

# EL ELYON – THE MOST HIGH GOD

Genesis 14:17-24

## INTRODUCTION

- For the child of God there is no such thing as a “random accident” – all the events that befall us, both good and bad, are overseen by the hand of Providence and have ultimate meaning and purpose
- Think of the countless examples in Scripture of what otherwise might be regarded as “random” events, but were ordained by God to accomplish his purposes
  - ✓ The widowed Ruth just happened to glean in the field of her late husband’s kinsman (Ruth 2:3)
  - ✓ A Syrian soldier “drew a bow at a venture” and mortally wounded king Ahab (1 Kings 22:34)
  - ✓ King Ahasuerus one night could not sleep, so he decided to have a book read to him, and the particular book and the particular part of the book read contained Mordecai’s saving of the king’s life (Esther 6:1-2)
- The reason why these events are not random is because there is a Sovereign God who rules supremely over his creation by his providence
- “God's works of providence, are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions.”
- “But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.” (Psalm 115:3)

- “Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.” (Psalm 135:6)
- “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:” (Isaiah 46:10)
- “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” (Daniel 4:35)
- God “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Ephesians 1:11)
- As we continue in our study of the names of God, we come now to the name “El Elyon”, which means “God the Most High”
- It is a combination of “El”, the shortened form of “Elohim” (God), and “Elyon” (highest, uppermost)
- Elyon is used to denote the highest thing in a particular category, and is used variously for objects (Genesis 40:17) , places (1 Chronicles 7:34) and nations (Deuteronomy 28:1)
- When used of God, it is translated “Most High”, and is used in combination with “El”, “Elohim” (Psalm 57:2) and “Jehovah” (Psalm 7:17), and at other places stands alone
- It is impossible in human language to set forth the glorious transcendence and supremacy of God, yet he has mercifully condescended and revealed himself to us within the constraints of language something of his greatness, his glory, his sovereignty and his power
- Genesis 14 is the first recorded war in the Bible
- It is the account of four confederate kings (v.1) making war against the five kings of Canaan (v.2)

- The kings of Canaan had been brought under subjection to king Chedorlaomer, but after twelve years they rebelled and war ensued (v.4)
- At the Battle of Siddim, the confederate kings were victorious and Sodom and Gomorrah fell to them, with Lot being captured and carried away captive
- Abram then went up with his 318 trained servants and smote them and recovered his nephew Lot as well as the others who were taken captive and their goods (vv.13-16)
- The king of Sodom was grateful to Abram and offered him reward for his intervention, but Abram refused (vv.21-24)
- But there was another king who appeared to Abram at the same time, a unique and mysterious king named Melchizedek
- He brought forth bread and wine for Abram (v.18), while Abram paid tithes unto him (v.20)
- It is in relation to Melchizedek that the name El Elyon is first revealed in Scripture, being found four times in this chapter (vv.18,19,20,22)
- In this glorious name, God is revealed as the Most High, the Supreme, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, the Sovereign, the Protector and Deliverer of his people
- He is the only living and true God, far above all else, and all other so-called gods which are but idols
- In our day, contemporary churches are seeking to bring God down to the level of man in their worship, their preaching and their ministries

- Our God is high – the *highest* – and this is what El Elyon shows us

## **I. HE IS THE MOST HIGH IN HIS SOVEREIGNTY**

A. He the Creator and Possessor of all things (Genesis 14:19,22)

1. Abram was brought up in an idolatrous home (Joshua 24:2)
2. He was surrounded by pagans who worshipped nature
3. But he had come to know the one true God, who was now revealed as the Most High God
4. This title is often used in a Gentile context (Numbers 24:16; Daniel 3:26; 4:34 5:21; 7:25)
5. Devils often use this title for God (Mark 5:7; Luke 8:28; Acts 16:17)
6. “The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” (Psalm 24:1)

B. As Sovereign Lord, he executes his will in his creation

1. The Most High God does “according to his will in the army of heaven” (Daniel 4:34-35)
2. The Most High God divides the nations of the earth and sets their boundaries as he wills (Deuteronomy 32:8; Acts 17:26)
3. He raises up kings and he removes kings (Daniel 2:21; 5:18)

4. Lucifer thought “I will be like the most High”, but God said, “Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” (Isaiah 14:14-15)

C. This truth is a great comfort to the Christian

1. We can say with Job, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15)
2. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)
3. *“Whate’er my God ordains is right:  
His holy will abideth;  
I will be still whate’er he doth,  
And follow where he guideth.  
He is my God; though dark my road,  
He holds me that I shall not fall:  
Wherefore to him I leave it all.”*

## II. HE IS THE MOST HIGH IN HIS SALVATION

- A. God’s sovereign rule is demonstrated most powerfully in the behalf of his people
1. Abram took no glory to himself, but acknowledged that it was God’s hand which brought deliverance (Genesis 14:20)
  2. We have great and powerful enemies – Satan, sin, the flesh, the world – and there is no human or angelic power that can overcome them
  3. Only the Most High, who has Almighty power and authority is able to save us from our enemies, to deliver us from death and hell, and to grant us eternal life

4. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."  
(1 John 4:4)
5. Melchizedek was a "priest of the Most High God"  
(Genesis 14:18)
  - a. A priest performs the role of a mediator between sinful man and the holy God
  - b. Christ is a "priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4)
6. Christ is the Most High God which willingly took the lowest place as a Man, as a Servant, and offered himself as a sacrifice for sin to save us (2 Corinthians 5:21)
7. As the Most High God, he is able to save to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25)
8. "And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer." (Psalm 78:35)

### **III. HE IS THE MOST HIGH IN HIS SAINTS**

- A. The believer is to magnify the Lord (Psalm 34:3; 69:30)
  1. A telescope does not make things greater, but it reveals the greatness of them
  2. We can in no way make God greater, but we can show forth his greatness
  3. We magnify the Lord first by ensuring he is the Most High in our own hearts and lives
    - a. The first commandment requires God alone to be worshipped: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3)

- b. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matthew 6:24)
  - c. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 4:10)
4. When God is sanctified (set apart) and magnified in our own lives, then we are able to magnify him before others
  5. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:" (1 Peter 2:9)
  6. Abram shows us how we may magnify the Lord
    - a. By giving of our substance unto the Lord (Genesis 14:20)
    - b. By praying unto him (Genesis 14:22)
    - c. By praising and glorifying him before others (Genesis 14:22)
    - d. By separating from the ungodly (Genesis 14:23)

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Most people, if they believe in a god at all, believe in a false god
2. He is often a god of their own imagination, formulated to fit in with their sinful lifestyle

3. Some think that when they get the chance to stand before God, they will tell him how awful he is for all the bad things that happened in their lives
4. Their god is little more than an exalted man, who can be questioned, corrected and ordered around
5. All such idolaters will soon have their views of God corrected when they stand before the Most High in dumb terror
6. What a mercy that God gives us grace to repent of our false views of him and humbly submit to him as the only true God as revealed in Scripture
7. Often it requires a crisis to shatter our foolish pride and self-worship, as was the case with Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4) in order for us to humble ourselves in submission before God
8. Do you accept God to be sovereign over all things, including the events in your life?
9. This can be proven by how you react when adversity comes
10. Those who know the Most High as Sovereign will patiently wait upon the Lord in their trials, know that it is all under his control
11. Is God the Most High in your personal life? Is he first, before all else? Or have you allowed idols to usurp his rightful throne?
12. Is God being magnified in your life? Do others see Christ praised and glorified in your words and actions?