*” to God. Be sure to read all of verses 17

through 24. Abram identified “*the LORD*” (Jehovah) with “*the most high God*,” recognizing them as one in the same (v. 22). He also acknowledged this true God as “*the possessor of heaven and earth*” (vs. 19 and 22). God not only created heaven and earth, He also *owns* them. Abram tithed (gave ten percent) to acknowledge this fact. Tithing is a practice to express respect and allegiance to God. See what Proverbs 3:9-10 says.

“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”

Giving God the first ten percent of what He gives you honors Him, and opens the door for Him to bless you. He owns all of what we have, and has the right to direct us in the use of all our income. To separate the “*first fruits*” of our increase for His church is to acknowledge His Lordship over the other ninety percent.

3. His Priest Was **a King** .

The priest of the Most High God was also a king, and in this way He pictures the Lord Jesus Christ. Melchizedek means “king of righteousness.” Salem means “peace.” Jesus is both the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace. The city of Salem was located in the mountains of Moriah, the place where Abram (Abraham) offered his son (a picture of Christ’s sacrifice in Genesis 22). It later was called Jerusalem, which means “founded in peace.” This, of course, is the city where Jesus died and rose again. Psalm 110 and the book of Hebrews say that Jesus is also a Priest. He intercedes for us at the right hand of the father. So the King-Priest of Genesis 14 points to our King and Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ!