

# Genesis 14:16-24 and 15:1-6

## Genesis 14:13-16 – Abram’s Rescue of Lot

Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram.

14 When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

15 And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus.

16 Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people. 15 And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus.

## Genesis 14:15-20 – Abram and Melchizedek

16 Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people.

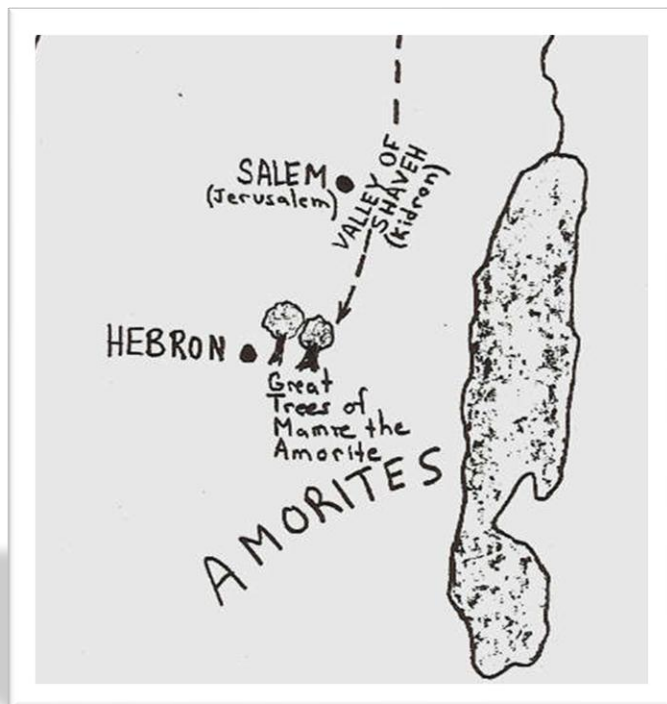
17 After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).

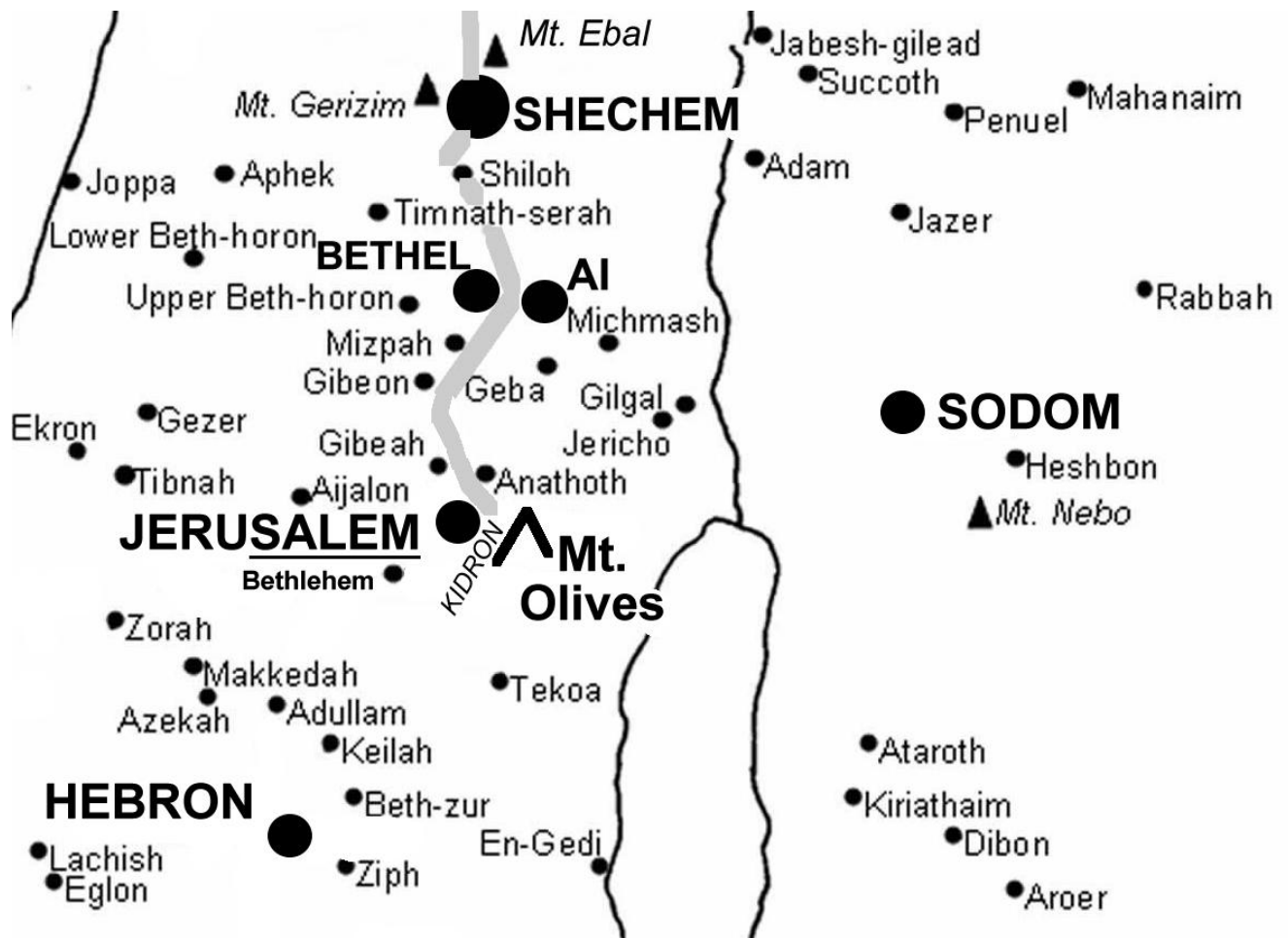
18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.)

