this notice is mainly taken, argues with  
some probability that the Writer of our  
Epistle can hardly have thought of Jerusalem as indicated by Salem, or he would have pressed, not merely the etymology of  
the name, but all those sacerdotal associations which belonged to the holy city. As to the further question, whether *Salem* is  
here, or by Philo, meant *as the name of a  
place at all*, see on ver. 2), **priest of God  
the most high** (so in Genesis. The appellation, here and in the Old Test., belongs to the true and only God: see Gen. xiv. 19, 22, where in this same history both Melchisedec and Abraham speak of “the most  
high God, possessor of heaven and earth.”  
The union of the kingly and priestly offices  
in one belonged to the simplicity of patriarchal times, and is found in Abraham himself, who offers sacrifice; see Gen. xv.  
and xxii. Remember the prophetic announcement Zech. vi. 13, so familiar to  
every Christian. Our beloved Saviour, as  
the *“Father of the age to come”* (so the  
Septuagint, Isa. ix. 6, where we have  
*“the Everlasting Father”*), restores again  
that first blessed family relation, which sin  
had disturbed), **who met Abraham** (it was,  
as the narrative in Gen. literally stands,  
the king of Sodom, who *came out to meet*  
Abraham: but Melchisedec is mentioned in  
the same sentence as having brought forth  
bread and wine, and must be included in  
the category of those who came out to meet  
him also) **returning from the defeat of the  
kings, and blessed him** (Gen. ver. 19: see  
the argument below, vv. 6,7); **to whom  
also Abraham apportioned a tenth of all**  
(*“of all,”* viz. the booty which he had  
taken from the kings: see ver. 4 below.  
In the narrative, the whole has the solemnity of a formal act; of sacerdotal blessing on the part of Melchisedec, and recognition of him as High Priest of God on the part of Abraham. The custom of setting  
apart the tenth to divine uses, was heathen  
as well as Jewish.

So far (see the summary above) is purely historical: now  
follow the inductions from the history;  
from the mystical office and name of the  
Person concerned) ; **first indeed being interpreted** (i.e. *“being by interpretation:"* his name bearing this meaning when translated into Greek) **King of righteousness** (or **righteous king,** as Josephus gives it.  
But the other form here is no doubt purposely chosen, inasmuch as Melchisedec is a prophetic symbol of Him who is not only   
righteous, but the fount and ground of all  
righteousness before God. Zech. ix. 9;  
Isa. ix. 7; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; Dan. ix. 21;  
Mal iv. 2; 1 Cor. i. 30), **and next also**  
(*“being,”* not *“being interpreted,”* must  
be supplied. This is plain from *“King of  
Salem”* representing a matter of fact, and  
the interpretation *following*) **King of Salem,  
which is, King of peace** (it has been much  
disputed, whether **Salem** is regarded by the  
Writer as the name of a town *at all*, and  
is not rather a portion of the personal appellation of Melchisedec. This latter has been held by Bleek, mainly from the consideration that no distinction here is made between the two expressions, “King of  
righteousness,” and “King of peace.” But,  
as Bleek himself confesses, we may well  
imagine that the Writer may wish to point  
out as a remarkable fact, that the city over  
which Melchisedce reigned, as well as his  
own name, was of typical significance; and  
in that case does not the expression **and  
after that also** draw sufficient distinction  
between his personal appellation and that  
of his city? As regards the word itself,  
*peace* is here used in that pregnant and  
blessed sense in which Christ is said to be  
“Prince of peace,” Isa. ix. 6; see also  
Rom. v. 1; Eph. ii. 14, 15, 17; Col. i. 20.  
It is peace as the fruit of righteousness,  
compare Isa. xxxii, 17: notice the order  
here, **first . . . of righteousness,** and after  
that also of **peace.** “Righteousness and  
peace,” says Delitzsch, “form in Old Test.  
prophecy, the characteristic of the times