

El Elyon – The Most High God

Gen 14:19-20a

Introduction:

1. El Elyon is derived from a combination that begins with El
 - a. El is a general term that refers to the majesty and power of God
 - b. It is used 238x in the OT
 1. *Ex 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god [El]: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*
 2. *De 3:24 O Lord GOD, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God [El] is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?*
2. El Elyon is translated “The most high God” in the KJV
 - a. Elyon is derived from the word which means “to go up”
3. Remember that God’s names are used to reveal his multifaceted character
 - a. This is like viewing a diamond. As we turn the stone in our hands we see different facets of its beauty as the light is refracted into prisms of color
 - b. God’s names reveal unique aspects of His nature and character

I. Abraham Found Out that El Elyon is Supreme

A. El Elyon is First Used in Gen 14

1. Lot had determined to separate his people and livestock from Abraham
 - a) *Lot chose the lush, well-watered land of the Jordan valley*
 - b) *He settled in the plains and moved closer to Sodom - 13:12*
 - c) *Lot chose by sight not by faith*
 - d) *His choice was dictated by the world’s standards of value and success*
 - e) *Beware of making decisions solely on the basis of financial reward without regard for the consequences that decision may have on our family*
2. Abraham moved into the area of Hebron where he built an altar and worshipped the Lord
3. Lot’s triumph and joy in Sodom was short-lived
4. The area was politically unstable
 - a) *There were many cities with small kings ruling them*
 - b) *Every now and then a more powerful king would conquer a smaller king and annex his territory*
 - c) *Occasionally a conquered king would rebel and try to gain his freedom*
5. For 12 years the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah and neighboring city-states had been paying tribute to Chedorlaomer
 - a) *In the 13th year the five kings rebelled, asserting their independence*
 - b) *Chedorlaomer gathered his allies and attacked and many were killed.*
 - c) *Survivors fled to the hill country – 14:10*
6. Chedorlaomer took spoils of Sodom and Gomorrah including Lot and his family and possessions – 14:12
7. Abraham heard news of his nephew’s capture and marshaled his own forces and pursued the enemy
 - a) *He divided his forces at night*
 - b) *With God’s help accomplished a total victory*
 - c) *Abraham recovered Lot and his family and the possession that were taken*

B. Abraham Met the King of Sodom – Gen 14:17; 21-23

1. The battle was over and the king of Sodom came out to greet Abraham
17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that *were* with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which *is* the king's dale.
2. The king of Sodom offered to make a deal with Abraham
21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.
 - a) *He had been defeated and any survivors had fled to the hills*
 - b) *He was at the mercy of Abraham since Abe had defeated Chedorlaomer*
 - c) *We would have thought that the king of Sodom would have bowed before Abraham, hailing him as deliverer*
 - d) *With his self-confidence remarkably intact, he offers a deal to Abraham*
 - e) *“You take the goods for yourself and give me the people” – vs 21*
 - f) *Abraham had the right to keep everything since he had captured it all*
 - g) *The king of Sodom had no bargaining rights here*
3. See Abraham’s answer to the king of Sodom – vs 22-23
22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God [El Elyon], the possessor of heaven and earth, **23** That I will not *take* from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that *is* thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:
 - a) *“I have sworn to the most high God, that I won’t accept any of the spoils.”*
 - b) *Abraham refused anything except what his men had eaten*
 - c) *He didn’t even want a thread or a shoestring*
4. Abraham had learned that El Elyon was the owner of everything
 - a) *Abraham didn’t want resources or victory from anyone else*

C. Abraham Met the King of Salem – Gen 14:18-20

- 18** And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the priest of the most high God [El Elyon]. **19** And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God [El Elyon], possessor of heaven and earth: **20** And blessed be the most high God [El Elyon], which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.
1. There is plenty of speculation about this Melchizedek
 - a) *The Jewish Targums say that he is Shem, Noah’s son*
 - b) *Some have said that Melchizedek is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus*
 - c) *Others have said that he is an angel or an outer-space visitor*
 - d) *I think that he is a real person*
 2. Melchizedek also came out to meet Abraham
 - a) *He was king of Salem (Jerusalem)*
 - b) *He was priest of the most high God – El Elyon*
 - c) *His name means “King of Righteousness”*
 - d) *He brought food (bread and wine) to refresh Abraham and his men*
 - (1) *They were exhausted with the fatigue of battle and journey*
 3. Melchizedek understood the nature of the victory of Abraham
 - a) *God most high had given Abraham the victory*
 - b) *El Elyon deserved the praise for the victory*
 4. Here is the first use of El Elyon
 - a) *The most high God*
 - b) *God most high*
 - c) *Why settle for a higher power when you can have the highest power?*
 - d) *Melchizedek blessed Abraham and he blessed God*

II. King Neb Learned that El Elyon is Sovereign – Dan 4

A. Nebuchadnezzar's Sudden Condemnation – vs 30-33

30 The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? **31** While the word *was* in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, *saying*, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. **32** And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. **33** The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' *feathers*, and his nails like birds' *claws*.

1. A pastor preached on the ownership of God and trusteeship of man. A wealthy landowner invited him home for lunch. The man took him to an area where he could see out to the edge of the land that he owned. And he said preacher, do you mean to tell me that all of this is not mine? The preacher said, "Ask me in a hundred years."
2. When it comes right down to it, we are just stewards

B. Nebuchadnezzar's Eventual Realization – vs 34-35

34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation: **35** 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?

1. For seven long years Nebuchadnezzar looked and acted as a beast
2. Suddenly the chains fell off and Nebuchadnezzar looked up and saw the heavens above
3. He had learned his lesson – God most high rules and the armies of the world are as a drop in a bucket
4. The words of the restored Babylonian should be engraved forever over the portals of every throne room and every congress on earth—especially in times like these, when terror stalks the earth, and when men have within their grasp weapons of mass destruction, and when men have shrugged off all fear of God.

C. Nebuchadnezzar's Restoration as King – vs 36

36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. **37** Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

1. This restoration was as much a miracle as was the madness
2. There would have been a power struggle for Nebuchadnezzar's position after his insanity
3. He probably would have been killed by the new king who took over
4. Maybe the new king saw no threat since Nebuchadnezzar was insane

III. In Psalms We See that El Elyon is to Be Worshipped

Ps 7:17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high [El Elyon].

Ps 46:4 *There is* a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy *place* of the tabernacles of the most High [El Elyon].

Ps 50:14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High [El Elyon]:

Ps 57:2 I will cry unto God most high [El Elyon]; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.

Ps 91:1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High [El Elyon] shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

IV. Satan Wanted to be Like El Elyon – Isa 14:14-15

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! **13**) For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: **14**) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. **15**) Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.