19 And he blessed him and said,

*“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
Possessor of heaven and earth;  
20 and blessed be God Most High,  
who has delivered your enemies  
into your hand!”*

And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.





**Genesis 14:21-24 – King of Sodom and Abram**

And the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself.”  
 22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom,  
 “I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth,  
 23 that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should  
 say, ‘I have made Abram rich.’ 24 I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and  
 the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share.”

1. King of Sodom may have come over to Abram’s route (valleys) to greet Abram in a safe location outside Melchizedek’s city.
2. King of Sodom may have “came out” of tar pit to meet Abram
3. First mention of “priest” in Bible
  - a. Deut. 20:2 says the priest was assigned the role to remind people that “the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory”
    - i. Melchizedek did this
    - ii. Melchizedek knows Abram was victorious because of God YHWH
4. Melchizedek, king of Salem, was a city/state king of Canaanite, Amorite or Hurrian descent
  - a. Melchi = “king” and Zedeq means “upright, righteous”
    - i. Malchiel means “El is my king” (El-malch)
    - ii. Malchiah means “YHWH is my king” (IAH-malch)

- iii. Joshua 10:1-3 Jerusalem's king is "Adonizedek" meaning "My Master is just" or "Adoni (Lord) is righteous"
- iv. 2 Kings 24:17-18 Jerusalem's last king was Zedekiah meaning "YHWH is Just" or "Righteous YHWH)

5. "Jerusalem" is from:

- a. "yeru" = "city" from Sumerian word "uru"
- b. "salem" = "peace"
- c. So, "uru-salem" means "city of peace" or JERUSALEM
- d. This Salem may have been a Sumerian trading post

6. Egyptian texts mention Jerusalem in 1850 BC as RUSALIMUM in Egyptian Execration Text

7. Amarna Texts from 1350 BC refer to Jerusalem as URUSALIM.

8. Melchizedek means "king of Righteousness"

9. King of Salem means "King of Peace"

10. Melchizedek in the New Testament book of Hebrews:

- a. Hebrews 5:6 –
- b. Hebrews 6:20 –
- c. Hebrews 7:1-22 –

11. Melchizedek was a man.

- a. Josephus claims Melchizedek founded Jerusalem and was the 1<sup>st</sup> King and 1<sup>st</sup> Priest
- b. Some Jewish traditions speculated Melchizedek was Noah's son Shem.
- c. Jews and early Christian writers assume Melchizedek was a man.

12. **GENESIS 18:18-19** – "God Most High" is from *El Elyon*:

5945 [e]	410 [e]	3548 [e]	1931 [e]	3196 [e]	3899 [e]	3318 [e]	8004 [e]	4428 [e]	4442 [e]	
'el-yō-wn.	lə-'él	kō-hên	wə-hū	wā-yā-yin;	le-ḥem	hō-w-šî	šā-lém,	me-lek	še-deq	ū-mal-kî-
עֵלְיוֹן	לְאֵל	כֹּהֵן	וְהוּא	וַיִּין	לֶחֶם	הוֹצִיא	שָׁלֵם	מֶלֶךְ	שֶׁ-דֵּק	וּמַלְכִי-
Most High	of God	[was] priest	since he	and wine	bread	brought out	of Salem	king	then Melchizedek	And
Adj-ms	Prep-l   N-ms	N-ms	Conj-w   Pro-3ms	Conj-w   N-ms	N-ms	V-Hifil-Perf-3ms	N-proper-fs	N-msc	Conj-w   N-proper-ms	
5945 [e]	410 [e]	87 [e]	1288 [e]	559 [e]	1288 [e]					
'el-yō-wn,	lə-'él	'ab-rām	bā-rūḵ	way-yō-mar;						
עֵלְיוֹן	לְאֵל	אַבְרָם	בְּרוּךְ	וַיֹּאמֶר						
Most High	of God	Abram	Blessed be	and said						
Adj-ms	Prep-l   N-ms	N-proper-ms	V-Qal-QalPassPrtpcl-ms	Conj-w   V-Qal-ConseclImperf-3ms	Conj-w   V-Piel-ConseclImperf-3ms   3ms					

