



[Genesis 14:18-23](#)

(18) Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High. (19) And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; (20) And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all. (21) Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." (22) But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, (23) that I *will take* nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that *is* yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'—

New King James Version

[Melchizedek](#) seems to appear out of nowhere, without any warning. Aside from a prophecy in the Psalms, this is the sole reference to Him until the [book of Hebrews](#). Not only is this the Bible's first appearance of Melchizedek, but it is also the first time that a *priest* is mentioned. Furthermore, despite Melchizedek being called a priest, the text makes no mention of sacrifices—understandable since, as the One who would later be called [Jesus Christ](#), He had no need for propitiation to come before [God](#) on another's behalf.

Notice also that the *priest* approaches the *man* on behalf of God, and not the other way around. This illustrates that God initiates the relationship and not man ([John 6:44](#)). It is impossible for man to [worship God](#) properly without His involvement first. We see Melchizedek bringing bread and wine, the

symbols of the New Testament [Passover](#), rather than a lamb and bitter herbs that were used in the Passover in Egypt. (As an aside, “bread” here is a general term in Hebrew, referring to either leavened or unleavened bread.)

This is also the first time God's title of “Most High” is used. It is used four times in this section on the eve of this Passover. Understanding how and where this divine title is used will help us realize how much of a blessing the Passover is to us.

Both Melchizedek and Abram tack on the description, “the possessor of heaven and earth.” We should consider the nature and the character of that “Possessor.” A landlord may *possess* a piece of property yet not care a whit about the tenants so long as the rent is paid. This, however, is not the way the Most High feels about His possessions. It is apparent from the rest of the Book that His ownership includes more care and concern for His possessions than we can fathom. His governance in the affairs of men springs from His will and purpose, which, despite human failure to understand them, can be described only as *good*.

Melchizedek ties the title “possessor of heaven and earth” with the fact that He delivered Abraham's enemies into his hand, showing just how interested the Most High God is in the affairs of men. He is interested enough that He will show Himself strong on behalf of His people and will judge the unrighteous. Without exception, whenever “Most High” is used in Scripture, God is shown blessing His people with whatever is needed for His perfect will to be accomplished, whether that blessing is of knowledge, physical provision, or especially defense and deliverance from enemies. He blesses His people with His perfect personal involvement.

The New Testament records a striking example of this. In Luke 1, the angel tells Mary that her Son will be called “the Son of the Highest,” the New Testament equivalent of “the Son of the Most High.” It is the same title. Just a few verses later, the angel tells Mary that this would take place because “the power of the Highest”—or the power of the Most High God—“would overshadow” her.

Again, we see God's people being blessed with His involvement in order to bring His perfect will to pass. In this case, His blessing includes the

supernatural conception of the Son of God, which, as God promised Abraham, will end up being a blessing to all of mankind ([Genesis 12:3](#)). This sort of implication is made whenever the title, “the Most High,” is used.

— David C. Grabbe

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