This is YHWH's role in Deut. and Genesis



**QONEH**

776 [e]	8064 [e]	7069 [e]
wā-'ā-reṣ.	šā-ma-yim	qō-nēh
וְאָרֶץ	שָׁמַיִם	קֹנֵה
and earth	of heaven	Possessor
Conj-w   N-fs	N-mp	V-Qal-Prtpcl-msc

13. "God Most High" is from "El Elyon"

- a. El was the chief Canaanite god in Ugaritic and Phoenician literature
- b. Canaan had a god EL who had a grandson ELYON
- c. El is generic enough to refer to any god
- d. El could refer to Abram's God or Canaan's god
- e. Never is El-Elyon combined as a compound in Ugaritic texts. It does not refer to a Canaanite god
- f. Abram identifies El-Elyon as YHWH.
- g. Elyon is a name the Psalmist used to refer to the Lord:

i. Psalm 7:17 –

“I will give to the **Lord** the thanks due to his righteousness,  
and I will sing praise to the name of the **Lord**, the **Most High**.”

5945 [e] 'el-yō·wn. עֲלִיּוֹן Most High Adj-ms	3068 [e] Yah-weh יהוה of Yahweh N-proper-ms	8034 [e] šēm- שֵׁם to the name N-msc	2167 [e] wa·'ā·zam·mē·rāh, וְאֶזְמְרָה and will sing praise Conj-w   V-Piel-ConjImperf.Cohort-1cs	6664 [e] kə·šid·qōw; כְּצִדְקוֹ according to His righteousness Prep-k   N-msc   3ms	3068 [e] Yah-weh יהוה Yahweh N-proper-ms	3034 [e] 'ō-w·deh אוֹדָה I will praise V-Hifil-Imperf.h-1cs	17
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ii. Psalm 9:2 -

“I will be glad and exult in you;  
I will sing praise to your name, O **Most High**.”

5945 [e] 'el-yō·wn. עֲלִיּוֹן Most High Adj-ms	8034 [e] šim·kā שִׁמְךָ to Your name N-msc   2ms	2167 [e] 'ā·zam·mē·rāh אֶזְמְרָה I will sing praise V-Piel-Imperf.Cohort-1cs	bāk; בְּךָ in You Prep   2ms	5970 [e] wə·'e·'el·šāh וְאֶשְׂלַח and rejoice Conj-w   V-Qal-ConjImperf.Cohort-1cs	8055 [e] 'eš·mē·hāh אֶשְׂמְחָה I will be glad V-Qal-Imperf.Cohort-1cs	2
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iii. Psalm 92:1 -

“It is good to give thanks to the Lord,  
to sing praises to your name, O Most High.”

5945 [e] 'el-yō·wn. עֲלִיּוֹן Most High Adj-ms	8034 [e] le·šim·kā לְשִׁמְךָ to Your name Prep-l   N-msc   2ms	2167 [e] ū·le·zam·mēr וְלִזְמֹר and to sing praises Conj-w, Prep-l   V-Piel-Inf	3068 [e] Yah-weh; יְהוָה to Yahweh Prep-l   N-proper-ms	3034 [e] le·hō·dō·wī לְהַדוֹת to give thanks Prep-l   V-Hifil-Inf	2896 [e] tō·wb, טוֹב [it is] good Adj-ms	7676 [e] haš·šab·bāt. הַשַּׁבָּת The Sabbath Art   N-cs	3117 [e] le·yō·wm לְיוֹם for day Prep-l   N-msc	7892 [e] šīr, שִׁיר a Song N-ms	4210 [e] miz·mō·wr מִזְמוֹר A Psalm N-ms	1
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- h. El Elyon here is “**qoheh**” and is translated in various Bible translations as “Creator”, “Maker” or “Possessor”
- i. El Elyon is credited as delivering the armies to Abram
- j. Melchizedek was a monotheist who preserved the original monotheistic religion of the first humans that had been passed from Adam to Noah and on to Terah (Abram’s father) and man, many others who took this monotheism around the world after the Tower of Babel. Abram was himself a monotheist that had this One, True God appear to Abram.

**Genesis 14:18**

1. “Bread and wine” were daily provisions, but were also luxurious food items.
  - a. Judges 19:19 –  
“We have straw and feed for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and your female servant and the young man with your servants. *There is no lack of anything.*”
  - b. Ecclesiastes 10:19 – “Bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, and money answers everything.”
  - c. Lamentations 2:12 –  
“They cry to their mothers, ‘Where is bread and wine?’ as they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city.’ ”
2. Bread and wine were refreshments for the returning warriors
  - a. Judges 8:5 –  
“So he said to the men of Succoth, “Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian.”

- b. 2 Samuel 16:1-2 –

*“When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, bearing two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred bunches of raisins, a hundred of summer fruits, and a skin of wine. And the king said to Ziba, “Why have you brought these?” Ziba answered, “The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who faint in the wilderness to drink.”*

### **Genesis 14:20**

1. Tithing or 1/10 occurs as early as 2000 BC in text from Sumerian Ur.
  - a. It was obligatory tithe in goods given to temple
  - b. This practice is recorded in Old Assyrian and Old Babylonian texts
  - c. Sometimes paid annually
2. Abram's tithe to Melchizedek is unique in ancient Near East and Bible
  - a. Was it paid to Mel as a priest
  - b. Was it paid to Mel as a king who Abram recognized as a political power
  - c. Hittite treaties do not require vassals who fight for their kings to pay a tithe. The vassal kept the booty and returned the land and people to the king.

### **Genesis 14:21 – King of Sodom's offer was different**

1. Keep the booty
2. King of Sodom keeps the people (land)
3. This appears to be a vassal/suzerain treaty
4. Abram now uses Melchizedek's name for God and adds YHWH to it.
5. Abram had previously raised his hand to take an oath in the name of God who is identified as both:
  - a. Melchizedek's god El Elyon
  - b. Abram's God YHWH
6. The oath Abram took affirms his faith in God and his trust that God would bless him and fulfill the promises spoken to Abram.
  - a. Abram will not enter into a treaty or covenant with any king
  - b. Abram is not going to rely on the help of the king of Sodom to accomplish God's promises or attain the covenant inheritance from God.

### **Genesis 14:23**

1. Abram's defeat of the four eastern kings gave him rights to the lands
2. Instead of claiming his political leverage and claim of the land, Abram relinquishes all claim to the land gained by war
3. Abram's decisions here and his engagement in battle:
  - a. Formed the political alignment for the nations of the Middle East at that time
  - b. Established his relationship with the Lord and the future of his people (seed, nation) forever

### **Chapter 15 – God confirms his covenant with Abram.**

1. Abram had held to the covenant he had accepted from the Lord instead of taking all the promised lands by means of warfare, negotiation, and covenants with foreign kings.
2. God appears in chapter 15 to confirm and recommit to this covenant.
3. God also provides more details of the covenant, his plans and the promises.

# Genesis 15:1-6

Genesis 15:1 – **After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”**

1. “The Word of the Lord came to Abram”
  - a. This qualifies Abram as a prophet or “nabi” as in Genesis 20:7
  - b. This is just like the other prophets in the OT
2. This was a vision
3. This is the first recording of Abram speaking to the Lord. So far Abram has heard and obeyed. Abram speaks to God in these places:
  - a. 15:2-3, 8
  - b. 17:18
  - c. 18:23-33
  - d. 22:11
4. Here Abram not only speaks, but asks a question. He desires clarification.
  - a. Abram asks another question in 15:8 when he asks:  
“How am I to know that I shall possess it?”
5. What was Abram afraid of? Was Abram afraid?
6. What is the “very great reward”

15:2 – **But Abram said, “O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”**

1. Eliezer of Damascus
  - a. There may be a connection to the great victory just won at Damascus against the Eastern kings.
  - b. At this time it was a custom to adopt an adult for the purpose of providing for the parents. Abram may have done this, or may have seen this as the next legal action necessary considering the circumstances.
    - i. The adopted adult would manage the possession and care for the aging parent.
    - ii. A trusted slave would be adopted as the “son” to manage the estate.

15:3 – **And Abram said, “Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.”**

15:4 – **And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.”**

15:5 – **And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”**

1. Abram had called God, “the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth.” Now, that God refers to the created stars as being outnumbered by Abram’s heirs!
  - a. God had made the stars in the past
  - b. God will out do his work of creation in the offspring of Abram.
  - c. This may be the foundation for the ultimate reference to “the star” that will rise out of Jacob made by Balaam in Numbers 24:7

15:6 – **And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.**

1. This is the basis for the covenant cutting ceremony that follows.
2. Abram received the promises. Abram believed. God counted Abram righteous. God made a covenant with Abram
3. Faith in God’s Word is always the basis of righteousness.